

THE LONG JOURNEY HOME

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FOREWORD

Heat waves on the distant horizon played tricks with one's eyes as the weary travelers made their way across this burning stretch of sand. Acacia trees appeared as horsemen charging the approaching caravan. Columns of dust swirled upward as the circular current of hot air carried it to some unknown repository in the sky. This was not a pleasant journey. Prophets had warned of the coming famine. People paid little attention to them. They had heard these proclamations before. Prophets were always crying out some message of impending doom if the people did not make some radical changes. Now they were in their third full year of draught with little or no rain. Perhaps, the prophets were right. The birds had long since left for a more hospitable home. Other creatures, which were earthbound, came out only at night. Many of the small creatures would lay atop the crests of sand dunes and wait for the breezes from the Great Sea to bring some dew to their bodies, which they licked off with relish, welcoming any refreshment from the relentless heat.

Jacob was still wrestling over the message that his sons had brought back from Egypt. "Joseph is alive and he is ruler over all of Egypt," they had said. "How can that be?" the old man had questioned. "He was devoured by some wild beast many years ago. I saw his bloody, torn garment."

It was only then that the brothers confessed that they had sold Joseph to a caravan of foreigners traveling to Egypt. Disappointment in his sons was diminished somewhat with the glad news that Joseph was still alive.

Jacob walked out some distance from his sons and sat down on the ground, drinking in the glorious sunset, which was made much more so by the dust that had been caught

up into the atmosphere. He was sure he had heard God's voice announcing to him, "**Fear not to go down into Egypt for there I will make of you a great nation.**" That was a puzzling word since he was sure he would return to Canaan in a short time. He would simply wait out the famine in Egypt. Surely, the rains would come in the winter and grains could be planted. He didn't like going to Egypt for help. Why hadn't God given them divine supply? Why must they turn to this heathen country for fulfillment? It was like digging through the filth and excrement of unclean beasts to find nourishment. But then, Yahweh had always been one colossal mystery to him. He vividly recalled how he was attacked at the brook, Jabbok. He yet walked with a limp as a result of that encounter. He had yet to figure out why God would put His finger on one man, set him apart for greatness, then go to such extremes to break and form that man into an acceptable vessel.

The extreme heat was now subsiding as the gentle sea breezes began to waft in from the Great Sea. The soft winds brought a relief from the scorching heat, but there was no promise of rain. An eerie silence had crept in about their family. No one was very talkative. Jacob's thoughts wandered back to his father, Isaac, and to his grandfather, Abraham. God had forbidden Isaac to go to Egypt in times of famine; yet, He had encouraged him and his grandfather to do just the opposite. Although, he was sure he would return to Canaan ere too many years had passed; God's word had seemed to indicate otherwise, when regarding Egypt He said, "**There I will make of you a great nation.**" (Gen 46:3) That presented a gigantic problem. Would God do that through Joseph, who was already in Egypt and knew the language and customs of the people, or would He do it through the rest of his family? He was too old to think about these things for too long. They left him weary.

He disdained the tent his sons had pitched for him and made his bed under the stars. As he lay under the open heaven, he recalled the dream Joseph had told him as a young lad. **“I saw the sun, moon and the stars bow down before me,”** he had said. The meaning of this dream was easily interpreted and its significance was now almost realized. As he lay there contemplating the Mazzaroth, he studied the form of the Lion and its proximity to the Virgin. Somehow, he knew these two held promises bottled up for the future. Also, he knew that the Virgin must precede the Lion, yet that remained a puzzle.

INTRODUCTION

The God of the Old Testament presents enormous problems when juxtaposed beside Jesus Christ of the New Testament. The God of the Old Testament seems unreasonably demanding, constricting man to the point of menial servitude. Yet, in fact, He is loving, patient and understanding. The austere picture of Him leaves us much like the Israelites, who asked that He not speak to them anymore. The trumpets, thunder, fire, smoke and quaking left them trembling with fear. All these demonstrations would leave one to think that God was terribly angry with them. Yet, all these things are but a shadow, a hazy projection of His reality. The entirety of the Old Testament is a pattern laid out in the natural fleshly realm in order that we might grasp, with some degree of understanding, how God desired to operate in the Spirit. God was very adamant with Moses when He gave him the directions for building the tabernacle in the wilderness. **“According to all that I am going to show you, as the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of its furniture, just so you shall construct it”** had been the ultimate edict. (Ex. 25:9) You can rest assured that Moses had not the faintest idea what all the curtains, boards, pieces of furniture, etc. represented. Nevertheless, because he had been sternly warned, he made them all according to the pattern God had given him in the wilderness. However, Moses seemed to have forgotten another edict when he struck the rock the second time in order to bring forth water for the children of Israel. God had said, **“Speak to the rock.”** In his anger, Moses struck the rock, bringing forth this response from God. **“Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.”** (Numbers 20:12) That seems unreasonable and excessive. The punishment outweighs the crime; if indeed,

it was a crime. Why was God so insistent that the pattern be followed? That rock was a symbol of Jesus Christ, who was to be smitten but once. To break the pattern was not permissible. This incident should prove once and for all that Canaan does not represent heaven; for later, we see Moses standing along side Elijah with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. He did not miss heaven—he missed fulfilling the pattern to its exactness.

Suppose a noted chef should give you the recipe of a dish that kings would fight over, and one day you determined to cook this delicacy. As you began to set aside the ingredients, you discovered that you did not have in your possession a couple of the spices required in the recipe. “It’s such a small amount, I’m sure I could either omit it or substitute another spice that is close in the same family,” you reason. Do you actually believe the finished product will taste the same? Of course not!

The patterns of the Old Testament are just that—patterns. They are not something we should try, in the flesh, to either adhere to or replicate today. Rather, our heavenly Joshua leads us into the fulfillment of the pattern. Paul admonishes us that if we try to keep the Law and are guilty of breaking just one article, then we are guilty of transgressing the entire Law.

The wheels of God turn agonizingly slow. A thousand years with man are as a day with the Lord. There will come a day when the times of restoration of all things will have been fulfilled. (Acts 3:21) Until that time, we must follow the pattern ever so carefully.

Because we do not see the Old Testament as a pattern for the New—we are constantly torn between our affection and allegiance for the two. If we are enlightened in our

understanding, we will hold the example before us at all times and endeavor to build according to pattern. This small treatise will, I trust, reveal some degree of enlightenment in order that we do not beat the air in our frustration.

Let us now embark on a journey which, I'm sure will prove to be enlightening and uplifting to some and quite shadowed and shaky for others. If we will walk on this journey with faith, casting aside old traditions, we will soon begin to embrace a land of harmony and light. We must, first of all, consider that Israel's sojourn into Egypt is a mirror image of Adam's offspring after his ejection from Eden.

The Scriptures always portray Egypt as that place of idolatry and rebellion. It is a place of "flesh worship", of creature comfort. It is a place content to abide apart from the presence of the Lord. It is into this place that the Lord sent His "called-out" ones until Canaan had become entrenched with the wild-eyed radical enemies of Israel. Keep in mind always that these enemies are distant kin of Israel. They are the offspring of their half brothers. Nothing will open your eyes as much as to realize that this was a family fight, as most religious disagreements are today.

As God led Jacob and his family down to Egypt, there was never a thought in God's mind of forsaking them in that heathen land. He was as much Jehovah to them there as He had been in Canaan. Remember, they could have gone back to Canaan anytime they chose; but the longer they stayed the more comfortable and familiar with the Egyptian lifestyle they became. They had become assimilated into Egypt's way of living. It would now be extremely difficult to break away from this their adopted homeland. Who can deny that these were still the chosen of the Lord?

If Egypt is a symbol of the world—and the Scripture always uses it thusly—then God had a people who lived in the midst of a hostile situation, whom He called His Son. It has become acceptable—no, expected—of Christians to reject the sinner as an alien creature whom God would cast into an everlasting lake of fire because they had been born in Egypt.

We became the offspring of Adam, not of choice but of predestination. All of us, in a sense, became the recipients of God's displeasure because we were participants in Adam's sin, for we were yet in the loins of Adam. When God expelled Adam from the Garden into the world, He expelled us all likewise. Through the succeeding ages, we have become very compatible with the world and the world with us. We became fused together into its ways and comfortable apart from our Creator. Even as we are brought out from our Egypt, it is through force and against our will even as was Israel. **“Is this not the word that we spoke to you in Egypt, saying, ‘Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.”** (Ex. 14:12) They had become so acclimated to servitude that they had rather remain slaves than take a step of faith toward freedom. Crossing the Red Sea into the wilderness, they became a people training in one land to live in another land. That's extremely difficult when not one of them had ever seen that other land. Does this all sound familiar?

CHAPTER 1

ISRAEL—THE CHURCH'S PROTOTYPE

When the Lord spoke to Moses, His servant, His commandments were, for the most part, very difficult if not impossible for the natural mind to understand. The fact of the matter is—God was laying down a blueprint for the subsequent ages. The blueprint would be followed until the close of the Kingdom age, at which time our Lord would turn everything back to the Father in the dispensation of the fullness of time. (1Cor. 15:28) (Eph. 1:10)

God was very particular with the blueprint. He repeatedly instructed Moses concerning the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, **“See thou make it according to pattern.”** (Ex. 25:9) Not only did God give Moses a pattern for the Tabernacle, but the Tabernacle itself was to be a pattern for man’s approach to God. We could deal in great length on the types and shadows found in the Old Testament, which would fill volumes, but our purpose is to show not so much the shadow but the substance of the matter. (Col. 2:17)

Just as a manufacturer will first build a model or prototype of his product, even so God built a prototype of His own people, Israel, to demonstrate what His purposes were for the future work of the Spirit. Everyone knows that if the model is out of proportion, so will be the final product. As we progress, we will see why God was so particular and seemingly unreasonable in His instructions. Many people were executed because they had broken the Sabbath or had committed adultery or even been rebellious to parents. May God help us if those laws were still in effect today. Hosts of precious people are traveling a road of sadness and drudgery because they are attempting to fit into the imitation rather than the authentic. Moses, the giver of the

Law, could not enter the Promised Land because he distorted the pattern. He broke the type of Christ's crucifixion by smiting the rock on two separate occasions. Paul affirms, **"That rock was Christ."** (1Cor. 10:4) In this same portion of Scripture Paul states, **"Those things happened as examples for us"** or as a pattern for us; and then again, **"they were written for our instructions."** (Verses 6 & 11)

A ray of light will begin to enlighten our darkened understanding if we will not close our eyes and ears to what the Spirit is saying. There was a time when I could not reconcile the God of the Old Testament with Jesus of the New Testament; yet Jesus said, **"When you have seen Me you have seen the Father."** (John 14:9) Jesus is also defined as **"the express image of the Father."** (Heb. 1:3)

In Deuteronomy the seventh chapter, verses 1 and 2 are examples of the Old Testament God that left my mind in confusion. **"When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites and the Girgashites, and the Amorites and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; and when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them nor show mercy unto them."** In another place God would say, **"Let thine eye have no pity."**

The above passage is one of the most important commandments to the church today, which, if followed, would bring the people of God into freedom and total health. God is very emphatic in His commands. To deviate from

them was and is extremely costly—both in this life and in the life to come.

Under the mentality of bygone years, the entire thrust of the church was to get men saved so they could go to heaven. It mattered not what the method was for the end justified the means. The entire impetus of the gospel was “get saved and escape hell.” That was and still is the only message many preach. Outrageous conduct, sickness, infirmity and borderline maniacs—all tolerated on the grounds that “One day we’ll have a new body in which these things will all be conquered.” Let me shock you by stating emphatically—all things of Satan’s kingdom can and should be conquered in this present life. Paul leads us into some rather deep water when he states, **“For if by the transgression of one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ.”** (Rom. 5:17)

My immediate response to the above statement was, “reign in life over what?” Certainly, Paul isn’t saying that we will be enthroned over some earthly kingdom. If he was saying that, he himself was a dismal failure. Nevertheless, much of the present day “gospel” has led men to seek an expansion of material possessions as if that was some indication of rulership, godliness and approval. The writer further rebukes those who suppose that **“gain is godliness.”** (1Tim. 6:5) Jesus condemned the accumulation and trust in riches as deceptive and worldly.

On the other hand, our rulership is not to be over men, for Jesus said we were to be as one of those who serve—not as those who exercise authority over one another. Servitude and kingship seem hardly compatible. The reigning and rulership are to occur in our mortal bodies until

every enemy is destroyed. I did not say subjugated but utterly and totally annihilated. As this becomes more evident in our lives, we will increasingly become the walking expression of God in the earth.

Through the years, I have wept and groaned over God's people who have been saved and yet remained prisoners in many other facets of their lives. There was bankruptcy, sickness, immorality, licentiousness, stealing, backbiting and every other conceivable evil. My cry of despair came when I saw these things so clearly in my own life and viewed today's Christians as a living contradiction. No power—no glory—no sweet savor of Christ, only a faint hope that someday—somewhere—somehow we would be changed. Now I believe that we all shall be changed **“in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye”** when mortality shall put on immortality; but how many of you realize that the marvel of metamorphism is a process? It is never instantaneous. This process which eventually leads to transfiguration has to do with the renewing of our minds. **“...be ye therefore transformed by the renewing of your minds.”** (Rom. 12:2)

In years past, I was so trapped in Romans seven, ever doing that which I hated and unable to do that which I desired, until I was filled with despair and my walk with the Lord was miserable and joyless. I know I was not alone for there are literally thousands of precious Christians who serve the Lord out of fear of going to hell. I have asked the question many times of people, “If there was no hell, nor fear of the hereafter and no threat of punishment at all, would you still serve the Lord?” Many of God's people have contemplated suicide because the demands of God seemed impossible to satisfy. However, Praise God! There is a better way, and the Lord desires our happiness and peace through our total freedom from the oppressor. One day, as

the scales began to fall from my eyes, the same Scriptures that heretofore had been a maze through which I could not find my way, slowly began to unfold their storehouse of wealth. I then began to see the God of Moses and of Joshua in a totally different light.

The Lord had to deliver me from the “heaven-hell syndrome” of which I had been force-fed for many years by well meaning preachers and friends alike. As my understanding broadened, I became aware that if getting people to heaven was God’s ultimate goal, then that should be amazingly simple to the One who formed the worlds out of nothing and hung them in space with an invisible thread. It further occurred to me that if one angel could bind Satan and cast him into a bottomless pit, (Rev. 20:1,2) then God is not really at war with Satan. Satan is a created being whom the Lord could consume or redeem with a mere breath of His mouth.

I heard one brother say, “We need to know the difference between a destination and a goal.” When Israel left Egypt, their destination was Canaan; however, listen as the Lord reveals what should have been their goal. **“You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself.”** (Ex. 19:4) As you can see, their destination was Canaan; but the Lord’s purpose was that He would be their goal. Most Christians are so intent on getting to heaven that they’ve neglected the Lord’s offer of an intimate relationship with Him here and now.

If the history of Israel is a blueprint for our lives, we then need to examine their experience in order to understand the Lord’s design for us and how we may fit into His economy. If indeed Israel’s history is a pattern for our journey, then I

suppose we should ask ourselves, "Why were they in Egypt in the first place?"

Do you remember how God called Abram from the land of the Chaldees while he was yet an idol worshipper? Remember, Abram was born in Mesopotamia, that area where Eden was located, that place we now call Iraq. This is where God had called him, and it corresponds with the whole human race—for it was from this same place that Adam went into outer darkness, away from the presence of the Lord. God begins the restoration where the fall occurred.

Abram was then lead by God to the Land of Canaan and was promised all that land as an inheritance. The Lord said to Abram after Lot had departed, **"Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you now are, northward, southward, eastward and westward, for all the land which you see I will give it to you and to your descendants forever."** (Gen. 13:14,15) I do not know how Abram received this word from the Lord; but I suspect that he thought the land was geographic and the inheritance consisted of acres of land, herds of cattle and an abundance of goods.

Stephen, when he was falsely accused, reached back two thousand years and used Abraham in his defense before the Sanhedrin. **"God removed him into this country in which you are now living, and He gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot of ground."** (Acts 7:4,5) That statement, coupled with the fact that Abraham even had to buy a burial plot for Sarah when she died, leaves us with but one conclusion. The land of which God was speaking did not consist primarily of soil, rocks and trees; but it was a land made up of flesh and blood and bone. In their time of want and deprivation, Abraham, Isaac and

Jacob all left Canaan and went elsewhere to get their needs met. It was so hospitable and fruitful in Egypt that Israel found it easier to stay than to return. In Israel's four hundred and thirty-year absence, Canaan became a stronghold of people who would fanatically fight for their right to the land. That attitude is still very much in evidence today.

All of this has an invaluable spiritual lesson for us today as we remember how Adam turned to another source to satisfy some deep need within himself. When he listened to Eve, he took a long journey into Egypt, as it were; and he took us all with him. We discovered that Egypt could supply all our needs except that **“deep which calls unto deep.”** As the Holy Spirit begins to lead us out of Egypt through our wanderings in the wilderness, we are suddenly aware that the restoration which has been promised us—the land which is ours by inheritance—is now filled with tribes of fanatics who must be forcibly ejected. Keep in mind! Each tribe is stronger and greater than we are.

Let me boldly declare unto you. Canaan is not heaven. Canaan is filled with violence and warfare. Though Canaan was a geographic spot in the Middle East, our “Canaan” is not geographic. Yet, it is a place where, if we choose, we can defeat every enemy and enjoy perfect peace and harmony with our Lord. It is a place Jesus said He was going to prepare for us—not some mansion of gold, or brick and mortar but a relationship with the Father as the first and second Adam enjoyed. **“That where I am you may be also.”** (John 14:3) Not “where I will be,” but “where I am now.” He was geographically in the same place they were; but spiritually, He was a million miles removed and at one with the Father. He was saying, **“I’m going to prepare a way you can defeat every enemy and free the land that you may enjoy the same relationship with the Father**

that I now enjoy. I will do that by sending you the Holy Spirit. I will come unto you.” (John 14 free translation)
The Canaan to be conquered, the land to be freed, the place of restoration is the place in which you now live, your own body. The Holy Spirit joins with your spirit to conquer every enemy of your spirit, soul and body.

Establishing a kingdom in Egypt never entered into God’s providence with Israel. He could have very easily done so, but it would not have fulfilled the type. Though Israel came out of Egypt into the wilderness, God never attempted to establish a kingdom in the wilderness. His kingdom was to be set up in Canaan. He would be satisfied with nothing less. Jesus said, **“The kingdom of God is within you.”** The Lord intends that out of your very person will flow the river of life supplying healing and life for the nations. That stream cannot be tainted with the doctrine of humanism or secularism, but it must be a pure stream of the spirit. He will be satisfied with nothing less.

I’m sure that Israel had not the remotest idea as to the ferocity of the inhabitants in the land into which God was leading them. Probably, had they known, they would never have left Egypt. When the spies returned with the report of the size of the enemy and of the walls of their strongholds, the people were demoralized. Only Calab and Joshua could see through God’s eyes the restoration of the land to them. As we teach of restoration and how the Lord is bringing us back into what Adam lost, people are overjoyed with the prospects. It’s as we begin to inform them what must be defeated and destroyed that they are filled with unbelief and anger and want to stone us. “Leave us with our rapture—we don’t want to fight! We don’t care about ruling and reigning. Just get us out of here.” Israel’s cry was **“Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! Why is the Lord bringing**

us into this land to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become plunder; would it not be better for us to return to Egypt? They murmured among themselves, Let us appoint a leader and return to Egypt.” (Num. 14:2-4)

Let me inject a thought at this juncture. In the spiritual community, any time the majority appoints a leader—invariably it is in conflict with God’s best. Every account in the Scriptures will bear this out. God’s kingdom is not a democracy, but a theocracy. That is one explanation as to why the church is where it is today. If you are liked, they will choose you as their pastor. If you cross them—they will simply vote you out. The ways of God will always contradict the preferences of the majority.

God allowed those unbelieving, grumbling old cowards to die in the wilderness. There were six hundred thousand men twenty years and older, plus their wives and children, who came out of Egypt. I believe we could conservatively say there were between two and three million people. In all, God allowed everyone who was twenty and older when they came out of Egypt to die in the wilderness with the exception of Caleb and Joshua. That was a lot of casualties in the wilderness. Their wanderings were marked with dead bodies. The wanderings of the church have been no different. The trail is strewn with the dead. The land awaited them. The promise was from God Himself. God would send terror before them and instruct His angels to fight for them. The victory was assured if they would believe. **“But because of their unbelief they entered not unto His rest; therefore, let us fear lest while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to come short of it.”** (Heb. 3:19--4:1) Keep in mind, we are not discussing heaven or hell, as we have been

taught—we are approaching God and the relationship that has been prepared for our habitation.

It is significant that the older generation of Israel had to die in the wilderness. Not only were they filled with grumbling and unbelief, they simply had no heart for battle. Today is little different. Most of the older Christians, steeped in denominational tradition, will die in the wilderness; but praise God, there is being raised up a people who are filled with a divine madness, who are not as their fathers—but are a people who itch for combat. Something deep in their spirit hears the cry of the eagle, and they will rise to join in warfare. Let the unbelievers rationalize. Let them theorize and doctrinalize. God will yet have a people out of whose lives flow life—who know how to bring release and healing to the broken and imprisoned masses of crying, hurting, wounded sheep.

If we do not have some understanding of God's plan for the ages and His determination for this earth and its inhabitants, we then shall miss the greatest opportunity God has ever afforded His people. If we do not understand God's desire and provision for our total freedom, we then shall remain prisoners in our own land, accepting every sickness and malady the enemy offers us. How true the Scripture, **“Where there is no vision, the people perish.”** (Proverbs 29:18) The New American Standard version records this Scripture as **“Where there is no revelation, the people are unrestrained.”**

The records bear witness that the Lord regarded David as **“A man after mine own heart who will do all my will.”** (Acts 13:22) Now if David was a man after the heart of God, it would behoove us to examine the attributes of this man if we desire to please God. There are many good things to say about David that, I'm sure, endeared him to God. He

had a shepherd's heart. He loved and protected the sheep. He also had no personal ambitions. He was content to wait on the Lord. A rare quality of this shepherd king was that he honored the anointed of the Lord. Even when that man was wrong, David refused to take matters into his own hands. Perhaps, the one outstanding trait of David was that he was a man of war who led in battle. Whether it was a simple sling against a giant or using the sword of that same defeated enemy, David was frightening in battle. He fought as a she-bear deprived of her cubs. You may have all the other attributes; but if you are passive in your attitude toward the enemy, you shall be rejected from ruling and reigning with Christ.

We used to sing an old song "Hold the Fort for He is Coming," and we sang it to the cadence of marching feet. That may have been permissible in its day, but the battle cry today is "Take the Land" not "Hold the Fort." My precious friend—the land is not Texas or California although it may include that; but the land is YOU. Capture every thought. Defeat every doubt. Conquer every sickness. Reign over every fear. Laugh at the scorners. Do the impossible. The people whom the Lord has chosen for this Armageddon are a people of such divine madness that stark terror has now gripped the enemy and there is confusion in their rank.

God's kingdom is begun in the hearts of men. Those ones who learn to rule in this little plot of ground will be found faithful to rule in a larger measure. When we pray, "**Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth even as it is done in heaven,**"—we need to realize His kingdom begins in the individual. If men will not allow His kingdom (government) to rule in their own lives, they cannot rule in the broader perspective. Instead of reaching for and yearning for some escape out of this world and to fly away

to heaven, our determination should be to bring heaven down and establish God's rulership here.

All the tribes of Israel stood ready to march as they watched the Levitical priests, carrying the Ark of the Covenant, approach the river Jordan. The command had been clear; **“When you see the Ark of the Covenant with the Levitical priests bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it. However, there shall be a distance of two thousand cubits between you and it.”** (Josh. 3:3,4)

These are very significant words—“You shall go after **it**”, not after the “priest”—but after the “ark.” Men have, through the ages, cunningly persuaded multitudes to follow them even though they had nothing to offer but empty promises. No man has a right to expect anyone to follow him, except he bears the glory of the Lord on his person. In excess of one-half mile, the people could not distinguish one priest from another so they had no choice but to follow the ark, not a priest.

As the river Jordan washed the feet of the priests, the swollen waters began to roll back and now they stood in the midst of the Jordan until all of Israel had passed over. As priests, they were to stand in that place of death—defying death until the people passed over. In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul enumerates some of his sufferings in chapter four. **“For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death works in us but life in you.”** (2Cor. 4:11,12) Being a true priest, Paul stood in the place of death to bring about life to the many.

As all Israel stood on the banks of Canaan and were ready to embark on the conquering of the land, the Lord suddenly spoke to Joshua saying, **“Make for yourselves flint knives and circumcise the sons of Israel.”** (Josh. 5:2) God would not allow men to enter warfare unless that which harbored disease, and at times prevented reproduction, was cut away. We understand that this is symbolic. This was the mark of covenantal relationship that the Lord had made with Abraham. God was very particular concerning this covenantal sign. **“But an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”** (Gen. 17:14) In Col. 2:11,12, Paul equates circumcision with baptism. Now we know neither water baptism nor Holy Spirit baptism circumcises us against our will. It is as we submit to the flint stone—the rock Christ Jesus—that our heart and ears are delivered from fleshy control.

There yet remained one thing necessary before they could begin the assault to free the land. **“Joshua lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold a man was standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand, and Joshua went to him and said unto him, ‘Are you for us or for our adversaries?’ He said, ‘Nay, rather I indeed come now as captain (prince) of the host of the Lord’.”** (Josh. 5:13,14)

Just as the Holy Spirit, who made His initial appearance in the New Testament as cloven tongues of fire, was never again witnessed in that manner; this man with the drawn sword represents the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. He is never seen again after this brief encounter; however, the delivering of the entire land of Canaan is contingent upon his presence. Any man or woman today who is trying to rid themselves of evil forces apart from the Holy Spirit is like

one who beats the air—confusion and defeat will be the results. It is absolutely imperative that our battles must be by the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Pay particular attention to the words of this “man” with the sword. As he announces his mission, he says in effect, **“I am not for you nor against you—I come as captain of the host of the Lord.”** It is very important we understand this. He is saying, “I didn’t come to bless your efforts, no matter how noble or how worthy they may be. I come to lead in battle. If you will follow me, you’ll be victorious. If you insist on going your own way—you’re on your own.” To prove that this is not just an angel, Joshua fell on his face and worshipped him and He received his worship. Angels never receive the worship of men. Furthermore, Joshua is commanded, **“Remove your shoes from off your feet, the place wherein thou now standest is holy.”** (Josh. 5:15) That dirt was no more holy than was the dust where Moses stood before the burning bush as he received the same commandment. It was that the spiritual relationship was now a most holy one. To remove one’s shoes denotes the position of a slave. As Moses was a slave to the God of the fire, so Joshua now submits to the God of the sword.

Out of the Charismatic movement, there emerged a whole new breed of people who were going to love everything into place, no matter what the problem—just love it away. Whether flesh or demons, monsters or maniacs, love is the answer; but love very often comes in the shape of a sword. You can’t love a demon out. You must declare war against it. You can’t pamper or excuse a spirit of anger by saying, “Oh, I’m Irish—my dad was the same.” Violent men will take the kingdom by violent means. Let me reiterate—the kingdom is you. If you are not ruthless—if you show mercy and allow thine eye to have pity, you will form alliances with

those spirits and co-exist with them until one day those same spirits will rise up and kill you.

Let me illustrate that last statement. Samuel came to King Saul one day and spoke these words to him: **“Thus says the Lord of Hosts—Go and strike Amalek and utterly destroy all that he has, and do not spare him; but put to death both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.”** (1Sam. 15:3) As the natural man reads that commandment from God, our humanistic impulse is to say, “How unnecessary! How harsh! How radical and extreme!” As spiritual understanding begins to dawn, we realize these men, women, children and infants represent demonic forces which are enemies in our land; and it is spiritual suicide to allow them to live. People say, “the infant babies are so innocent.” Yes, today they are; but they grow up. Coddle that little two-year-old in his temper tantrum—laugh at his angry outburst and hold his arms and chuckle as he tries to bite you. But hear me, unless that spirit of anger is conquered, one day in a full-blown rage that spirit will explode and murder will likely be the outcome. You could be the victim.

The ox, sheep, camel, and donkeys are not demons; but they are those amenities that contribute to demons’ welfare, sustenance, and worship. King Saul foolishly brought back sheep, oxen and worst of all, Agag, the Amalekite king. I’m sure his natural reasoning got the better of him. “This is too extreme—we can use these cattle to sacrifice to the Lord our God,” he thought.

A fact we all need to be aware of is—you can’t sanctify and make pure that which is wicked and evil—that which was conceived in the womb of Satan. Some of the world’s largest denominations have filled their coffers with money that was obtained through fraud, embezzlement, theft and

narcotics. Churches have filled their pews with people who are gyrating to the same musical beat they grew up with in the nightclubs and concerts. Christians need to realize that God does not sanctify that which is evil. He demands its death. Is it any wonder He will not sanctify nor purify our flesh but demands its crucifixion in order that **“no flesh shall glory in His presence.”** Abraham was aware of this as he refused the polluted reward that was offered by the king of Sodom. “Oh, the money might be polluted,” we reason, “but it will take me to my next revival meeting or conference.” Abraham could have rationalized as did King Saul, but he recognized the snare which accompanied the tainted reward.

Many Christians live by the modernistic concept that the end justifies the means, but the Lord is very clear in His requirements. If it does not originate with and in His Holy Spirit, it is unacceptable and rejected, suitable only for the fires of judgment.

