

HOW TO UNDERSTAND AND ENJOY THE BIBLE IN EIGHT LESSONS

LESSON NUMBER ONE

ADAM—MOSES—CHRIST

Let us begin the study of the Bible with some statements recorded in Paul's Epistle to the Romans, which was written by the apostle of the Gentiles some years after Christ died on the cross to break down the partition between the Jews and the Gentiles. Romans 11:13—Romans 10:12 and Ephesians 2:14 and 15. When we refer to this Divine message as Paul's Epistle, we accept at full face value Paul's statement in II Timothy 3:16 and 17 and Peter's statement in II Peter 1:20 and 21:

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of men: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

Thus you see that we believe in what is called "the plenary inspiration" of the sixty-six Books of the Bible. The word "inspiration" in II Timothy 3:16 is literally, "God breathed."

Now let us carefully and prayerfully read and study Romans 5:12 to 14; 20 and 21 and Romans 8:1 to 4:

"Wherefore, as by one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;" "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of Him that was to come." "Moreover the law entered; that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

In these verses of Scripture we learn of three laws: "The law of sin and death," "the law that entered by Moses," and "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." We learn, in these Scriptures, that sin and death entered into the world and passed upon all men by the sin and

death of the first man, Adam. God said to Adam, in Genesis 2:17, “in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die.” More than four thousand years later, God, by the pen of Paul, declared, “the wages of sin is death.” Romans 6:23. Then several years later Paul was directed to write, in Ephesians 2:5 and 6: “Even when we were dead in sins, hath made us alive together with Christ (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus.” He further describes those who were dead in sins in Ephesians 4:18: “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.”

Sinners, who were physically alive, were dead in sins, alienated from the life of God. Then in Revelation 20:14 and 15 we read of the destiny of those who are not made alive spiritually while they live on earth as dead sinners, those who do not pass out of death into life, by faith. John 5:24.

Thus we learn that death is far more serious than the absence of physical life.

The law of sin and death is a universal law. By one man (Adam) death passed upon all men. But here is good news for those who are dead in sins: “the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” Titus 2:11. Jesus Christ, by the grace of God. tasteth death for every man.” Hebrews 2:9.

We read concerning Adam and Christ, in I Corinthians 15:21 to 23:

“For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming.”

When Christ was here on earth, He said:

“Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father.” John 10:17 and 18.

After He laid down His life and took it up again we read:

“But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool.” Hebrews 10:12.

By His once-for-all sacrifice unto death and by His resurrection the Lord Jesus Christ established “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.” When Christ went back to heaven, after His death and resurrection, He sent the Holy Spirit to indwell, control and teach believers. And as they walk in the Spirit, they fulfil the righteousness of the law. Romans 8:4.

BY MOSES—BY CHRIST

Now let us note again Romans 5:20 and John 1:17:

“Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.”

“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”

The law entered by Moses. Why did the law enter? When did the law enter? The law entered that the sin, that entered by Adam, might abound. Romans 5:20. We read in Galatians 3:19. “the law was added because of transgressions.” We read in Romans 3:20, “by the law is the knowledge of sin.”

But now read concerning the grace abounding through Jesus Christ our Lord:

“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.” Acts 13:38 and 39.

When did the law enter? In Exodus 7:7 and in Exodus 20:1 to 17 we learn that Moses received the law from God when he was eighty years old. This was about twenty-five hundred years after sin and death entered by Adam. This can be learned by studying Genesis 5:4 to 32 and Genesis 11:10 to 32 and Galatians 3:16 and 17. Thus We learn that:

“By Adam was the entrance of sin.”

“By Moses was the knowledge of sin.”

“By Jesus Christ was, and is, the forgiveness of sin.”

“By Adam is the law of sin and death.”

“By Moses is the law of Sinai, the ten commandments.”

“By Jesus Christ is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.”

Jesus Christ has abolished death and He hath brought life and incorruptibility to light in the gospel. II Timothy 1:10.

FROM ADAM TO MOSES

God has designated a period (about 2500 years), “from Adam to Moses.” When there was no law. Romans 5:13 and 14. Let us change the reading to “When there was no old testament.” During those twenty-five hundred years God had some prophets. Enoch was a prophet. Jude 11. Noah was a preacher of righteousness. II Peter 2:5. But during those centuries the human race was undoubtedly without the written Word of God; for Moses wrote the Book of Genesis, the first Book in the Bible, centuries after the events recorded in Genesis took place. During those centuries the people had the glory of God revealed to them in the heavens; and even that revelation left them without excuse. Romans 1:19 to 28 and Psalms 19:1 to 6. Their conscience also bearing witness. Romans 2:15.

If those people who lived “from Adam to Moses,” without God’s written revelation, were without excuse (Romans 1:20), how about the millions today who have the inspired Record concerning the revelation of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, the complete Bible and nineteen centuries of Christianity? Jesus Christ, on earth, said that it would be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment than for Capernaum. If it was more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment than for Capernaum, where the works of Christ were witnessed, how about the cities of the United States? We learn in Acts 17:30 that God no longer winks at man’s ignorance. Read Matthew 11:23 and Luke 10:15 and learn that the more light men receive from God, the greater their responsibility and the more severe the punishment for not living up to that responsibility.

Let us compare Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:8 with Genesis 50:26:

“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He him.” “And the Lord planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed.”

“So Joseph died, being a hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.”

Quite a difference between Adam in the garden of Eden in the image of God and Joseph in a coffin in Egypt. The first Book closes with Joseph in a coffin. So far as the human race is concerned, the Book of Genesis begins with Adam and closes with Joseph, a period of nearly 2300 years. Then in the first two chapters of Exodus we have the period from Joseph to Moses.

Joseph was one of Jacob's twelve sons. Note what God said to Jacob according to Genesis 35:10 to 12:

“And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob; thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name; and He called his name Israel.” “And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.”

Jacob (Israel) was Isaac's son and Abraham's grandson. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob died before Joseph died and of course before the law (old testament) was added. Galatians 3:19. Therefore, we see that no one from Adam to Joseph was an old testament character or was under the law. They were not under Israel's sabbath with Israel's religious program. Hebrews 9:10. Moses passed under the old testament when he was eighty years old. Moses died when he was one hundred and twenty years old. Deuteronomy 34:7. Moses spent the last forty years of his life under the law. Moses received the law about three hundred and thirty years after Abraham died. Compare Genesis 12:4, Genesis 25:7, and Galatians 3:16 and 17.

Moses wrote the Book of Genesis about 900 years after the flood. The period “from Adam to Moses” was divided, “from Adam to the flood,” “from the flood to Abraham,” “from Abram's call and justification until Moses received the law at Sinai.”

NOAH AND THE FLOOD

Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Genesis 6:8.

“And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth. And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood.” Genesis 7:6 and 7.

“And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.” Genesis 9:28 and 29.

Thus we see that Noah lived six hundred years before the flood and three hundred and fifty years after the flood. By carefully studying Genesis 5:5 to 32 we learn that the flood was upon the earth about 1656 A.H. (year of man), the very same year that Methusaleh died, at the age of 969. The nation Israel came from Shem, the son of Noah, by the way of Abraham and Isaac.

The descendants of Noah became great sinners as we read in the last verses of the eleventh chapter of Genesis and in Romans 1:18 to 31. God gave them up. Romans 1:24 and 28.

ABRAM CHOSEN

Out of the human wreck God chose one man who became God's friend. His name was Abram. The story is told in Genesis 12:1 to 5; Genesis 13:14 to 18; Genesis 15:1 to 6. Abram was seventy-five years old when God called him. Genesis 12:4. Abram was called about 427 years after the flood.

It is most interesting and significant to note that nearly twenty-one hundred years of the history of man, from Adam to Abram, is covered in the first eleven chapters of the first Book of the Bible, Genesis, the Book of beginnings. The old testament Scriptures began with the twentieth chapter of Exodus, when the law was added. There is nothing in Genesis of the testament or covenant that was made old, according to Hebrews 8:11 to 13. So we should not call

Genesis the old testament Scriptures. But here is interesting truth: Beginning with the Genesis record of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and on through to Malachi, the last Book of the old testament, those thirty-eight and one-half Books from the middle of Genesis to the Book of Malachi, deal with the nation Israel and only with such other nations and peoples as had dealings with Israel.

ABRAM—ABRAHAM

When Abram was ninety-nine years old he was circumcised and his name was changed to Abraham. Genesis 17:5 and 24. Abraham was one hundred years old when Isaac was born. Genesis 21:5. Abraham means “the father of many nations.” Isaac means “laughter.”

Note 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.” Abram received the promise four hundred and thirty years before Israel received the law. Galatians 3:16 and 17. Abram received God’s righteousness years before he received circumcision.

“For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also.” Romans 4:9 to 11.

Then note Romans 4:22 to 25:

“And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”

THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO ABRAHAM

This truth is confirmed in Galatians 3:8—“And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.” The gospel was preached before the law was added. Thus we see that when God chose and justified one heathen (Abram) in uncircumcision, before the law was given, the Scriptures foresaw that millions of uncircumcised heathen would be offered God’s righteousness by faith without religion.

The law was added to the promise which God gave to Abram; but it was done away by Christ’s death on the cross, and Christ became the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Romans 10:4. II Corinthians 3:11 to 18. The “law” Covenant and dispensation was parenthetical and temporary. It has been done away but the Abrahamic Covenant is still in force.