It is a fact that the land in which we were born is a land filled with all manner of wicked, violent inhabitants. Because it's all we've ever known, it seems perfectly normal to us when some unholy personage of greed or lust drives us. “It's only human nature,” the psychiatrist explains. We've never known what it was to walk in total freedom from these enemies and to enjoy the fellowship and wonder of the Lord's glorious presence. We have been programmed from our birth to accept sin, sickness and death as a normal course of events of which every man must partake. It should be clear to any Bible student that all these were enemies with which Jesus dealt while He was on this earth. Because they have been our constant neighbor and companion, we have grown to accept their presence as normal and, for the most part, have long since ceased doing any battle with them. We passively wait for these intruders

in our land to finish their business, which is to kill, steal and destroy. They steal our health and vitality. They destroy our relationship with our family and our Lord; and when they can do no more, they eventually kill the very land they inhabit. Little wonder the Scriptures beg for understanding when it proclaims, **“The land mourns and withers away...”** (Isa. 24:4)

“If my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven and forgive their sin and heal their land.” (2Chro. 7:14) This land is more than dirt and rocks. This land is you, and it needs healing and deliverance.

Saul was not obedient in that mission on which the Lord had sent him. **“Now go and strike Amalek and utterly destroy all that he has, and do not spare him; but put to death man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey”** had been God’s fiat. (1Sam. 15:3) Years later as Saul lay wounded on the hillside of Gilboa there drew near to him a man who killed him and took his crown and that man was an Amalekite. In bygone years when the Lord had sent him to utterly destroy Amalek, Saul had compromised and allowed some to live. Now when he lies wounded, drained of strength and will, one whom his eye had pitied now slays him.

Let him beware who is not ruthless in his attitude toward these intruders. For those who are soft and vacillating in this unholy alliance, the day will surely come in their moment of weakness when faith and resolve have been exhausted—there will suddenly appear one or more of those with whom you tacitly agreed. In that day, now stronger than you, they shall rise up and slay you.

CHAPTER 2

GREASY GRACE—NOT IN THIS FAMILY

When Paul was caught up into the heavens, he was given insight into those things that had been hidden from God's people throughout the ages. Christians today are still partially blind to God's glorious plan, which He has laid out in intricate detail. In the tenth chapter of First Corinthians, Paul recounts a part of Israel's history in the wilderness and makes this profound statement: **"Now these things happened to them as an example (model) and they were written for our instruction..."** (1Cor. 10:11)

Israel in Egypt represents God's people yet unredeemed, in slavery and bondage to Satan and the kingdom of darkness. In God's dealings with Pharaoh, He is not trying to win Pharaoh's heart. Neither is He trying to effect some kind of victory over him; rather in the plagues of blood, lice, frogs, etc., God is attempting to build a faith and hunger in Israel in order that they might discover freedom, redemption, deliverance and restoration that is readily available through an omnipotent God.

Let us now approach this sacred area with humble hearts and open minds. The Passover Lamb, which was slain and eaten, with its blood applied to the lintels and the door posts of each Israelite house, speaks to us of Jesus Christ, Who is our Passover and Who shed His blood that His life may be imparted to us. Here is one important fact. Passover or salvation always takes place in Egypt, or the world. You do not come out of the world and clean yourself up to be saved. You're saved in the world.

In addition, though the blood of the Passover Lamb has now redeemed them, they were as yet totally unchanged

internally. Someone once said, "If you're an idiot and God saves you, you're now a saved idiot." The blood of the Lamb was not designed to change them. It was designed to protect them and make them acceptable unto God while He dealt with Pharoah and his kingdom. Israel was then protected from the ministry of the death angel as he visited the households of Egypt. Now this death speaks to us of the second death, not physical death; for if you will recall, all of Israel who were twenty years old and upward died in the wilderness when they came out of Egypt, with the exception of Joshua and Calab.

When the blood of Jesus Christ is applied to our lives, our sins, past, present and future, are forgiven and washed away. However, the sin nature yet remains, which God deals with in an entirely different method.

The Lord now brought Israel into the wilderness where He dealt with them in various ways. Remember, God's purpose was not primarily to get them to Canaan, but to mold and form them into an army that would obey, without question, the orders given by their commander-in-chief. The wilderness experience was designed to bring them into an intimate relationship with their heavenly Commander-in-Chief. They must now discover Him as more than their Savior and Deliverer. (Ex. 19:4)

Israel was redeemed from Egypt and set apart by the blood of a lamb, but they were set free from Pharoah by their baptism in the Red Sea. In the natural realm, it was Pharoah who was slain in the Red Sea. In the spiritual realm, it is not Satan who is slain; but we who are counted dead and resurrected by the ritual of water baptism; **"...having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the**

working of God, who raised Him from the dead.” (Col. 2:12)

Paul’s assertion is that **“all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock, which followed them; and that rock was Christ.”** (1Cor. 10:2-4) Now we understand that the baptism in the sea is comparable to water baptism. The baptism in the cloud must then equate with baptism in the Holy Spirit. If this is true, we are compelled to admit that it takes place in the wilderness and not Canaan, as many have taught—neither is it a door into Canaan. The Holy Spirit is given to train us and reveal the Lord to us. Here is the reason men can be saved, baptized in the Spirit, speak in tongues, prophesy and even perform miracles and still be very carnal and loathsome with the offensive stench of flesh.

Our wilderness experience is filled with myriad testing, disappointments, complaints, accusations, false leaders, deaths and thirst. It also gives us manna, which does not satisfy. We must understand that all of these are designed by God to work into us a quality that can be formed into a formidable weapon. We are headed to Canaan to make war, not sit on a fluffy cloud playing a harp, nor dangle our feet into a crystal clear stream. Moses said, **“He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna...that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.”** (Deut. 8:3) As we see, the manna was not designed to satisfy them but rather just the opposite—to dissatisfy them—to make them hunger for something more than leeks, melons and garlic—to stir in them a hunger for God himself. I praise God for dissatisfied people, who hunger for a deeper relationship

than they now have. Please notice, I did not say complainers but dissatisfied people. I have a deep fear for those who are satisfied—those “we have need of nothing” people.

Would you understand if I said that even some of the things that God does for us will not continue to satisfy? There was a time when I was completely content with just being saved—not today. I then was totally gratified to have received the infilling of the Holy Spirit—not today. Later the operation of the gifts of the Spirit and the preaching of the gospel pleased me beyond measure—not today. The only thing that brings me total consolation is a person—Him! That God quest ever grows.

God looks at our wilderness walk as a precious time, just as we look back on the youth of our children. Listen to the poignant words of our Lord: **“I remember concerning you the devotion of your youth, the love of your betrothals, your following after Me in the wilderness through a land not sown.”** (Jer. 2:2) One time during my meditation with the Lord, I said, “Lord, that’s a strange thing to remember—all their complaining—their unbelief—your anger with them.” As children in their formative years, God seems to remember only the good **“the devotion of your youth, the love of your betrothals, your following after Me...”**

If Israel in her deliverance out of Egypt, her wanderings in the wilderness, and her conquering of Canaan are representative of you and me—then the deliverance of our “land” will bring excruciating pressure, pain and conflict.

During a trip to Israel, I stood on the ruins of old Jericho and looked back across Jordan toward the plains of Moab to the most desolate, forbidding land you can imagine. Bare rocks, scrub brush, and sand lay parched in the merciless

heat. I thought to myself, “No wonder they complained.” To bring them out of Egypt into a country more harsh than the land they had left seemed inconsistent and paradoxical with God’s nature. I said to myself more than to God, “Why didn’t you bring them into a land like North Carolina or California? At least they would not have become so discouraged—but to give them a land which was questionably better and for that land to be filled with fierce fanatics, who would fight to the death to defend it. Some gift!”

My dear friends, if you don’t realize that God is forming us into a weapon so tried that it can stand in any battle, you’ll grow confused at the seemingly cruel humor of our Deliverer. Believe me when I say, the Lord is not primarily concerned with your present comfort. He is vitally interested in the development of a God-like character. To sit with Him on His throne, you must be formed into His likeness. (Rev. 3:21) (Rom. 8:29) Hardness and strength of character are developed through adversity. There is no other method.

This is the reason the easy, prosperous “gospel” of today is a travesty. It offers throneship and rulership to the spiritually inept and irresponsible. Encouraged by the push button, instantaneous, dehydrated mentality of today’s frantic generation where all that is necessary is “add water, heat and serve”, the preachers of today seem pressed into that same mold.

It would be beneficial if every person who hasn’t experienced farming or raising a garden to do so. You need to see that in normal circumstances to produce food for the table involves more than a can opener and a microwave. You’ll find out before too long, in spite of all that you can do, a great deal of time is involved; and it is yet God who gives the increase.

If you're honest, you'll have to admit that there is a great deal more tenacity and willingness to sacrifice in the souls of those people who have come to this country from some of the middle east and far eastern countries than those who were born here with every opportunity readily available. Those people were birthed in hardships—molded in afflictions.

The churches in underground Romania, Russia and China are also different than the mainline denominational churches of the United States and Canada. As long as the church faced adversity, it grew stronger and more vital. It was only after Christianity was made the world religion by Constantine that it rapidly deteriorated and devolved into a pathetic caricature more willing to enter into détente and co-existence rather than aggressive warfare to utterly slay the enemy who now inhabits our "land."

In the policy of co-existence and détente, may I ask you one question? Who wins eventually? I think you would readily agree it is the godless ones who take the spoils. Is it any different—can it be any different in the spiritual realm? To passively regard our enemy as an innocuous, harmless nuisance invites disaster and loss. Believe me when I say, the loss is more than just your health or peace of mind. It has an eternal bearing on your place in the Kingdom of God.

In the past, I have made men furious by suggesting that heaven's occupants will not be on equal ground. **"In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some of honor and some of dishonor. Therefore, if a man cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work."** (2Tim. 2:20,21) I like how

the Amplified New Testament reads: **“In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver but also (utensils) of wood and earthenware, and some for honorable and noble (use) and some for menial and ignoble (use). So whoever cleanses himself (from what is ignoble and unclean) who separates himself from contaminating and corrupting influences—will (then himself) be a vessel set apart for honorable and noble purposes.”** True! We have been blood bought. Perhaps, we have been baptized in the Holy Spirit; however, there yet remains something we must do. We must engage in battle with those entities who now corrupt our land in order that we become a vessel of honor and nobility. The Lord will not do this apart from our will and cooperation.

Perhaps, this is why I labor the issue. Our attitudes and actions here and now will determine our position eternally, in God’s great house, whether it will be a place of honor or one of dishonor (less honor). I can hear the voices reverberating off the walls of many homes—“I don’t care anything about ruling and reigning. I just want to escape hell and make heaven my home.” If you’re determined to make heaven some geographic place—set on some distant planet where there awaits you a breathtaking dwelling located on a street of gold with the river of life rippling nearby wherein you can dangle your feet—then I can understand your attitude. If, on the other hand, heaven is composed primarily of a relationship with the Father where His life is so infused into our being that we join with Him in bringing life to the innumerable planets in space, which now lie in silent death, it would then do us well to reconsider our spiritual stance. Geography is not really important, for where He is—that is heaven; and because He is everywhere, heaven spans the universes.

Since I am a man with the propensity to become bored with repetitive actions or projects, I was very sure at one juncture of my life that I did not want to go to heaven; for I was sure only boredom awaited those who made it through the portals. I became bored in church services even as the minister was promising us, “This is a little bit of heaven.” I thought to myself, “Man, if that’s true, we’ve got a gigantic problem; for everyone here can’t wait until this service is over and we can go home.” On the other hand, as you draw near to the presence of the Lord, the hours can slip away without notice.

If you wish your inheritance to be in the wilderness or if you wish to die in the wilderness or even in Egypt, God will let you. There is a second best with the Lord—also a third best, etc.

Many preachers of the Pentecostal persuasion present a confusing message. I listened recently as a young man posed this question, “Can a man have a demon after he is saved?” The answer came from a widely recognized preacher of a worldwide Pentecostal organization. He said, “Impossible! For Jesus said, **‘If any man hear My voice and will open unto Me, I will come in unto him and sup with him and he with Me.’** (Rev. 3:20) The Lord will not inhabit a vessel filled with demons. His very presence will cleanse that vessel, for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.”

On the surface that sounded great, but let us examine this both historically and practically. Historically, God has always had to dwell in the midst of an unclean people. He is not afraid of becoming contaminated. The Lord doesn’t operate by remote control. By that I mean, He is not doing His work by proxy; rather, He is intimately involved in every facet of the building of His kingdom. True to character,

Jesus, the express image of the Father, had in His close company one whom He called a devil. Judas was never a child of God in the sense that Peter was. Jesus knew that Judas was a devil (John. 6:70), that he was an unbeliever (John. 6:64), that he was a thief (John. 12:6), that he was unclean (John. 13:11), that the promises were not for him (John. 13:18) and that he would go to his own place. (Acts 1:25) As we consider historically the nature of God, we will find Him dwelling among sinners.

Everything that God was historically with Israel, He intends to be with us presently in the Spirit. If He dwelled among the sinners and the unclean of ages past, He will dwell in the heart of an unclean vessel with a view to its ultimate purity. It is His determination to lead us in battle against every unclean occupant of our house (land—body) until every room, closet, basement and attic have been delivered from the unwanted guests who have overstayed their visit.

It's because of this erroneous teaching that some Pentecostals have a widespread spirit of pride and arrogance. "Well, Bless God! Since the Holy Ghost will not dwell in an unclean vessel and I speak in tongues, it's only logical that I'm pure and clean." The only logical thing is that when you speak in tongues, it's only the Holy Spirit's announcement that He has come to take over and to declare war on those areas in your life still under the dominion of the wicked one.

The argument would continue, "There may be some sin in our lives, but we're free from demons." If that is true, plus the fact that "**The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin**" (1John 1:7), there can be only one logical conclusion. If we are free from all sin and also free from all demonic activity, there remains nothing to keep us from

being translated to that next life, for the transfiguration (metamorphism) is now complete.

In his book, “Destined to Overcome”, Paul Billheimer makes a profound statement: “There is no such thing as abstract evil. Evil always has an intelligent, self-conscious source. There is no evil that does not originate in a personality.”—end quote. Now I believe that to be a true statement. When a demon has been exorcised—its power broken—his lease cancelled, there will be no more problems with that particular sin. Remember, the blood of Jesus will cleanse me from any sin yet does not destroy the oppressive and captivating rulership of the sin nature. Just as surely as Israel remained internally unchanged after the blood of the Passover Lamb had been applied to the lintels and door posts of their home—just that surely the ministry of the Holy Spirit will be required to deal with the sin nature which lies embedded in each of us because of our relationship to Adam. The blood is applied to our heart to protect us and make us acceptable unto God as He begins to wage war with the Pharaoh of our lives and effect our total deliverance.

It’s because of the afore-mentioned doctrine that says in effect, “All I have to do is to daily ask God to forgive me of my sins and wash them away by the blood of Jesus, and I’m ready to go.” That has left multitudes of Christians in a state of perpetual infancy. You can spend all your life at the foot of the cross, daily forgiven of your sins and yet remain a spiritual infant, not having matured one whit. How many of you realize that in the wilderness Israel was as much God’s son as they were in Canaan? Would you further agree that they were His son even in Egypt? **“When Israel was a youth I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.”** (Hos. 11:1)

Can you see the damage that has been done by implying that the “new creature” is an immediate, full-grown man? God made the prototype very clear in the historical account of Israel and their journey to Canaan. **“That which is spiritual is not first, but the natural, then the spiritual.”** (1Cor. 15:46) We are expected—rather commanded—to do in the spiritual realm what Israel did in the natural. Please hear me clearly when I say, I believe there is a place we can live free from every sin, every sickness, every weakness, and lastly the effects of death; but this will occur only as every enemy has been conquered. I am not now speaking of something that will happen in the hereafter.

If you can see no need for deliverance in your own life, or if you embrace the popular belief, “We’ll all be made perfect at the rapture,” then you will remain a Reubenite, content to take your inheritance in the wilderness. Israel (Jacob) knew this by the spirit when he prophesied over Reuben and said, **“Reuben, thou art...unstable as water, thou shall not have preeminence.”** (Gen. 49:3,4) I repeat, you can have God’s second best, live and die in the wilderness and not go to hell. If the scope of your vision is just to escape hell—that may be easier than you think. If your desire is to be molded into His image, then I can promise you—it is more costly than you think, requiring even your very life.

I want to go back briefly to the promise the Lord made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. **“And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob; and I will give it to you for an heritage; I am the Lord.”** (Ex. 6:8) Again, the promise is repeated, **“And it shall be when the Lord shall bring thee unto the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which He swore unto thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with**

milk and honey....” (Ex. 13:5) Numerous other Scriptures convey the same promise.

Now let me ask you a question of vital importance. What kind of gift is it that you must fight for? How can God call this a gift when every inch of soil would be dearly bought with intense conflict? Unless you know God’s methods and dealings there in that historic land, you can not understand His dealings in this day of grace. God has purposely cloaked Himself in ambiguity. He has **“Hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes; even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.”** (Luke 10.21)

I believe we have come, at least, to a partial understanding that when God speaks of a gift it usually means it cannot be bought with money—not that it’s free. **“Ho everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”** (Isa. 55:1) Notice the seeming contradiction. “Buy”, but “without money and without cost.” To the five unwise virgins, the admonition was, **“go ye rather to them that sell and buy (oil) for yourselves.”** (Matt. 25:9) These virgins were not wicked they were merely foolish. They had allowed that most precious commodity, the Holy Spirit, to become unproductive in their lives. Do I believe the foolish virgins went to hell? No! However, I do believe they missed God’s best and were not a part of the bride of Christ.

“I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.” (Rev. 3:18) Pay particular attention to what God is selling, for He’s in the

selling business. He's selling gold (Godliness), white raiment (righteousness) and eyesalve (the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit). There are many other Scriptures validating our claim that nothing of God is counted as cheap but must be purchased with a dear price.

I firmly believe that Jesus, through His sufferings in Pilate's hall and His ordeal at Calvary, paid the full price for man's total redemption—spirit, soul and body. In His resurrection and ascension, He gave proof that the victory had been won; and we were (are) invited to be a partaker of all He accomplished, thereby becoming **“heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.”** (Rom. 8:17) (Gal. 3:29-4:7) **“Who in His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed.”** (1Pet. 2:24)

From the above Scripture and the witness of numerous others, it is obvious that at least two things occurred. First, He took our sins away. Secondly, He purchased our healing with many stripes. Following a normal course of logic, if He took our sins away—then we shouldn't have a problem with sin any more, once we accept him as our Lord and Savior. How many of you reading this have ceased having problems with sin? If He also purchased our healing, then all that should be necessary when we become ill is to quote the appropriate Scriptures to God, remind Him of His responsibility, and we're instantly healed. Right? Most, if not all of us, have found by now it doesn't work that way. These are gifts even as the land of Canaan was a gift to the Israelites. Just as they had to fight for the gift of Canaan, we will also be required to fight for our freedom from sin and sickness. The Scriptures never imply that when you come to Jesus, you'll never have another problem with sin; but there is a steadfast promise that **“sin shall not have**

dominion over you..." (Rom. 6:14) In other words, "you shall not be a slave to sin."

Most honest Christians do real battle against sin day by day. We all must soberly fight the good fight lest we be caught unawares in one of the devices of Satan. Many of these Christians who struggle for that free gift of atonement will, nevertheless, accept sickness without a fight. It is received as a normal course of events of which everyone is a partaker. If you will agree with me that because of the sacrifice at Calvary, we can walk totally free from sin—that we do not have to sin a little each day. Would you further agree that we could walk completely free from sickness and its debilitating effects? If you concur with either of the above deductions, you will be forced to further agree—it will be as the results of severe conflict.

In the work at Calvary, Jesus is buying back, as if it were, all that the first Adam willingly, though perhaps ignorantly, placed in pawn to the great deceiver. Everything which was lost to Satan shall be restored and more. Perhaps, something occurred at Calvary of which you were not fully aware. There was a declaration of war, which reverberated through the corridors of hell; and its every inhabitant knew they had already lost. When I say they knew they had been defeated, I do not mean to imply they would roll over and play dead. Those hosts of darkness are also aware that most Christians are ignorant of the implications of that victory—projecting it ever into some future realm. When the Pharisees walked by, every demon laughed and cavorted with delight, knowing they were safe, although they were illegal inhabitants. When Jesus walked by, those same demons screamed in terror and were in a frenzy at the mere presence of the Word made flesh.

If Satan or some preacher can persuade you—“Hey! You don’t have to struggle. The battle has been won”—then you’ll wind up with those whom Jesus said, **“You say you have need of nothing, but I say you’re destitute and naked and blind. Buy of Me.”** (Rev. 3:18) Godliness is not an automatic process that occurs through osmosis or some mystical transference. Godliness is bought from the Lord with an incalculable price. White raiment is not some garment that is just tossed around your shoulders at conversion. Look with me as we read: **“His bride has made herself ready and it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.”** (Rev. 19:7,8 NAS)

I realize I have labored this issue, but if I can get you to understand—everything in you and about you that had its birth in the realm of darkness, God is determined to conquer and annihilate. You say, “Hey! That’s all of me.” You’re absolutely right. His determination is to bring down every regime until He sits in total authority—without opposition or subversion.

CHAPTER 3

FREE vs. CHEAP

It is imperative to the fruitfulness of our understanding that we have a clear understanding of Israel and Her relationship with Canaan if we are to understand the Church's relationship with Canaan and the overcoming life. I previously asked the question, "What kind of gift is it that you must fight for?" Most would respond, "You don't have to fight for a gift or it isn't a gift, for a gift is free." How many of you have seen the court system tied up with law suits attempting to set aside a valid will? Some even succeed. A cherished father died leaving the whole sum of his riches to a special loved one. Because it was not divided as some of the family thought it should be, they sued, hoping to have the will invalidated. That is exactly what is happening to the children of God. The whole of God's riches was left to certain ones and now we are in a battle against those who allege that the will is invalid. We can roll over, throw up our hands and comply—and in so doing, lose our inheritance—or we can fight for what is rightfully ours.

Here we must make a distinction between what is free and what is cheap. The Lord himself uses what seems to be a contradiction in terms when He says, "**You go buy oil from them that sell.**" (Matt. 25:9) Oil in the Scriptures represents the Holy Spirit. How do you buy that? Isaiah, speaking from the inspiration of the Spirit of the Lord, prophesies saying, "**Come buy wine and milk without money and without hire (cost).**" (Isa. 55:1) Wine has to do with the blood of Jesus Christ or our salvation and life. Milk has to do with the nourishment of the Lord—the sustenance of His word. How do you purchase those things? Jesus speaks to a lukewarm, backslidden church and counsels them to, "**Buy from Me gold refined by**

fire—and white garments—and eyesalve...” (Rev. 3:18) Gold speaks of the divine nature of God. White garments allude to righteousness, and eyesalve is the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. With what currency do you purchase these things? The Old Testament’s wisest man exhorts us to **“Buy the truth and sell it not.”** (Prov. 23:23) This is not truth incorporated in a book or auctioned as some cheap merchandise. I have posed questions without giving any answers, but that’s not to imply there are no answers. We hope at this time, to bring greater understanding to those whom God has chosen to give sight and hearing.

The very first Scripture the Holy Spirit made real to me was this: **“The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force.”** (Matt. 11:12) The corresponding words in Luke’s gospel read somewhat differently: **“...the gospel of the kingdom is preached and everyone is forcing his way into it.”** (Luke 16:16) That Scripture so exploded in my being that it became a part of everything I said. My poor Pastor, after hearing this repeated so often, said in exasperation, “I wish you would learn another verse.” Well, I knew a lot of verses but none had become a part of me as this one had. I didn’t know what it meant. I only knew it excited me. It was real. It was truth. All this in the midst of a gospel that was being preached, “Just try to hold out ‘til the end.” This message has never pleased God. We are called to be more than conquerors, not just to hold out to the end.

As you study the Scriptures, you will find those people He held in high esteem were radicals and non-conformists who were filled with righteous anger and explosive zeal for which many paid with their lives. Study the lives of these violent men. **“Shamgar struck down six hundred Philistines with an oxgoad (a sharpened stick) and he also saved Israel.”** (Judges 3:31) Barak, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthae,

and Samson were men and women of extreme violence. Let us not forget Jehu, David and Elijah “...**who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign enemies to flight.**” (Heb. 11:33,34)

The individuals just mentioned were not hothouse plants, growing up in a controlled atmosphere, which would wilt and grow faint in the noonday heat. They were rabid, fanatical extremists, who had a vital concern for the glory of God’s name and an intense hatred for any other god. For thirty years, I preached this violence but did not know how to translate it into redeeming our “land” from the intruders.

Most of today’s Christians have been so coddled by possessive and insecure pastors—having been fed a continuing diet of pap and pabulum—when under the assault of the “giants in our land,” will lay down their arms and walk away murmuring, “Oh well, I didn’t think it would work anyway.” If perchance there should come one preaching a violent confrontation with a real enemy, he is accused of causing confusion and disruption. I’ve often wondered what the scene must have been like as God weeded out 31,700 stalwart men from Gideon’s army, leaving him with only 300 “madmen” who so hungered for battle that they couldn’t even relax to quench their thirst from a cool clear brook. Which group would you be comfortable with—where do you fit today?

There are two glaring examples of the wilderness journey. One—it is only a two-week journey. Secondly—it took Israel forty years to make that two-week journey. If you think of Canaan as heaven, then none of this makes any sense. However, if you consider Canaan as the overcoming

life, you can readily see why it would take so long to reach that land. Remember! It was not Moses who led them in circles; it was God himself who led them by the cloud and by the fire. They merely followed. But in these forty years God either killed or allowed the faithless to die in the wilderness. The remainder was to be fused into an army, not so much of shields and swords but of faith and desire. Today's "believers" want to go to heaven, but most of them do not want to live the overcoming life. Heaven is a place of joy, peace and contentment, while Canaan is a place of temptation, prayer, hardship and warfare. "I don't want to do battle—I just want to sing, shout and dance." You can do all these things, but it will be after the battle is won.

The Lord made some promises to Israel concerning Canaan which are applicable to us today. Of these promises there are two that I feel are paramount in our present journey. The first promise is as follows: **"I will send my terror ahead of you, and throw into confusion all the people among whom you come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you."** (Ex. 23:27) This Scripture should make you shout. I have often seen God's people terrified at the presence of demons. If they only understood what this whole thing is all about, they would know that the enemy is also terrified at the presence of one of the Lord's representatives. That is true not only concerning the demons who are without but also those who are within. Demons are filled with fear that they will be exposed. Since they are creatures of darkness (spiritual darkness as well as natural darkness), they are panic-stricken at the prospects of the light of God exposing their presence. As we become increasingly aware of the terror that demons experience and become more knowledgeable of their presence, our faith should grow daily until nothing evil can stand before us. Knowledge of our inheritance and

our standing in God with Christ Jesus will make us invincible before the host of darkness.

The second promise follows immediately after the first. **“I will not drive them out before you in a single year, that the land may not become desolate, and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you. I will drive them out before you little by little, until you become fruitful and take possession of the land.”** (Ex. 23:29,30) If Canaan represents our bodies, which I’m convinced it does, then the purging of our bodies from all demonic activity will take some time. The Lord said, **“I will not drive them out in a single year”** or in a short period of time.

When I first became a Christian, I felt so pure and clean. I was sure there remained not one unclean thing in me. Only weeks later, I was in the depths of despair as something I was sure was eternally gone, reared its ugly head. Since those times, fifty odd years have pass and the Lord is still revealing entities in my land that must be driven out. I meet people who say, “My, you’ve mellowed.” That’s not really a true assessment; nevertheless, I pray that there has been a drastic change in my life.

Notice the reasons God gives for not driving them out in a single year. **“...that the land may not become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you.”** In the next passage He reiterates, **“I will drive them out little by little, until you become fruitful and take possession of the land.”** It is not enough for the “squatters” to be evicted, but the area must now be filled with fruitfulness and Godly productivity. Jesus spoke to the Pharisees saying, **“When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, it passes through waterless places, seeking rest, and does not find it. Then it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came’; and when it comes it**

finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order. Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first.” (Matt. 12:43-45 NAS) Jesus here reinforces the reasoning behind God’s promise to Israel. God is saying in effect, “If they are all driven out at one time, you will not be able to hold the land; so they will return in greater numbers, and you will then be in worse condition than before.” You must be able to occupy as well as dispossess. Jesus said the unclean spirit returned and found the house clean but unoccupied; consequently, it reentered the house taking his cronies with him. Nature hates a vacuum—it is totally unnatural. That space will be filled with something. The same holds true in the spiritual realm. It is not enough to be delivered from a demon. That space must now become productive and fruitful, filled with the life of God. May I say, “It is easier to cast a demon out than to keep it out.” To keep it out requires not only the fruit of the Spirit, but the walls of your city must be built up in that certain area. That can only be accomplished by the renewing of the mind. That does not happen over night. One thing is certain—the area cannot remain unoccupied.

Let us review briefly some facts, which I trust are becoming a part of your spirit. First, God had given Israel the land. It was now theirs, legally and potentially, but not yet experientially. God sent angels before them to strike terror in the hearts of the present inhabitants. They had yet to do battle with stubborn fanatics who claimed the land as their own, for they had lived there for centuries undisturbed. Let me now inject this truth—those demonic entities that harass us did not come on the scene yesterday. They have been a part of our family for generations. They have been passed down from generation to generation for hundreds, even thousands, of years. They know the land in every

detail, and they claim it as their own. Look again at what the demon said, “**I will return to my house...**” (Matt. 12:44) That demon will forever claim that house as its own.

Look with me at the present-day Middle East and tell me what the Palestinian mentality is. “This is our land and the Jew is an intruder.” These are children of the Canaanites with the same hatred, the same tenacity and the same fanaticism. There can never be peace in that land regardless of the desire of the United States and the rest of the world. The strife will continue until one or the other is totally annihilated. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, remains the only hope for peace. Israel, who is a type of the church, would like to co-exist with the Arabs. That will never be, for the Palestinians (Philistines) are dedicated to the total extinction of Israel, even if it requires an agreement which they would readily sign in order to gain time and strength.

We, as Christians, are faced with enemies of greater fanaticism and determination. Their rage is fed from fires of hatred, which have burned for millenniums. They claim as their own the land the Lord has given to us; and my dear brother and sister, no matter how much you desire to coexist and walk in peace with them—to live and let live—it is utterly impossible. They will be content with nothing less than the absolute eradication of God’s claim on your life. You have no other recourse—you will either slay them or be slain. Every Christian needs a good dose of Divine hatred. Listen to this king-priest whom God counted as a man after His own heart. “**Blessed be the Lord, my rock, Who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle.**” (Ps. 144:1)

As we study church history, we read of the different accounts of great victories and rejoicing because one was healed of an incurable disease. In another instance, a

crooked limb was made new by the power of God. Blind eyes were opened and the deaf were made to hear. The lame leaped as the hart; and on rare occasions, the dead were raised to life again. These are areas our forefathers sojourned in. They didn't possess that land; they were merely visitors there in certain seasons. **“Now Jacob lived in the land where his father had sojourned, in the land of Canaan.”** (Gen. 37:1) How significant! God has chosen us to live in a land where our fathers only visited. Where there was occasional healing, we are to live perpetually in perfect health. Where there was occasional deliverance, we are to live entirely free from demonic control. Where there were those rare instances of resurrection, we are called to walk in resurrection life, free from the pangs of sin and death. Does this sound like the raving of some demented lunatic? Jesus called deliverance from demons **“...the children's bread...”** (Mark 7:27) Are we not His children? Does this sound too visionary—too mystical for the rational man to embrace? I challenge you to reread and reexamine God's word apart from the “escape elevator” mentality, taking you away before the great tribulation.

We mentioned that there can be no détente between the Holy Spirit and the forces of darkness. When we pray **“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”** (Matt. 6:10), we are inviting God to bring to naught every other kingdom in the earth. This must begin with the smallest iota in His kingdom, which is you and me. The Lord begins His conquest by making war with the enemy within us and will not rest until His temple is free and clean. It is an all-out war. No prisoners are taken. It is conflict without compassion.

Israel is warned in no uncertain terms, **“You shall make no covenant with them or with their gods. They shall not live in your land, lest they make you sin against**

Me...” (Ex. 23:32,33) Listen to these alarming words. **“But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall come about that those that you let remain of them will become as pricks in your eyes and as thorns in your sides, and they shall trouble you in the land in which you live. And it shall come about that as I plan to do to them, so I will do to you.”** (Num. 33:55,56) To allow the enemy to remain exposes our little ones, our families and loved ones to the attack of the destroyer.

I am appalled at some of the stories I read and the accounts I hear from day to day. There was a man who kept a “pet” boa constrictor in the same room with his infant son. The serpent escaped its cage and killed the small baby. The distraught father chopped the snake into small pieces; nevertheless, the damage was irreversible. There are stories of lions, tigers and poisonous creatures that are kept as “pets.” Hardly a month passes without vicious dogs killing their owners, turning on their masters without cause or provocation. “But I don’t have any of these things around my home,” you say. These are of the natural realm. How about the spiritual realm? How many parents dress their children as ghosts, witches or hobgoblins on Halloween? In doing so, they invite every demon in hell to be that child’s companion, unwittingly initiating that child into the fellowship of creatures from hell. How many parents use the TV as a babysitter, foolishly allowing Hollywood’s sewage to bathe that child’s mind relentlessly. Murder, rape, incest, drinking, wife swapping, drugs and extreme violence is the daily fare upon which they feed. To be more foolish is to defend their actions by the lame excuse, “They’re not affected by what they watch on TV.” This pertains not only to children. Christians feed on these things constantly and then wonder why they cannot walk in victory nor have authority over Satan. Paul admonishes the church at Corinth with these

words, **“...the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.”** (1 Cor. 10:20,21)

Rock music and rap bombard the walls of a child's mind even tearing down the boundaries of restraint with the overpowering beat and the obscenities which gush forth like a broken sewer, filling the mind and heart with necromancy, Satan worship and unspeakable sexual perversion. Country and western music is no better. Every song has to do with “Heaven's Just a Sin Away” or some bar-room cheater who's looking for someone to “Help Me Make It Through The Night.” If you'll look at the entertainment industry as a whole, be it film, music or athletics who have become idols and national heroes, you'll find the industry riddled with homosexuals, whores, whore-mongers, drug addicts, drunkards, perverts, romance novels and soap operas. Not a pretty picture. These are often the babysitters of many Christians.

Christians are such gullible fools to entertain demons and fellowship with demons. The Lord has been faithful to warn us that if they are tolerated in our lives, they would be pricks in our eyes and thorns in our side and He himself would become our adversary in our time of distress. Those things that Christians permit, even embrace, as their daily companion is a source of constant amazement to me. We permit with apathy, even friendliness, the prolonged existence of enemies, whose sole purpose is to destroy us.

For centuries we have treated symptoms in human affairs rather than deal with the cause. Depression, insanity, epilepsy, cancer, viruses, asthma, diabetes and a host of

other maladies are just a few of the symptoms which will “kill, steal and destroy.” All of these we deal with symptomatically, leaving the root undisturbed. The axe must be laid at the root of the tree. To simply cut down the tree will not solve the problem. As you know, from the stump of the tree many new sprouts will spring forth, multiplying without difficulty. Jesus treated a fever as a spirit and rebuked it. (Luke 4:39) He called deafness a spirit. (Mark 9:25) He called muteness and blindness a spirit. (Luke 11:14) (Matt. 12:22) He called an infirmity, which had bowed a woman over eighteen years, a spirit. For eighteen long years this demon had derived its joy and satisfaction from keeping this poor woman bowed down. (Luke 13:11-16) There are literally thousands of manifestations in the physical realm we accept as normal. In truth, death with all its outworking is the most alien thing in the Christian walk. Life and death are ever in opposition. They are a transparent contradiction. **“Do not be bound together with unbelievers, for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? What harmony has Christ with Belial or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God.”** (2Cor. 6:14-16)

CHAPTER 4

FREE vs. HOSTAGE

There swept over me a sickening nausea deep in my being as the pilot's voice of TWA 847 crackled over the air, "They're about to shoot a passenger!" That was followed by a muffled shot; and then the pilot's voice again, "They've just shot a passenger!" Beirut, which had been the scene of violence for years, had now the blood of another victim to consecrate its soil. There are no words to express the feeling within me at that time. Shock followed by rage, sorrow, frustration and helplessness crowded in upon me as I listened over and over again to the news media replay that scene to an anxious public.

I began to pray for the release of the hostages, as I'm sure many did, and also that judgement and justice would prevail. One early morning as I was praying for them, the Lord began to speak to my heart. *"Why are you so concerned and upset about those few people?"* Needless to say, the question shocked me into silence. Before I could formulate some logical answer, He continued. *"There are millions of hostages held by terrorist throughout the world. They are tormented, tortured and killed all the day long; and you have not been as distressed and disturbed about their condition."* The words stopped as abruptly as they had begun, but the impact left me stunned.

The hostage situation dragged on. We were reminded of the similar incident in Iran and then later the occurrences aboard the cruise ship Achille Laura. It was as if the Lord was trying to graphically imprint a vital truth on our understanding. What we see in the natural realm is much more pervasive in the spiritual region. As I meditated on

these situations some obvious truths began to be revealed, which heretofore had been rather blurred.

The first aggressive blow the terrorist uses is that he seeks to impose his will on us by force and coercion when subtlety has failed. Satan's first attempt is in the area of reason. If he can entice one through persuasion to willingly join ranks with him—to become an agreeable, accommodating slave in his kingdom—he will many times elevate that slave to a place of prominence and prosperity. David observed this in the wicked and remarked, **“But as for me, my feet came close to stumbling; my steps had almost slipped. For I was envious of the arrogant, as I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no pains in their death; nor are they plagued like mankind.”** (Ps. 73:2-5 NAS) In the physical domain, it appears as if the wicked are the wise and God's people are fools. Then David explains further, **“Then I came into the sanctuary of God; then I perceived their end.”** (Ps. 73:17)

Many people have stumbled over the pride and prosperity of the ungodly. The outrageous atrocities executed against God's people by such men as Nero, Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin and a host of others leave us horrified and filled with questions. These were men who had been willing advocates of Satan. If subtlety fails, then Satan will use any means necessary to inhabit and control an individual. His first attack is always to besiege our will. Christians must remember that the will is our foremost citadel of defense. In order to break down this defense, the enemy has at his availability a varied arsenal. Drugs, hypnosis, passivity and involvement in the occult are some of the snares that are used to compromise our will. One of the most effective weapons against the Christian is the buffeting of our will by relentless, merciless pressure. If left alone, we would be overwhelmed by sheer force of power and numbers; but

praise be to God, we are not left alone and the promise stands sure—**“You will not be tempted above what you are able to bear.”** In the extremity of our weakness, the Holy Spirit infuses us with His own ability and wisdom.

The second thing we need to recognize is this: The hostage to be, or the selected prey, is caught off guard and unprepared to challenge or resist the terrorists. I’m using the plural in these illustrations because rarely, if ever, will any of us come into direct contact with Satan himself. We encounter his underlords or demons who function as gangs. The similarity between the mode and activity of terrorists and demons is more than coincidental. We are repeatedly warned in Scriptures to be on the alert and not be caught off guard. **“Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.”** (Matt. 26:41)

It is one thing to be taken hostage in a foreign land. It is quite another to be captivated in your own land—in your own house—in your own body. To be held captive by disease, to be enslaved by sickness, to be a prisoner of fear, lust or habits make us no less a hostage than those who are faced by machine guns and grenades. If we ever get a glimpse of what God has purposed for that one who will embrace with naked faith His promises, we will cease our praying to get out of this world. We will stop trying to escape and settle down to the task of cleansing the temple and keeping (guarding) the garden of God, which is our body.

In the beautiful allegory of Christ and His church, Solomon speaks to the lovely Shulamite maiden and chides her gently. **“A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.”** (Song of Songs 4:12) The Lord is saying through this parable, “You’re a

garden with bars across the gate. You've locked me out of your life. The fountain of life that is within you is sealed up by a heap of stones."

"Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out saying, 'If any man is thirsty let him come to me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scriptures said, from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive." (John 8:37-39) As we trudge through this dry barren land, multitudes are looking for fresh sparkling water to quench their thirst. There flows from a few a faint trickle of muddy water, tainted by the murky influence of denominationalism, prejudices and doctrines of men. From most, there is no stream at all. From a pitiful few, there is abundant water from which we can drink. What is our problem? We're a garden locked up and a fountain sealed.

The word "flow" from the above passage of Scripture comes from the same Greek word from which the word "rhetoric" or "speaking" is derived. Jesus is saying, "If you will believe in Me as you ought, the Holy Spirit will flow out from you in words that will be saturated with life—free from the foul odor of death."

The world is tired of promises which do not materialize—of dreams that appear like wisps of gossamer, then fly away on the wind—of a cotton candy religion that is sweet to the taste but leaves the inner man unfulfilled and emaciated. These are the things we are dealing with—that Christians would be delivered from a selfish, self-serving ambition, striving to erect some Babylonish tower. The stone heap must be removed from the sealed up spring. The bars must be taken down so the Lord can move freely in His garden.

Scriptures are full of accounts of God's people being over-run and held captive in their own land. Their warlords moved them where they wished. Their children were conscripted into service and sold as slaves. They were taxed beyond measure. They lived in constant fear, ridiculed, starved, tormented, taunted and placed even lower than animals. Although many times they outnumbered the enemy, they were held in bondage by a number of methods.

The enemy's first priority was to strip from the masses all competent leadership. When Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, captured Jerusalem, he immediately **"Led away into exile all Jerusalem and all the captains and all the mighty men of valor, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths. None remained except the poorest people of the land."** (2Kings 24:14)

For God's people to come into perfection—or maturity—men of gifted leadership are an absolute must. The first subterfuge to captivate a people is to take away gifted leaders. I believe there should be the gathering of believers for prayer, fellowship and sharing, but that in itself is not sufficient. There must be gifted leadership. When I speak of gifted leadership, I am not referring to one who has great talent or ability to speak. One may be able to captivate an audience with mesmerizing oratory and still not be a gifted leader. Remember that Moses was a stutterer. A gifted leader is one the Lord has chosen to occupy that place of undershepherd—not voted into position of Pastor. I've met many groups of lovely Christians who embrace the attitude, "We have no leader. Everyone is equal. We are the body of Christ. God speaks to us through prophecy or His word. What need have we of Pastors or Prophets?"

Does this not sound like Korah and the two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation who rebelled against Moses? **“You have gone far enough, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the Lord is in their midst; so why do you exalt yourself above the assembly of the Lord?”** (Num. 16:3) You see there was truth in what Korah said. The Lord was in the midst of the congregation. The people were holy unto the Lord, but it was a lie when he accused Moses of exalting himself. Moses never aspired for that position in the first place. It was the Lord Who appointed him to that particular station.

Concerning Jesus **“...when He ascended on high, led captive a host of captives, and He gave gifts unto men...and He gave some Apostles, and some as Prophets, and some as Evangelists, and some as Pastors and Teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ: until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.”** (Eph. 4:8-13) As you can see by the passage above, the gifts, which are given to the church, include men who are endowed with a special function.

I’ve watched some of those same groups who said, “We don’t need a leader,” and chaos was their constant companion. The enemy’s first goal is to destroy the leadership. In Laos and Cambodia, the communists imprisoned every person who wore glasses. They reasoned that if they wore glasses then they could read; and if they could read, they would garner enough information as to be a potential threat. God said, **“How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? And the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge.”** (Pro. 1:22)

Leaders are effectively destroyed in many ways. Many are made the object of ridicule because of some foolish past mistake. Others are led off into some extreme doctrine, which was received by what they believed to have been divine revelation. I do not believe Father Divine, Jim Jones and a host of other spiritual gurus intended to be heretics when they began.

Probably the most effective way of rendering the leadership impotent is to tie them to some denominational structure, which publishes guidelines for ministry. Now all points of denominational tenets are not wrong. There are many good areas of religious conduct in all denominations; however, we need to be very careful that the good does not become the enemy of the perfect. Most will encourage that competitive spirit latent in all of us—start us on a building program to erect some ivory tower, by which we can be remembered. Many will browbeat and harangue the people into giving their paychecks to the cause instead of giving their lives to the Savior. Nothing castrates true leadership more than falling into the religious trap of building buildings. **“Israel has forgotten his Maker, and buildeth temples.”** (Hos. 8:14) This is not just a modern entrapment.

The second means of taking a people hostage is to take away their weapons. Notice Nebuchadnezzar carried away captives, **“all the craftsmen and the smiths.”** Let us also look at First Samuel 13:19-22. **“Now no blacksmith could be found in all the land of Israel, for the Philistines had said, ‘Lest the Hebrews should make swords or spears.’ So all Israel went down to the Philistines, each to sharpen his plowshare, his mattock, his axe and his goad...so it came about on the day of battle that neither sword nor spear was found in the hands of any of the people who were with Saul and Jonathan, but they were found with Saul and his son Jonathan.”**

Let us examine this scenario. Joshua and the children of Israel had conquered the land of Canaan but had let the Canaanites continue to live and be their servants. That was a deadly mistake, which God pictures graphically for us, that we should not follow their example. From the time that it was stated, **“The Lord has given rest to Israel from all their enemies on every side”** (Josh. 23:1), to the time when no one in Israel had sword nor spear except Saul and Jonathan approximately 400 years had passed. In that period of time, the Canaanites—those they had allowed to live—had grown strong and had risen up to conquer their conquerors. Israel now had no blacksmiths in the land—no one to arm them—no one who could effect their freedom. You must see from a spiritual stance how embedded the enemies of our land are, since they have been ruling our land from the time Adam sold us out. Our “garden”, which he was commanded to groom, has from that time become overgrown with brambles, briars and thistles and swarming with fanatical enemies.

Can you see this from today’s perspective? Some young zealot who wishes to follow the truths of the Bible finds himself listening to the counsel of a “Christian” professional who has his degree in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, eschatology and psychology. He quickly learns that the days of miracles are over and that God does things differently today than in times past. It would seem that God does change, in spite of the Scriptures’ assurance that He does not. He has become much more understanding and tolerant of sin in His old age. He now uses methodology rather than divine genius. How do you get a weapon or learn how to use it sitting at the feet of today’s administrators and educated office managers? Where God in ages past healed in a brush arbor or a tent, it now requires a multimillion-dollar hospital where hands are “also” laid on the sick.

“But I’ve never used a weapon! I don’t know the first thing about spiritual warfare.” With this excuse, they go peaceably like cattle to the slaughter. In the books “Auschwitz” and “Night,” you read of entire villages of Jews who silently marched to their deaths without a struggle—without even an outcry. Christians are repeating this horror daily. “Well, I guess this disease is God’s way of taking me home.” That is utter nonsense. God can take you home without the pain and crippling effect of some diabolical disease. The modernistic Philistines have programmed us into believing a lie.

“My pastor fights for me when I’m sick,” some have remarked. May I ask one question? What’s his batting average in healing? I’m not knocking your Pastor. I’m merely suggesting that if you do not begin to learn how to fight your own battles, you’ll die before your time; and your Pastor can’t stand in your stead at the judgement seat of Christ. One of the responsibilities of a Pastor is to instruct the young Christians and help bring them into some degree of maturity. They should be benevolent drill sergeants who are to assist in forming an army, equipped for battle. Most, I fear, are nothing more than administrators who have a minor in entertainment.

“Well, this old house isn’t worth the battle anyway,” you may say; but you must understand that conquering this land is as much for the glory of God as it is for you. You must realize that this temple of the Holy Spirit is worth any striving—every extreme—all sacrifices to claim—in order to cleanse and bring it into a glorious habitation, which will manifest the presence and beauty of the Lord. If you do not, then you will surrender your will, your weapons and your land to the enemy.

The third reason we become hostages to some savage terrorist is because there is no vision—no revelation of God’s grand intention for us. **“Where there is no vision (revelation), the people perish.”** (Prov. 29:18) Most of us are escape artists, either by “rapture” or by death. Few there are who are stretching and reaching for that metamorphic phenomenon called transfiguration. If Jesus was the pattern Son, everything He did was done as a parable lived out—a pattern for other sons who would be brought to glory. (Heb. 2:10) This glory, that the writer to the Hebrews declares, is not heaven. It is the filling of this temple with the essence of the Holy One.

We can look at Israel’s failings and chide her for her foolishness. We can stand on one of those barren hills and scream, "Hey! Wake up! Canaan is your inheritance. Be careful how you treat it today for it’s all you’ll ever have." Could the same be true of us today? Would you understand if I said, "Hey? That land you live in is all you’ll ever have." Not the only place you’ll ever go to or occupy, but the land is your inheritance. Conquer it! Subdue it! Make it an expression of the Kingdom of God.

God has said, in effect, “I’ll make that land a paradise flowing with milk and honey. I’ll make it glorious. I’ll make it transcend anything I’ve ever done. I’ll make it spectacular in its ability and beauty. Its power and authority will be universal. Its magnificence will appall angels. The heavens will gasp, then applaud the finished work.” We need to embrace the vision of the Lord, or we will perish falling far short of God’s expectations.

The fourth reason we’re held hostage in our own land is because of fear. This ranks number one in Satan’s arsenal of weapons. Having spent a good portion of my childhood days growing up in a tough oil boom town in south Texas, I

know first hand what bullies can do to your self-image and confidence. Being Pentecostal in those days was neither popular nor charismatic. Fear has the paralyzing effect of negating all your skills and imagination. It dwarfs men who could be giants. It makes paupers out of kings. Is it any wonder that Jesus frequently repeated the phrase, "**Fear not?**"

"If I take this course of action, I could get hurt. If I go this other route people may misunderstand my motives. What I do may give the wrong impression. That decision would conflict with my friends' beliefs or my church doctrines, so I'll not voice my opinions." Can you see how this inner conflict cripples and disarms one into passive inactivity? We so dread isolationism. People put themselves through hell in order to conform to what society demands. Buy clothes you don't need or an automobile you can't afford. Move out of a perfectly adequate home into a showplace designed to imprison you for the next thirty years. "Hey brother! Why are you discarding that suit?" "Oh! The lapels are too wide." "Sister! What's wrong with those shoes?" "You can't see? Those heels went out of style years ago." "Sir! Why are you buying a new car?" "Well, the new ones get so much better mileage." "But the new one cost \$28,000. That'll buy a lot of gasoline."

Isaiah asked the question, "**Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy?**" (Isa. 55:2) Jesus elaborates on this by saying, "**Life is more than food, and the body more than clothing.**" (Luke 12:23) We are pressured into other men's molds because of our fear of being different. Because of our fear of getting hurt, we allow the innocent to become victims on the streets of our cities without so much as raising our voices. "But that man had a knife. He could

have hurt me.” We then add our names to those hostages crippled by fear.

The enemy attacked a convoy in Vietnam, led by my brother. After the artillery had been called in and the enemy driven back, there was found crouched on the floor of his truck a young GI who had died from gunfire at close range. In his hands was clutched an M16 rifle that had never been fired. Although wounds shattered his body, he died as much from fear as from the bullets. Jesus came that **“He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.”** (Heb. 2:14,15)

The subject of fear covers much too broad a scope for us to address here, but it is epidemic among Christians and brings the fearful into a prison-house where they are tormented day and night by heartless terrorist. To follow in simple faith the footprints of Jesus will deliver us from all fear. **“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out all fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.”** (1John 4:18) There is a perfection—or maturity we are being brought into where all fear—all disease and sickness—all death will have been conquered.

I do not believe Jesus played with words. We play with words, but Jesus did not. When He healed a man and commanded him to **“tell no man,”** He meant exactly that. He wasn’t using reverse psychology. If what He said seems to contradict our theology, we should reevaluate our theological stance.

Let us share a portion of the Scripture that we have observed from a natural standpoint. **“For I was hungry**

and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you invited me in; naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to me. Then the righteous will answer Him saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? And when did we see You a stranger and invite You in, or naked and clothe You?' And the king will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine even the least of them, you did it unto Me.'" (Matt. 25:35-40) Verses forty-one through forty-six give us the negative side of this same parable or prophecy.

Now I ask you this question. How can the Lord be a stranger, hungry, thirsty, naked, sick or in prison? The apparent answer is—when one of His brothers is in that same situation. We have ministered in the prisons, sent food and clothing to the needy and risked our lives by taking in strangers. This is all well and good, but this is not what our Lord is referring to in this portion of Scripture. Notice the last verse "**...to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine...**" He is not speaking of the unbeliever. He is referring to the Christian who finds himself in prison, naked, sick or destitute. Although, we may interpret this from a carnal point of view—fill our automobile with food and clothing and go searching for the naked and hungry—this is not the thrust of our Lord's teaching.

How many realize that there are innumerable Christians who are naked and hungry? Read our Lord's indictment against the Laodician Christian. "**Because you say, 'I am rich and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.**" (Rev. 3:17) This is spiritual clothing. Would you agree that there

are countless Christians who are spiritually ill and in need of healing? How many of God's children are caught in some denominational web, dying from malnutrition and dehydration daily because there is no flowing stream of life?

Why would the Lord say He is in prison? Listen to the protests. "God's children are free. We were rescued out of prison and brought into God's unspeakable freedom." If Jesus was speaking of the natural realm, why did He not visit John the Baptist when he was in prison? He is actually speaking of those who have been caught unaware and have been taken hostage by the wiles and cunning of the devil.

One of the first revival meetings I ever preached was an eye-opener for me. The first Sunday morning I was asked to leave the sanctuary for a few moments while they concluded some "church" business. I later discovered that they had excommunicated a brother who had been repeatedly ensnared in a rather embarrassing situation and found difficulty freeing himself from the predicament. In other words—if you can't get him healed, kill him. If you can't get him out of prison, don't visit him anymore—de-fellowship him. If a man is dying from hunger—put him out of sight where you don't have to look at his pitiful condition. The rich man never abused Lazarus—he simply ignored him. God's people have historically killed off their weak and injured. However, I am not advocating the coddling of sin nor should we close our eyes to the transgression.

I'm a determined believer in confrontation. However, scriptural confrontation is always designed that restoration may be the results. It is never designed for humiliation, separation or division. This may be the result, but it is never the purpose. **"Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a**

spirit of gentleness, looking to yourselves, lest you too be tempted.” (Gal. 6:1)

As I further contemplated the fate of those hostages aboard TWA 847, this thought occurred to me—to really help them out of their predicament would require the efforts of those who are free. Another prisoner could not change their situation. Every Christian should aspire for the total freedom of his own land in order that he may help free others. Our freedom should not be the grounds for gloating nor pride but of thanksgiving and praise to our Lord.

I was saddened day after day as I watched the hostages in Beirut cooperate fully with their captors, even to the mouthing of their complaints. This may not be a breach of international convention; but in the spiritual realm, it is deadly. The spiritual terrorists never release their hostages until one who is mightier compels them to.

Jesus said, **“How can anyone enter the strong man’s house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.”** (Matt.12: 29) In order to free another’s house (land or body) from the strong man (demons, terrorists), the terrorist must first be bound; and then the house can be plundered or returned to its rightful owner. You can never set a man free from the spirit of alcohol if you are an alcoholic. You can never free one from the bonds of lust if you are tormented and enslaved by those same spirits. Only in those areas where you are free can you effect freedom in the life of another. Satan will use this as a means of accusation against you, claiming that you have to be perfect in every facet of your life in order to have any authority over him. This is another of his lies. There are many areas of your life where you are free, and these are the areas you will have faith to plunder the strong man’s house.

Satan cannot be bound by mouthing the words, “I bind you in the name of Jesus.” We have tried to use the name of Jesus as a magic wand, waving it over the oppressed yet receiving not the answer we desired. However, there is a binding of the strong man; and it is done by the flow of life. In any area of your land that has been conquered and delivered from the enemy through the power of Jesus Christ, there comes a wellspring of life-giving water from that particular realm. The very presence of light dispels the darkness. There is neither struggle nor strain. When the light comes into view the darkness disappears. Vibrant, robust health prevents and expels disease. “...**Death is swallowed up in victory.**” (1Cor. 15:54) “...**Mortality is swallowed up by life.**” (2Cor. 5:4) Satan, the strong man, is bound by the flow of life, not by the barrage of words.

I am sure you have witnessed men whose very presence generated strife and confusion. On the other hand, there are those who walk in peace; consequently, they engender peace. There should be an outflow of our lives that touches others. When Jesus said, “**Blessed is the peacemaker,**” He wasn’t suggesting that we are to constantly intervene in other men’s strife, rather that the peace of God should so reign in our own lives that it would simply permeate the atmosphere where we are.

In any realm that you enjoy freedom, you can impart that same freedom to another for you will reproduce what you are. We do not reproduce what we say unless our words correspond with what we are. You cannot help but reproduce what you are. It is impossible to do otherwise.

CHAPTER 5

A GOOD LAND

I stand amazed at the divine genius of our Lord. If you do not know Him in some degree of intimacy, you will think, “He giveth with one hand and taketh away with the other.”

As God spoke to Moses from the burning bush, He said, **“I have come down to deliver them out of the hand (power) of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite, and the Amorite and the Perizzite, and the Hivite and the Jebusite.”** (Ex. 3:8) If you look at this Scripture closely, it’s almost as if they were being delivered out of the frying pan into the fire; and in a sense, that was true. This land is referred to repeatedly in the books of Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges and in the Kings as a good land. Believe me folks, it takes eyes of faith to see it as a good land.

One day I stood sweltering in the summer heat on a hill overlooking Jericho, gazing back across Jordan and a little chuckle arose within me. “God, how could you do such a thing? This is one of the most miserable lands I’ve ever been in. The whole land is totally dependent on a little fresh water that lies above the brackish water in the Sea of Galilee. Why didn’t you bring your people to a land like North Carolina or California or Texas? Why did you choose this inhospitable land which is so forbidding? In addition to the severity of the land itself, vicious enemies called this their home.” Because we are so prone to see our circumstances and situations through carnal eyes, I can readily identify with the ten spies who said, **“It is a land which eateth up the people.”** (Num. 13:32) Because of

that testimony, they were prevented from entering the land. Now my friends, that is a frightening account, for I see thousands upon thousands of people who sneer and scoff when they hear of a land which can be totally conquered before Jesus returns again to gather His people unto Himself.

God purposely gave them a land that would require their total obedience, their implicit faith and a divine recklessness that would brand them as madmen if they were to possess it. It was a good land, but it was not a land that could be taken by the faint of heart nor held by the timid. A timid one who is always ready to let someone else carry the ball has never pleased the Lord. Please, let us not lose sight of the fact that the land is you; and it is filled with enemies. It may appear to be a barren wasteland, but God said it is a good and spacious land flowing with milk and honey. Unless you begin to see yourself from God's perspective, you'll never fight for total freedom. You'll be content to dwell on the wilderness side of Jordan, where most of the church now exists.

I've listened to so many people say, "I don't know why Jesus saved me. I don't know why He gave His life for me. I'm just a nobody. No one in my family ever amounted to anything. I'll never amount to anything either. If I can just squeeze into heaven, I'll be content with a cabin in the corner of gloryland." That is so much garbage. God doesn't make bad deals. He is not a gambler. Eternity rests on His faith—not yours. That faith has not been misapplied. He knows the field that He has purchased. It's a good land. However, the inhabitants of the land would make you think that the land itself is hopelessly worthless.

Paul makes a remarkable statement in his second letter to the church at Corinth. Note carefully the wording. "**But**

we with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.”
(2Cor. 3:18)

If I look with my natural eyes into a mirror, the image looking back at me is one in which I see a multitude of flaws and failings; but Paul is saying, “That’s not how you’re supposed to see yourself. You should by faith be seeing yourself changed from glory to glory into the image of the Lord.” (paraphrase) If I look at the problems in the land and the seemingly impossible task of ridding the land of its adversaries, then I will sink into despair and cast my lot with the ten fearful, faithless spies. If, on the other hand, I can see the Lord changing me from glory to glory, as He leads in the conflict—ever patient—ever faithful—ever forgiving, then my faith rises up to do exploits. I then embrace the vision that I can fulfill the purposes of God when He said, **“Let us make man in our image.”** Do you realize that God has never wavered from that original intention? He still intends to bring forth a people in the exact image of Himself. Jesus was the pattern Son. He conquered every enemy.