In closing this first chapter let us think again of Romans 8:2 to 4:

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

The sum total of man's spiritual duty is:

1. To appropriate the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, by believing on Christ.
2. To demonstrate the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, by fulfilling the righteousness of the law.
3. To propagate the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, by preaching salvation through the death and resurrection of Christ to others.

In Romans 6:14 God's Word states in plain language that the believer in this age of grace is not under the law, but under grace. The law is called "the ministration of condemnation." II Corinthians 3:9. But there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Romans 8:1. And no one in Christ Jesus should frustrate the grace of God with law.

LESSON NUMBER TWO

ISRAEL'S RELIGIOUS PROGRAM

Let us carefully and prayerfully consider Galatians 3:19 and Hebrews 9:10:

"Wherefore then serveth the law? It (the law) was added because of transgressions, till the Seed (Christ) should come to whom the promise was made."

"Only in meats and drinks, and divers baptisms, and carnal ordinances, imposed until the time of reformation."

From these Scriptures we learn that the law was added "till," and that the religion of the Jews was added "until." "Till the Seed should come." "Until the time of reformation." Christ, the Seed came. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Romans 10:4. The law was Israel's schoolmaster to bring them to Christ that they might be justified by faith, and then they were no longer under the schoolmaster, or law. Galatians 3:24 and 25. The law was added to the gospel, which God preached to Abram 430 years before the law entered, that the offence might abound. Galatians 3:8 and 16 to 18. The religious program, described in Hebrews 9:10, was also added at the time the law was added: it was imposed on Israel until the time of reformation. Israel was God's religious nation; that is they were, beginning with Sinai. Israel was God's nation before God gave the law and religion to Israel. By the law, God's Word says, "let every mouth be stopped and all the world become guilty before God." Romans 3:19. "The law made nothing perfect." Hebrews 7:19. The law found Israel imperfect and the law left Israel imperfect. Galatians 3:10. Now note Ephesians 2:13 to 18:

"But now in Christ Jesus ye (Gentiles) who were sometimes far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ, For He is our peace, Who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition; Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, the law of commandments in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one Body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through Him we both (Gentiles and Jews) have access by one Spirit unto the Father."

When the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross God blotted out the handwriting of ordinances. He took it out of the way; nailing it to the cross of Christ. Colossians 2:14. When the time of reformation came God set aside His religious nation and ushered in "the dispensation of grace." This was given to Paul by revelation. Ephesians 3:1 to 4. The risen Lord sent the apostle

Paul far hence to Gentiles (Acts 22:17 to 21; Romans 15:16) to preach the grace of Christ to them and to tell them that they could be justified without Israel's law or religion, as was uncircumcised Abram 430 years before God added the law and the religion to Israel. Read Galatians 1:6 to 12 and Galatians 2:7.

GOD'S SON WAS MADE UNDER THE LAW

As we study Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, we should keep in mind several important and significant statements:

God's Son was made under the law. Galatians 4:4.

God's Son was born as David's Seed, to be Israel's Saviour. Acts 13:23.

God's Son was sent only to Israel. Matthew 15:24 and Matthew 10:5 to 8 and 23.

God's Son was a Minister of the circumcision. Romans 15:8.

God's Son performed miracles in the midst of Israel. Acts 2:22 and Acts 10:39.

God's Son came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. Matthew 5:17.

God's Son recognized those who sat in Moses' seat. Matthew 23:1 to 3.

God's Son took His place as a worshipping Jew. John 4:22.

God's Son regularly attended the Jewish synagogue on the Jewish sabbath. Luke 4:16.

God's Son instructed His people to obey the law of Moses. Matthew 8:4.

God's Son observed the feasts of the Jews. John 7:10; Luke 22:15.

John the Baptist's baptism was to manifest Christ to Israel. John 1:31.

So far as there is any record in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, only one Gentile man received a blessing from Christ before His death, and that man loved the Jews and built them a synagogue and sought his blessing from Christ through the Jews. Luke 7:1 to 10. He was a man of great faith. There is no record of any other Gentile man who was blessed. There was a Gentile woman of great faith. Matthew 15:23 to 28.

Christ did not interfere with the sacrifices, ordinances, divers baptisms, the Sabbath-keeping and the "law" program of Israel while He was Jesus of Nazareth in the midst of Israel. Acts 2:22. Christ was born as King of the Jews, and was crucified as King of the Jews, and specifically instructed His apostles "go not into the way of the Gentiles." Matthew 10:5 to 8. Christ spoke of Israel as "the children of the kingdom" (Matthew 8:10 to 12; Matthew 15:24 to 27), and of the Gentiles as "dogs" (Matthew 15:24 to 28 and Matthew 8:12). There was a great difference. But in Romans 10:12, no difference. While Christ was on earth He witnessed in the land of the Jews and His disciples were to go over the cities of Israel. Acts 10:39 and Matthew 10:23. God's Son was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law. Galatians 4:4.

There is a great difference between Christ's message to Israel, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 10:7), and the message He gave to the apostle of the Gentiles (Romans 11:13) years later, "the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."

There surely was a great difference between "the kingdom of heaven" at hand, for the Jews, and "the grace of God" at hand, for all men. In the twenty-eight chapters of Matthew "the kingdom of heaven" is mentioned 32 times, but not once is found the word "grace." In all the writings of the apostle Paul "the kingdom of heaven" is not mentioned once, but the word "grace" is found 89 times. This word "grace" is found 21 times in the Epistle to the Romans.

Let us compare John 1:11, Matthew 21:42 and Acts 5:29 to 31 with Romans 11:30 and 11:15:

CHRIST, ISRAEL AND THE GENTILES

“He came unto His own and His own received Him not.”

“Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The Stone which the builders rejected the same is become the Head of the corner; this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?”

“Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. 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.” John 1:1, Matthew 21:42, and Acts 5:29 to 31.

“For as ye (Gentiles) in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their (Israel’s) unbelief.”

“For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?” Romans 11:30 and Romans 11:15.

Here we learn that Christ’s own (the Jews) are called the builders. It was prophesied that the builders would reject Christ. His own (Israel) received Him not. Many individual Israelites, or Jews, received Him, but the rulers and the majority of the people of Israel received Him not. Then He prayed for Israel on the cross, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Luke 23:34. After that three thousand of His own (Jews) received Him. Acts 2:41. Then the believing Jews were increased to five thousand. Acts 4:4. For several years the disciples of Christ preached to none but Jews only. Acts 11:19. God raised Christ from the dead to be Israel’s Prince and Saviour. Acts 5:29 to 32; Acts 13:31 to 36. Thus we learn from Acts 13:23 to 36 and in Acts 5:29 to 32 that both, in incarnation, and, in resurrection, Christ was raised up to be Israel’s Saviour.

Christ said to the twelve apostles, “go not into the way of the Gentiles.” Matthew 10:5. Then note what the leader of the Twelve (Peter) said about ten years later:

“And he (Peter) 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 showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.” Acts 10:28.

Then note what happened When Christ appeared to Paul:

“And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; And saw Him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning Me. And I said, Lord they know, that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on Thee: And when the blood of Thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew Him. And He said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.” Acts 22:17 to 21.

Then note the great change in God’s attitude toward the Gentiles

“And when they were come and had gathered the Church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.” Acts 14:27.

Meditate prayerfully on this statement in Acts 14:27. Study this statement with Paul’s words in the preceding chapter, “Lo we turn to the Gentiles.” Acts 13:46. A very radical change is indicated.

Then Paul testified:

“That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.” Romans 15:16.

“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.” Ephesians 3:8.

Why did the Gentiles obtain mercy? Because of Israel’s unbelief. Romans 11:30. Why did the Gentiles receive the message of reconciliation Because Israel was cast away. Romans 11:1. Israel put the Word of God from them and God turned Paul unto the Gentiles. Acts 13:46 and Acts 18:6.

Israel had not been cast away when Peter preached to Cornelius in Acts 10:32 to 44. Note Peter’s testimony to the other eleven apostles concerning his message to Cornelius: “. . . 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.” Let us emphasize “MY mouth.” One of the twelve mouths of the twelve apostles preached to Cornelius and his house.

During the years that Jesus Christ was on earth the twelve apostles did not preach reconciliation to the Gentiles because Israel was cast away, or to provoke Israel to jealousy (Romans 11:11), or for any other reason. They did not even preach to Gentiles during those years the message of Matthew 10:7 and 8, “the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Jesus Christ, in incarnation, was sent only to Israel. Acts 13:23. Matthew 15:24. He came unto His own. He specifically charged His apostles, “go not into the way of the Gentiles.” Matthew 10:5 and 6.

There is no record in the first eleven chapters of Acts, that the twelve apostles preached to the Gentiles, because Israel was cast away, or for any other reason. Acts 10:28. Acts 11:19. One mouth of the twelve apostles preached to one company of Gentiles before Israel was cast away. Acts 15:7. When Peter preached to Cornelius, Peter was using the keys of the kingdom of heaven, which Christ gave to him. Matthew 16:16 to 20. Cornelius was a devout, religious, Godfearing Gentile who loved Israel. Acts 10:1 to 4 and Acts 10:22. And gave alms to Israel. His prayers and good works ascended up to heaven as a memorial. Acts 10:2 to 4. Acts 10:22.