Man is the eternal escape artist. If you press him with the realities of warfare and the necessity to be violent in battle, he will attempt to escape to the future with **“We shall all be changed in a twinkling of an eye.”** Although that truth brings us great hope, I am not now referring to that day of our Lord’s appearing but to this present day in which we have been called to rule and reign. There will be a company of overcomers who will have put every enemy under their feet, even to that last enemy to be conquered—death itself. (Rom. 5:17)) (1Cor.15:26)

As we begin to see ourselves as God sees us, truth will begin to dawn as to the vast possibilities that are resident in

Him. When in the beginning, the Lord repeatedly said, “**It is good**”; we became a part of that great creative outgrowth. You need not have an I.Q. of 200. You do not need a doctorate in comparative religion or religious philosophy. You don’t even have to have mastered the art of selling yourself. All that is needed is to agree with God that you are what He says you are and walk by faith in that declaration.

When you study the history of Israel, you will understand why they were in Egypt in the first place. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, those mighty patriarchs of old, all had the same problem. They really had no appreciation of the land. Abraham went to Egypt to get his needs met in his time of famine. His son, Isaac, went to the Philistines when he experienced famine. When again there was a drought in the land, Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to buy grain.

Undoubtedly, this will come as no great revelation to you, but Egypt and the Philistines both represent that realm of the world. Your response to that, I imagine, is “We know that.” Then permit me to ask you a simple question. To whom do you turn when faced with a desperate need? When your land (body) is experiencing a time of famine (sickness—weakness) who meets your need? Do you wait for God to bring healing to the land, to send showers of refreshing and restoration, or do you in your impatience and fear rush to the representative of Egypt to write you a prescription so you can fill your bags with corn? Please hear me with the ears of the Spirit. I am not attacking the medical profession. I’ll guarantee you, if I can’t get healed, I’ll find a good physician immediately.

Concerning the woman with the issue of blood, it is recorded that, “**She had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse.**”

(Mark 5:26) Notice! After she had touched the hem of Jesus' garment and received healing in her body, there was not one word of rebuke directed at her because she had gone to physicians. You see this episode has a much larger message. This woman is representative of a church whose very life has been draining out of her for years. She has tried musicians, speakers, movies, missionaries, programs, celebrities and hype. For all that she has suffered at the hands of these enchanters, she has steadily grown worse. What she needs is to touch Jesus.

Although I have some dear friends who are in the medical profession—in my time of need, I should have developed an intimate relationship with the Great Physician, in order that I may grow from faith to faith, ever reaching for total deliverance. Hear me when I say, you do not suddenly have faith to conquer a cancer. You develop your faith when in conflict with colds, flu and viruses. David did not suddenly have faith to face Goliath. His faith had been schooled through his encounters with the bear and the lion.

You will now need to hear me with spiritual ears when I say, we all have had little appreciation for our land. We look at this body—this life—this time between birth and death as a nuisance, which we must endure, until we're taken to heaven. We have lightly esteemed the Scriptures that say that we are God's temple—His abiding place. The temple was always the physical expression of God's presence in the earth. Let us examine together the following Scriptures: **"...The body is not for immorality, but for the Lord; and the Lord is for the body. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? ...Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own. For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in you bodies."** (1Cor. 6:13,15,19,20) We

become so super-spiritual that we think the only thing important to God is the Spirit; yet from the above Scriptures, it is obvious that the Lord is very interested in your body. To abuse your temple with thoughtless excesses, whether in the realm of eat, drink, work or play, will induce God's displeasure toward you.

Most of us have given an attentive ear to Satan as he belittled and condemned our land. "You're a nobody." "You're a failure." "You will never conquer that sin or weakness." "It's in your genes." "You might as well quit trying." "Look how many times you've tried and failed." The attack is relentless and merciless. With good cause, he is called the accuser of the brethren. (Rev. 12:10) Not only does he accuse us before God, but also he accuses us to each other and to ourselves. If I do not believe that my land is good, I will accept those accusations as true and will try to hide from God.

My dear friend, give close attention to the following words. You must learn to look at sin objectively, whether in your life or in the life of another. Look at that sin—that fault—that flaw as a despicable affront to our Lord. Hate it. Curse it. Rebuke it. Declare war on it. Be merciless toward it but do not hate nor despise the land. The land is a good land, and it is a spacious land flowing with milk and honey. The enemy within is another story.

If someone brought me a bad report on one of my children, it would probably bother the bearer of that tale very little; but it would hurt me deeply because of my love for that child. As I was praying one night over a similar situation, the Lord spoke to me. "Neither do I like to hear of My children's faults, nor should you bare their flaws to another." God is very jealous of His offspring. Every rebuke, reproof, or mention of another's sin should be for the sake of

reconciliation and restitution. We must begin to see that each land is a good land.

When Jesus said, **“Love thy neighbor as thyself,”** He was not saying, “Love your neighbor and hate yourself.” The omniscient Lord knows that if you can’t love yourself, you can’t love your neighbor much less your enemies. If you can see your neighbor or your enemy as a good land, conceivably controlled by a mob of lawless, hateful terrorists, then you will better understand his actions and his desperate need for help and deliverance.

Jesus doesn’t get too upset with some sins that we consider almost unpardonable. I personally know some people who find it difficult to forgive David because of his sin with Bathsheba. There once was a woman who had slid down the moral slope until she was caught in the very act of adultery. She was brought to Jesus with the very correct sentence, **“In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do you say?”** (John 8:5) Believe me when I say, “I can relate to their attitude.” I have a Pharisaical spirit that stands on the other side of the door demanding to be heard. I don’t want to listen to that voice, but it makes me feel more righteous when I discover another’s sin. Are you guilty of that sometimes? Jesus was not nearly so troubled with her sin as He was with theirs. In fact, He said to her, **“I do not condemn you, go and sin no more.”** (John 8:11)

In another place **“Jesus said, ‘Woman, go call your husband.’ The woman answered and said, ‘I have no husband.’ Jesus said unto her, You have well said, ‘I have no husband’; for you have had five husbands; and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have truly said.”** (John 4:16-18) Today’s papal offspring would say, “Sorry, you’re unfit to preach from my

pulpit. You've had more than one wife." Many people suppose it would be better to kill the objectionable hindrance, as David did to Uriah the Hittite, than to "live in sin." God forgives murder but not divorce or adultery. Isn't that a strange doctrine? Now I hate divorce, adultery and moral looseness in any form; for these are enemies that pollute and castrate the land, leaving it barren and unproductive—yet the land itself is a good land. Strange indeed that the woman, who had had five husbands and was now living with a man to whom she was not married, immediately became a flaming evangelist who led an entire city to seek Jesus as their Messiah.

How often do parents play the devil's advocate in regard to their children? Johnny spits in his big brother's face and is reprimanded with words like "You're a bad boy." Little Johnny goes away thinking, "I'm bad and not good." Later in life he slaps his sister and as a part of his punishment hears, "You're a terrible person." The condemnation becomes reinforced. We need to say, "That was a bad thing you did or what a terrible deed you did" rather than, "You are bad." A distinction needs to be made between the person and the deed.

I know I'm treading on ground that will bring the accusation of being humanistic or a religious psychologist at least. Nevertheless, I've watched many preachers lose their little ones because their children needed freedom from the enemy within, and the parents joined sides with the enemy to further shame and humiliate the child. As you progress in God, you will discover that the New Covenant is no less demanding than is the Law. The difference being that under grace Jesus does not condemn us but helps us to overcome our sins; whereas, under the Old Testament, the Law simply points out our errors. All of us are experts in the performance of the Law. We know how to point out

another's sin and to do so in a manner that will decimate him. That's Law. That's pharisaical. That's abominable and abhorrent to God. Under grace, we are not to ignore one's sin; but we are to react differently. **"Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to yourselves, lest you too be tempted."** (Gal. 6:1)

In growing a garden, it is remarkable the amount of care and watchfulness that is required to produce a bushel of corn or tomatoes. Every conceivable type of insect or weed suddenly finds your garden plot the ideal place to grow and multiply. From where did they all appear? They weren't around before, were they? Then there's the rationalization; "It's cheaper to buy from the supermarket." I've watched many people start a garden, only to let it become overgrown by weeds and destroyed by insects. On the spiritual side—I've watched many people become so discouraged at the endless barrage of the enemy's ceaseless buffeting, that they simply caved in and surrendered their land.

The Lord never lined up all the enemies in Canaan before Israel as one great army. He could have, but Israel would have fainted from fear. It was not God's purpose to free the land in one short smashing assault. **"I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee. But little by little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land...I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out before thee."** (Ex. 23:29-31) Neither is our land freed completely by kneeling and asking the Lord to save us. However, at the moment we determine to conquer the land (it may be years after we have come to Jesus), the "Man with the sword" (Josh. 5:13) will appear to lead us in this civil war, which will bring eventual freedom

and peace to our land. In the case of Israel, it was forty years from the time of their redemption until the meeting with this warrior. Understand, His determination is to conquer every enemy that defiles and desecrates this temple of God. Sickness, pride, greed, fear and even death are all enemies that we face.

In the Scriptures, we find that Jesus cleansed the temple twice: once at the beginning of His public ministry (John 2:14) and again after He had made His final triumphal entry with the hosannas still ringing in His ears. (Matt. 21:12) It must be remembered that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. There was a cleansing in part at the time of your renouncing your earthly citizenship; nevertheless, the cleansing of your temple (land) is an ongoing process until the Son of David sits enthroned, and all the land is at peace. (Josh. 23:1) (2Sam. 7:1)

God gave us the three forty-year reigns of Saul, David and Solomon as a process of His dealings with us. Saul was a man of the flesh. Although, he was anointed of God to be a king, he was yet displeasing because of his carnal choices. He was more than willing to fight the battles of the Lord, but he could not follow the Lord in total obedience.

God's next choice was a "man after His own heart." As we study the life of David, we would have to admit that surely God wasn't pleased with everything about him. He couldn't have been pleased about David lying to king Achish and joining himself to the Philistines. He certainly wasn't pleased with David committing adultery with Bathsheba. Moreover, how could God look the other way when his fair-haired boy had Uriah, the husband of Bathsheba, killed? He didn't, and it cost David dearly. What was it about David that would make God say, "**He's a man after My own heart?**" It was his attitude about the enemy in the land. He

hated idol-worshippers and made war with them continually. They were terrified of him. David and Joshua are both types of Jesus Christ. Joshua means “Savior” and David is the “Shepherd King—a man of war.”

Jesus is referred to throughout the Scriptures as the “Son of David.” Why wasn’t he called the son of Saul or the son of Solomon? He was not the son of Saul because Saul was a type of the carnal Christian, who has just begun his walk with the Lord. He was not the son of Solomon because Solomon represents that dispensation which shall come after all enemies have been subdued. He was called the “Son of David,” and among other things, a man of war who would subdue all the enemies and bring total peace to the land.

My friend, Jesus came not only to be your Savior and deliver you out of the world (Egypt); He also comes as your heavenly David, who will declare war on every enemy of the land. He is awesome in battle and glorious in victory. He is determined that there shall come a time when you shall be at rest from all your enemies.

I vividly recall the night God apprehended me for Himself. I felt so pure and clean as if no unclean thing could ever touch me again. This was only His first cleansing of the temple. Imagine my dismay some time later when I discovered there was still anger, lust, pride, and a host of Canaanites still in residence, fanatic in their claim to the land and determined to fight to the death. Fifty odd years later, we are still at war; but I can truthfully say, “Many of them lay slain on the battlefield.” Let me further state. I bear in my body the scars of warfare, which when some men see will scoff remembering how I was wounded. To look in the mirror and see only my failures and imperfections would discredit the power and purposes of the Lord. That

would be like seeing the unconquerable giants and the impregnable walled cities. I look instead and see **“...the glory of the Lord as we are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.”** (2Cor. 3:18)

There is an exciting passage of Scripture found in Hebrews, where the writer quotes from the eighth chapter of Psalms. He begins by saying, **“What is man that thou art mindful of him or the son of man that thou visitest him? Thou hast made him for a little while lower than the angels. Thou hast crowned him with glory and honor, and hast appointed him over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not see all things subjected to him. But we see Jesus...”** (Heb. 2:6-9) Man has been crowned with glory and honor and all things have been put in subjection under his feet. The writer further explains, **“But we do not, presently, see all things subjected unto him, but we see Jesus, who was the pattern Son, conquer every enemy, even death.”** (lit) As the forerunner, or firstborn among many brethren, He invites us to enter into His victory until there is nothing left which has not been brought experientially into subjection.

Even the most casual student of the Bible is very familiar with the account of the brazen serpent, which God commanded Moses to create. The people complained and **“...spoke against Moses and against God: ‘Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this miserable food’** (manna). **And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died.”** (Num. 21:5,6) Moses prayed unto the Lord and the **“Lord**

commanded Moses saying, “Make a fiery serpent and set it on a standard (pole); and it shall come about that everyone who is bitten when he looks at it, he shall live.” (Num. 21:8) The translation is somewhat vague here, but let me tell you what it does not mean. When one was bitten, they could not merely take a quick glance at the brazen serpent and be healed. It means when one was bitten he or she was to look steadfastly at the brazen serpent until faith arose in their spirit and they could grasp their healing. It means for you to see that the very thing that now threatens your life has already been judged and destroyed. Look **until** faith arises within you to be healed or delivered from the sting of sin, the bite of the serpent.

The brazen serpent was fastened to a pole. Actually it was nailed through its head to the pole. It was to reveal to the Israelites in graphic display that the thing, which was causing their pain and death, had been judged and conquered. They were to look steadfastly upon the serpent as already been slain when, in fact, they were still being bitten by the serpents. Although, Satan has been judged and his power broken; he yet can cause a bite that can kill you.

Jesus said, **“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”** (John 3:14,15) How many passed by Jesus hanging on the cross that fateful day and took a quick glance at Him but did not experience the delivering power of the Master as did the thief who, in his dying hour, believed in Him? It makes no difference whether it is one who is in the depths of the most degrading sin or one who is in the grasp of the most debilitating disease, the answer to the solution remains the same. **“Fixing our eyes upon Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith...”** (Heb. 12:2) As we

look with an unwavering gaze on the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, we will come to understand that He took every enemy of our land and put a spike through its head on the cross. That does not mean that we may not still get bitten. It means that there is deliverance from every enemy, if we look with faith at the finished work rather than the present problem.

How could God look upon Canaan, which was filled with wicked people, who practiced the vilest kinds of idol worship and call that land a “good land?” It is because God differentiates between the land and the enemies within. When we look upon a person who is vile and wicked, we need to look with the eyes of faith and allow the Lord to show us the real land. Perhaps, today it is depraved—abandoned to immorality. Tomorrow it can be purged, fruitful and productive, having little resemblance to the wilderness of the past. Who would have thought that Saul of Tarsus could ever be Paul the Apostle? What chance would you give a red-complexioned shepherd lad of ever becoming a king? Only those who can see by faith past the deception of the exterior will behold the treasure hidden within.

As you have probably noticed by now, I have not dwelled very much on going away to heaven—of being transported to some distant planet where we’ll all squander away our time in a blissful state. Although I believe there is a heaven, I believe it is a relationship long before it is a place. Most Christians are waiting to be caught away to some distant place, having never developed a relationship with the King. Even if they should make it, they would be as miserable as was the guest without a wedding garment in Jesus’ parable. (Matt. 22:10-13) Although you are a temple of the Holy Spirit, you’re yet a part of a larger temple. You are a stone the Lord has chosen from the quarry and is now shaping so

you will fit in the temple building. You're not yet at the building site. Neither am I. After we have been chiseled and hewn to fit perfectly, then we shall be transported to the "temple site." Now I don't believe that site is Jupiter or Mars; however, it may include those planets.

Many people mistakenly believe that we can rid ourselves of the enemy within by abusing the body. This is no more possible than it was to rid Canaan of its evil inhabitants by mistreating the land. Throughout the history of man, he has tried to make himself more acceptable to God through various extremes of fleshly worship.

Some of the earliest devices man used for self purification was found in the different forms of sacrifice. Some began to close themselves away in some austere monastery hoping that by fasting, penance or self-flagellation they would find themselves at peace with God. In many areas of the world where Roman Catholicism is predominant, scourging and even crucifixion is not uncommon. Neither one's carnal flesh nor the enemy can be conquered in this fashion. The adversary is defeated by **"...the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives even unto death."** (Rev. 12:11)

Now I am a staunch believer in fasting, however, with perhaps a different goal than some. There was a time I fasted in order to "have power with God." I then would fast in order to coerce God into granting some special request. Even if the petition was a Godly one, the method was wrong. Now I fast in order to hear Him more clearly. To simply draw near in fellowship is my only goal. Except on special occasions, I believe long fasts are detrimental and can contribute to ill health as well as developing a prideful nature. I am not saying that my reasons for fasting are the

only viable ones. There are many good reasons for fasting. An excellent guideline for fasting can be found in the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah.

This is not intended to be a treatise on fasting but merely to show that the enemy is not routed by abusing the land. Many times, in our sincere ignorance, we cooperate with the enemy when we oppress and do hurt to the land, for that is Satan's purpose also. His aim is to kill, steal and destroy. I trust that you will understand that I am not advocating some doctrine that will deify your body. I do believe that since **"...we have been bought with a price, we should glorify God on our bodies."** (1Cor. 6:20)

Satan is the master at bringing up past mistakes. Even after we are assured that our sins have been forgiven, the accuser still persists in his assault. David testified to this truth when he said, **"...My sin is ever before me."** (Ps. 51:3) God was not the One who held his sin before him; yet, it was an area of remembrance and pain.

Keep looking in the mirror of the Lord. Do not dwell on your weaknesses or your flaws. Don't allow your enemies or your friends to depreciate your land. It's a good land; however, the enemy is still there screaming out his threats and defiance. Nevertheless, your land has great potential and promise.

CHAPTER 6

THE ENEMIES WITHIN

Many years ago there was published in this country a book called, “The Enemy Within,” and it dealt with the dangers of communism in our land. There are thousands of known communists, along with other aliens, in this country whose loyalty is directed to another country and are dedicated to the overthrow of our government. Yet, they are permitted to remain in this country with few restrictions. They move with impunity among the masses and are impervious to our laws and morals. It’s almost as if there is some insane death wish deep within the core of our government. Their threats have been clear. Their purposes are obvious. The progress toward their goal is indisputable; yet, we harbor and protect their “right” to be here.

There exist enemies within our church—within our family—within our lives—even more cunning and dreadful than any enemy in our country. We’ve shut our eyes to their presence. We’ve closed our ears to the cries of God’s true prophets. We’ve embraced the attitude “Everything will be better—someday,” ever projecting into the future what God intends for us to deal with today.

I do not like to give much space to that which is evil; yet, it is of utmost importance if we are to understand the relationship of evil spirits and the land in which we live (our bodies). Many of today’s Christians seem to entertain the idea that at Jesus’ ascension all demons ceased to exist. Remember that Jesus spent at least one quarter of His time dealing with demons. However, Christian humanists and psychologists would have us believe that all our problems are hidden in the psyche of human personality. In order to alleviate our problems, all we have to do is talk it out with a

trained professional who will help us understand why there are those uncontrollable urges lurking in some dark chamber of our lives. Strange indeed is that the greatest ratio of suicides in the professional field is among psychologists and psychiatrists—those who are supposed to have all the answers.

As we have stated, Jesus spent at least twenty-five per cent of His earthly ministry dealing with demons. They did not suddenly appear on the scene when Jesus was born nor did they disappear when He ascended. They were around when Cain slew his brother Abel. They were present when Nimrod built the tower of Babel. They were there prompting Saul to kill David. They lied to Ahab through the mouths of his prophets and thereby led him to his death. Jezebel, Athaliah and Delilah all received their ambitions and cunning ways from demonic sources. Paul warns the Corinthians with, **“I would not that you should have fellowship with devils (demons).”** (1Cor. 10:20) Demons are still as active as they ever were. They will become more numerous as hordes of them are loosed on the earth in the latter days. (Rev. 9:3) Out of ignorance, or in order that we might be politically correct, different names have been given them, such as: alcoholic, epilepsy, psychotics, schizophrenics, bipolar disorder and a host of other enslaving maladies.

That God is spirit, we should all agree. He appeared to Abraham in the form of a man and as an angel unto Jacob. We call the visible manifestation of God either a Theophany or Epiphany, which we understand to be temporary in nature. Nevertheless, the true nature of God is spirit. Satan is also a spiritual being and can manifest himself in a physical form if so desired. **“...Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.”** (2Cor. 11:14) Even so, the true nature of Satan is also spiritual.

The Lord has in His kingdom a host of other spiritual beings who do His bidding and minister help to those who reach for the kingdom. **“But to which of the angels has He ever said, ‘Sit at My right hand until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet?’ Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?”** (Heb. 1:13,14) These unseen holy ones are with us continually, assisting the Holy Spirit in directing us toward the heavenly Father. In their service, they deliver us from harm, strengthen our hands in battle and save us from the snares and pitfalls of the enemy. Their goal is to minister life, which is union and communion with the Father.

Satan’s kingdom, on the other hand, is the counterpart and antithesis of the kingdom of God. His is the kingdom of darkness. He surrounds himself with a host of unseen beings, which are dedicated to the ministry of destruction. In their consecration to evil, they ever attempt to lure us into the labyrinth of darkness through temptations, reasonings and imaginations. (Rom. 1:21) (2Cor. 10:5) Their sole purpose is to minister death—which is separation from the Father.

We are also spiritual beings who are clothed with flesh. God never intended that we should be creatures ruled by the flesh, but that we should walk in the spiritual realm, thereby enjoying oneness with the Father. When Adam cast his lot with Satan, he brought man to a walk, which was almost exclusively in the carnal or fleshly realm. Man has, since that monumental occasion, devolved into an increasing domination by the mind of reason. When there appears on the scene that rarity of a spiritual man, **“Who by reason of practice have trained their senses to discern good and evil”** (Heb. 5:14), they appear to be an oddity for they see and hear things that belong to the realm of the

spirit. In reality, they are the normal Christians—we are the oddities, the abnormal ones.

Satan has little means of expression in the natural domain except through man. He uses his army of demons to entice, enslave, manipulate and control man and establish the expression of his nature, which are violence, perversion, confusion, sickness, disease and death. These are the works of the devil. These are the things Jesus, the pattern Son, came to destroy.

If Satan controls an area of your life, that area becomes a means of his expression through you. That does not mean you are demon possessed. It does mean that a certain area of your life is out of control or is ruled by Satan. The Lord, in His precious wisdom and love, does not reveal all these areas at one time but “little by little” so that we do not become discouraged. **“I will not drive them out before you in a single year, that the land may not become desolate, and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you. I will drive them out before you little by little, until you become fruitful and take possession of the land.”** (Ex. 23:29,30) These areas, or demons, are brought to light through temptation. We are brought into certain situations in order to expose what is within us.

The King James Version of the New Testament does not contain the word “demon” but rather uses the word “devil” instead. Most other translations will use the word “demon” in those instances where the Greek calls for it. The Greek word “DAIMONIZOMAI” means to be demonized or ruled in a certain area of our life. If you question that statement, let me give some illustrations.

“And as they were going out, behold a dumb man, demon possessed, was brought to Him. And after the

demon was cast out, the dumb man spoke..." (Matt. 9:32,33) There is no mention that this man was a raving lunatic or an uncontrollable madman. He was simply mute—unable to speak. **"Then there was brought to Him a demon possessed man, who was blind and dumb, and He healed him, so that the dumb man spoke and saw."** (Matt. 12:22) Here we see that there were two areas of this man's life which were controlled by demonic forces. The other areas of this man's life were evidently free from the control of Satan.

As Jesus and three of His disciples came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, they met a man, who had an epileptic son. He prayed, **"Lord, have mercy on my son for he is an epileptic and is very ill; for he often falls into the fire, and often into the water."** (Matt.17:15) In this instance, we are getting close to what most people think demon possession is; yet, in this narrative, there is no indication that this condition was continuous but was an occasional occurrence.

"And behold, there was a woman who for eighteen years had had a sickness caused by a spirit; and she was bent double and could not straighten up at all." (Luke 13:11) This infirmity was caused by a demon who had control of a certain area of her body. Once the spirit was expelled, the woman was free from the insidious prison to which she had been confined for many years.

If you think demons disappeared when Jesus ascended, then you are blind to the enemy within and will accept the terminology that is given for a host of afflictions. For example, to the one who was deaf, we would accept the diagnosis that his auditory nerve was dead or damaged. But remember, it's the cause we're after, not the effect. In His evaluation of the condition, **"Jesus rebuked the**

unclean spirit, saying to it, 'you deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and do not enter him again'." (Mark 9:25) Concerning the epileptic child, we have been well schooled from the halls of science that it was caused by damage to the child's brain, probably during childbirth. There is also the likelihood of a chemical deficiency or imbalance in the brain. It could be a tangle of blood vessels deep inside the brain. These are the modern explanations. It is remarkable that Jesus called it a devil, or demon.

We should understand that the Lord desires to express himself in and through us. Satan is well aware of this and will use any area yet under his control to rob God of the glory that rightfully belongs to Him.

Demons are more in evidence today than they were in Jesus' day when He began to pull back the shroud, under which they had been hiding. There is scriptural evidence that in the last days the bottomless pit will be opened and **"...out of the smoke comes forth locusts upon the earth; and power was given to them, as the scorpions of the earth have power...and they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months; and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man."** (Rev. 9:2-5) Since the book of Revelation is a book of symbols, I believe that you will agree that these locusts are not ordinary grasshoppers for a locust will not sting and torment a person. These are demons loosed upon the earth to join with their cohorts who are already here. As you read further in this chapter, you will find an unusual description of their appearance (also symbolic) followed by this statement: **"They have a king over them whose name is in the Hebrew Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon."** (Rev. 9:11) Both of these names mean "destroyer" or "destruction." This gives

credence to the fact that these locusts are demons who serve the wicked one as their king.

As we have previously stated, demons are spirits without bodies. Since their primary purpose is the destruction of God's progeny, or offspring, they must find a means of expression that is recognizable to the natural man. That expression comes through demonizing a given area of man, or if possible, the entire man such as the demoniac of Gadara.

Once an evil spirit finds an open or willing vessel, he will never leave unless he is driven out or until death occurs. In the interval of his habitation, he faithfully studies and observes all other persons who are in close proximity to his host or hostess. The unclean spirit will claim that person as his own house until that person dies. **“Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places, seeking rest, and does not find it. Then it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came’; and when it comes, it finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order. Then it goes, and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first.”** (Matt. 12:43-45) For this reason, we believe that there are “family spirits.” They inhabit a member of a family and invite in other like spirits who also take up residence in that family.

I do not believe demons to be brilliant geniuses when it comes to individual behavior. Although, they have been around for millenniums and have studied human behavior intensely; I do not believe they can read your mind or know how you will respond in a given situation. Through trial and error, they learn just which button to push to obtain their desired reaction. After a given period of time, they know

how to manipulate, almost at will, that certain area in which they reside. They're comfortable there. They're at rest there. In the interim, they are also studying family members and will come and go within that family like old home week.

The following passage of Scripture that we have often quoted always perplexed me. **“When an unclean spirit goeth out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.”** (Matt. 12:43) As I prayed about the true meaning of this verse, I asked God, “Lord, do you mean that out of the millions of people who were readily available, that wandering spirit could not find a suitable place of habitation?” The Lord is so patient, so gracious to teach us. He is so faithful to develop the truths that are concealed, if we seek for them like hidden treasures. His response was almost immediate. *“There were many persons the unclean spirit could have entered and remained; but there were none he knew as well. He would have had to relearn afresh his new host. This would have inhibited his expression. Therefore, he returned to the one with whom he was familiar; one he knew; one with whom he could enjoy rest.”* Herein lies the answer to the puzzle concerning the man who has been saved and delivered from his past bondage but has again been taken into captivity. If he should depart from following the Lord, he will revert to the same pursuits he was involved with before. However, he is now worse than at the beginning, because the original evil spirit has brought reinforcements with him to ensure his safety and right of residency.

Have you ever observed a family that was abused and neglected by an alcoholic father? Almost invariably there will be one or more of the children who will become alcoholics and abuse their own spouses and children. You would think that they would have learned. They so hated it as a child. What happened? Is it a disease that is

hereditary? Is it genetically transmitted? Hardly! It is a spirit, which while demonizing the father was also scrutinizing every family member to discover which or how many he could comfortably inhabit—one which he knew and could easily maneuver.

The Lord made a rather bewildering statement to Israel when He said, **“I will...visit the iniquities of the fathers on the children and the grandchildren to the third and fourth generation.”** (Ex. 34:7) I would look at this verse and in my human reasoning think, “How unfair! Why should I suffer for my great grandfather’s sins?” Of course, we know that there are many obvious sins, such as syphilis, other venereal diseases, insanity etc. that are passed down from father to children or from mother to children. However, as the Lord began to give me understanding regarding this verse, I saw that the most dreadful sins from the fathers are visited on the sons in the form of demonic spirits. Have you ever observed a youngster’s temper tantrum and thought, “My, he’s just like his father. Same explosiveness. Same violence. Same antagonistic nature.” These are not genetically transmitted but spiritually inherited—the family spirit.

As has been mentioned before, those enemies have inhabited our land for centuries. They know every weakness and flaw of the true heirs of the land. Their studies have been so meticulous; they know every “panic button,” where the “explode switch” is and what will send us into weeping and depression. They know every lever in the “cockpit.” And why not? They’ve had centuries in which to observe our family. They have been passed down from fathers and mothers and now must be forcibly ejected by the power and authority of Jesus Christ. They grow terrified at the prospect of having no means of expression. If they cannot demonize a person, they will, as a last resort, take

up habitation in an animal. After Jesus had exorcised the evil spirits from the demoniac of the Gadarenes, they were so afraid of being cast into the abyss that they begged Jesus to have mercy. **“Now there was a herd of many swine feeding there on the mountain; and the demons entreated Him to permit them to enter the swine. And He gave them permission. And the demons came out of the man and entered the swine; and the herd rushed violently down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.”** (Luke 8:32,33)

Since Israel and her inheritance of the land of Canaan was an example or model for us (1Cor. 10:6) (Rom.15:4), we can now better understand God’s commandment to Joshua concerning the city of Jericho. **“And they utterly destroyed everything in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword.”** (Josh. 6:21) The Lord spoke through Samuel unto King Saul and said, **“Now go strike Amalek and utterly destroy all that he has, and do not spare him; but put to death both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.”** (1Sam. 15:3)

Clearly, in these two instances and there are many more, even the animals were put to death. In type, there was to be nothing left that could house an evil spirit. King Saul, against the commandment of the Lord, preserved some of the lives of the Amalekites, some of the choice animals and worst of all, King Agag himself. Little did he realize that in his disobedience he was sacrificing not only his right to rule but also the right of his son Jonathan as well. For you to tolerate some wicked entity to continue to live in your “land” after the Lord has been faithful to expose its presence will disqualify you from ruling and reigning with Christ on His throne. We are not speaking here of losing your salvation—that was assured when you came out of Egypt.