LESSON NUMBER THREE

ISRAEL AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Let us compare these several verses concerning the Holy Spirit, words spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ before His death, with the words of Peter and Stephen after the resurrection of the Messiah:

“And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” Matthew 12:32.

“But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.” John 7:39.

“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.” John 16:7.

“And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Spirit, Whom God hath given to them that obey Him.” Acts 5:32.

“Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye.” Acts 7:51.

“But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly unto heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.” Acts 7:55 and 56.

Israel sinned against the Son of man. The Son of man had to go to the cross. Matthew 26:24. He was delivered according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God when Israel slew Him. Acts 2:23. The Son of man declared that He came down from heaven to die. John 3:14, John 12:27 to 31; Matthew 26:24; Matthew 20:28.

Now note Luke 23:34 and Acts 3:11 to 19:

“Then said Jesus, Father forgive them, for they know not what they do. And they parted His raiment and cast lots.” Luke 23:34.

“And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all His holy prophets, that Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled Repent ye therefore, and be converted that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” Acts 3:17 to 19.

Thus we see the significance of the “therefore” in Acts 3:19. Because the Son of man had to go, as He went and when He went, and because of the prayer of Christ on the cross, Israel’s sin against the Son of man would be forgiven them on the ground of ignorance, if they would repent. If they would repent, God would send Christ back to them. Acts 3:21. In Matthew 23:31 to 39, Christ denounced Israel as “serpents” and “vipers.” In Acts 3:25 and 26, they were again children with prior rights. Thus we see the efficacy of Christ’s prayer on the cross.

In Acts 7:51 to 56, Stephen beheld the Son of man standing in heaven. Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit. Why was Stephen filled with the Holy Spirit? Note Acts 5:32: “And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Spirit Whom God hath given to them that obey Him.” Stephen obeyed Him. Israelites either obeyed Him or resisted the Holy Spirit’s witness.

Stephen believed that God had raised Christ from the dead to be Israel’s Prince and Saviour and when he was baptized for the remission of sins in the name of Jesus Christ he received the Holy Spirit. While Jesus Christ was on earth, as the Son of man, the Holy Spirit was not yet given, but Israelites were baptized with water unto repentance for the remission of sins. Luke 3:3 and 3:16.

Note the great truth that was witnessed by the Holy Spirit. Acts 5:30 to 32, Christ raised up to be Israel’s Saviour. The Israelites, to whom Stephen preached, committed two great sins. They betrayed and murdered the Son of man. Read Acts 7:51 to 58. They could have been pardoned for this sin. They resisted the Holy Spirit. This was the unpardonable sin. Note also Acts 13:45 and 46 and Acts 18:5 and 6, where Paul turned to Gentiles when Israel blasphemed.

Now compare John 14:16 and 17 with Galatians 3:14 and II Corinthians 1:21 and 22 and Ephesians 1:13 and 14:

“And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever. Even the Spirit of truth; Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” John 14:16 and 17.

“That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” Galatians 3:14.

“Now He which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts:” II Corinthians 1:21 and 22.

“In Whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, ‘on’ believing, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.” Ephesians 1:13 and 14.

The Holy Spirit was first WITH the disciples who lived with Christ on earth and later on IN them. When Christ went back to heaven He sent the Holy Spirit down from heaven. I Peter 1:12. Members of the Body of Christ, saved during the reign and dispensation of grace, could not have an experience like that of the disciples who lived with Christ both before and after His resurrection. Today the very moment the sinner believes the gospel of grace and receives Christ he receives the Holy Spirit within and is immediately sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption. Ephesians 4:30, Ephesians 1:13 and 14. The moment the believer comes to Calvary he is sealed, anointed, and baptized with the Holy Spirit, and in this age of grace the sealing, the anointing and baptizing with or in or by the Holy Spirit is always a past experience, and not a religious experience to strive for or pray for or tarry for.

But the believer may and should obey Ephesians 5:18:

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.”

In I Corinthians 12:13 we learn of the Holy Spirit’s work in baptizing the believer into the Body of Christ. In Ephesians 1:19 we learn that the mighty power of God is for every member of the Body of Christ, who is also blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies. Ephesians 1:3.

LESSON NUMBER FOUR

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

Let us carefully study Luke 21:24 to 33. We quote Luke 21:24 and 27:

“And they (the Jews) 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.”

“And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.”

When the Lord Jesus Christ uttered this most significant statement Israel had been under Gentile domination for more than six hundred years.

In Daniel 2:31 to 45 we are told of the beginning, the course and the culmination of “the times of the Gentiles,” politically. According to Daniel 2:43 to 45, “the times of the Gentiles” will be terminated by the coming of the King from heaven to destroy all that is left of the four great Gentile kingdoms, whether gold, silver, brass, iron, or clay. This certainly is in agreement with the termination described in Luke 21:27 to 33, the coming of the Son of man from heaven for Israel’s redemption.

We quote II Kings 25:8, 9 and 21:

“And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem.”

“And he burnt the house of the Lord and the king’s house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man’s house burnt he with fire.”

“And the king of Babylon smote them, and slew them at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was carried out of their land:”

Daniel 2:44: “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven setup a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

In Daniel 2:42 to 44 we learn that “the times of the Gentiles” will be fulfilled when the King comes from heaven.

In Acts 13:23 we learn that Jesus Christ was born in the house of David, to be Israel’s Saviour. Now let us read:

Luke 1:68 and 74: “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people.”

“That He would grant unto us that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear:”

Luke 19:42 and 44: “Saying, if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes:”

“And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.”

Luke 13:35: “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

In the last chapter of II Kings and the last chapter of Jeremiah we learn when and how “the times of the Gentiles,” politically, began, with Nebuchadnezzar’s conquest of Jerusalem and the captivity of the Jews. When Jesus Christ came to Israel the first time as their Messiah and Deliverer they rejected Him. But when He comes the second time they will receive Him. “The times of the Gentiles” will end with the coming of the Son of man to be Israel’s Redeemer.

Then in Amos 9:14 and 15 and in Ezekiel 37:25 we learn of Israel’s earthly glory after the times of the Gentiles will be brought to an end

“And I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God.” Amos 9:14 and 15.

“For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.”

“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.” Ezekiel 36:24 and 28.

“And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob My servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children and their children’s children for ever: and My servant David shall be their prince for ever:”

Now study carefully Luke 1:67 to 72? and Luke 19:43 to 45 and Luke 13:35, which we have quoted above.

Jesus Christ was born to redeem Israel from the hands of her enemies, the Gentiles. Israel knew not the things that belonged to her peace. Israel knew not the time of her visitation. They would not have Christ to reign over them. Luke 19:14 and 15. Therefore, the words of Christ in Matthew 21:43:

“Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

In 1944 A.D. We are still living in “the times of the Gentiles,” politically, and the kingdom has not yet been restored to Israel. Acts 1:6. God has not yet sent Christ back from heaven to bring about the restitution of all things. Acts 3:21 and Luke 1:70.

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES—SPIRITUALLY

After the Gentiles conquered the Jews and ruled over them God still blessed the Gentiles, spiritually, through the Jews.

“And in every province, and in every city, withersoever the king’s commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.” Esther 8:17.

“Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship for salvation is of the Jews:” John 4:22.

“And He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

“But He answered and said, It is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it to dogs:” Matthew 15:24 and 26.

“He came unto His own (Israel) and His own received Him not.” John 1:11.

“Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phoenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the Word to none but unto the Jews only.” Acts 11:19.

“Unto you (Jews) first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” Acts 3:26.

“Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles:” Acts 13:46.

“For as ye (Gentiles) in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their (the Jews’) unbelief.” Romans 11:30.

“For if the casting away of them (Israel) be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life front the dead?” Romans 11:15.

From these verses and from many other Scriptures we learn that the beginning of “the times of the Gentiles,” politically, did not mark the beginning of “the times of the Gentiles,” spiritually. Read the place of Israel in God’s religious and spiritual program in Romans 9:4 to 6.

In Esther 8:17 we learn that the Persian Gentiles became Jews, religiously. Jesus Christ said that salvation was of the Jews; that He was sent to Israel only; that it was not right to take the bread of Israel, the children, and give it unto Gentiles, the dogs. The dogs received the crumbs from the children’s table. The children were under the dogs (the Gentiles), politically, but the dogs had to receive their spiritual blessings from Israel. Note the proselytes in Acts 2:10. Note Romans 15:27.

“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.”

Jesus Christ came unto His own (Israel). Seven or eight years after the rejection and resurrection of Christ the disciples and apostles of Christ were all Jews and went to Jews only. Acts 11:19. It was not yet lawful for them to do otherwise. Acts 10:28. It then became lawful. Hence the words of Peter to Cornelius:

“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Hint” Acts 10:34 and 35.

Up to this time God’s order was, “to the Jews first and only.” Acts 3:25 and 26. Then, several years later, Paul said, “to you Jews first and then to the Gentiles,” because the Jews refused the Word of God. Acts 13:46. Romans 1:16. The Gentiles obtained mercy because of Israel’s unbelief. Romans 11:30. Israel was cast away and reconciliation was then sent to Gentiles, to provoke Israel to jealousy. Romans 11:11.

Then the message of Romans 10:12 and Ephesians 2:19:

“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.” Romans 10:12.

“Now therefore ye (Gentiles) are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.” Ephesians 2:19.

When God set aside His religious “kingdom” nation by sending blindness upon all but the remnant, according to the election of grace (Romans 11:6 to 10), “the times of the Gentiles,” spiritually, began. Paul is called “the apostle of the Gentiles.” Romans 11:13. After reading Romans 11:6 to 15 and Acts 28:25 to 28 we surely will not believe that God’s order is “to the Jews first” now.

Note the course and culmination of the times of the Gentiles, spiritually:

“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. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.” Romans 11:25 and 26.

“For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ).” Ephesians 3:1 to 4.

“Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.” II Timothy 1:17.

“Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain One New Man, so making peace.” Ephesians 2:15.

“Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a Perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Ephesians 4:13.

“And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, Which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.” Ephesians 1:22 and 23.

“That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word. That He might present it to Himself a glorious Church not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” Ephesians 5:26 and 27.

Blind Israel is now the outcast nation. The fulness of the Gentiles will come in. In the meantime we are living under “the dispensation of the grace of God,” revealed as God’s mystery to the apostle Paul. Ephesians 3:1 to 4. The Church in the age of grace is “the Body of Christ.”

This Body of Christ is to be the fulness of Christ; the filling-up of Christ “For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.” I Corinthians 12:12.

God will complete the One New Man. Ephesians 2:15. Christ is going to present the Church unto Himself as a glorious, spotless Church. Note again the climax of this “grace” Church age:

“Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a Perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Ephesians 4:13.

This is one of the most wonderful verses in all the Bible. It is concerning the one Body of Ephesians 4:4 and 12. That Body is growing up into the Head, fitly joined together. Ephesians 4:15 and 16. When complete, or full, the Head and Body together will be the Perfect Man, the stature of the fulness of Christ. When Christ appears for His Church He will not come to earth as the Son of man.

The Son of man will come to earth, during the great tribulation, to end “the times of the Gentiles,” politically. Before that, Christ will come in the air as the Head of the Church, to call the living members of His Body, together with those who have departed to be with Him, to meet Him in glorified bodies. This will be the end of “the times of the Gentiles,” spiritually. Then the kingdom of heaven will be established on earth and there will be the fulfillment of such prophecies as Zechariah 14:4 to 9 and Isaiah 9:6 and 7 and Isaiah 2:3 and 4.

LESSON NUMBER FIVE

FULFILLED PROPHECIES AND

THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST

Let us carefully compare Romans 15:8 with Ephesians 3:8 and Romans 15:16:

“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.”

“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.”

“That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.”

In Romans 15:8 we read that Jesus Christ WAS a minister of the circumcision. We emphasize the word WAS. It would not be true to say that Jesus Christ IS a minister of the circumcision at this present time.

Note again Ephesians 1:19 to 23 and Ephesians 4:10:

“And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies, Far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all

things to the Church, Which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.” Ephesians 1:19 to 23.

“He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.”

Here we learn where Jesus Christ is during this present economy of grace. Jesus Christ, far above principality and powers and far above all heavens, is not doing what He was doing when He was in the midst of Israel, performing miracles as Jesus of Nazareth (Acts 2:22). Then He was confirming, or fulfilling, the promises which God, by His prophets, made to Israel. No prophet of God ever prophesied to Israel or to any other nation or man that Christ would be Where He now is, and would be doing what He is now doing. Concerning Christ’s present ministry, we read this statement in Colossians 1:26:

“Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints.”

It is for this reason that the apostle Paul called his Christ revealed message and ministry, under the economy of grace, “the unsearchable riches of Christ.” Ephesians 3:8. The word “unsearchable” is from a Greek word meaning “track” or “step.” Therefore, the word “unsearchable” means “untraceable.” This refers to a ministry of Jesus Christ which was not prophesied in Israel’s Scriptures. Therefore, it is a ministry different from I Peter 1:11; Acts 3:21; and Acts 13:29:

“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.”

“Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.”

“And when they had fulfilled all that was written of Him, they took Him down from the tree, and laid Him in a sepulchre.”

Have you observed how frequently in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are found the words’ “that the Scriptures might be fulfilled,” “that the words of the prophet might be fulfilled?”

Note Christ’s words in Matthew 5:17 and 18 and in Luke 24:25 to 27:

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

“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.”

“Then He said unto them, O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”

So we understand 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.”

On earth Jesus Christ was a minister to the Jews with a message and program God had prophesied by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. Acts 13:23; Acts 4:26 to 29.

In the Greek of Philippians 1:10 God’s instruction to believers is “test things that differ.”

Now note Ephesians 3:1 to 4:

“For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words whereby when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ.)”

There is a great difference between a “confirmation” ministry to Israel, while Jesus of Nazareth was a man approved of God in the midst of Israel (Acts 2:22), and the “revelation” of God’s secret by the risen Christ far above all heavens, Head of the Body, which is the fulness of Christ.

Paul at first had a confirmation ministry, a message in fulfillment of prophecy. Note Acts 26:22 and 23 and Acts 17:11:

“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: That Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.”

“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”

In the “confirmation” message the Jews could search from Genesis to Malachi and see if Paul was preaching Bible truth concerning the “searchable” riches of Christ. But when Paul preached “the eternal purpose of God” revealed in Romans 8:28 to 38 and Ephesians 1:3 to 21 and Ephesians 3:1 to 15 and Ephesians 4:9 to 18, no one could search the Old Testament Scriptures and learn whether Paul was teaching the truth because this “mystery” truth was not found in those prophecies; therefore, the “unsearchable”, “untraceable,” or unpropheesied riches of Christ.

Note the great change in God’s program suggested in II Corinthians 5:16 and 17

“Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new.”

Note Romans 8:28 and 29; Ephesians 1:4, 5 and 9; II Timothy 1:9; Ephesians 1:11; and Ephesians 3:9 and 11:

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose. 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.” Romans 8:28 and 29.

“According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.” “Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself.” Ephesians 1:4, 5, and 9.

“Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” II Timothy 1:9.

“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.” Ephesians 1:11.

“And to make all see what is the dispensation of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God.”

“According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Ephesians 3:9 and 11.

Note the word “purpose” in these Scriptures. Whose purpose? God’s. God’s eternal purpose. What God purposed in Christ for Christ and His Body before the world began. God’s “predestination” purpose. This eternal purpose of God was “the mystery of God’s will.” The Lord Jesus Christ revealed this mystery, or secret, to the apostle Paul. Then Paul wrote to other members of Christ’s Body to make all saints see what is “the dispensation of the mystery,” which had been hid in God before the foundation of the world.

In the first eleven chapters of Acts the twelve apostles were carrying on a prophesied, spiritual program. In I Corinthians 15:3 and 4 we read “according to the Scriptures.” This means in fulfillment of prophecies in the thirty-nine Books from Genesis to Malachi. In Ephesians 3:11 and II Timothy 1:9 and Romans 8:28 we read “according to God’s purpose.” There is a great difference between God’s program for the human race, which is “according to the Scriptures,” and His program which is “according to His eternal. purpose.” Jesus Christ’s death was according to both. Acts 13:29 and 30 Acts 2:22 and 23; Acts 4:26 to 28; I Peter 1:18 to 20. But God’s purpose concerning the heavenly position and possessions and eternal destiny of the members of Christ’s Body, revealed in Ephesians and Colossians, is not according to the Scriptures with the exception of the lesson from Adam and Eve as the figure of Christ and the Church. For this lesson let us read Genesis 2:18 to 25; Ephesians 5:31 and 32; I Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 2:15; Ephesians 4:12 and 13; Ephesians 1:22 and 23. We quote some of these verses, but would suggest that you carefully study all of them and the chapters in which they are found. Ephesians 5:30 and 31 is the truth stated by Adam in Genesis 2:23 and 24. When God made Adam and Eve God called their name Adam. Genesis 5:2.

“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.” Ephesians 5:31 and 32.

“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.” I Corinthians 12:12.

“Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances: for to make in Himself of twain One New Man, so making peace.” Ephesians 2:15.

“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a Perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Ephesians 4:12 and 13.

“And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, Which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.” Ephesians 1:22 and 23.

Adam was a figure of Christ, the last Adam. Romans 5:14 and I Corinthians 15:43 to 48.

“God called their name Adam.” “So also is Christ.” Adam and Eve one flesh. Christ and the Church one flesh. Eve part of Adam’s bone and flesh. The Body growing up into the Head. Ephesians 4:15 and 16. The Body the fulness of Christ. Christ and the Church, the One New Man, the Perfect Man. A great mystery. The measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. This is a great mystery, Christ and His Church, one flesh.

Note Paul’s words in I Corinthians 9:17 and Colossians 1:24 to 27:

“For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation is committed unto me.”

“Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body’s sake, which is the Church: Whereof I am made a

minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the Word of God: Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints, To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Colossians 1:24 to 27.

By revelation from heaven (II Corinthians 12:1 to 12; Ephesians 3:1 to 4) the risen Christ committed to Paul, “a dispensation,” “the mystery,” to complete God’s revealed Word, “the dispensation of the grace of God for Gentiles,” “the dispensation of the mystery,” “the eternal purpose of God.” The consummation is recorded in Ephesians 4:13. Paul wanted all Christians to know this truth. Note Ephesians 6:19 and 20 and Colossians 4:3 and 4:

“And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel.”

“Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.”

Paul suffered in jail for “the mystery.” Paul urged Christians to pray for open doors and open mouths that this most wonderful truth might be proclaimed. He said for “my gospel” I suffer as an evil doer in jail. II Timothy 2:8 and 9.