King Saul at seventy-five years of age—while battling the Philistines, knowing the battle was lost and his sons already slain—leaned upon his own spear and lay mortally wounded on Mt. Gilboa. He questioned one who came and stood over him, **“Who are you?”** And the man answered, **“I am an Amalekite.”** This stranger thereby administered the *coup de grace*, taking Saul’s life and then his crown and bracelets. He later brought them to David, thinking he would gain favor; but David instead ordered his execution. This is a powerful message in type.

That little infant spirit that you allow to live could one day grow up and become a “Goliath” that will terrorize you. Deal with it now. There stands a demon behind every work of the flesh. It may now simply be a work of the flesh—but let it develop—allow it to grow and go unchecked and it will mature into a full-fledged demon out of control. I do not mean to imply that flesh becomes demonic. Undisciplined flesh opens the door to the spirit world. If you allow these enemies to live that God has commanded you to annihilate, then in your moment of weakness they could rise up and kill you.

I was discussing some of these things with a Christian friend one night concerning how demons infiltrate families. She blanched as she related how her sister, who was married to an epileptic, became epileptic upon the death of her husband. I could see she was concerned about the possibility, that upon the death of her sister, she might also become epileptic. I assured her that the Lord does not leave us defenseless. I was staying in their home at the time and was awakened about 3 a.m. by the overpowering presence of an evil spirit. I sat up in bed and quietly began to rebuke the spirit. It was then that I heard a strange sound outside my open window. The battle with the evil presence

lasted no longer than one or two minutes when the demonic spirit departed, and I felt the peace of God fill the room. The next morning my friend was quite agitated and expressed her displeasure with these words, “Our dog had a fit last night in my flower bed right under your window. He’s never had fits before.” I replied, “Your dog had an epileptic seizure. That spirit which has been studying you became terrified and disturbed because it realized that the Holy Spirit had exposed its presence. He, consequently, attacked the one with the least defense.” The Lord has placed within man a wall of defense that the animal does not have. It is called the will. Solomon made this observation, **“Like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has no control over his spirit.”** (Prov. 25:28) The enemy can come and go at will where there are no walls of defense. Our first line of defense is our will. The victory does not depend on our strength or cunning, but it is won or lost in that area of our mind called the will.

While fellowshiping with the Lord one day, He suddenly spoke something into my spirit. *“Do you know what a demolition derby is?”* My first reaction was “What a strange question.” But then I answered, “Yes, Lord. It is where men ram automobiles into each other until they are totally disabled. The last one able to move is the winner.” *“That’s how demons behave,”* the Lord continued. *“They use people as their vehicles and bring them into conflict with each other, determined to cripple and destroy in the process. They count it fun and games.”* I was both pleased by the revelation and disturbed by the fact that I had more than once been used as a vehicle in the past, for the destruction of others, being an unknowing but willing instrument in the hands of our common enemy. There is no greater conflict with so many casualties as the strife that occurs in our family—called the church. I’ve seen lying, stealing, hatred, gossip, envy, political infighting, backbiting,

adultery, cursing, manipulation and unforgiveness, which eats like a cancer; and this is just among the preachers. I blush with shame and confess that I have been guilty of participating in the spiritual demolition derby. So have you if you have brought hurt and injury to another with your unkind words or criticism. Even through our passive inaction, we can promote the wreckage and maiming of another.

I shudder when I look at my ancestors and recognize the “company” they had. A desperate prayer escaped my lips as I cried, “Lord, am I going to have to conquer all those demons?” The Lord gently replied, “*Yes! But little by little; and not only those, but the ones who have captivated the land of your brothers and sisters.*” We’re called not only to deliver the land but also to make it fruitful and productive. With my analytical mind, I could easily join forces with the ten faithless spies and agree that it is an impossible task, which we have been called to accomplish. Consequently, this choice would assure my death in the wilderness, dying there without ever endeavoring to deliver the land. On the other hand, I can look beyond the staggering heights of the walled cities and the endless taunts of the giants therein to the One who is the Lord of Hosts, leading me from victory to victory. It is an act of my will. With whom shall I agree? Will I agree with the jeers of the trespassers, who inhabit my land unlawfully; or shall I set my will to agree with the Captain of my salvation? The figures are astounding as we see those who have agreed with the adversary by saying, “The struggle is too severe. I’m saved and on my way to heaven. Why should I get involved in a battle that I’m not required to?” I can assure you—this struggle has more to do with your eternal salvation than you can imagine.

I believe every enslaving habit is demonic in nature. If it is a habit you cannot quit, no matter how hard you try, it is very likely demonic. The nature and purpose of Satan is to

control us completely. He establishes his center of operation in those areas that he commands with the intention of expanding his scope of activity until he dominates the entire land. When he controls the entire land, then and only then is one demon possessed. God's purpose is for us to take back the territory little by little until He reigns supreme o'er the entire land. I'm suspicious of any habit that becomes enslaving, be it tobacco, alcohol, hard drugs (street drugs), soft drugs (prescription drugs), gambling, coffee or cokes. In addition, there are those things we don't think of as habitual, such as criticism, gossip and backbiting.

I urge you to examine the works of the flesh mentioned in the fifth chapter of Galatians. The above list was not intended to be an exhaustive study of the works of the flesh by any means; it barely scratches the surface. Behind every work of the flesh stands a bona fide demon ready and anxious to transform these works into an enslaving habit, out of your control.

Follow with me as we examine some areas of this progression. If a person, in a moment of weakness, drinks too much alcohol and becomes totally intoxicated, does that mean he has automatically become an alcoholic? No! It only means the person got drunk. Can you agree with that? It would be a rather easy chore, at that particular moment, for that person to lay that bottle down and never pick it up again. If, however, they should turn to the bottle at every disappointment or weariness of life, at some point that person will become an alcoholic, which then becomes demonic. As the spirit of alcoholism takes over, the person may be absolutely free in most every other area of their life yet out of control in this one area. The danger that now exists is that this spirit of alcoholism will bring in other evil spirits more wicked than himself to reinforce his position and

protect his holdings. Some of us have observed an alcoholic who became a liar, a thief, and an abusive wife-beater, irresponsible and violent. He was not that way before his captivity, but other spirits gained entrance as the spirit of alcoholism tore down the walls of his will.

The demon of lying may begin as a little white lie that is told to escape responsibility or discipline. As the lying skills are honed, it becomes easier to fabricate lies than to tell the simple truth. That person is so deceived by Satan that they assume the mere facts are too unbelievable.

Exaggeration is another invitation to the demon of lying. It is begun early in childhood by aggrandizement or embellishing the facts. The facts are too boring, so it becomes a "tall tale" or a "fish story." I've listened to preachers exaggerate repeatedly; and when confronted, they say it was scripturally acceptable because it was "evangelically" speaking. A lie now becomes acceptable because the people are too dense to understand the simple truth. These preachers are colorful, imaginative and in great demand because the people desire those types of sermons. Some people will say that this is permissible on the grounds that the end justifies the means. This activity will, at some point in time, become demonic and that person will become incapable of the truth. Not only can he not tell the truth, but he will develop perverted hearing. The truth that he hears will be warped and distorted. He is not a liar because he tells one lie no more than a man is a drunkard because he over indulges one time.

Each of us, at one or more times in our life, have sat down at a sumptuous meal and overeaten. I do not believe that the occasional overeater makes one a glutton. There is, however, a line that is crossed where every meal is a gluttonous orgy. If a man or woman overeats to the point

that their health is in jeopardy, they need to face up to the glaring facts. They are out of control in that area. If you take in more calories than you are burning, you are overeating. At this point, drastic measures should be taken to limit the amount of food one consumes; but why let it get to that point? **“He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.”** (Prov. 25:28)

Anyone who has ever used tobacco will have to agree with me on this detail—you certainly were not hooked with your first experiment with the leaf—be it cigarette, snuff or chewing tobacco. The cigarette made you dizzy. The snuff or chewing tobacco probably made you sick to the point of vomiting. Your body was trying to tell you, “This stuff is not good for you.” It was as you yielded to the temptation to be like others that you became addicted and later found it almost impossible to lay the tobacco down (whatever form of it) apart from the power of Christ. Look at those pitiful caricatures of humanity in the cancer wards, who have undergone an operation to remove a cancerous larynx. Some are still inhaling cigarette smoke through some mechanical device. Even though the habit gave them cancer, which robbed them of health and freedom, they yet serve that demon.

As you study the list which Paul calls “**...the works of the flesh**” (Gal 5:19-21), you will discover that each of these can become a ruling, dominating, overpowering, demonic master if you yield your will in that certain area. From the Ouija board to temper tantrums, each is involved in a realm we must conquer if our land is to be free. Again, I am not speaking of heaven or hell but rather the gaining of our Promised Land.

I cannot over-emphasize the importance of your will in this conflict. I cannot stress too greatly that it will not be your strength or intellect that will win the battle—but your will. Every battle is won or lost on the battlefield of the mind. **“For as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.”** (Prov. 23:7) Anything that anesthetizes the will leaves the gates to the city open to evil forces. I will not submit my will into the hands of another man. Hypnosis has been lauded as a sort of panacea by psychiatrists and psychologists alike. However, it places your will into the hands of another who simply rearranges the problems rather than eliminating them.

Transcendental Meditation is an exercise devised by the Indian Hindu, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. It teaches the suppression of all activity of the body, mind and will in order that self may realize its distinction from them and attain liberation. This passive state leaves the will helpless against the hordes that besiege the city. If “TM” is the answer to so many problems, then why is India such a terribly distressed country? Why do so many Gurus come to America? The answer is obvious. Money! Many foolish Americans have turned to every witch doctor and peddler of snake oil in the world rather than to the Truth.

Whether it is hypnosis, anesthetics or comas, the will is inoperative to some degree; and in the case of surgery or comas, we who are spiritual should stand in the gap to resist the enemy for that helpless person.

Any use of drugs, from tranquilizers to crack cocaine, runs the risk of entertaining the demon associated with it. I have never dealt with anyone who habitually used marijuana, alcohol, LSD, heroin, cocaine or any number of other drugs who did not need deliverance from a host of demons. All of these narcotics, including prescription drugs,

can weaken the will to the point of helplessness if used excessively. If used at all, they will, to a degree, compromise the deliverance of our land.

CHAPTER 7

GOD—OUR SOURCE OF AUTHORITY

I don't really like to devote so much space to demons; but in order for us to understand God's ways, we need to understand His tools. The last chapter was not an exhaustive study on the subject by any means, but just enough to make you aware of the enemy's methods and cunning. Lest we glorify and elevate evil spirits to some ethereal realm equal to God and His holy angels, let us briefly examine the relationship between these two contrasting kingdoms.

Isaiah is exultant in his declaration, **“Thus says the Lord, ‘Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool.’”** (Is. 66:1) Jeremiah further strengthens the testimony with these words, **“Do not I fill the heavens and the earth?”** (Jer. 23:24) If we are to walk in confidence and joy, we need to see God as One Who is in total control of every aspect of our lives as well as having perfect knowledge and command regarding the affairs of this world.

If you think for one moment the Neros and Hitlers of this world wrested the reins of government from the hands of God by force or cunning—leaving God to frantically attempt to salvage some small remnant from Satan—then that leaves you with a very small God. You will always walk in doubt and uncertainty. God leaves absolutely nothing to chance. He is not a gambler. Do you honestly believe for one moment that God would carelessly leave the decisions and directions of His universe to the discretion of some faltering, vacillating man? He has always been in control of every situation, and He always shall be.

Some would protest and say that the church is His voice and authority in this present world. This is true to a point. As long as she is obedient to the Holy Spirit, she is His voice. If she walks in her own way, she is just another voice—a voice without power or authority. She becomes as sounding brass and clanging cymbals—an empty gong. When the Holy Spirit is in charge, He does some pretty radical things. He kills people. He smites them with blindness or causes them to become mute and silent. (Acts 5:1-10) (Acts 13:11) (Luke 1:18-20)

The Lord has never been caught off-guard. He has never been duped by a counterfeit nor fallen victim to a lie. Because He is pure truth, untruth stands in stark contrast. Because He is light, darkness cannot exist in His presence. Because He is good, evil cannot subsist nor co-exist except by His permission or command. He is called in one place “**...the Father of spirits...**” Other translations say, “**...the Father of our spirits...**” (Heb. 12:9) Although the latter version is true, it weakens somewhat the broader perspective of truth involved.

We need to consider carefully the words of the Bible, cognizant of the fact that God does not play with words. Words are the very foundation of life. By His Word, He spoke into existence the worlds and the ages. “**The power of death and life are in the power of the tongue.**” (Prov. 18:21) By His Word the dead was raised, the lame healed, the diseased cured, the storms stilled and the feeble strengthened. The Word is also sharp and piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit. His Word declares without apology or explanation the following: “**For in Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him and He is before all things and**

in Him all things hold together.” (Col. 1:16,17) This is a startling Scripture when you realize the “rulers and authorities” (principalities and powers) are the same principalities and powers we are encouraged to wrestle against in Ephesians 6:11. The very things that war against us, God holds together by the power of His might. Before you throw up your hand and relegate this to the scrap heap, hear what the Lord has to say: **“Behold, I Myself have created the smith who blows the fire of coals, and brings out a weapon for its work; and I have created the destroyer to ruin.”** (Isa. 54:16) This verse was once an enigma to me, totally out of harmony with the verses preceding and following it. One day I learned that these testings, though they proceed from God, are not designed to destroy us, but rather to temper and mold us into a formidable weapon of warfare.

Why were the children of Israel in Egypt in the first place? Because it was the will of God. Joseph’s brothers, who had come down to Egypt to buy grain, were confronted by Joseph with these words, **“Now therefore, it was not you who sent me here but God...”** (Gen 45:8) Can you accept that? Remember, Joseph was first sold into the hands of the Midianites (Ishmaelites), who in turn sold him as a slave to an officer in Pharaoh’s army named Potiphar. Joseph subsequently spent a number of years in jail, wrongfully accused and unjustly convicted. For many years he languished there, of which the Psalmist writes, **“He sent a man before them; Joseph, who was sold as a slave. Whose feet they hurt with fetters. He was laid in iron, until the time that his word came to pass, the word of the Lord tested him.”** (Ps. 105:17-19) His steps were ordered of the Lord. He was not the victim of circumstances by which God seized the opportunity to glorify Himself. His was a planned adventure.

Have you ever heard such foolish babbling as, “God’s kid should go first class?” Well, God may deliver His deliverers by slavery, whale, whirlwind, or donkey. It may be by a Rolls Royce, but it could be by second or third-class coach on a plane or sitting in the aisle of a crowded bus or train.

Who do you think was controlling the affairs of the Midianites or the house of Potiphar? Can you agree that it was God’s will for Joseph to spend those years in prison? There is a term we should get down in our spirit; it is called “a time for birthing.” Notice again the words of Joseph. **“God sent me before you to preserve life. As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.”** (Gen 45:5—50:20)

If you think that your life or the lives of your loved ones are merely unguided missiles headed for eventual destruction, then you will sink into despair. If you think Satan or demons can act with impunity to savage and rampage whomsoever they will without restraint, then you have consigned God as a paper king, over a puppet government, who can act only when and where Satan allows Him. Just the opposite is true. Satan is commissioned by God to operate in given areas. If the hosts of Satan step out of their designated sphere of operation, God is quick to deal with their disobedience. **“And angels who did not keep their first estate (principality or area of dominion) but left their own habitation (proper abode), He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”** (Jude 6)

I stand amazed at some people’s theology. While discussing Adam’s fall with a brother one day, I asked him, “Where do you think God was while Satan was tempting

Eve? Do you think He had stepped out somewhere when this earthshaking transaction was made? Do you believe Satan surreptitiously slipped into the garden and held a clandestine meeting with Adam and Eve, unaware and unknown to God?” His answer to all these questions was, “Yes.” I was dumbfounded. I couldn’t believe any man would serve such a weak and vulnerable God. But, of course, God was not asleep nor was He caught off guard. He not only knew but invited the encounter.

Neither Adam nor any other man could ever be a genetic son of God unless and until there first occurred a divine implantation of Holy Seed into their being. That could never happen until Jesus Christ, the bearer of life—the corn of wheat—fell into the earth and died, thereby releasing the Life-Seed shut up in His person. All men who came before Him were only sons of God creatively but not genetically.

Satan understood the prophetic word given in the garden. “**...The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head.**” (Gen. 3:15) He knew that from Eve’s progeny would arise one who would effect his total defeat. Let me now pose a question. Why didn’t Satan just kill Eve and thwart the purpose of God, thereby eliminating the threat at its source? The answer is amazingly simple. He could not act outside his assigned jurisdiction.

When Satan had Jesus alone on the Mount of Temptation, why didn’t he kill Him there? The answer, which may shock you, is this: Satan did not want Jesus to shed His blood. He wanted Him to live to a ripe old age and carry the Life-Seed to the grave with Him. I can hear the protests, “But Satan had Jesus crucified!” Did he really? Why then did he try to keep Jesus from the cross? Remember when Jesus began to reveal to His disciples how that “**...He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things**

from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, 'God forbid it Lord! This shall never happen to you.' But He turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me Satan'." (Matt. 16:21-23) If Satan wanted Him crucified, why was he, through Peter, trying to deter Him from the cross?

Look with me to that day when a great gathering of people surrounded Peter as he began to preach. This is the same man who had earlier tried to dissuade Jesus from the cross. **"Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know—this man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death."** (Acts 2:22-23) He was not crucified by the conspiracy and strategy of Satan but by the intentional arrangement of the Father.

As Pilate grew irritated with Jesus because He refused to answer him further, **"He said to Him, 'You do not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you, and I have authority to crucify you?' Jesus answered, 'You would have no authority over Me unless it had been given you from above'."** (John 19:10,11) Now consider this carefully. Who determined and brought about the crucifixion? It was not Satan—but the Father Himself. The Father planned it and initiated it, for His life was shut up in the person of Jesus Christ. For that life to be perpetuated, it had to be poured out into the earth—you and me.

There have been suggestions that the beatings in Pilate's hall were Satan's attempt to frighten Jesus away from the cross, but the whole scenario got out of hand. Of course, I disagree with that seeing as how the angels of God accompanied His every move. Every stripe, every welt, every bruise and every drop of blood was predestined of the Father. **"But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief..."** (Isa. 53:10)

Permit me to make a statement that may shock some of you but will open a door of understanding to others. God uses Satan and his demons as instruments by which He trains and hardens His sons and through whom He obtains glory and praise. **"...I am the Lord, there is no other, the One forming light and creating darkness, causing well-being and creating calamity; I am the Lord who does all these things."** (Isa. 45:6,7)

Job has been the center of controversy and the root of many perplexing questions. There are some who say that Job made the wrong confession, which brought about his many problems when he said, **"The thing I greatly feared has come upon me and that which I was afraid of is come upon me."** (Job 3:25) Some say it was because of his "negative confession" that he brought calamity upon himself and his entire family. Notice what God's Word has to say about this as Job responds to the provoking barbs of his wife. **"...You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity? In all this Job did not sin with his lips."** (Job 2:10) Look closely at what God said to Satan **"...he still holds fast his integrity although you incited Me against him, to ruin him without cause."** (Job 2,3) Consider carefully who initiated the challenge that was the beginning of Job's troubles. It was not Satan. It was God.

To understand God's purposes is to erase the fears and doubts that shadow our questioning mind. God has a kingdom in mind that will rule in justice and righteousness throughout the whole of His creation. He cannot—He will not hand the reigns of government over to untried novices who have been coddled and protected in some "spiritual hothouse." Those who will rule and reign with Him will have been tested by the various means that He Himself has chosen. Satan is merely a gym teacher who puts us through the ropes at the bidding of the Lord.

I had a coach once who, I was sure, hated me. He cursed me. He cast disparaging doubts on my legal birth. He screamed insults at me. He invited me on numerous occasions to quit the team. He put me through exercises that I suspected were designed to kill me. Only my angry stubbornness kept me going. Later I discovered that he saw where I was weak and was really challenging my weaknesses, not my areas of strength. When we have become victorious in a given area, we will have no more problems that we cannot overcome in that realm. It's in those areas of weaknesses and needs that we will be challenged and tested.

There was a wicked king by the name of Ahab who had persuaded Jehoshaphat, a godly king, to join forces with him. Ahab gathered four hundred "prophets" about him who prophesied nothing but good. Knowing that these were not true prophets, Jehoshaphat ask for a true prophet. A prophet by the name of Micaiah was summoned, and he prophesied disaster if the two kings pursued their present course. **"He said, 'I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains like sheep which have no shepherd. And the Lord said, 'These have no master. Let each of them return to his house in peace'."** (1Kings 22:17) **"And Micaiah said, 'Therefore hear the word of the Lord. I**

saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right and on His left.’ And He said, ‘Who will entice Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’ ‘And one said this while another said that. Then a spirit came forth and stood before the Lord and said, ‘I will entice him.’ And the Lord said unto him, ‘How?’ And he said, ‘I will go out and be a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ Then He said, ‘You are to entice him and prevail’.” (1Kings 22:19-22)

In this incident, we are permitted a glimpse into the heavenlies and what transpired at that given time. The host of heaven stood on His right and on His left. Please don't imagine for one moment that these are all holy angels of the Lord. When Daniel declares, **“...the heavens do rule,”** (Dan. 4:26), we are to understand that the heavens refer to that realm from which authority flows—whether good or evil. These are, in part, evil spirits who stand before the Lord; and He is receiving suggestions from them as to how they will accomplish Ahab's death. One suggests this while another that. It seems that all the suggestions are considered and rejected until there comes one and makes the proposal, **“I know how to lure him to his death.” The Lord answers, “How?” “I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets,”** was the reply. **“Go, for you will succeed,”** was the Lord's commission. Where was Satan in all of this? Where was the battle raging between God and Satan? It wasn't. I tell you, God is not at war with Satan. We are!

Does the above story sound at all familiar to you? The land today is filled with “prophets of the Lord” from whose mouths deceiving spirits speak. They speak prosperity in such beautiful flowing phrases. Who could doubt the “good” things of the Lord that comes forth with such seeming anointing? There are no rebukes—no confrontations—only

those things that will swell the offering baskets. I tell you, the Micaiahs of today are treated no better than was he. He broke on the scene for this one dramatic proclamation and perhaps perished in the prison to which Ahab had consigned him. Scriptures never mention him again. Nevertheless, he left an indelible mark on the pages of God's word.

Man so wants to be a permanent fixture in the history of this world. Sadly, this is the mentality of most ministers today. Obviously, the mark of a successful minister is to have a large television audience, have an itinerary packed for the next two years, or pastor a growing, prosperous church. The present church building boom is stark evidence of the trend toward making a splash in this turbulent sea of humanity. Where are the Micaiahs of today, who are content to remain in obscurity until such time a true word of the Lord needs to be spoken, then fade into oblivion?

If you think that this is just a doctrine of the Old Testament, let us examine these letters from the Apostle Paul. **“...the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.”** (2Thes. 2:9-12) Notice! It was not Satan who sent upon them a spirit of delusion—it was not a demon. It was God.

There is a doctrine that is being taught that embraces the theory that God does not know the future nor does He know what sort of clever trick Satan will pull out of his hat next.

Our Lord does not know, so they claim, what choices we will make in any given situation. He simply reacts in defensive countermeasures in an effort to ward off the attacks of Satan. How utterly foolish and ridiculous. A god such as that could never win my allegiance. Listen to this word out of the mouth of God. **“For I know that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him.”** (Gen. 18:19) **“Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you...”** (Jer. 1:5) Does this sound like some blind god who is stumbling through eternity?

I emphatically repeat, the Lord has left nothing to chance. Every spirit, whether good or evil, is under direct authority of God. Listen to the cries of demons as they recognized Jesus. **“What do we have to do with You, Son of God? Have You come to torment us before our time?”** (Matt. 8:29) **“What do we have to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!”** (Mark 1:24) Isn't it amazing that demons recognized who Jesus was before the people of God did?

May I give you a crude illustration that may help clarify my teaching. Suppose that I was an engineer educated in the field of heating and air conditioning. Then assume that I invented a new system that would keep my home at a predetermined setting day by day—year by year. One day I returned home to find my home engulfed in flames. Upon investigation, it is discovered that my invention had malfunctioned, causing an electrical short circuit, thereby burning my house to the ground. You would have to conclude, after studying the evidence, that there was a flaw

in the conception of this undertaking. I had made an error in calculation. I had overlooked some hidden danger.

If the fall of man wasn't in the plan of God—if Satan outsmarted God in the Garden of Eden—if God had to resort to an alternate plan for man—then one must conclude that there was an error in God's master design. If Satan outsmarted God, then God is not omniscient. He has a weakness—a flaw—an imperfection in His intelligence. If man's fall in the Garden of Eden was a dreadful mistake, we are then serving a God who is not in total charge of all that He has created. He is a Frankenstein who has a monster out of control. But of course that is not the case. We are assured, not only by our faith but also by His word, that these things are not true. God is in total control. There has been no error—no flaw in His divine plan for the ages. There is neither now nor has there ever been an alternate plan—no backup system—no chance for failure. **“The Lord sat as King over the flood; yea, the Lord sits as King forever.”** (Ps. 29:10)

Paul, having been caught up into a spiritual realm unknown to other men, gives us some insight into how God was involved in the fall of man in that celestial garden. He records this astonishing statement for our enlightenment. **“For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.”** (Rom. 8:20,21) **“The Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world.”** (Rev. 13:8) Speaking of Jesus, the Bible agrees, **“He was foreknown before the foundation of the world.”** (1Pet. 1:20) Speaking of us, it is recorded, **“He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world.”** (Eph. 1:4) This is not the ranting of some demented preacher seeking attention to some wild and

weird fantasy, but this is the testimony of God throughout the Scriptures. He is in total charge of this magnificent pilgrimage.

As king Saul became more obstinate in his behavior, **“The spirit of the Lord departed from Saul and an evil spirit from the Lord terrorized him. Saul’s servant said to him, ‘behold now, an evil spirit from the Lord is terrorizing you’.”** (1Sam. 16:14,15) **“Now it came about on the next day that an evil spirit from God came mightily on Saul and he raved in the midst of the house.”** (1Sam. 18:10) **“Now there was an evil spirit from the Lord on Saul as he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand, and David was playing the harp with his hand.”** (1Sam. 19:9) This evil spirit was from God’s presence, not from His being. From the second division of the book of Samuel, we read these words; **“Now the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and it incited David against them to say, ‘go number Israel and Judah’.”** (2 Sam. 24:1) The corresponding account reads: **“Then Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel.”** (1Chron. 21:1) There is no discrepancy in these two accounts. God’s anger burned against Israel, so He instructed Satan to move upon David to number the people. If you believe Satan or his demons can move with impunity, then you will always walk in fearful trepidation.

Paul gives us this revealing account. **“Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me—to keep me from exalting myself. Concerning this I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me. ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness’.”** (2Cor. 12:7-9) Now let us, with teachable spirits, examine this passage. Who

gave Paul the thorn in the flesh, and who had the power to remove it? It is clear that the messenger of Satan (a demon) was sent in order to keep Paul from boasting. Satan, on the other hand, loves for you to boast. In fact, that is one of the most prevalent of evil spirits—the spirit of pride. That messenger of Satan was sent by God and could have been removed by Him; but the Lord, in His wisdom, knew what was necessary to keep Paul in a humble state of mind and deed.

“No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, Who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it.” (1Cor. 10:13) If God can control the amount of temptation which challenges you—if He can make the way of escape, then who is in charge of the temptation? The answer is obvious—God.

“Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.” (Matt. 4:1) Mark uses a stronger word and declares, **“The Spirit driveth (impelled) Him into the wilderness.”** (Mark 1:12) Upon reading these things, one might be tempted to become fatalistic in thinking and say, “What’s the use? God is trying to kill me.” Well, that’s true to some degree. There are some things in your life that He’s after, and He’ll never be satisfied until you have been purged from all unrighteousness and transformed into the image of His dear Son.

So what should our attitude be when confronted by demonic forces? Give in and say, “These are from God so I’ll submit.” Never! These are sparring partners given to teach you how to fight. They’ll make you strong—if they don’t kill you. The choice is yours. I know that to many this will sound like heresy; however, permit me to ask some

questions. What was God's purpose for man in the event Adam had not failed in the Garden of Eden? Remember! Adam and Eve were created beings, as were the angels. Had Adam and Eve not failed, the Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world would have been a wasted sacrifice. But, you might say, "Out of God's foreknowledge of what Adam would do, the Lamb was prepared." But I submit the entire episode was in the perfect will of the Father.