Now note the two great prayers of Ephesians 1:16 to 19 and 3:14 to 19:

“Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, 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: 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. And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power.”

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That He would grant you according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man: That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith: that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length and depth and height: And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God.”

This is the Divine method for the understanding of the profound and glorious truth. Do you want the eyes of your understanding enlightened? Do you want to see what God wants you to see? And to obey Ephesians 3:9.

Let these prayers be answered. And if you are a minister of Christ, remember you are to be a faithful steward of the mysteries of God. I Corinthians 4:1 to 4.

“AND TO MAKE ALL SEE WHAT IS THE DISPENSATION OF THE MYSTERY.”

LESSON NUMBER SIX

THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM

THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD

There is a decided difference between “ the gospel of the kingdom” and “the gospel of the grace of God.” First let us compare four verses in Matthew with four verses in Titus:

“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. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give.” Matthew 10:5 to 8.

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Titus 2:11 to 14.

In Matthew 10:5 to 8 the twelve apostles were told by Jesus of Nazareth on earth what to preach and what to do. In Titus 2:11 to 14 the one apostle, Paul, was preaching and teaching what the risen Christ in heaven instructed him, by revelation, to preach and teach.

There was a great difference between the kingdom of heaven at hand for Israel—not for Gentiles, and the grace of God at hand for all men.

Let us again compare Matthew 4:17 and Matthew 4:23 and 24 with Acts 20 :24 and I Corinthians 15:1 to 4.

“From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

“And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and He healed them.”

“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.”

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.”

When Jesus Christ was preaching “the gospel of the kingdom,” and healing all that were sick and crippled, He was announcing the kingdom of heaven at hand, claiming Himself to be Israel’s King from heaven. He was not telling the Jews that He was going to the cross, as the rejected King, to die and be raised the third day. It is true that Christ was born to die. Hebrews 2:9. But Christ was also born to occupy David’s throne, to reign over Israel, to be Israel’s Governor, and to deliver Israel from Gentile domination. Luke 1:27 to 33, Matthew 2:5 and Luke 1:67 to 80. Christ preached to the Jews “the gospel of the kingdom.” Christ told His twelve apostles to preach “the gospel of the kingdom.” He said they would not have gone over the cities of Israel before the Son of man came. Matthew 10:23. There is a great difference between the message of Matthew 10:8. “heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons,” and the gospel of I Corinthians 15:1 to 4, “Christ died for our sins, and was buried, and was raised the third day.”

THE APOSTLES KNEW NOT I CORINTHIANS 15:1 TO 3

When the twelve apostles were preaching “the gospel of the kingdom” they knew not the gospel of I Corinthians 15:1 to 4.

Compare Luke 9:1 and 2 and 6 and Luke 18:31 to 34:

“Then He called His twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And He sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.”

“And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere.”

“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. For He shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge Him, and put Him to death; and the third day He shall rise again. And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.”

From these Scriptures we learn that after the twelve apostles had preached “the gospel of the kingdom” for many months they knew not, they understood not, the gospel by which are saved: that Christ died for our sins. Note John 20:9—”For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.” After several years of association and preaching with Jesus Christ the two leading apostles knew not the Scriptures that Christ would be crucified and raised from the dead. Even after the death and resurrection of Christ the twelve apostles asked, “wilt Thou again restore the kingdom to Israel” Acts 1:6. In Luke 24:45 to 48 we read:

“Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.”

Here we learn that Christ, opened their understanding and they were given new truth to proclaim along with kingdom truth: for the Lord Jesus had given unto Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 16:17 to 19.

Compare Luke 3 :3 and 16 with Acts 2:38:

“And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.”

“John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of Whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”

“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.”

Now compare Luke 1:63 to 71 with Acts 3:21 and 3:26:

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people, And He hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David; As He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began; That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us.”

“Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.”

“Unto you (Israel) first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.”

Now compare Luke 12:33 with Acts 2:44 and 45 and Acts 4:34 and 35:

“Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.”

“And all that believed were together, and had all, things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted then to all men, as every man had need.”

“Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold then, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles’ feet; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.”

Thus we see that Peter on the day of Pentecost, and for some time thereafter, preached what John the Baptist preached and carried on with “the gospel of the kingdom,” and the offer of the kingdom, and the program of the kingdom, after the death and resurrection of the Son of man, Whom Stephen saw standing in heaven when he addressed Israel’s rulers in Jerusalem. Acts 7:51 to 60.

In preaching “the gospel of the grace of God” to Gentiles, the apostle Paul did not preach Acts 2:38 or Acts 3:21 or Acts 2:44 and 45 and Acts 4:31 and Acts 3:5 or even Acts 10:34 to 36.

Peter preached to Israel, “repent and be baptized for the remission of sins:” “repent and God will send Christ back.” Paul preached, believe the gospel of your salvation and be sealed with the Holy Spirit and be seated up where Christ is in the heavenlies. Ephesians 1:13 and 14 and 2:6. There is a great difference. Compare Acts 10:34 to 36 with Romans 4:4 and 5. Paul went out to Gentiles with the unmixed gospel of grace when and because Israel was cast away. Romans 11:15 and 30; Acts 13:46, Acts 18:6, Acts 28:25 to 28.

Keep in mind this fact: when “the gospel of the kingdom” is preached with Divine sanction Israel is in favor with God. When “the gospel of the grace of God” is preached with Divine sanction Israel is in disfavor with God. When “the gospel of the kingdom” is preached the nation Israel and David’s throne are in view, and the kingdom program of Isaiah 35:4 to 10, and the kingdom communism of Acts 4:34 and 35 are in order. There is much grace in “the gospel of the kingdom,” but grace in a gospel may be quite different from “the gospel of grace.”

When “the gospel of the kingdom” is preached to Gentiles the Gentiles are seeking God. Note Peter’s message to Cornelius the seeking Gentile:

“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; But in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him. The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ; (He is Lord of all;) That Word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began first in Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; 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.” Acts 10:34 to 38.

The prayers and good deeds of Cornelius had gone up into God’s presence as a memorial. Acts 10:1 to 6. Compare this with Romans 4:4 and 5 and II Timothy 1:9 and 10.

When Peter used the key of the kingdom and preached to Cornelius and his household Israel had not been set aside. Compare the message concerning Jesus of Nazareth in Acts 2:22 and Acts 10:36 to 38 with Paul’s statement in II Corinthians 5:16.

THE DISPENSATIONAL MIRACLE

Note this interesting miracle and what happened to a Gentile as the result of the blindness sent to a Jew by God.

“And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-Jesus; Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the Word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul (who also is called Paul), filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.” Acts 13:6 to 12.

This was the beginning of a radical change in God’s attitude toward Israel and His dealings with the Gentiles. A man by the name of Paul, a prudent Roman official, was saved when he saw that God sent blindness upon Bar-Jesus. Bar-Jesus means “the son of Jehovah the Saviour.” The nation Israel was the son of Jehovah the Saviour. Saul also became Paul, the name of the Gentile who believed. Now note Romans 11:7 and 11 and Romans 11:25 and 26:

“What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for: but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.” “I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.”

“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, 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.”

Israel’s blindness brought Gentile salvation. The first Gentile was Paul of Rome; that is, Sergius Paulus. Then Saul of Tarsus also became Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles. Romans 11:13. Bar-Jesus was to be blind (not seeing the sun) only for a season. Likewise with Israel. Romans 11:25 and 26. “But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings: and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.” Malachi 4:2.

Note the great contrast between Nathaniel, which mean “the gift of God” and Bar-Jesus:

“Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to Him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile,” “Nathaniel answered and saith unto Him, Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God: Thou art the King of Israel.” John 1:47 to 49.

“And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus.”

“And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord.” Acts 13:6 and 10.

The word “guile” in John 1:47 is the same word as “subtilty” in Acts 13:10. Bar-jesus speaks of Israel, the outcast nation, in blindness, during this period of grace, waiting for the Sun of righteousness to appear. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. Romans 11:27 to 30. This is why Israel is to be saved. Nathaniel (the gift of God) speaks of Israel in the coming “kingdom” age. Note what God is to do with Israel:

“For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. 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. A new heart, also will I give you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 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.” Ezekiel 36:24 to 27.

Surely then Israel’s King and Messiah will say, “behold Israelites in whom there is no guile,” and Israel will respond, “Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God: Thou art the King of Israel.” But in the meantime God is carrying on a “grace” program and building a great House, the Church, or Body of Christ. The apostle Paul is the Lord’s foreman.

“For we are labourers together with God: Ye are God’s husbandry, we are God’s building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon, But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.” I Corinthians 3:9 and 10.

If we are to walk worthy of the calling wherewith we are called and build intelligently and successfully with God, we must go to Paul’s Epistles for our blueprints and specifications. Paul was chosen to be Christ’s architect for God’s purpose in this age of grace.

Note Paul’s words in Ephesians 2:8 to 10; Colossians 1:24 to 27; Ephesians 3:1 to 4; 8 and 9. Study these Scriptures carefully.

This present economy of grace is called “the dispensation of the mystery.” Ephesians 3:9. But the mystery (secret) was revealed to and through Paul (Ephesians 1:9) and it should be known by every member of the Body of Christ. And every true servant of the Lord should be the faithful steward of I Corinthians 4:1 to 4 and obey Ephesians 3:9.

Note these wonderful “grace” verses:

“Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 5:20 and 21.

“Being justified without a cause by His grace through the redemption that ‘s in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.” Romans 3:24 and 25.

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

“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law: ye are fallen from grace.” Galatians 5:4.

“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you: that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.” II Corinthians 9:8.

“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.” Acts 20:21.

LESSON NUMBER SEVEN

SOME CHANGES IN GOD'S SPIRITUAL PROGRAMS

In this lesson we are copying from the Bible some of the commands, commissions, orders, injunctions, admonitions and prohibitions which God at sundry times and in divers manners gave unto His people. In these verses we shall see what God told His people to do, or not to do, or events which took place by God's decree. All of these instructions and happenings rightfully belonged to God's religious or spiritual programs in times past.

We shall see that certain ordinances and religious practices, which God expected His people to obey and observe in one dispensation, had no place in God's program during a different dispensation, some of them even being forbidden.

As we carefully note these different Divine instructions, let us remember that the Bible speaks of a period of about 2500 years, "From Adam To Moses; When There Is No Law." Romans 5:13 and 14. Then we read in Romans 6:14, concerning members of the Body of Christ during this present age and economy of grace, "Ye Are Not Under The Law." Thus we learn that the human race, from the time that Adam left the garden of Eden until Moses, at the age of eighty years, received the law on Mount Sinai, about 2500 years, was not under the law. And the people to whom Paul wrote, in his messages of grace, were not under the law. Colossians 2:13 to 16, Ephesians 2:13 to 18.

Then we should emphasize Galatians 3:19 and 4:4: "The Law Was Added Because Of Transgressions Till The Seed (Christ) Should Come." "God's Son Was Made Under The Law To Redeem Them That Were Under The Law." Thus we learn that the people of God who lived from the day that Moses was on Mount Sinai, receiving the law, until the time the risen Christ revealed the message of grace to the apostle Paul lived under a different dispensation than did the people who lived during the 2500 years "from Adam to Moses." And that God's people who have lived since Christ's revelation of grace to Paul have lived in still another dispensation. Therefore, every intelligent student of the Scriptures knows that the Bible must be studied dispensationally, if he is to be a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth. It Timothy 2:15.

As we remember that "from Adam to Moses" there was no law, let us also remember that "from Adam to Jacob," about 2200 years, there was no Israel, there were no Jews. Abram was an uncircumcised heathen and became Abraham, the circumcised, and the father of many nations. Thus we see there is not one line of the old testament or the old covenant (the law covenant) in Genesis; and that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Jacob's twelve sons, all of whom died before Moses received the law covenant at Sinai, were not old testament characters. They lived and died in that period "from Adam to Moses," "when there was no law," "when there was no old covenant." Hebrews 8:7 to 13.

All of the Scriptures are for members of the Body of Christ, but they are not all about them. God's principle is II Timothy 2:15.

Suppose you check all in the following Divine programs that have a place in this age and dispensation of grace, all that should be obeyed and practiced by members of Christ's Body, who are seated with Christ in the heavenlies. Ephesians 2 :6.

Genesis 9:6 and 16

“Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man.” “And the bow shall be in the cloud: and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.”

Genesis 8:20

“And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord: and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar.”

Genesis 17:10 and 14

“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.” “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.”

Genesis 22:11

“And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.”

Genesis 35:9 and 10

“And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him. And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and He called his name Israel.

Exodus 14:21

“And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea: and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided:

Exodus 16:4

“Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you: and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in My law, or no.”

Exodus 19:20

“And the Lord came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.”

Exodus 22:18

“Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.”

Exodus 23:8

“And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous.”

Exodus 23:14

“Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year.”

Exodus 25:21 and 22

“And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee.”

“And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.”

Exodus 30:1

“And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood shalt thou make it.”

Exodus 30:25 and 26

“And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary: it shall be an holy anointing oil.”

“And thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith, and the ark of the testimony.”

Exodus 35:3

“Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day.”

Exodus 40:1 and 2

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying.”

“On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation.”

Leviticus 8:10 and 12

“And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that was therein, and sanctified them.”

“And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron’s head, and anointed him, to sanctify him.”

Leviticus 9:8

“Aaron therefore went unto the altar, and slew the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself.”

Exodus 31:15

“Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

Numbers 15:32 and 36

“And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day.”

“And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the Lord commanded Moses.”

Numbers 15:27

“And if any soul sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she goat of the first year for a sin offering.”

Numbers 22:28

“And the Lord opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?”

Numbers 33:53 and 54

“And ye shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein: for I have given you the land to possess it.”

“And ye shall divide the land by lot for an inheritance among your families.”

Deuteronomy 12:19

“Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest upon the earth.”

Deuteronomy 14:8

“And the swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud, it is unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcass.”

Deuteronomy 16:1 and 13

“Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the Lord thy God: for in the month of Abib the Lord thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.”

“Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine.”

Deuteronomy 20:13 and 17

“And when the Lord thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword.”

“But thou shalt utterly destroy them; namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee.”

Deuteronomy 22:9

“Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled.”

Deuteronomy 23:20

“Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it.”

Deuteronomy 27:6

“Thou shalt build the altar of the Lord thy God of whole stones: and thou shalt offer burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord thy God.”

Deuteronomy 29:5

“And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot.”

I Samuel 17:48 and 49

“And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose. and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine.”

“And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk in his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.”

II Samuel 5:19 and 25

“And David enquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? Wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the Lord said unto David, Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand.”

“And David did so, as the Lord had commanded him; and smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gazer.”

Count the number of instructions you have checked as belonging to this age of grace. To begin with, members of the Body of Christ are, not instructed by angels or by personal appearances of God. Members of Christ's Body do not build altars and offer animals on them. God does not rain bread down from heaven for saints to-day or give any Christian power to dry up a sea. In this age of grace members of Christ's Body are not to observe days or religious feasts. Galatians 4:9 to 11, Colossians 2:13 to 18. Members of Christ's Body are the circumcision and have been circumcised with the circumcision of Christ; but the physical circumcision, which was once required for fellowship among Gods people, is forbidden in this age of grace. Philippians 3:1 to 4; Colossians 2:11; Galatians 5:3, Galatians 6:13 and 15.

Members of Christ's Body can kindle fires on Saturday and gather sticks on Saturday, without being transgressors of the law. During the “law” dispensation these acts were not only sins, but serious crimes that brought the death penalty. Under the law it would have been a real sin, the transgression of the law, to eat bacon or ham or any part of a hog; but God has changed His program. I Timothy 4:3 to 5. There are no Levites in this age of grace to stone law-breakers. We need no anointing oil today. Oil is mentioned in James 5:14, but that Epistle was addressed “To The Twelve Tribes Of Israel.” James 1:1 and 2.

During the years and centuries of Israel's Commonwealth and Kingdom, State and Church were joined together. Israel's rulers, judges, priests, kings and others had the Divine authority to administer civil, criminal and domestic laws the same as religious or spiritual laws. But in Matthew 22:18 to 22; Matthew 23:1 to 3; Romans 13:1 to 10; and in Timothy 3:15 and 16 we learn how that has since been changed by God's orders.

After considering these differences, which God instructs us to test, I am sure that you will not join with the foolish Christians who say the whole Bible is for me to obey. It is all profitable and inspired of God. II Timothy 3:16 and 17.

CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES

But now let us look into Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, the Book of Acts and First Corinthians and check the instructions below that members of the Body of Christ are expected to obey and practice during this age and economy of grace, remembering Galatians 4:4; Romans 15:8; Acts 2:22; Acts 13:23; Matthew 15:24; Matthew 16:17 to 19; Galatians 2 :7 and Ephesians 3:8:

Matthew 5:5

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.”

Matthew 5:23 to 25

“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee.”

“Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.”

“Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.”

Matthew 5:40 to 42

“And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also.”

“And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.”

“Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.”

Matthew 6:14 and 15

“For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly- Father will also forgive you.”

“But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Matthew 6:17

“But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face.”

Matthew 6:31 and 34

“Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?”

“Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”

Matthew 8:4

“And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.”

Matthew 10:7 and 8

“And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

“Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.”

Matthew 18:34 and 35

“And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.”

“So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.”

Luke 3:3 and 16

“And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.”

“John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”

Luke 4:16

“And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.”

Luke 6:34 and 35

“And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.”

“But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.”

Luke 9:3

“And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.”

Luke 9:62

“And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

Luke 10:1, 9 and 17

“After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither He Himself would come.”

“And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.”

“And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.”

Luke 12:33

“Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.”

Matthew 15:24 and 26

“But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”
“But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it to dogs.”

Matthew 23:1 to 3

“Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples.”
“Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat.”
“All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.”

John 7:2 and 10

“Now the Jews’ feast of tabernacles was at hand.”
“But when His brethren were gone up, then went He also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.”

John 11:55 and 56

“And the Jews’ passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.”
“Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that He will not come to the feast?”

John 13:14

“If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet.”

Mark 16:14 to 18

“Afterward He appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Him after He was risen.”
“And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”
“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
“And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues.”
“They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

Acts 1:5

“For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”

Acts 1:8

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

Acts 2:1 to 3

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.”

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

“And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.”

Acts 2:15 to 18

“For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.”

“But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.”

“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.”

“And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.”

Acts 2:38

“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.”

Acts 4:34 and 35

“Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold.”

“And laid them down at the apostles’ feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.”