If God is, in truth, more powerful than Satan or any other demon, and the Scriptures are abundantly clear that He is, then why does God allow Satan to roam the earth, wreaking havoc on the "apple of His eye?" If one strong angel can bind Satan for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1,2) so that he is powerless to exercise any authority, surely the Lord "**Who makes the Bear, Orion and the Pleiades, and the chambers of the south...**" (Job 9:9) is not helpless before the destroyer. "**He who made the Pleiades and Orion and changes deep darkness into morning, who also darkens day into night, who calls for waters of the sea and pours them out on the surface of the earth, the Lord is His name.**" (Amos 5:8) Does this sound like some paper hero who has been concocted and sustained by some clerical order or religious PR men? I swear to you on the authority of God's word that our Lord has no weaknesses. There is not one flaw whatsoever in His character. The universe and all that it contains are upheld, sustained and cleave together by His wisdom and the power of His might. (Col. 1:16)

Jesus came for this purpose, "**That He might destroy the works of the devil.**" (1John 3:8) As Jesus fulfilled His days on the earth, He healed the sick, opened deaf ears, cured the diseased, brought light to blinded eyes, gave strength to the crippled, cleansed the leper and raised the

dead. All these are the results of the work of the devil. Why didn't Jesus just destroy the devil? His purpose was not to destroy Satan but his works, because Satan is used by God to teach us how to do battle. If you are going into Mexico for a missionary endeavor, you cannot stand on its border and bind every demon within its boundaries in order that you do not face any banditos or contract dysentery. However, the Lord has given us authority through Jesus Christ to resist and overcome every demon who opposes us, whether they come in the form of robbers or dysentery.

A friend of mine, while preaching in Central America, shocked the congregation with these words, "Whether you realize it or not, the devil is your friend." Needless to say, that kind of statement will brand you as a heretic. He wasn't saying the devil was your friend in the same sense that Jesus is your friend; however, Satan plays an integral part in your spiritual growth. Satan is essential to your spiritual completeness. God never allows temptation for the purpose of your destruction nor to cause you to surrender and cave in. Temptations are the calisthenics contrived to develop your spiritual muscle.

Don't murmur and complain about the hardships or warfare. **"Put on the full armor of God that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil..."** (Eph. 6:11-18) (Isa. 59:16,17) Understand that pain and exhaustion are a part of muscle development. If you can see God as bigger than any problem, as Lord over every circumstance, as One Who pours strength into your weakness, then faith will mount up enabling you to begin walking in a spiritual plane that has access to an open heaven.

CHAPTER 8

TEMPTATION—GOD’S METHOD OF EXPOSURE

It is a shocking experience to the Christian when one day he discovers, lurking in some dark cavern of his being, something so distasteful—so sinful and ugly that he is made to wonder if he can still be a Christian. To that one who truly runs after God, this will occur many times. The faithfulness of God will insure that every enemy within us will be exposed in order that we may deal with it. It is impossible for it to remain forever hidden.

I believe there are three main spirits of evil who are the nemeses of every minister. First and foremost is the spirit of pride. Pride will bring a division between the “clergy” and “laity” causing the minister to become aloof and unapproachable. Pride will make him protect his position at all cost. He will become manipulative, scheming, and he will guard his office and pulpit with the ferocity of a she-bear. Pride will cause the minister to believe that he can carry on the work of the Lord apart from the hours of prayer and fasting necessary to receive the direction and anointing of the Holy Spirit. He unknowingly becomes independent from the Lord and begins to build his own kingdom. This nation is covered with gigantic buildings that are monuments to a Pastor’s “vision” but, in fact, are memorials to the man himself. Jesus built no visible monuments of Himself. His efforts were vested in men who would continue His work. Three hundred years passed before any “church buildings” were built.

The second snare for the minister is the spirit of greed. We need only to turn on the television and listen to the numerous carnival-like hawkers and their obscene request for money in order to fulfill some grotesque creation of their

“vision.” For a price, you can board a cruise ship to the Bahamas, which is termed a “religious retreat.” They will also construct some multimillion-dollar recreational park where Christians can go have some “good clean fun.” Now folks, all you have to do in order to see this for what it really is—is try and imagine Jesus involved in any of these projects. Jesus never tried to construct “fun city” and His Galilean cruise turned into a walk on the water or asleep in the bottom of a boat, each in the midst of a storm.

The third overpowering evil spirit, which ensnares thousands of ministers, is the spirit of sexual lust. So many are caught in this web that their message of repentance and holiness is a hollow dry-mouthed gasp. Their preaching is as a trumpet giving an uncertain sound. The age of the sexual revolution has not been relegated only to Hollywood or the nightclubs. I’ve watched countless young women, dressed in mini-skirts and unisex paraphernalia, gyrating to the overpowering beat of a rock “gospel” band which was performing in a Charismatic gathering. This same spirit has seduced many ministers.

Countless are the ministers who, unaware of the subtlety of the enemy within, sat down to counsel some sweet little lady, only to discover too late that the spirit of lust was an overpowering presence. Too late he discovered that the lust within him manifested itself in a moment of weakness, entangling him in a web of deceit, deception, shame and adultery. Let me quickly add, that the physical act of adultery needs not to have occurred for the sin of adultery to take place. Jesus is very plain in this regard. **“Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.”** (Matt. 5:28) This also applies to the woman with the roving eyes. Of course, there are numerous branches to this three-headed monster

that the Lord in His faithfulness will expose through the avenue of temptation.

I am a person who asks a lot of questions. I am, by nature, a man with an inquisitive mind. I've always thought it strange that someone would sit in a classroom not understanding what was being taught but was too timid or too disinterested to ask questions. I believe the Lord wants us to ask questions. And why should we ask questions? To get answers. Why do you pray? To get answers. If you pray for any other reason, it's simply a religious exercise. Why do you read the Bible? To get answers and receive instructions. If you read the Bible as a novel, you'll miss the answers and the instructions.

Let us share one conspicuous example. In the thirteenth chapter of Matthew's gospel, a great multitude had gathered to listen as Jesus spoke to them about the things of the kingdom. He began with the sower who went forth to sow. When He had finished relating the parable to the multitude, His disciples ask Him, "**...Why do you speak to them in parables?**" (Matt. 13:10) The answer He gives is a wonderful eye-opener if you don't choke on its importance. As you hear these words, allow the Lord to sweep away all those preconceived ideas that have been planted in your field by unknowing ministers who were trying to make it all fit their theology. "**To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven; but to them it has not been granted. For whoever has, to him shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. Therefore, I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, 'You will keep on hearing, but will not**

understand; and you will keep on seeing, but will not perceive; for the heart of this people has become dull, and with their ears they scarcely hear, and they have closed their eyes lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart and turn again, and I should heal them’.” (Matt. 13:11-15)

When I first read this account and for many years afterwards, I was troubled by the severe implications. He would hide the truth so you couldn't find it. He would take away what you have, or seem to have, and give it to those who already have an abundance. It hardly seemed fair. There appeared to be partiality on the part of our Lord. My mind went back to the parables of the talents and of the pounds. The man who had only one talent or pound was deprived of even that one and it was given to the one who had ten. (Matt. 25:14-30) (Luke 19:12-27) Almost the same wording is used in both instances, **“For to everyone who has shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.”** (Matt. 25:29) (Luke 19:26)

The answer begins to be revealed later in the thirteenth chapter of the gospel of Matthew. Jesus related another parable of the tares and the wheat—then of the mustard seed and still again of the woman who hid a small amount of leaven in the measure of meal. (Matt. 13:33) It was only after He had left the multitude and had gone into the house with His disciples that the petition was made. **“...Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field”** His disciples requested. (Matt. 13:36) I can almost hear the sigh of relief escaping from the lips of our Lord. Until this time, the disciples were as spiritually blind as the multitude. They were not astute scholars who had a ready grasp of the hidden things of the Spirit. They were ordinary men with an

ordinary dullness of sight and hearing. However, one thing set them apart from the multitude—they had a divine curiosity that hungered to be met. The multitude was content to sit in silent dumbness rather than to run after the Lord for an answer.

I'm a firm believer in asking questions of our Lord. Oh! I've had Satan use the following Scripture on me in an attempt to produce condemnation and guilt, and it is a favorite of his. **“Tempt not the Lord thy God.”** What father does not welcome the probing questions of an inquisitive child seeking knowledge? Our Heavenly Father is no different. He welcomes questions that emanate from the hungry hearts of His children. It is only when that “why” arises out of a rebellious heart that the Father is displeased. Believe me when I say, “The Father can stand any test. There are no questions too difficult for Him, and you will discover that He is totally unshockable.”

You might ask, “What has all this got to do with temptation?” Just this. When you're in the midst of a struggle that seems to threaten your very spiritual existence, you need to be able to come to the Lord and find out the reason. Now hear me carefully when I say, “The answer may be long in coming, but it will come if you persevere.”

Permit me to make a statement that is pivotal to your relationship with the Lord. It is crucial that you understand—temptation is God's method of exposing the enemy in our land. All people are, to some degree, willingly blind to their own faults. Christians are no exception. But I'm not speaking merely of faults. I'm referring to wicked entities that we have housed and accommodated for years because our “land” has been ruled by Canaanites for centuries.

Let us consider one verse of Scripture, which has been used repeatedly in protest against this teaching. **“...Let no one say when he is tempted. ‘I am being tempted by God; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust’.”** (Jas. 1:13-14) First of all, these verses contain what is called an ellipsis. An ellipsis is the omission of one or more words that are obviously understood. This passage could read **“...God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone to do evil.”** We are tempted to evil by the enemy within, whether it be lust, anger, lying or greed. The temptations devised by God are never designed to cause us to sin nor to fail but to expose whatever evil there may be in us or to reveal our love and dedication to the Lord. **“And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, ‘Abraham!’ and he said, ‘Behold here I am.’ And He said, ‘Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of’.”** (Gen. 22:1,2) This temptation from the Lord was designed to test Abraham’s love and obedience, not to lead him into evil.

In reference to Judas, Jesus said, **“Have not I chosen you twelve and one of you is a devil.”** (John 6:70) Also it is recorded **“...He was a thief...”** (John 12:6) In light of these two verses of Scripture, why did Jesus make him the treasurer of their little group? Why make a thief the banker? This is not some cruel sense of humor on the part of the Lord. It was designed to expose the greed in Judas in order that he could make a correct appraisal of his need.

Jesus said, **“...let him who has no sword sell his robe and buy one.”** (Luke 22:36) **“And they said, ‘Lord, look,**

here are two swords’.” (Luke 22:38) Among those who followed Jesus there were only two swords. Isn’t it strange that one of the men who owned a sword was that hothead Simon Peter? **“Simon Peter, therefore having a sword, drew it, and struck the high priest’s slave, and cut off his right ear; and the slave’s name was Malchus.”** (John 18:10) I would venture to say the possessor of the other sword was James, one of the “Sons of Thunder,” who wanted to call fire down out of heaven and destroy an entire village, simply because they refused to accept them. These are things that need exposing in us, and He does it by putting us in situations that will bring these things to the surface.

As a young Christian, I was troubled by what I observed as a pattern in Christian living. A person could be doing very well in this world, living in sin and reveling in the pursuits of the wicked; yet, when he decided to follow the Lord it seemed all hell broke loose. Their businesses suffered reversals. They were passed over for promotion or even lost their jobs. Sickness seemed to run rampant. Troubles in the family erupted causing division and friction. It seemed as if the Christian walk had introduced us to a pathway of uncertainty and tears. It seemed incongruous of God and incompatible with what men had taught me of Him. I quizzed my Pastor concerning the dilemma I was in, observing how I had experienced fewer problems as a sinner. His comment was, “Are you advocating going back into sin?” No! I wasn’t considering going back at all, but his remark didn’t answer my question.

What I had not realized was that when I asked the Lord to come take charge of my life there was a simultaneous change of citizenship. I had now become a citizen of another country whose laws were diametrically opposed to the laws of man. I had now become an alien in the country

where I now lived—a land with different laws and a hostile king. Though I was not immediately aware of what had occurred, the spiritual rulers of this worldly kingdom were joined together to frustrate, inhibit and destroy any influence for good that I may exert. Therefore, since they cannot cancel or annul our citizenship in the heavenlies, they will seek to hold us up as an example of ridicule. How many of us have been caught in some cunning trap of the enemy that made us appear as fools? It had nothing to do with our citizenship, but it had much to do with our influence.

The aforementioned problems also serve as other valuable lessons. The alien in the natural takes resources from one country and sends them to another. They normally do not build kingdoms and empires in an alien land. That would be foolish. To do so would insure their loss at some time in the future. Christians, in the midst of their toils, trials and frustrations, should understand that the Holy Spirit is teaching us to build and lay up treasures for that heavenly country. This world is not our home. We should not be expending unnecessary time and energy building and saving for the comforts of this life. I heard a man say, “If when I come to the end of my life, I should discover that this whole Christian thing is a cruel hoax—a myth; I pray that I will have so lived that my life will have been a total waste.”

As we give thoughtful consideration to our topic, we will conclude that temptation is designed not for the sinner but for the Christian. Let us consider an enlightening portion of Scripture. **“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprovved by Him; for those whom the Lord loves He disciplines and He scourges every son whom He receives. It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as sons; for what son is there whom his father does not**

discipline? But if you are without discipline, of whom all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.” (Heb. 12:5-8) If I understand correctly, punishment is for past sins while discipline is designed for future correction and improvement.

Since the discipline of the Lord is not exercised over the children of this world, they can enjoy the pleasures of sin without any correcting circumstances being brought to bear. They are outside the remedial laws of the Kingdom of God; nevertheless, they bring retribution on their own heads by the seed they sow in their self-willed walk. They ever walk in condemnation; whereas, the child of God does not walk in condemnation. The Holy Spirit is ever active to free the child of God from the bondage and effects of every enslaving alien in our “land.”

“For whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and scourges every son whom he receives.” (Heb. 12:6) My question is this. How does He scourge His sons? What method of scourging is the writer referring to? The scourge, if you recall, was a whip used for correction, discipline and punishment. Jesus made a scourge of cords and drove the moneychangers from the temple. Jesus Himself was scourged in Pilate’s hall until His flesh hung in shreds. As a result of setting free the slave girl from the spirit of divination, Paul and Silas were scourged with rods. The beatings were so severe that the Philippians’ jailer later bathed their open wounds after his conversion. (Acts 16) In every instance, scourging is designed to inflict pain—not just an imagined or token charade but real and intense suffering. Our heavenly Father is the One who administers the rod through whatever medium He chooses in order to accomplish His eternal purposes in our lives.

I've listened to "faith preachers" make this foolish assertion: "God never uses sickness as a means of discipline. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil—one of which is sickness." I totally agree that sickness is an enemy which we should put under our feet. Sickness is never to be accepted passively. Death is also an enemy, which we are to conquer; nevertheless, the Holy Ghost killed Ananias and Sapphira as a direct act of the will of God. The Lord used an enemy (death) to exercise His will against two of His children. I tell you with an assurance birthed out of experience that God will use any method—be it circumstances, sickness or a fire-breathing demon to mold you into the image of His Son.

God's word is so pregnant with truth, ready to be birthed, that it staggers our modern theology. Jesus gives us an account of the Father's behavior that will contort the doctrines and traditions of a permissive and indulgent religion. There was a man who owed his king about \$10,000,000 in silver content—an incredible amount of buying power. As he was called before the king to settle the account, he fell down before him begging for mercy and patience. The lord of that slave felt compassion for him and forgave him the entire debt. That slave, however, went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii (18 cents). He seized him and began to choke him saying, "**Pay back what you owe.**" So his fellow slave began to entreat him saying, "**Have patience with me and I will repay you.**" However, he was unwilling, and threw him in prison until he should pay the debt.. These events were eventually related to the king, who sent for the unforgiving slave and upbraided him with these words, "**...You wicked slave. I forgave you all that debt because you entreated me. Should you not also have mercy on your fellow slave even as I had mercy on you? And his lord moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he**

should repay all that was owed him.” (Matt. 18:32-34)
Now here is the verse I want you to carefully consider. It immediately follows the preceding verses. **“So shall My Heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from his heart.”** (Matt. 18:35)

Now the above passage is primarily dealing with forgiveness, but the method of correction is what I wish to enlarge upon. Remember! Jesus is not dealing with a rank sinner. He is speaking with Peter, one of His disciples—a believer. Peter had asked how often he should forgive his brother in a single day. The following commentary was Jesus’ surprising answer. As punishment, the offender is not turned into the lake of fire but over to the torturers. The torturers are none other than demons. Listen! The torturers are to inflict their special brand of pain until the debt is paid. This is not hell as we have been taught to think of hell. You could hardly repay a debt if you were in the lake of fire. However, these are events that transpire in this present life.

I’ve said all that to say this. We need to question painful situations and circumstances that seem to be a constant replay of yesterday or last year. Chronic sicknesses that reoccur for no apparent reason and persist over a long period of time should cause our spiritual antennas to vibrate. Ask some questions of the Lord. We should always look for a spiritual solution to a physical problem. If you seem to repeatedly get entangled in the same type of web—ask some questions of the Lord. Find out if there is an area in your life the Lord is trying to correct. Let us not be like “...dumb, driven cattle...” **“...for the rod is for the back of him who lacks understanding.”** (Prov.10:13) **“A rebuke goes deeper into one who has understanding than a hundred blows into a fool.”** (Prov.17:10)

If we simply endure sickness in the midst of health, poverty in the midst of plenty or mental anguish that hounds our every step and never petition the Lord for answers, then we're as fools whom the tormentors abuse, never finding the reason for the temptation. I am not suggesting that the Christian walk will be free from trouble. I am contending that troubles, testing and temptations should be a medium through which the enemy within our "land" is exposed.

Let us bear in mind that Satan is a legalist. He moves in those realms that the Lord has delegated to him. He has authority over those delegated areas of his kingdom just as the Lord exercises authority over His kingdom. **"Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, 'The Lord rebuke you'."** (Jude 9) There are many foolish Christians who refer to Satan as "old dumb-dumb" or "old slew-foot," "a toothless lion", etc. thinking that by calling him names they humiliate him and diminish his authority. Names and noise will not effect the realm of authority—be it Satan's or God's. Satan moves as a prince in those areas consigned to him.

Jesus spoke these words to Peter, **"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."** (Luke 22:31,32) Let us consider the following question. What legal right did Satan have to demand permission from God to sift or riddle one of His children? What grounds could he use to approach God with that outrageous insistence? There was an area in Simon Peter that Satan still occupied, and it was his legal right to manifest himself in and through that area. What was that area? It was pride. **"But Peter answered and said**

unto Him, 'Even though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away'." (Matt. 26:33) Peter had a proud and independent spirit. He also was a man who had greater confidence in the sword than in the power of God. He was not aware that he had a problem. He was not cognizant of its deception and danger. Out of the Father's great love for Peter, he turned him over to Satan for the sifting process. He loves us no less and will do for us as He did for Peter in order to expose the enemy in our "land."

I can almost hear the protests—God would never do that! The God I used to know wouldn't do that, but the God I have come to know is vitally interested in my eternal welfare and will spare nothing in order to bring me to His desired purpose. Listen to the words of the sweet psalmist of Israel, **"Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Thy word."** (Ps.119:67) **"It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn Thy statutes."** (Ps. 119:71) David was aware that his afflictions did not originate with Satan. **"I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are righteous, and that in faithfulness Thou hast afflicted me."** (Ps.119:75)

"When you pray," Jesus said, "pray after this manner '...do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil'." (Matt.6:13) If the Lord does not lead us into temptation, then why are we taught to pray this prayer? God has not relinquished our schooling to someone or something over which He does not exercise authority.

John the Baptist stood in a wilderness place in Judea proclaiming the coming of the kingdom of heaven. **"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor; and gather His wheat into**

His garner, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” (Matt. 3:11,12)

Close your eyes and imagine the stacks of cut grain lying on a large flat rock under the burning sun of the Judean hills. The grain is still feeling the pain of the sickle as it was severed from its life-source. Now branches of trees are used to beat the stacks of grain, separating the grain from the blades and stalks of the wheat. As the grain settles to the bottom, a large fan is used to blow away the chaff (or purge the floor). The chaff is then gathered for burning. Then an ox is led back and forth across the grain to riddle the grain from the beard, or husk, which houses it. Again the grain is winnowed, to leave nothing but the naked grain that is gathered into the garner. In all this process of reaping, beating, trampling and gusts of wind, what is the object of all this attention? Is it for the blade—the stalks—the beard? Of course not. All this activity and energy has been expended toward the freeing of the grains of wheat. Look now at the great pile of husks and chaff and compare it to the meager yielding of grain. Our lives are like that.

Precious people, most of us are not aware of the great heaps of refuse that make up the bulk of our lives; God knows, but we do not. As Jesus makes His triumphal entry into the city of our lives, He heads directly to the temple. As He approaches, there is something in His hand with which He is working. As He nears, we see the object in His hand is a whip. What would He possibly need that for? The sharp cutting of the whip is felt as He begins to separate the chaff from the grain. Look into His eyes. No condemnation is there—no vindictive retribution—only the tears of a resolute love as He administers the means of our purging.

Most Christians are now praying for the “rapture” to happen quickly. In a world that cries for peace, they are

fearful of the increasing violence we now face. I can only echo the words of the prophet Amos as he cries against the house of Israel. **“Alas, you who are longing for the day of the Lord. For what purpose will the day of the Lord be to you? It will be darkness and not light; as when a man flees from a lion and a bear meets him; or goes home, leans his hand against the wall, and a snake bites him. Will not the day of the Lord be darkness instead of light, even gloom with no brightness in it?”** (Amos 5:18-20) Why does Amos warn the people of God that the day of the Lord would be vastly different than what they imagine? Their spiritual mentality was as faulty and warped as is ours. They were longing for an earthly kingdom to be established which would restore the grandeur and prominence to Israel. They could not make the fulfillment fit the Scriptures they had misinterpreted. It didn't happen that way. Instead, they experienced oppression, slavery, pain and death.

The majority of today's Christians are ill prepared to stand before the Son of God. They have embraced Jesus because they are afraid of going to hell or because of an erroneous concept of heaven to which they hope to fly away. The "Day of the Lord" will, with increasing intensity, deal with the chaff of our lives. In the final hours of the birth travail, there is the tearing and rending of flesh amid the cries of anguish and mind-searing pain. That day will be vastly different than most imagine. As we see the violence increasing in the natural realm, there is a parallel escalation of activity in the spiritual domain. The book of Revelation proclaims that one-half of the earth's population will die in the coming holocaust. Would you understand when I say, I believe the same ratio of Christians will perish at the hand of our spiritual enemy simply because there has been a deliberate co-existence with rebellious and disobedient spirits. I am not saying that they will go to hell.

Jesus said, **“Whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.”** (Matt. 21:44) Cast yourself on the mercy of the Lord. Pray for and accept with meekness His discipline. These are times of deep probings and intense scrutiny as the Lord judges His people. **“And it will come about at that time that I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are stagnant in spirit...”** (Zeph. 1:12) **“Who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner’s fire and like fuller’s soap. And He will sit as a smelter and a purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may present to the Lord offerings in righteousness.”** (Mal. 3:2,3)

CHAPTER 9

CONFRONTATION—THE HEALING PROCESS

There was a tragedy that occurred on beautiful Mt. Hood in the state of Oregon. A group of high school students were on an outing with the purpose of scaling this inviting challenge of fear and triumph. They were caught by a sudden and severe spring storm that left many of their party dead and others crippled for life. One young man suffered the amputation of both legs as a result of his encounter with the merciless cold of the unforgiving mountain.

Let us approach this with childlike simplicity and ask an innocent question. Why was it necessary to amputate the legs of that young man, leaving him a lifelong cripple? What could motivate such drastic behavior? Why not wait another six months or at least six weeks? Perhaps there is yet hope. Of course, anyone with any degree of intelligence can readily see the problems that would arise from procrastination. First and foremost is the proliferation of deadly bacteria that is produced and nourished from the dead tissue left by the frostbite. To wait, to delay the radical cure invites death to the entire body. There are numerous accounts frostbites, accidents, wars and disease where a limb had to be removed in order to save a life. In extreme cases, men have amputated their own limbs in order to survive. They saw the dreadful necessity and from some inner resolve gathered the strength that had lain dormant until needed.

Paul, who writes from a revelation given by God, compares the natural body with the body of Christ. To my knowledge, the term "Body of Christ" or "Christ's Body" is not used in the Old Testament. The Old Testament refers largely to a kingdom, an army and a land. The term is just

as viable in the New Testament economy yet is brought into a more intimate and interdependent relationship. It is still a kingdom with its accompanying army; however, the army is viewed as a corporate man, who is made up of many members. **“For even as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.”** (1Cor. 12:12)

In our account of the Mt. Hood tragedy, a disinterested party, or one who was not intimately joined in a genetic relationship, performed the amputation. Only in those instances where a person has performed self-amputation is there a correct analogy of the self-governing which God has committed to His Christ. It is only in understanding that kind of pain—that sense of loss—that degree of suffering—and that necessity of severance—we can begin to comprehend the scope of the judgments in the House of God and the severe implications involved, either in executing or ignoring their requirements.

To that family that has no rules to live by—no guidelines of conduct or responsibility—disorder, chaos and perpetual infancy will be the outcome. There must be some authority that says, “These are the rules of this house. As long as you abide by the rules and contribute to the general welfare of the family, you are welcome to stay. If you choose to go your own way, ignoring the laws that are set down, introducing rebellion and anarchy into the household, we have no alternative but to cut you off from the life and sustenance of the family.” What father or mother would not find that difficult to do? Yet to ignore the problem, hoping it will go away, only multiplies the dangers and exposes the entire family to the same insidious disease.

The word “confrontation” carries with it a negative connotation, conjuring up images of strife and division; but

actually, confrontation is designed for health and healing, not antagonism nor hurt. Its sole purpose is for reconciliation—never condemnation nor humiliation.

We hear much about unity among the brethren. The message is that we sacrifice everything for the sake of unity. John seventeen is used as the proof-text. The unity they preach is usually one that requires no commitment to the Body of Christ (I do not speak here of a denomination or a building) but rather accepts everyone as they are. It is a unity without strength. It is a unity that does not deal with sin and disease. It is a unity so fragile almost anything can shake it. It is a unity based on the concept that as long as there is neither disagreement nor conflict then everyone is in great spiritual health. As long as no one is demanding the resignation of the Pastor or an accounting of the tithes and offerings, there is unity.

If you will be honest, I believe you will agree that most church organizations operate on the growth principle. Everything is utilized for the promotion of membership enlargement. The Pastors have become intellectually astute in generalizing their sermons. Never get specific. To become specific will ruffle feathers and rattle cages and eventually brands you as a coarse, crude iconoclast, lacking in wisdom. Bank accounts are enlarged, not to be shared with the visiting Levites as they should but to build a bigger building.

Is it any wonder that God has a controversy with the shepherds? Listen to His indictment. **“All you beasts of the field, all you beasts of the forest, come to eat. His watchmen are blind, all of them know nothing. All of them are dumb dogs unable to bark, dreamers lying down, who live to slumber; and the dogs are greedy, they are not satisfied. And they are shepherds who**

have no understanding; they have all turned to their own way, each one to his unjust gain, to the last one.”

(Isa. 56:9-11) It is depicted here by perhaps the greatest of the Old Testament Prophets that the Shepherds (Pastors) are as dogs without voices. They lack the ability to sound a distinct warning. He also says they are blind, spiritually stupid and lazy. They are self-pleasers—hirelings with no self-control. Their pitiful condition invites the beasts (predators—demons) to come and devour the flock of God.

Under the old covenant, which is a type of our spiritual walk, deviation from the Law was dealt with swiftly, effectively and with graphic finality. Korah and his followers questioned the procedures that were established by God. They questioned God’s choice of leadership and railed against Moses and Aaron as if they had appointed themselves to that place of authority. Nevertheless, Moses fell on his face in an attempt to dissuade them from their path of rebellion. In response to their rebellion, **“The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who belonged to Korah, with their possessions. Fire also came forth from the Lord and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering the incense. Those who died by the plague were 14,700, besides those who died on account of Korah.”** (Num. 16:32,35,49) When Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire unto the Lord, which was contrary to His set pattern, **“Fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord.”** (Lev. 10:2)

In the beginning of the wilderness journey, God himself executed judgment on Israel’s disobedience. Afterward, when Israel sinned by the making and worshipping of a golden calf, it was Moses and the Levites who executed the punishment and about three thousand men were slain. (Ex.

32:28) Later in Canaan, which is a type of our present conflict, when Achan disobeyed the commandment of the Lord by taking a Babylonish garment, pieces of silver and a bar of gold, he was stoned to death by the entire congregation of Israel. (Josh. 7:21-25) “But that’s Old Testament,” some will say. Then let us go to the New Testament.

When Ananias and Sapphira sinned against the Lord, the Lord gave Peter a word of knowledge, exposing their sin. But it was Peter who pronounced the sentence. (Acts 5:1-10) This is not an isolated case. There was in Corinth a brother who was a fornicator whom Paul delivered up to Satan for the destruction of the flesh “**...in order that his spirit may be saved in the Day of Jesus Christ.**” (1Cor. 5:5) He also delivered over to Satan “**...Hymenaeus and Alexander so that they may learn not to blaspheme.**” (1Tim. 1:20) When he acted in this capacity, he was functioning as the executor of God’s will. He calls for collective mourning because of the loss. They are instructed to “**...clean out the old leaven that you may be a new lump.**” He further demands “**...remove the wicked man from among yourselves.**” (1Cor. 5:7,13) He further states, “**I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of this world. But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he should be an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a drunkard, or a swindler—no not even to eat with such a one.**” (1Cor. 5:9-11) It seems as if Paul is being discriminatory in that he allows them to associate with the unclean of this world and yet prohibits the same relationship with an erring brother.

Paul continues in the sixth chapter of First Corinthians to enlarge upon our responsibility to judge the body of Christ when he says, **“Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world?”** He then makes this astounding statement, **“Do you not know that we shall judge angels?”** (1Cor. 6:2,3)

As you start to analyze the principles of the Lord, a glowing truth will begin to emerge out of the seeming contradiction of grace and judgement. God will make it as difficult as possible for one of His children to continue in sin and still enjoy the fellowship of His people. He says, in effect, **“You can’t luxuriate in both worlds. You can’t continue in your sins and yet receive fellowship and life from My Body.”** It will cost you dearly no matter how you choose—but choose you must. If parents would only practice on their children the blueprint God has laid down for His church, there would be fewer problems. If they would exercise “tough love” and not make it convenient for their children to act out their experiments and rebellion, then there would be less heartache later.

God’s laws and principles are designed for health and healing rather than disease and death. **“...Make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.”** (Heb.12:13) **“If a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of gentleness...”** (Gal. 6:1) Now this restoration is not to say, “Aw, just come on back. We’ve all been guilty of that. No one is perfect—we accept you like you are.” No indeed! The very word “restore” has to do with putting back in an original condition. It has to do with repentance and forsaking of the sin.

To confront a child in the family or a brother in the Lord requires infinitely more love than to adopt the attitude, “time and the Lord will heal the situation.” This is probably true, but it sends the violator on a long and perhaps unnecessary journey. The disobedient child as well as the errant brother will, no doubt, vehemently defend their present course of action. We should understand that confrontation always runs the risk of bitter misunderstanding and rejection. If you should attempt to follow the guidelines of the Scriptures and the dictates of love in order to bring healing and restoration to a spiritual illness, your actions will probably earn you a session of counseling with your Pastor or district Presbyter. They, perhaps, have learned in seminary the “proper” way to bring peace and serenity to the flock. It’s much easier to “flow with the tide” than it is to confront and correct. To function in a “Body” relationship requires more love than to walk in isolationism. Let me quickly add—you can be a part of a huge congregation and be on friendly terms with all your brothers and yet be a “Lone Ranger” who is unapproachable and outside the correction of any man.

We discipline a child for a number of logical reasons. The wise parent will consistently deal with disruptive attitudes and actions. To allow a child to gain attention with unacceptable methods will almost insure that in adult life he or she will continue to demand undue recognition by outrageous and bizarre methods. Our correction is designed to bring to adulthood, at the proper time, a child who fits into society with the least amount of friction. In the meantime, other members of the family need to be protected from the child’s selfish behavior as well as protecting the child itself from other members retaliation. These rules are all applicable in the spiritual realm.

Permissive parents, as well as permissive Pastors, do irreparable damage to their children. Little Susie or Johnny

is called in before the visiting relatives and bribed to sing for “Aunt Jane.” It’s so cute today, but tomorrow they will demand center stage even in church activities; and if they aren’t allowed to perform, they’ll change churches. They’ll go where their talent is recognized. To encourage precociousness in a child or a new Christian can be a dangerous and oftentimes crippling mistake. A child acts mature in a certain area so we encourage them in their premature activity, assuming they are mature in every other area. We’re then shocked when they have difficulty “fitting in” and being accepted socially, resulting in some instances of them becoming sexually active at a very young age.

We take a newborn Christian—who is adept at memorizing Scripture and is personable in their presentation—shove their hands full of literature—and make them a teacher of the young people’s class. “Well”, we rationalize, “they can do less damage there and yet receive their on-the-job training.” Sadly, the mentality behind this is not so much to mature them but to keep them tied to a responsibility so they do not escape to another family. Contrary to the reasons offered, they are in the most vulnerable class in the entire church system, teaching half-truths without revelation. This makes the class ripe for deception and destruction.

Paul gives us some beautiful insight into the Body of Christ as he unfolds his revelation with the church at Corinth. If you will allow the following Scripture to permeate your spiritual being, it will forever shake any complacency you may now permit toward known, willing and repeated sin—whether it be in you or your brother or sister in the Lord. Listen with your spirit to these words. **“If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it...”** (1Cor. 12:26) This Scripture is loaded with revelation and healing. We readily accept the same truth in the natural realm. If a

falling boulder has crushed my ankle, my whole body is in pain and suffers along with the injured limb. If that ankle was a Christian, we would say, "Cut it off. Amputate it. Get rid of the problem. It affects the attitude of the whole community toward us." We're not nearly so glib with the pat answers if it's our own ankle. "Doctor, save it at any cost." Some would even say, "I'd rather die than lose my foot and ankle." For too long we have held in low esteem the other members of the Body of Christ.

I would to God that we could see this in the magnitude of its importance. Every Christian's disease (sin) affects our individual spiritual well being. The lives of Joshua and Caleb were dearly affected by the sin of unbelief of the other ten spies. My disease and ill health affects every other Christian. They need not be in the same prayer group or the same local assembly. If they are in the Body of Christ, my relationship with the Body will have an affect upon all its members. I'm speaking now of the spiritual realm. My spiritual well being hinges, to a great degree, upon the health and vitality of the other members of the Body of Christ. Neither you nor I can change that fact. You might say, "I'm not aware in my spirit when there is sickness, sin or disease among others of Christ's body." Let me offer this simple observation. Could it be, because we've never been completely whole, that we fail to recognize what true health is? If a boil or carbuncle infects us, our entire body is very aware of its presence. There is the emission of pus and the sloughing of dead skin as the dead cells give evidence of the life and death struggle that is occurring. Our body does everything in its power to prevent the spread of the infection. Even after healing has taken place, scars will remain as a reminder of our battle and our pain.

Has anyone ever heard of a church squabble or a church split? Of course you have. That's an infection that involves

a segment of the Body of Christ. As the infection grows, the poison is spewed out over the entire community. The Body of Christ is feverish and suffering; although, another group may be shouting and singing the victory only a few blocks away because their spiritual body has become so anesthetized that they are unaware of the pain.

I sat one night with a small group as the minister so capably brought forth the truths of God's word. I had been sick for about a month, losing a great amount of blood and in such pain that I could not comfortably straighten up. I was listening to the anointed word, when the Lord abruptly spoke into my spirit with such clarity that I was startled. "*You are sick*", was His whisper. My condition was such that a statement of such obvious facts almost irritated me. My spirit responded with a sigh of despair, "Yes, I am sick." His reply was immediate. "*No! Not you (singular) are sick, but you (plural) are sick.*" I could see by the Spirit as His hand swept across, not only the people who were there, but the entire Body of Christ. He was saying, "*You are sick physically, but all My people are sick and suffering spiritually.*" I sat there barely comprehending what had been said, feeling that I was a failure as a Christian and Pastor.

My mind suddenly went to a passage of Scripture that has been of some concern to me in the preceding weeks. God pours out His heart to a rebellious people who were representative of the church. **"Where will you be stricken again, as you continue in your rebellion? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is nothing sound in it, only bruises, welts, and raw wounds, not pressed out or bandaged, nor softened with oil."** (Isa. 1:5,6) I could hardly believe that God would look at our lovely group of

people in that light. I was stunned by the implications. I saw in the spirit the emaciated condition of the flock of God.

It was at this time that God carried me away in a vision. I was wide-awake; and yet, it was similar to a dream. I found myself in a hospital room looking across the room at a man lying on a hospital bed, with sheets that were smooth and white. I vividly remember that he was the same color as the sheets. He lay extremely still, hardly moving as he breathed. I thought to myself, "Oh my! The poor man is dying of cancer." As if in response to my innermost thoughts, I watched as his prostrate arm began to tremble and rise from the elbow. His trembling hand and forearm continued to rise until it was in a vertical position; and then his forefinger, pointing upward, spoke almost defiantly, "I'm not sick. I am whole." I could hardly believe it, all that effort to make that absurd statement. I whispered under my breath, "You fool! When he dies you will also die."

I was brought back to the natural realm by hearing the minister say, "We'll now turn the service back to Brother Hollis." As I stood, I suddenly realized I was healed of my infirmity, and I remain healed thirty years later. However, something greater had taken place in my life. For once in my life, I truly realized that no man could say, "I am whole—I am pure—I have no need—until the entire Body of Christ is free from sin and diseases." **"When one member suffers, all suffer with it..."** (1Cor 12:26) Would you agree that our sins and iniquities bring pain and suffering to our head, even Jesus Christ? Little wonder that our Lord's sternest rebuke is directed to a church which boasts, **"I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing, and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked."** (Rev. 3:17)

God deals harshly with sin because He understands its debilitating and insidious nature. Sin is always enticing, but it produces death. Hanging on the cross, Jesus depicts God's open hatred for sin. If we can see from the broader perspective, we will understand that **"Not one of us lives only for himself, and not one dies for himself."** (Rom. 14:7) We cannot selfishly say, "What I do is no one else's business. If I'm wrong, then I and only I will be the one to suffer the consequences." No one should be foolish enough to believe that. Look at the fathers and the mothers whose choices have brought immeasurable pain and suffering to a family. In addition to that, our lives and the way we live them affect every other Christian near and far.

Our lives, which include our sins, diseases, joys and health, go much further than the four walls of our home. The invasive and cumulative effect of sin is like some poisons that the body has difficulty in expelling. It affects each of us ultimately. If I said to a man, "Sir, I would certainly appreciate you not smoking where I will be affected," then I would be justified in doing so because my physical health was involved. How can I rationalize my lack of concern and silence if my brother is willfully sinning and I ignore its wide-ranging consequences? Am I willing to risk the harsh retaliation from the smoker when his offense affects only my physical well being, yet all the while ignoring that which is greater in scope and severity?

If we understand at all what we've been discussing, we will see the desperate need to confront sin in the Body of Christ. We must first confront it in ourselves, and we must be open to others as they confront us. Would you agree that we are all blind to some areas in our lives? I am not speaking so much of little flaws and irritations as much as I am referring to known and persistent sins. Jesus said, **"Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye,**

but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye’, and behold the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye and then you will see clearly enough to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.” (Matt. 7:3-5) Notice, Jesus does not say that we should not try to remove the speck from our brother’s eye. He points to the fact that we should start with ourselves.

Have you ever confronted a smoker and asked him (or her) not to smoke, or one who curses not to use foul language in front of your wife? If you have, you know the risks involved. Everything from vile rebuke to physical threats is often the result. It is not appreciably different when you deal with a rebellious Christian, and that’s who we’re discussing for the most part—those who willfully and persistently continue in known sin. That, however, is not always the case. As we walk through this life, we will unconsciously accumulate some of this world’s dirt and filth. We need others to wash our feet with the cool refreshing water of the Word of Life. We need our brothers and sisters to lovingly and tenderly point out our failures and excesses with reconciliation and restoration as the goal.

In the aforementioned Scripture in Isaiah, the Lord said **“...bruises welts and raw wounds, were not pressed out or bandaged nor softened with oil.”** (Isa. 1:6) This verse contains the necessary ingredients for true healing. There must be the pressing out of the infection—that is confrontation. That is the painful exposure of the hidden sin that is working death in the members. This is the reason confrontation is so often avoided in the visible church as if it was something evil. In light of today’s “positive attitude Christianity” the prevailing doctrine is “God wants you to feel good about yourself.” Therefore, anything negative is not of

God. Sin, confession and repentance is passe and out of touch with modern theology; therefore, confrontation is a repugnant idea from an archaic mind. However, God cannot be pressed into the humanistic mold used to clone a multitude of “counselors” and “New Age” ministers whose goal it is to make you feel good.

There is the necessity of bandaging up the wounded. There are many people who are professionals when it comes to pointing out the faults and flaws of another. They're like a Wild West gunslinger who shoots anything that moves. They come in with the sword and leave the object of their indignation bleeding in a cringing heap—their open wounds an invitation to even more infection. Have any of you ever had to fight bitterness in your spirit because of some thoughtless, loveless crusader of God? Most of us have. So many claim to have the ministry of Jeremiah, whose obligation it was “...**to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow...**” (Jer. 1:10) I know that God has set in the church Prophets who often have a harsh word that must be spoken. However, if it is from the Lord, these men should normally be uttering that strong word through tears, as did Jeremiah. Probably, the greatest need in the church today is men who are healers; and by that, I am not speaking of “leg lengtheners” or “tooth fillers.” I am speaking of those who carry an ample supply of bandages, oil and wine.

Isaiah also mentions how the wounds must be “**softened with oil.**” Any person knows that it's much easier to deal with one in error if the Holy Spirit has already been dealing with that individual. It's useless to preach unless the Holy Spirit is also preaching. It's useless to teach unless the Holy Spirit has been preparing the soil and opens their understanding. Never confront a brother about his sins unless there has been a thorough saturation of the Holy

Spirit, both on his wounds and upon you. After all, our purpose is correction and restoration—not alienation.

Jesus gave the parable of a man who fell among thieves, who stripped him and beat him then went away leaving him half dead. Although many passed him by, a Samaritan came upon him and felt compassion. He **“...came to him, and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them...”** (Luke 10:34) In this parable, as well as the account in Isaiah, the oil is poured into the wounds; and, as you well know, the oil represents the Holy Spirit while the wine represents the life of Lord Jesus Christ. We can easily minister the life of the Lord if the Holy Spirit has been generously applied. Notice in this parable that it is the Priest and the Levite who gave the poor man a wide berth, leaving him in his misery. This is a tragic picture of today’s ministers, who choose to ignore the problem rather than confront it and bring healing to the “Body.”

There is an interesting passage in the book of Revelation that reads, **“...a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny, and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.”** (Rev. 6:6) This is taking place in the midst of what we call “The Great Tribulation.” Yet God is saying, in effect, “Let there be nothing to hinder the flow of divine life and of My Holy Spirit in this time of great sorrow.” Isn’t that encouraging? In the midst of this world’s greatest catastrophe, the love and life of God are there to bring healing and life to the wounded.

Jesus taught confrontation much earlier than did Paul as He gave this advice: **“And if your brother sins (some mss. Add: against you) go and reprove him in private. If he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every**

fact may be confirmed. And if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church let him be to you as a gentile and a tax-gatherer.” (Matt. 18:15-17) In this passage, the Lord gives the guidelines for exposing hidden sins, which gives rise to strife, unforgiveness and an atmosphere that grieves the Holy Spirit. Sins and infections within the Body of Christ are never to be ignored.

I recall a situation as a very young Christian when there was an ongoing state of friction between two other Christians that seemed to be a source of constant irritation. I had just been reading the above portion of Scripture, so I went to the Pastor and suggested we follow the Lord’s blueprint in order to reconcile the situation. His reaction was totally unexpected. “My God boy! You’ll split this church wide open if you do that.” I could hardly believe my ears. It was at that moment, I began to learn the politics of the “church.” It was only a short time later that the doors of that church closed anyway because of a “church split.” If the poison is not released, either by healing or by lancing, it will spread.

Paul gives us an account concerning his confrontation with Peter that many Pastors would like to delete from the Scriptures. **“When Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.”** Notice, Paul is not too diplomatic for he said, **“I said unto Peter before them all...”** (Gal. 2:11-14) This was not smoothed over so that Peter could save face, but it was all in the open for the church to behold. It might have cost them members; I can’t be sure of that. However,

one thing I do know—it did not cost them the presence of the Lord. Which is the more important?

May I press this point? As I have said before, the purpose of confrontation is to bring healing, restoration and harmony to the Body of Christ. To face someone on a one to one basis without having your “backup squad” takes a great deal of love and courage. The Lord is concerned that someone who is misunderstood or is vindictive in spirit unjustly maligns no one. Keep it private; unless it is necessary to do otherwise. By all means, if the wrong is made right, no one else needs to know what has transpired. Our long tongues have slain more of God’s people than Satan and his host of angels.

A desperately sick man is helpless to fight his own battles or defend himself with much effectiveness. Paul is aware of the obvious need when he states, **“Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness...”** (Gal. 6:1) The church is the only army on record which kills it wounded.

As I look back over my life as a Christian, how I wish that there had been someone who loved me enough to come to me and correct me when I went astray. I needed someone to say, “Hollis, I love you, but if you persist in doing what you’re doing, I can no longer fellowship with you.” Does that sound harsh? I believe we should make it as difficult as possible for a person to have communion with both worlds. Don’t make the fellowship of the gospel cheap.

I understand the dangers involved in what I’ve been saying in these words. There will be abuses and misunderstandings. There will be accusations and much trembling. There will be outrageous outbursts and the repeated charge; “It won’t work that way.” I can see only by

revelation the rewards of a stream as clear as crystal flowing from the throne of God. My purpose is not to cause disruption or contention, but rather bring healing to the Body of Christ. It will be painful. It will be costly. It will be glorious.

CHAPTER 10

CANAANITES—DEMONIC RESIDENTS

Let us backtrack a few pages and enlarge on the inhabitants the Israelites were commanded to expel. As a matter of review, we recall that God had commanded Israel concerning the Canaanites, **“You shall make no covenant with them or with their gods. They shall not live in your land, lest they make you sin against Me; for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.”** (Ex. 23:32,33) **“And when the Lord your God shall deliver them before you, you shall defeat them, then you shall utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them.”** (Deut. 7:2)

Since these Canaanites are a type of evil spirits in our land (bodies), the Lord is emphatic that we do not sign any peace agreement with them; but that we are to be perpetually at war with them. The tragedy of today's Christians, for the most part, is that they have resigned themselves to believe a lie that says, “Your anger, lust, pride, cigarettes, liquor and obesity are genetic things that you inherited from your parents or grandparents.” While it is true that it is usually inherited, it is not true that it is always genetic. It has little to do with your physical genes but with your spiritual genes. The problem is primarily a spiritual one.

While multitudes of ministers preach that a Christian cannot have a demon, the majority of their congregation is fighting a losing battle in the spiritual realm. These are the Sunday morning's “white knuckle clubs” that wear forced smiles because it's expected of them. We have to at least look as if we're overcomers even if we're contemplating suicide.

In this chapter, we would like to take each of these Canaanite inhabitants and give you his counterpart in today's spiritual battle. Let me remind you that demons rarely function alone. They normally operate in gangs, much as mobsters do. So each of these principal characters will have numerous underlings who are active in their related field. For instance, if there is a spirit of anger present; there will also be the spirit of hatred, the spirit of revenge, the spirit of pride and ultimately the spirit of murder. If the spirit of lust is active, accompanying it will be the spirit of pornography, a spirit of masturbation, a spirit of bestiality, a spirit of whoredom, promiscuity, homosexuality, perversion and a host of others. This gives you some idea of the nature of the enemy.

As we read the account of Noah at the time of the great flood, we find he was the father of three sons. Some years after the flood had subsided and when his vineyards were productive, Noah became drunk on the wine of his vineyards and lay naked inside his tent. His son Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers, Shem and Japheth. With their faces turned away, so as not to look upon his nakedness, they walked backward with a covering and covered Noah. **“When Noah awoke from his wine, he knew what his youngest son had done to him. So he said, ‘cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers’.”** (Gen. 9:24,25) It is so alien to our thinking that Noah would curse Canaan when it was his father who had sinned. Let us remember that the book of Genesis contains the seed to all the happenings in the Bible. He will use Genesis to lay the foundation to His great house. This incident concerning Canaan is God's introduction to a principle. **“...I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, (and the grandchildren) unto the third and fourth generation**

of those that hate me.” (Ex. 20:5;34:7) Notice the parallel reference that states, **“...He will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.”** (Num. 14:18)

So it was not Ham who was cursed per se but his son Canaan. Although Canaan's destiny was to be a servant, he eventually became the nemesis and oftentimes ruler of the very ones who were to rule over him. The destiny of every Christian is that we are to rule over all our enemies. **“The Lord will stretch forth Thy strong scepter from Zion, saying, ‘Rule in the midst of Thine enemies’.”** (Ps. 110:2) How often do those who are appointed to govern become the prisoners, while those who are appointed to serve use their cunning and guile to instill fear, deception and lethargy in those destined to be their masters. Without exception, anytime the Canaanites gained the upper hand over the Israelites, it was because Israel had sinned; and God gave them over into the hands of their enemies. May I be so bold as to say, “When demons gain the upper hand in the life of a Christian, it is usually because there is unresolved sin in that life and God has given them over to be chastised by their enemy.” (Matt.18:34,35)

The word Canaanite is a word that denotes one or all the tribes of the offsprings of Canaan. **“And Canaan became the father of Sidon, his firstborn, and Heth and the Jebusite and the Amorite and the Girgashite and the Hivite and the Arkitre and the Sinite and the Arvadite and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite; and afterward the families of the Canaanite were spread abroad.”** (Gen. 10:15-18) In their intermarrying with other hostile foreigners, they produced other tribes such as the Hittites and the Perizzites.

In biblical terms, the name was extremely important for it spoke of the character and nature of the person or the people. Some people foolishly name their children absurd names, not knowing that the name is a harbinger of what demons plan for that child.

Amorite

This may not be the most prominent of Israel's enemies, but it could be the most prominent in the life of a Christian. The name means mountaineer, distinction or publicity. It has to do with seeking the high places. Today, this Amorite, which we are commanded to conquer and with which we are to sign no agreement or covenant, is called PRIDE. This is literally what Amorite means. Pride—that spirit—the attribute of that one who said, **"...I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God. I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."** (Isa. 14:13,14) Notice how many times the little word "I" is used. This evil spirit is the essence of all other sins. It is a spirit that has found lodging in most people—Christians included. We find it especially loathsome in another as they strut, preen and boast; yet, the very nature of this demon blinds us to its presence in our own lives.

Men will admit to many vices—temper, lust, greed, drink, ladies and gambling to name a few; however; even sinners are reluctant to admit that they have a spirit of pride and very few Christians will "fess up." This spirit makes a man obnoxious and fractious; yet, we will defend its presence in our lives with all manner of senseless excuses. The wisest man in the Old Testament says, **"Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord."** (Pro. 16:5)

“Though the Lord is exalted, yet He regards the lowly, but the haughty He knows from afar.” (Ps. 138:6)

Pride, by its very nature is competitive—it must be first—it must be heard—it must be right. Pride causes enmity because it is the very nature of enmity. It promotes friction between men and will even compete with God for center stage. It is a spirit that must dominate. It must rule. If it cannot control or dominate a person or a situation, it will rise up to destroy that over which it has no dominion. When Satan saw he could not rule it all, he determined to destroy it all.

I have met men who, if they could not get their way, would determine to sabotage the entire program. As long as there is one person in their group whom they cannot control and manipulate, that person is a threat and a challenge that must be demeaned, belittled and ignored. This is one of the greatest dangers to preachers—the temptation to abuse authority and use people for their own purposes. Many preachers are notorious for their methods of manipulation and dominance through promises of God’s approval and blessing or through the threat of judgment, disaster or hell. I have seen many witches and sorcerers standing behind the pulpit who were spiritual fortune-tellers and manipulated the people to give or to obey, through well designed sermons or even through a prophecy “straight from God.”

To come face to face with God is the ultimate challenge to pride because God cannot be manipulated or coerced. Remember! This is a Canaanite spirit, which is an offense to God. As long as we tolerate a passive relationship with this spirit, we will be in conflict with the Lord Himself. **“...He resisteth the proud but giveth grace to the humble.”** (1Pet. 5:5)

After Saul had been confronted by Samuel concerning his disobedience in utterly destroying Amalek, Saul found it impossible to admit to his sin. He blamed the people and defended his actions. As Samuel turned to leave, Saul took hold of his garment and tore it. **“So Samuel said to him, ‘The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and given it to your neighbor who is better than you’.”** (1Sam. 15:28) Is Saul concerned about the Kingdom? Is he concerned about the presence of the Lord? Apparently, he is unmoved about these things. Notice his response. **“I have sinned; but please honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel and go back with me, that I may worship the Lord your God.”** (1Sam. 15:30) Some people will give a bushel of false humility in order to extract a cup of pride in the process.

This demon—the spirit of pride—is the equivalent to the Amorite in the land of Canaan. God hates it. It is an affront to Him because it stands in competition with Him and prevents us from entering into any degree of intimacy with Him. We have touched on this in a prior chapter, but it bears repeating at this time. Simon Peter was not only a rash man but a man of pride. He made the boast, **“...Even though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away...”** Jesus had just said, **“...You will all fall away because of Me this night...”** (Matt. 26:31,33) This is not the first time Peter has taken it upon himself to argue with the Lord. On another occasion when Jesus had shared with the disciples **“...how He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.”** Peter, true to form, **“...took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, ‘God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to you.’ At this time Jesus whirled on Peter and said, ‘Get thee behind Me Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me’.”** (Matt. 16:21-23) I would not go

so far as to say Peter had a demonic spirit of pride, but he surely was a man whose pride and boastfulness got him into a lot of trouble.

Hittite

This is the next Canaanite on the list and his name means terror. In the true sense of the word, he is the original terrorist. This is not a natural fear of fire or falling or of loud noises. It is an unnatural fear that leaves us petrified and almost immobile. It is the kind of fear that awakens us in the middle of the night in a cold sweat. It is irrational. It is unreasonable. It is paralyzing. It is a demonic spirit that will not leave except by the power and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I have known grown men who would give a bear a good fight but were afraid of the dark. They were afraid to go to sleep; consequently, they spent endless nights miserable and restless. Since demons are creatures of darkness, they are most active in the night hours. They love darkness rather than light; therefore, their activity seems to intensify during the times when there is no sun (Son). Not only does this spirit leave its victims in a quagmire of irrational conduct, but they also become a point of ridicule from the accusing finger of friends, family and Satan.

I flew overseas with a preacher friend who was petrified of flying. It got to be sort of a joke with many, but it was no joke with him. He caught a cruise ship back home. Some will not get on an elevator. Others dread high places. There are those who flee from crowds. Many are so fearful of germs that they wash repeatedly. There are those so fearful of close places that being closed up in a constricted area will send them into orbit. The list goes on ad infinitum. The secular world calls these phobias; but if the fear is out

of control and tormenting, it is very likely demonic in character. This spirit will not leave of its own accord. The anointing of the Holy Spirit must expel them. Jesus said, **“If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can anyone enter the strong man’s house and spoil his goods, except he first binds the strong man? Then he will spoil his house.”** (Matt. 12:28,29)

God is not pleased with the spirit of timidity. God said of David that he was a man after His own heart. Although David could see the danger, he saw God as bigger than his problems. Goliath was a type of the spirit of terror. He terrorized Israel’s king and all its army, but David saw him only as a man who blasphemed the Lord God. David didn’t need a sword to slay this mountain of terror—all he needed was a little stone and faith in his God.

Simon Peter was an impulsive and daring man. He would step out of a boat onto nothing but water. He would cut off the ear of the High Priest’s servant. He was probably the first disciple to follow Jesus. He cared not about the ridicule and threats of the religious order. He was bold; therefore, the Lord gave him the keys to the Kingdom. In addition, God blessed him with a prophetic insight into the days which were yet future.

The Hittite not only means terror but also “warlike.” They dwelt in the area of Hebron, or hill country. The spies that were sent into Canaan to spy out the land found their very appearance frightening, especially to those ten who were not moved by faith.

Hivite

The Hivite is a Canaanite whose name means villager, life giving (Eve) or a small town. It sounds innocuous enough doesn't it? It seems to be a strange name to pin on a demon; but as we examine it, we will see how really demonic and evil it really is.

It was written of Abraham that **“he was looking for a city, which has foundations, whose architect, and builder is God.”** (Heb. 11:10) The Christian, the Jew and the Arab all look to Abraham as the father of the faithful; so perhaps, we should listen to him. By the Holy Spirit, David penned these words—**“There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy dwelling places of the Most High.”** (Ps. 46:4) He elaborates further on the city of God in (Ps. 48:1-8). We often sing the Psalm which says, **“O city of God, glorious things are spoken of thee.”** He ends that Psalm by exulting, **“All my springs of joy are in thee.”** (Ps. 87:3,7) What is this city that Abraham sought and of which David sang? It is none other than the New Jerusalem, the Bride of Christ. It is a city that has its light in nothing except the Lord Himself and from whose temple there flows a river of life. It is a grand and glorious city majestic in its splendor and awesome in its eminence. Her brilliance is as costly gems, and her foundations are of precious stones. The Lord God and the Lamb are its light and its temple. Nations shall walk by its light and live by its life. It is a life-giving city because the Lord is its King and Husband. (Rev. 21:24)

There is another city that promises life, and she is also beautiful to look upon. Like the city of God, she is adorned with **“...gold and silver and precious stones and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, and every kind of citron wood and every article of ivory and every**

article made from very costly wood and bronze and iron and marble, and cinnamon and spice and incense and perfume and frankincense and wine and olive oil and fine flour and wheat and cattle and sheep, and cargoes of horses and chariots and slaves and human lives.”

(Rev. 18:12,13) It is an interesting study to go through the book of Revelation, chapters sixteen through eighteen and notice how many times the phrase “the great city” is used. It is never to be confused with the Holy City. This city is called—not the Bride of Christ—but the whore of Babylon. She is beautiful and enriched with goods. She has even preserved the truths of God; but in her there is no life, only the promise of life. She is also called the Mother of Harlots. She has been fruitful in her fornication and adultery to produce many offspring who are like her in miniature. Few Spirit-filled Evangelicals would disagree that this represents the Romish ecclesiastical system that has spawned countless denominations, which have patterned their religious format after their harlot mother.

If Rome is that “great city,” which offers life and sustenance to the millions, then this Hivite spirit must represent the smaller cities and villages (denominations) which offer life to its inhabitants. I realize that this word is an offense to many. Actually, the gospel is an offense to many people. By the way, to qualify as one of these Hivite spirits that offer life, the denomination does not need to have its headquarters in Missouri, Tennessee nor Indiana. Any group that embraces a sectarian spirit is guilty of this offense. This is one of the more difficult spirits to eliminate from our midst because it promises so much in the way of support, politics and money. It is the glorious substitute—the city with gold, silver, pearls, precious stones, etc. but without the Lord, the Lamb or the temple. It promises life but merchandizes in death.

These Hivite cities major in finite areas of their law. You must spend a certain amount of time being schooled and counseled by the Pastor before you can become a member of their fellowship. You must pledge to tithe faithfully to the local church. The board of elders and the Pastor must sanction any meetings you have in your home. Also, one of the elders must attend any meeting you have in your home or at any other location. You must keep the approved Sabbath. You will not be allowed to have communion apart from the Pastor's approval. You may not baptize; however, if you are an "ordained minister," you may participate with the Pastor in baptism. All baptisms must be performed according to the endorsed procedure. You are not allowed to counsel unless you have a degree in counseling certified by the church fathers. You most certainly cannot be allowed to hear confessions or forgive sins. Do you see the prison house that has been erected by these little cities?

Men find it abrasive to accept the work of grace without adding walls and boundaries to it. It abrades against the nature of man. No one gets something for nothing. There must be a catch to this grace thing. There has to be some sort of payment. Of course there is. Calvary extracted the last installment of everything man owed. Satan is still busy sending you payment notices and most are still busy attempting to square the debt. My friend—there is no debt. It has been paid in full. But hear me! The little cities will join with Satan to cram your mail full of "past due" notices.