Acts 5:18 to 20

“And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.”

“But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said.”

“Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.”

Acts 7:56

“And said. Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.”

Acts 8:14 to 17

“Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John.”

“Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost.”

“(For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)”

“Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.”

Acts 8:26

“And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.”

Acts 9:37 and 40

“And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber.”

“But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.”

Acts 10:3 and 4

“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.”

“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.”

Acts 10:11

“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.”

Acts 10:46

“For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter.”

Acts 5:15 and 16

“Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.”

“There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.”

Acts 11:27 and 28

“And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch.”

“And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.”

Acts 12:7 to 9

“And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.”

“And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee and follow me.”

“And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision.”

Acts 16:3

“Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.”

Acts 16:13

“And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.”

Acts 16:18

“And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.”

Acts 16:25 and 26

“And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.”

“And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one’s bands were loosed.”

Acts 18:18

“And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow.”

Acts 20:16

“For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.”

Acts 19:5 and 6

“When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

“And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.”

Acts 19:11 and 12

“And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul.”

“So that from his body were brought unto the sick hand kerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.”

Acts 20:9 and 10

“And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.”

“And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him.”

Acts 21:24 and 25

“Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law.”

“As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication.”

Acts 22:16

“And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized. and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”

Acts 23:5

“Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest, for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.”

I Corinthians 14:39

“Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.”

I Corinthians 14:27 and 28

“If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.”

“But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.”

I Corinthians 14:34

“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.”

I Corinthians 12:8 to 11

“For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.”

“To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit.”

“To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues.”

“But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.”

Read Also I Corinthians 12:28

I Corinthians 13:8, 11 and 13

“Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.”

“When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”

I Corinthians 5:4 and 5

“In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

“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.”

I Corinthians 11:28 to 32

“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.”

“For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.”

“For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.”

“For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.”

“But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.”

Matthew 8:11 and 12

“And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.”

“But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Matthew 21:43

“Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

After carefully reading these different Scriptures we can better appreciate the statement in Hebrews 1:1 and 2, “God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us in, or by, His Son.” With this let us think of Matthew 13:17; John 16:12 and 13; II Corinthians 13:3; Ephesians 3:8: and Colossians 1:25 and 26: Jesus Christ, on earth, said to His apostles, “many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, to hear those things which ye hear.” “I (Jesus) have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now: However when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth.” Ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me (Paul).” “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable (unprophesied) riches of Christ.” “The dispensation of God which is given to me (Paul) for you, to complete the Word of God, the mystery.”

Here we have the principle of progressive revelation, learning that the inspired Word of God was given on the installment plan. Spiritually speaking, anything that is new is not true; and anything that is true is not new. In other words, progressive revelation is confined to the limits of the Bible. Since the last of the sixty-six Books of the Bible was revealed by God to His holy servant nothing that man has said, spiritually, is true, unless it is found somewhere in the sixty-six Books of the Bible, in the same language, or in different language.

When we study the Book of Matthew we must not study that Book as though the Divine truth in the Epistle to the Romans or the Epistle to the Ephesians were true at the time Jesus of Nazareth was speaking on earth to Israel. At that time Romans 10:12 to 14 and Ephesians 2:13 to 18 were not true. The Lord Jesus had not at that time revealed Galatians 1:11 and 12 and Galatians 2:7 and Ephesians 3:1 to 9 to Paul.

The mystery of Ephesians 3:9 and Colossians 1:24 to 26 has been called the capstone of Divine truth. Jesus Christ on earth did not make known the mystery. He did not preach the

unsearchable riches of Christ. Neither did the twelve apostles, during the first seven or eight years after the death of Christ, during those years when Peter and the Eleven were ministering with the keys of the kingdom of the heavens.

Paul had a “confirmation” (prophesied) ministry and a “revelation” (unprophesied) ministry. Acts 26:22 to 24; Acts 17:11; Ephesians 3:8 and Ephesians 3:1 to 4. The first eleven chapters of Acts, like Psalms, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, The Epistles of Peter and the Epistle of James, must be studied, interpreted and applied in the light of the last revelations which Christ gave to Paul. Paul’s Epistles, written during the period covered by the Book of Acts, must be studied, interpreted and applied in the light of Paul’s prison Epistles, written after the close of the period covered by the Book of Acts.

This is the truth told to members of the Body of Christ in I Corinthians 13:8 to 13. Compare I Corinthians 12:28 with Ephesians 4:7 to 14.

Members of the Body of Christ, during this age and economy of grace, are not expected to be guided by angels or visions, as were the Christians during the period covered by the Book of Acts. In this age of grace God’s servants are not to preach and practice Mark 16:14 to 18; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:1 to 15; Acts 19:3 to 6; and I Corinthians 5:1 to 6. God’s judgments in this age of grace are not pronounced and executed upon Christians as they were upon Ananias and Sapphira in the fifth chapter of Acts. Sick people are not healed in this age of grace by walking in the shadows of Gods servants or by handkerchiefs and aprons. God’s servants do not raise the dead. They are not expected to sell their houses and lots and give the money to apostles. They are not delivered by angels and earthquakes as were God’s servants during the Acts period. Members of the Body of Christ are not to speak with tongues in this day of grace, or baptize in water for the remission of sins. There is now one Body and one baptism. Ephesians 4:4 and 5. There were many baptisms during the period covered by the Book of Acts. During that same period the most carnal Christians exercised all of the miraculous sign-gifts. I Corinthians 12:8 to 11; I Corinthians 12:28. During that period God’s awful judgments fell upon those who partook of the Lord’s Supper unworthily.

In the Lord’s messages to the members of the Body of Christ, written after God’s order was no longer “to the Jew first.” after the close of the Acts period, we find a message and program of unmixed grace; no religion, no miraculous sign gifts. In the light of these Epistles study all other Scriptures.

LESSON NUMBER EIGHT

THE FOUR GOSPELS AND PAUL’S GOSPEL

Note these words of the apostle Paul:

“But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.” Galatians 1:11 and 12.

“According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.” I Timothy 1:11.

“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.” Acts 20:24.

“But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter.” Galatians 2:7.

The Lord Jesus, some years after He went back to heaven in His glorified body, committed the gospel to Paul, by revelation. “The glorious gospel of the blessed God.” “the gospel of the uncircumcision,” “the gospel of the grace of God,” committed to Paul’s trust surely differ, in some respects, from any gospel Christ had committed to the twelve apostles before He revealed His message and ministry to this special apostle, who said: “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.” Ephesians 3:8. “I am the apostle of the Gentiles.” Romans 11:13.

Some man of God said, “if Christians are determined that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John must be called ‘the Four Gospels,’ then I am going to call Paul’s gospel, the fifth gospel” In Romans 2:16 Paul refers to “my gospel.” Note II Timothy 2:8 and 9 and Romans 16:25 and 26:

“Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to MY gospel; Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the Word of God is not bound.”

In Romans 16:25 we learn how believers in this age of grace are to be established by a gospel which was kept secret since the world began, but given to Paul in a revelation. Note Romans 16:25 and 26:

“Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to MY gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.”

Note “my gospel.” This gospel was according to the revelation of the mystery.

Note the comments of three outstanding Bible teachers concerning Romans 16:25

Dr. Wm. L. Pettingill:

“There is much preaching of Jesus Christ which does not stablish God’s people, because it is not according to Paul’s gospel, not according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but was made manifest by revelation to the apostle Paul.”

Mr. Wm. R. Newell:

“And again it pleased Him to choose Paul to be the great proclaimer and revealer of just what the gospel is for this dispensation. You can judge any man’s preaching or teaching by this rule—Is he Pauline? Does his doctrine start and end according to those statements of Christian doctrine uttered by the apostle Paul? No matter how wonderful a man may seem to be in his gifts and apparent consecration, if his gospel is not Pauline, it is not the gospel, and we might as well get our minds settled at once on that point.”

Dr. H. A. Ironside

“The mystery was not something of difficult mysterious character, but a sacred secret never known to mankind until in due time opened up by the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul. This was not until Israel was given every opportunity in incarnation and in resurrection to

receive Christ. The mystery was the secret purpose of God's heart only to be revealed after the rejection of His Son."

Would that every Christian would take to heart these true and helpful statements by these men of God. In no other way can Christians be established in God's truth for this age. Let us emphasize the statement of Dr. Pettingill:

"There is much preaching of Jesus Christ which does not stablish God's people, because it is not according to Paul's gospel."

To the statements of Mr. Newell quoted above, he added:

"Would that we had grace to defend just as vigorously this great message today, for it has many enemies, and even real friends who do not yet see it clearly; and there are others, who like Peter (Galatians 2:11), through fear of others, are ready to compromise and tone down the gospel of God."

What a pity that any servant of the Lord Jesus Christ will keep silent concerning this most wonderful truth for saints, because he fears religious Christian leaders who are violently opposed to Paul's unmixed "grace" message and program! Remember Paul's words in Galatians 1:10, "If I yet pleased men I should not be the servant of the Lord."

Now let us emphasize with very special emphasis the all important and true statement of Dr. Ironside: "The dispensation of the mystery with Paul's 'my gospel' did not begin until Israel had had every opportunity to receive Christ in resurrection as well as in incarnation." This is sound doctrine and certainly proves that the dispensation of the mystery did not begin with Peter and Pentecost, which was before Israel had had every opportunity to receive Christ in resurrection.

Any intelligent spiritual student of the "scriptures, Who has studied Acts 5:29 to 32, Acts 13:31 to 36, Acts 13:46, and Acts 3:19 to 21, knows that Israel was given the opportunity to receive Christ in resurrection. As Dr. Ironside so clearly and truthfully writes, "the dispensation of the mystery," which he states seven or eight different times in his written messages, was not revealed to any person until it was first revealed to Paul, was not even revealed to Paul until Israel rejected Christ in resurrection. as well as in incarnation. It is no easy matter to learn from the Book of Acts just when Israel had had every opportunity to receive or reject Christ in resurrection. But when the time arrived that Israel rejected Christ in resurrection, "the dispensation of the mystery with Paul's "my gospel," was revealed to Paul and proclaimed by Paul.

Paul was in the jail at Rome for preaching "my gospel." II Timothy 2:8 and 9. He was in jail for "the mystery of the gospel." Ephesians 6:19.

CHRIST IN THE FOUR GOSPELS

Matthew, Mark and Luke are called "the synoptics." These three books record many of the same sayings and doings of Jesus of Nazareth in the midst of Israel on display. Acts 2:22. The so-called "Fourth Gospel," John, contains sixteen complete chapters of the sayings and doings of Christ not found in Matthew, Mark and Luke. For some reason the Holy Spirit did not lead John to write his Record until about fifty years after Matthew wrote. John's Record was not written until after Christians had been indoctrinated in "grace" by Paul, years after Peter wrote II Peter 3:15 and 16:

"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; As also in his epistles,

speaking in them of those things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction.”

In John’s Record there is no mention of “the Sermon on the ‘Mount,” “the Our Father prayer,” “the kingdom parables,” “the so-called great commission.” The word “believe,” is found one hundred times in John’s Record. The words “believe not” are found twenty-three times in John 3:12, 4:48, 5:38, 5:47, 6:36, 6:64, 8:24, 8:45, 8:46, 9:18, 10:26, 10:37, 10:38, 12:39, 12:47, 16:9, 20:25, 3:18, 6:64, 10:25, 12:37, 3:36 and 12:44.

In the very first chapter of John, Christ is mentioned as rejected. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. He is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. John 1:11, 1:17 and 1:29. John emphasizes the sin of believing not on Christ. John 16:9.

Note John 1:11: Christ came unto His own and His own received Him not.

Note the penalty for “believing not.” John 3:18, 3:36, 8:24, 16:9, 16:10 and 16:11.

Condemned already.

The abiding wrath of God.

Ye shall die in your sins.

John’s Record was written that ye might believe and have everlasting life. John 20:31.

Hear Christ’s words in John 6:47 and 6:29:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.”

“Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent.”

As in the “grace” message of the apostle Paul, we learn in John’s Record that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, without works guarantees eternal life to the believer.

Compare John 3:17 and 18 with Romans 8:1 and 8:34

“For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.”

“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.”

Compare also John 6:64 and 65 and 6:37; John 17:2, 17:11 and 12 and 17:24 with Romans 8:28 to 32 and 8:35 to 39, and we can better understand John 10:28 to 30: “I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father which gave them Me. is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of MY Father’s hand. I and My Father are one.”

Much of this is quite different from Matthew, Mark and Luke. In these Records the messages of Jesus Christ are messages of grace and law mixed. In these Records we read that Jesus Christ was circumcised, and after His circumcision many things were done for Him and to Him and by Him according to the law. Note Luke 2:22, 23; 39, Luke 4:16; Matthew 8:4; Matthew 7:12; Matthew 23:1 to 3.

“And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought Him to Jerusalem, to present Him to the Lord; (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord.)”

“And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.”

“And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.”

“And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.”

“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.”

“Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to His disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat; All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say and do not.”

Then note the words of Christ in John 7:22 and 23:

“Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man. If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at Me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?”

Not only did the Lord Jesus on earth preach a mixed message of grace and law, not only was He Himself circumcised, but He sanctioned circumcision and seventh-day sabbath keeping and in no way did the Lord Jesus on earth interfere with Israel’s “law” and “religious” program except in the points where they had substituted traditions for Divine truth. Hebrews 9:10 and Matthew 5:17 and 18.

Now with the messages and program of Jesus Christ in Matthew, Mark and Luke, compare some statements which the same Christ directed Paul to write to the Galatians.

“I do not frustrate the grace of God; for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” Galatians 2:21.

“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” Galatians 3:10.

“For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.” Galatians 5:3 and 4.

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” Galatians 6:15.

“And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased. I would they were even cut off which trouble you.” Galatians 5:11 and 12.

The religious program of Jesus Christ in the midst of Israel, as recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, was according to Gods will while His Son was under the law, fulfilling the law. Galatians 4:4, Matthew 5:17 and 18. But the same Christ forbade the mixture of those religious observances and teachings in the gospel of His grace which He revealed to Paul. Galatians 1:11 and 12.

If Paul had asked the Galatian Christians to obey and practice much that Jesus Christ on earth told “the children of the kingdom” (Matthew 8:12) to obey and practice, he would have frustrated the grace of God and perverted the gospel and called down the anathema of God upon his own head. Galatians 1:6 to 10.

Once again we learn the importance of the change suggested in II Corinthians 5:16 to 18 and Romans 11:15:

“Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, Who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.”

“For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of there be, but life from the dead?”

We learn from this lesson that we most study Matthew, Mark, Luke and John in the light of Paul’s “my gospel,” always keeping in mind II Timothy 3:16 and 17:

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

Everything in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John that fits into “the dispensation of the grace of God,” and does not frustrate the grace of God, is for the obedience, and practice, of members of the Body of Christ in this age of grace. This likewise, is true of all the Scriptures which are profitable for instruction in righteousness. The truth revealed by Christ to Paul is God’s golden key to all the Scriptures. All truth must be interpreted, appropriated, and applied in the light of Paul’s “my gospel.”

When we said “A Christian is a follower of Jesus Christ” we should explain that statement, for if we follow Jesus Christ in what He did on earth, we may find ourselves old testament Jews instead of members of the Body of Christ, living in this age and economy of grace. In I Corinthians 3:10 Paul calls himself the wise master builder (architect) and in I Corinthians 11:1 he instructs us to follow him as he followed Christ. Thus we should be exceedingly careful when we go back to the other side of Calvary for our “grace” message and program.

Far above in God’s heaven, there on God’s throne.

The glorified Saviour appears for His own;
For all who are trusting in His death on the tree
Because I am trusting, He appears there for me.
Nothing by nature can I reckon or claim:

All by God’s mercy all in Christ’s name.
He, rich in glory, became poor for my sake.
Of His Divine nature by faith I partake.
Christ suffered at Calvary; He died there for me;
To save me from judgment, and now I am free.
From God’s wrath I’m delivered by His infinite grace
Because the Lord Jesus was judged in my place.
Yea, Christ is my Saviour, my Lord and my Head
I am one with Christ Jesus and with Him I’m dead.
But with Him I’m living, for Christ lives in me.

This life is eternal, in Christ Jesus ‘tis free.
By God’s Holy Spirit I’m indwelt and sealed,
Till my Saviour in glory shall soon be revealed.
Baptized by God’s Spirit into God’s blessed Son;
Because I am trusting in what He has done.

God's mighty power raised Christ to His throne;
 'Tis mine for the taking, yea, my very own:
For with Christ I am seated where He is above.
 Such is God's mercy, His grace and His love.
Christ my redemption, my righteousness too.
 By God's grace abounding all this is true.
I'm complete in Christ Jesus, eternal Divine;
 Joint-heir with my Saviour; His riches are mine.
So my peace and my glory never shall cease;
 For Christ is my glory, my hope and my peace.
I'm serving while waiting for Christ to appear;
 That day of redemption may be very near.
Then a body of glory I shall surely receive;
 Changed in a moment, this world I shall leave.
Before the Lord's Body, His Church, is complete;
 I may go by dying my Saviour to meet.
But leaving this body I shall be with the Lord;
 And then wait for His coming to receive my reward.
So in Christ the Beloved I'm accepted by grace.
 In the Lord Jesus I am resting my case.
You, too, need this Saviour to save you from sin;
 To receive life eternal and Divine peace within.
There's no way to heaven except by this path.
 If you accept not Gods mercy, you must have His wrath
God's door of salvation is still open wide:
 By faith in Christ Jesus you may step inside.
You are not sure of tomorrow, so do not delay;
 Receive Christ as your Saviour, and do it today.

The following is from the inside back cover.

TEST THINGS THAT DIFFER

In Philippians 1:10, the saint is instructed to "test things that differ."

Now compare and contrast the following Scriptures

CHRIST AND ISRAEL

"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." Romans 15:8.

"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." Acts 2:22.

"Of this man's seed hath God, according to His promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus:" Acts 13:23.

“And he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”
Matthew 15:24.

PAUL AND GENTILES

“For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office.” Romans 11:13.

“For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words.)” Ephesians 3:1 to 3.

“And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.” Ephesians 6:19 and 20.

“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.” Ephesians 3:8.

Note first: Christ the minister of Jews, as Jesus of Nazareth in the land of the Jews, the Seed of David, sent only to the Jews, with a prophesied message and program.

Second: The apostle Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, the minister of Christ to the Gentiles, the prisoner of Christ for Gentiles, an ambassador in bonds, in jail for telling the Lord’s secret, with an unprophesied message and program for heathen.