Perizzites

Let us take into account the tribe in Canaan called the Perizzites. The word means an open country or an unwallled village. This seems harmless enough until we examine the purpose of the walls about the city. Walls are erected for defense. I realize that in recent years walls were

erected to keep people in, but originally they were built to keep people out. Even the Great Wall of China was built to keep people out. They are a protection against wild beasts, marauding gangs and invading armies. The wise man Solomon said, **“Like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has no control over his spirit.”** (Pro. 25:28) **“He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city.”** (Pro.16:32) As we can see from this Scripture reference, the wall about the city is speaking of discipline and self-control; therefore, the Perizzite spirit has to do with the undisciplined and immoral lifestyle the carnal man has adopted which he refers to as freedom.

The great tragedy of Viet Nam was not that America was humiliated overseas and torn apart internally. It was not even the pain of the thousands who were tortured and slain, or its effect on their families, as great as these things were. The great calamity was the surrender of an entire generation of youth to the stupefying effects of drugs, which dulled their senses and broke down all the walls about their city. No longer were there any restraints. No longer were there limits and boundaries. The drugs had deadened their hearing to the voices of their mothers and dads, who warned them of the pitfalls of certain paths. Their credo was emblazoned around the world. “If it feels good—do it.” We saw the expansive eruption of homosexuals, junkies, prostitutes, pimps and pushers by the multiplied thousands. Pornography and explicit sex were piped into the homes and then shown on giant screens, engendering an explosion of homicides, suicides, venereal diseases and illegitimate babies, of which decisions were made to kill by the hundreds of thousands.

Not only was the drug traffic increased to tear down the walls of our cities, but also the eastern cult religions were

welcomed and promoted as the panacea for all ills. Indian gurus left their homeland, which is filled to overflowing with unbelievable poverty, filth, discrimination and disease, and migrated to America and Canada where they were elevated to the position of gods; but who, in fact, dealt in bondage and death.

Psychiatry is lauded as the answer to all ills; yet, an atheist started it and men, most of whom are agnostics, propagate it. It has been repeatedly proven to be unreliable, unacceptable in courts and on shaky ground, scientifically. The psychiatrist's pillar of treatment is hypnosis. Electric or chemical shock treatments stand waiting in the closet if hypnosis doesn't work. These are the primary cures for all problems—so they tear down the walls of resistance through hypnosis and drugs (medication, tranquilizers), and the Perizzite spirit takes another weakling captive.

The Lord was very specific concerning the Canaanites, when He said, “...**you shall utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them. Furthermore you shall not intermarry with them...**” (Deut. 7:2,3) The church, with its Hivite spirit, has welcomed the representatives of the Perizzites and has intermarried with them. The music of many church gatherings has been married to the Voodoo drums of Haiti and of Africa, and now we have contemporary “gospel rock” or worse still “punk gospel.”

The Christian counselor has brought into the house of God the atheistic teachings of Sigmund Freud, founder of psychoanalysis (the study of the soul); and he now deals with the psyche of the troubled one, teaching them through hypnosis and suggestion how to feel better about themselves. Jesus saw it much differently. He taught that self must be crucified. It's not that you should feel good nor

bad about self but simply present it for execution. Whatever happened to prayer? Where has the glory and presence of the Lord gone, which has the power to deliver? What happened to the ministry of the Holy Spirit, who searches the deep things of the person? I recently read this statement, "If we choose anything except God, we are doomed." Haggai makes a chilling prophetic utterance. **"For thus says the Lord of hosts, 'once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. And I will shake all the nations and they will come with the wealth of the nations; and I will fill this house with glory'."** (Hag. 2:6,7) **"And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised saying, 'Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven'."** (Heb. 12:26) In the coming days of great shaking, all foundations will crumble and fall except the Rock—Christ Jesus.

There are seminars now held on a regular basis in religious circles which will teach you how to speak in tongues, how to prophesy, how to dance in the Spirit and how to have faith and miracles as a part of your life. I shudder at the implications. Why not just run after God until these become a fruit of that union? But no! The religious world has married the Canaanite and its offspring is antichrist.

Girgashites

This inhabitant depicts perhaps the most insidious enemy of them all. To those observant ones, it seems hardly sinful much less demonic. Nevertheless, let us examine this crafty one for his name means "clay-like soil." That seems hardly offensive; except when under close scrutiny, we find that clay soil has difficulty absorbing water. The water that others drink as refreshing life, the Girgashite spirit repels;

and that person is left as bereft of life as the desert is of vegetation. In most places outside the United States where I have preached, the people received the Word of Life with gladness. There was only one place where it seemed as if I was ministering to dead people. That place was Haiti. I knew when I had finished each message that their understanding had not profited one iota. It was not until much later that the Lord opened the truth to me. People with a Gergashite spirit must first be delivered from that spirit before they can even hear the Word of Life. I failed to do that. They have a saying in Haiti; "We like Christianity but we love Voodoo."

There was a certain slave-girl who followed Paul and Silas at Phillipi crying, "**...These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation.**" (Acts 16:17) This sounds like a good testimonial does it not? That spirit of divination, which inhabited the girl, obviously bound the spirit of the meeting until finally "**...Paul, being greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, 'I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!' And it came out at that very moment.**" (Acts 16:18) You see Paul was not ministering in word only but "**...my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.**" (1Cor. 2:4) Paul did not try to mimic the clerics of that day no more than did Jesus of His day. The demons of Jesus' day declared, "**...I know who You are—the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him saying, 'Be quiet and come out of him'.**" (Luke 4:34,35) "**And demons were coming out of many, crying out and saying, 'You are the Son of God!' And rebuking them He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ.**" (Luke 4:41) Neither Jesus nor Paul needed demons to advertise or confess their identity.

The preaching of the gospel has devolved into dry-mouthed sermons which are designed to last for only a given time on a certain day or night. The thought of casting out demons has long since been relegated to some archaic time in the past and then only to Jesus' Apostles. Jesus never cast out a demon at night. It was always during the daylight hours when He dealt with the spirits of darkness. I've heard many preachers referred to as "word" preachers, but few are advertised as a "deed" preacher. One of the great men of God of the past was noted for his ability to see into the unseen. I've been in many of his meetings. They were wonderful, but he was one of the worse "preachers" I think I've ever heard. He tried to slip out of his called ministry into what were the acceptable services of the day, and it simply didn't work.

This spirit of the Gergashite is one of the more pervasive enemies of our land; and yet, we treat it as little more than a nuisance. It is impossible to reach the heart and soul of a person as long as this spirit of darkness and confusion overshadows them.

Jebusite

The Jebusites were the last people to be conquered in Canaan. Their stronghold was a city called Jebus. They mocked and jeered at David with these words, "**You shall not come in here, but the blind and the lame shall turn you away...Nevertheless, David captured the city and renamed it Jerusalem.**" (2Sam. 5:6,7) They were attempting a scheme that works so many times because it is what their name signifies. The name "Jebusite" means trodden down, threshing place, to trample, to tread under foot, to shame, to humiliate and to bring low.

One of Satan's most effective weapons of warfare is to cast questions and aspersions on your faith, your relationship and your walk with the Lord. If he can make you believe that you were saved by your own efforts or that you're kept saved by your own strength, he'll beat you black and blue every time you falter or fail. He is the master of accusation and tyranny. There will be constant ridicule concerning your relationship with the Father—that your hope is in vain and the Lord is uncaring. That is the Jebusite spirit. On the other hand stands the promise that is the bulwark of our peace, **“There is therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”** (Rom. 8:1)

Hundreds of thousands of precious Christians would deny the presence of a Jebusite spirit in their lives. They will declare triumphantly, “Hey! I'm a King's kid. I'm the head and not the tail.” However, they will passively accept the suggestion, “This is flu season and you may get it!” “Be careful or you'll have a heart attack!” “Because the economy is so bad, you'll probably be laid off work!” These are all methods of Satan to beat you down and destroy your faith. It is a Jebusite spirit designed to bring you low.

It really makes little difference if, in God's providence, you have a job. God has a million channels through which to bless you. Whether that channel has prestige or position is of little consequence. He, many times, must move us geographically to effect the change He desires in us. Don't believe the accusations of the Jebusite concerning your worth to God. Strive to keep your life pure and the channel between you and God free from unclean debris and then trust that He is discharging His will in your life.

The humility that pleases the Lord is not the same kind of humility the Jebusite would impose. True humility is not a

“hang-dog” look, like you’ve been caught with your hand in the cookie jar. It is realizing that we can do absolutely nothing that will contribute to the furtherance of His kingdom apart from His Holy Spirit. Not only do we know that we can do nothing apart from Him, but we cannot be persuaded to embark on any endeavor that the Spirit has not initiated. That is true humility—realizing our utter dependence is on our Lord.

False humility, oftentimes the results of a trampled spirit, limits God’s ability to do anything through you. You’re saved, your talent is safely buried and you’re waiting for Jesus to come and take you away from all this. As you know, that attitude does not please God; in fact, it will incur His displeasure.

When God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, do you think there was something special about that bush? Of course not! Any old bush would have been sufficient. If there hadn’t been a bush, He could have used a stone or one of those few sheep through which to speak. After all, He later spoke through the mouth of a donkey to Balaam. My dear brother and sister, God can take whatever is available to Him and make it radiate His glory. You are no exception.

I have listened to many preachers harangue the congregation with threats of judgment, hell fire, calamity and retribution until not one person was left sensing the love of our Lord. That is, for the most part, a Jebusite spirit that is never pleased unless we are praying to be spared from the wrath of God. That’s a terrible God to serve. That’s not the God I serve, and I don’t believe it is the God you want to serve.

Canaanite

This spirit is the outcome of the curse from Noah because of his son, Ham. The Canaanite is a term that entails all the tribes of the land of Canaan. It is used as an all encompassing term; and yet, it is also used in the singular in God's word. The word itself means servant, peddler, merchant, trafficker, low and flat. Because of incurring the wrath directed to his father, Canaan received a curse rather than a blessing. We must remember that in that day a blessing from the father was accompanied by material wealth. Canaan was deprived of a blessing from his father so he became shrewd in his business dealings, as his name implies.

Jesus was incensed at the presence of merchandisers in the temple and displayed His anger by driving out the moneychangers with a whip that He Himself had woven. This is the only "spirit" in which He uses physical force to expel the abusers. This sin may not be a demon in the true sense of the word but may be a work of the flesh that is comfortable operating with demons and, in fact, inviting them entrance into our "land." Today's churches are still filled with peddlers, who are an offense to our Lord. Paul's remarks to the Corinthians were, **"We are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God."** (2Cor. 2:17) There have always been those who have made the gospel a "business." To many today, the preaching of the gospel has become a very lucrative profession. With their tables filled with books, tapes, videos, CDs and digital paraphernalia they ply their trade. If you will give them a sacrificial offering, they will send you "free of charge" their latest book, tape or some memorabilia from the Holy Land. They are merchandisers and Canaanites. They traffic in the souls of men with money as their goal.

The Canaanites were never completely annihilated by Israel. They were merely subjugated for a season. As God had warned, they became **“...thistles in their eyes and thorns in their sides...”** (Num. 33:55) They remain so ‘til this day. The Philistines, who were a perpetual enemy of Israel, dealing them no small amount of misery, were but the forefathers of the present-day Palestinians, who still harass the people of Israel and anyone who aligns themselves with the country of Israel. Even the name has not greatly changed today.

God commanded the children of Israel to make no covenant with the Canaanites nor to intermarry with them. In direct disobedience to God’s command, **“The sons of Israel lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites; and they took their daughters for themselves as wives, and gave their own daughters to their sons, and served their gods.”** (Judg. 3:5,6)

The church today has done no differently than did Israel. Instead of driving out the demon spirits that have harassed the Christians, the church has now taken in marriage the cursed ones and granted them a place of respectability alongside the Holy Ghost. It is now “healing plus surgery,” “deliverance plus counseling,” “prayer and meditation plus psychiatry and transcendental meditation” and the “gospel of peace plus tranquilizers.” God seems to have become weak and impotent in His old age and unable to save to the uttermost. A puppet government has been inaugurated which has all the trappings of Christianity but is, in fact, anti-Christ.

There were many enemies in Canaan that Israel had to conquer before they could have peace in their land. We

have briefly dealt with only seven. Let's just look at some others that it would be a good study for one to pursue. There were also the Arvadite (roving, refuge); Hamathites (walled—as in a wall of protection); Arkites (Tush, fugitive); Zemarites (wooly, double-fleeced—remember wool always represents flesh); Anakim (necklace, strangling chain, giant)—these were the giants who occupied the land of Hebron. These were the ones that the fearful spies reported that **“...we were in our own sight as grasshoppers...”** (Num. 13:33); Amalekites (earthy, warlike, Esau); Rephaim (mend, cure, heal, repair, physician, giant) and Philistine (roll in dust, wallow in self, migratory). These are only a few. There are scores of others.

These are tremendous days when God is **“...searching Jerusalem with lamps.”** (Zeph. 1:12) No longer is it just the obvious and blatant sins He is after, but the thoughts and intent of the heart. The Lord will soon begin to appear in and through a people who will manifest His power and glory to this wicked generation. It will be the great and terrible day of the Lord. It will be glorious beyond words to some and unthinkably terrible to others. **“Keep your behavior excellent among the gentiles (unbelievers) so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may on account of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.”** (1Pet. 2:12)

CHAPTER 11

A CORPORATE EFFORT

There is a peculiarity, which exists among God's people, that is a mixture of the pure zeal and quest for God and the ambitious, self-serving, grasping for position and recognition. The battle to possess our possessions—to take our inheritance is God's desire as well as ours. To reach maturity and be clothed upon with His glory should be the hunger of every true son.

We have heard much in recent years of sonship, of the enchristed ones and the man-child. We pore over the Scriptures, which speak of “...**waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.**” (Rom. 8:23) That there are different stages of maturity no one can deny. On the one hand, there is the child who runs, laughs and rejoices, having just become a member of the family of God. He's impatient and critical at any sign of restraint or of waiting on God, which is a sign of doubt and weakness to him. On the other extreme swing of the pendulum is the wise old saint whose pace seems to have come to a standstill. They don't seem to be accomplishing anything for the Lord; yet, there's a deep settled peace, which radiates from their countenance. They patiently endure the race—their bodies bearing the scars and present wounds of conflict.

There existed the same contrast in the tribes of Israel as they encamped in the wilderness opposite Jordan. There were those that had requested from Moses that they might have their inheritance in the wilderness. Their vision was limited to the immediate. They had come as far as they desired. They wanted no more. “...**If we have found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants as a**

possession; do not take us across this Jordan.” But Moses said to the sons of Gad, to the sons of Reuben and the half tribe of Manasseh, ‘Shall your brothers go to war while you yourselves sit here? Now why are you discouraging the sons of Israel from crossing over into the land which the Lord has given them?’” (Num. 32:5-7) “So Moses said to them, ‘If you will do this, if you will arm yourselves before the Lord for war, and all of you armed men cross over the Jordan before the Lord until He has driven His enemies out from before Him, and the land is subdued before the Lord, then afterward you shall return and be free of obligation toward the Lord and toward Israel, and this land shall be yours for a possession before the Lord’.” (Num. 32:20-22)

In the above verses, we see a people who were interested in their own inheritance, but the inheritance of their brothers was of little concern to them. Although what they requested for themselves was less than what God had determined for them, they were yet denied even that plea unless they joined with their brothers in warfare against the Canaanites and helped secure their inheritance that they might live in peace in the land.

We have observed this same scene being multiplied about the country. Little groups of “churches” who are going to come into the stature of a full grown man (Eph. 4:13) and leave all their brothers and sisters languishing in the wilderness or fighting alone for their inheritance. I can promise you that you will never come into your full inheritance alone. By that I mean, you will not be able to drive out every enemy from your land without the help of your brothers and sisters in the Lord. When I say help, I do not mean the kind of help you ask for when you raise your hand in the assembly and say, “I have an unspoken request or need.”

The Lord has an almost maddening way of binding us inextricably together—even with those we don't like so very well. We speak so glibly of the "Body of Christ" and how we are joined together with cords of love, drawing strength and life from the other members. How can we believe that and yet be loners, independent of all other relationships, to the extent that we are gods unto ourselves? If we are able to impart strength and life to those about us, we are just as capable of exposing and infusing disease and death.

There is a remarkable Scripture found in James' epistle which reads as follows, "**Confess your sins one to another, and pray for one another that you may be healed...**" (Jas. 5:16) This follows on the heels of the instructions given the sick in the previous two verses. Since he is speaking of the sick, it can be assumed that he now refers to sickness that is a result of some grievous sin. In our confession of that sin, we can believe that we shall be healed of the sickness that now plagues us. This does not fall under the category of "unspoken requests." It may not even be a public confession unless the sin is public. If the sin is public, then the confession is public. If the sin was a private one, I would then say the confession should be private. Our confession should be within the scope of our offense. I personally believe that the reason many sicknesses are so persistent is because a demon has a legal claim to that land—for it has not been purged and cleansed by the act of confession and forgiveness.

Today's mentality concerning marriage is but a reflection of attitudes in the church. A couple lives together without the bonds of a marriage contract basically because they're afraid of a total commitment to anything over a long period of time. They enjoy the pleasures and excitement of sex—even the prospect of rearing children together offers a

certain allurements. However, there is a certain resistance to being committed to each other “forsaking all others, until death do us part.” In the back of the mind, hidden behind tons of garbage, lies the subtle suggestion, “Perhaps someday, I may meet someone else more exciting or someone I’d rather be with. I don’t want those elaborate ties that would have to be broken in order to follow my dream.”

In the church, there are multitudes who have a “Lone Ranger” approach to the Kingdom of God. They’re much like the people who want the convenience and benefits of marriage without the cost of commitment. Years ago, we used to sing a song called, “It’s Just Jesus and Me.” The entertainment industry followed with a song called, “Me and Jesus Got a Good Thing Going.” While I agree, Christianity has to become a one-on-one relationship with the Lord—the thrust of true Christianity revolves around our having more than a casual acquaintance with Him. God is still determined to bring into full stature a corporate “son” who will **“rule all nations with a rod of iron.”** (Rev. 2:27)

When I speak of commitment, I am not implying particularly of joining a local assembly or some prayer group but rather an obligation to the Body of Christ. This will normally necessitate having its primary outworking in smaller groups. It is impossible for you to bring the entire Body of Christ into freedom alone; yet, you can bring one or two or a dozen out of a prison house and break those bars that keep them enslaved. I’m not implying that you can bring anyone to perfection; nevertheless, you can contribute to their total release by being faithful to the calling of God.

You cannot know the desperate need in another unless you have developed some measure of intimacy with that person. The framework of today’s churches is so constructed that the average person will become lost within

the maze of programs and activity. There can be those sitting around you who are beaten, broken and brutalized; and you may not have the slightest suspicion of any problem—because we have become so proficient in the wearing of masks. We have been programmed to believe that “church” is not the place to open up your life and bare your heart. It is a place to be still. It is a place to listen to one man speak, much too often of insignificant things. It has been compared to throwing pieces of rope to a drowning man. The Band-Aid wears thin—the salve is temporary—the problem remains. The church should not be a gathering of non-entities, who are merely numbers with faces—playing charades—dealing with the peripheral and applying ointment to the exterior.

In a marriage, there are gut wrenching agonies that must be faced and resolved if the marriage is to be what God designed it to be. Failure to face up to the confrontations, which are necessary in order to expose the real problems, leaves a caricature devoid of substance. With the problems never being resolved, the marriage usually becomes an endurance contest developing into a love-hate relationship. It is so sad to see couples with that stern set of the jaw—wearing that fake smile that does little to mask the hurt and pain within. All joy and excitement have long since departed. It is one of those puzzling enigmas about human behavior. We had rather tell an enemy what it is about them that provokes us than to tell a friend or our spouse. Yet, to neglect exposing the problem and keeping the lid tightly closed will strain a relationship to the breaking point.

Is it any different in the church? I’ve watched a host of people, wearing that look of resignation, enter into “fellowship” week after week asking for prayer that they may “hold out faithful to the end.” They’ve given up all hope that there can be a walk of freedom or that one can live an

overcoming life in this present world. No one has ever loved them enough to confront them about certain enemies in their land. The pastor barely knows their name. They're afraid to confide in another Christian for fear the conversation will be broadcast about the community. To **“confess your faults (sins) to one another”** is unthinkable. “I’ll confess my sins to no one but God!” Okay, if that’s your attitude, then your “land” will never be free; and you’ll remain a prisoner in those areas. Did you know that’s exactly how psychiatrists operate? They understand the necessity of persuading you to talk about (confess) your problems (sins). On the other side of the coin, there are the Priests who sit in the confessional booths and listen to your drama of guilt. The Evangelicals have tried to find a middle ground by offering you trained Christian counselors. They have a degree, which states that they can give you the right answers. Do you realize that it’s not the answer that’s important? It is the exposure of the enemy who has cloaked himself in darkness, hiding in the recesses of your soul. The Scripture does not say, “Confess to a psychiatrists,” nor does it say, “Confess to a Priest.” It doesn’t even say, “Confess to a Christian counselor.” The bible says, **“Confess your sins one to another, and pray one for another that you may be healed...”** (Jas. 5:16)

We’re discussing the problem of getting your “land” (body) healed and set free from the indwelling enemy. **“If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and heal their land.”** (2Chron. 7:14) Now I realize that the land spoken of here has to do initially with the geographic place of their habitation and the curse on the soil, which was a consequence of Adam’s transgression. Paul remarks, **“Creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of**

the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.” (Rom. 8:21,22) If there is to be a deliverance of the natural land, a setting free of our individual land must also occur, which is our body.

As we have stated, according to the type that the Lord set forth in His people Israel and their relationship with the land of Canaan, there must be a corporate effort if we, the church, are to come into total freedom. It will necessitate a war waged by the plurality as well as the individual. The enemy to be engaged is made known by the following methods: (1) confession by the oppressed one, (2) discerning of spirits by those walking in the Spirit and (3) temptation, which reveals the presence of the enemy. Thus far, we avoid at all cost an encounter with any of these methods. By persuading us to reject the revelation of the enemy's presence or by deceiving us into believing that we do not have any hostile residents, Satan sits secure on his throne with no fear of defeat. How long has it been since you heard a demon scream out in fear during your Sunday morning service?

As the gift of discernment of spirits (1Cor.12:10) becomes operative in the Body of Christ, there will, as a matter of course, be an indescribable amount of garbage and stench come to the surface. When the offensive presence of the enemy begins to be revealed, we will have difficulty distinguishing between the land and the enemy within. Something we need to keep in the forefront of our mind is the promise of God. Canaan is referred to by God and by those of faith as a **“good land.”** (Ex. 3:8; Num.14:7; Deut. 1:25-35; 3:25; 4:21,22; 6:18; 8:7-10; Josh. 23:13-15; Judges 18:9; 1Kings 14:15) These are just a few of the scriptural references that speak of God's opinion of the “land.” Those without faith could only see **“...a land which eateth up its**

inhabitants..." (Num. 13:32) If there is no faith in us, we will only see a church riddled by sin and a people hopelessly imprisoned by an unconquerable enemy.

We sing a song called "I Hear The Sound Of The Army Of The Lord" and numerous others concerning the army that the Lord is forming in these last days. This army is made up of that vast multitude of dry bones that Ezekiel saw, which covered the valley. True, it was primarily a prophecy concerning Israel, but it has its more perfect fulfillment in the Spirit as the great army of God which will stand together to do battle with an enemy who now inhabits our "land."

Someone has said that Christianity is the world's greatest spectator sport. That may be true now, but it certainly wasn't designed to be so in the beginning. In the beginning of the fourth century A.D, the then known world had almost been totally evangelized for Christ when Constantine issued his edict requiring the whole of the Roman Empire to become Christian. It made little difference that the pagans simply added Jehovah to their already long list of gods. Jesus became just another Christ. The decree made wealthy and powerful an elite few of the church and idled the majority of the great army of God. In this one mandate, Satan enjoyed his greatest coup. Almost immediately, the church entered the Dark Ages as the masses were deprived of the true gospel and most of the world became prisoners of an idolatrous system that led the people away from the true and living God. They were now offered a form of Godliness that denied the power thereof—one that was merely a shadow rather than the substance.

The priests guarded their position with such jealousy and fervor that anyone who questioned their rulings or behavior was brought before the Inquisition to be tried for heresy. The church held as much power as the political government.

There was no such thing as individual rights. The suspect was at the mercy of the Diet (jury). Literally, millions were slain for the word of their testimony. “Fox’s Book of Martyrs” is a sobering publication written concerning the times of the Dark Ages. The Roman church has stubbornly kept its parishioners under tight control even to this day—relinquishing only in areas where there is hope of future gain. I was talking to a dear Catholic nun recently who had served the church all her adult life. As we talked and I quoted some Scriptures, which were pertinent to our conversation, she was embarrassed and became apologetic as she confessed; “We were never allowed to study the bible. We were taught that the priests, who have that position in the church, could only correctly interpret it.” It was so sad to see her expression. She did not know that we are all called to be kings and priests unto our Lord.

Before we go too far in condemning the Church of Rome, let us look at some of her offspring who would vehemently deny any relation with her, but who crawl out of her bed every morning. How do you reconcile a policy that makes men dictators, who rule the flock of God with an iron hand? “Well,” you say, “Our Pastor can’t rule us with an iron hand. We’d call a special election and vote him out.” That too is unscriptural. Since when do the proclamations of God hinge upon the vote of the people? Where in the bible has the will of God been decided by democratic process? God’s kingdom does not operate on the “one man—one vote” system. It is to be a Theocracy where God dictates the direction and the method.

The democratic principle of church government is the reason many Pastors resort to a number of methods to safeguard their tenure in that office. “If I’m going to face the possibility of an election each year” they reason, “I’ll simply build my own church building, then they can’t vote me out.”

Now, I see nothing wrong in owning your own church building if it doesn't serve as an anchor to keep you secured to one spot long after the Lord has finished with you in that area. It can also serve as a security blanket, thereby crippling your faith. Mobility is probably the hardest thing for a preacher to maintain; and yet, it is a necessary ingredient for God's servants. That's not to say that you'll be moving every six months, but the willingness to go and the readiness to move is a must. Also, by owning your own building, there is an arrogance that creeps in which has a tendency to make you deaf to anything which crosses your will.

If this is a corporate effort where the whole of God's army is utilized in battle, it will eventuate in a change if not total disruption of our Sunday morning "pageantry." Most Pastors operate under the delusion that if God has anything to say of any importance it will be spoken through them. Let me quote the following from a book that recently came across my desk written by a renowned Pastor and endorsed by one of the principal charismatic leaders of our day:

"When prophecy comes through a member of the congregation, its purpose is to edify the Body of Christ, to keep the Body well and strong, to encourage it and give it comfort. This prophecy must be judged by the local elders. But when prophecy comes to give direction to the church, it will always come through those whom God has set in authority over the Body—the Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers ordained by Jesus Christ **'...for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry for the edifying of the Body of Christ...'** (Eph. 4:12) God must speak through His ordained leadership, for too many voices from the Body would bring confusion. God must have authority through whom He can speak, because **'God is not the author of confusion, but of peace...'**

(1Cor. 14:33) The message of a true prophet of God is not to be judged by elders.” ---end quote.

As you look at this excerpt, you will immediately perceive the spirit of the writer. It is necessary to judge the words of the “laity”, but the “clergy” is off limits. They are not to be judged. Jesus had an interesting commendation He bestowed upon the church at Ephesus. **“I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot endure evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves Apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false.”** (Rev. 2:2) How did the church at Ephesus prove false those who claimed to be Apostles except by judging or trying them? Let me state emphatically—truth can stand the test—it is not afraid to be examined.

In years past before people began to move in the prophetic realm, the ultimate in the Spirit’s moving was thought to be in the form of “messages in tongues and interpretation of tongues.” One night as I sat on the platform at the beginning of a revival meeting, a message came forth in tongues. It was hardly finished before the interpretation came from someone in the congregation. The Pastor, obviously irritated, leaned over and whispered to me, “God will always choose the clergy to interpret. This is out of order.” Now isn’t that sectarian? To think that God would have to speak through one particular vessel is to limit Him. He has spoken when men said, “It thundered.” He has spoken out of burning bushes, out of the mouths of babes and out of the mouth of a donkey.

In one very large Pentecostal church, of which I’m well acquainted, no one can give a prophetic word unless it is cleared beforehand with the Pastor. The purpose, so they say, is to eliminate confusion and fleshly prophecies. The

end result has been to eliminate the participation of the masses, having still the Roman church as its pattern.

Paul instructs us in simple language concerning spiritual participation. If one is speaking with a prophetic anointing and revelation comes to another who is seated, **“...let the first keep silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be exhorted.”** (1Cor 14:30,31) Try that some Sunday morning if you're looking for some excitement.

Now hear me clearly on this point. I am not opposed to sermons preached on Sunday morning, or Saturday morning or Friday night. I am not opposed to preachers owning the church building. I am not opposed to deacons and elders working in conjunction with the Pastor. However, I am opposed to any government, policy, method or excuse that makes idle the majority of God's army and presses them into the role of spectators rather than participants. I will venture this seemingly contradictory statement. The majority of Christians are totally useless in battle just as was Gideon's army. They are filled with fear, unbelief and passivity. Nevertheless, it must always be God's option as to whom He chooses to use, not men's.

As long as the warfare is confined to the generals, the victory will always remain incomplete. It will remain a spectator sport. As long as the vast army of God is shut up in a system that requires their submission to some man-appointed authority, they will be emasculated and barren—unable to reproduce the Christ in the earth.

The Scriptures relate how, **“Phillip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Phillip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles**

which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voices, came out of many that were possessed with them; and many taken with palsies, and that the lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city.” (Acts 8:5-8) Phillip was not an Apostle. He was not a Pastor. The translators call him an Evangelist, but the bible refers to him as one who served tables. He was a servant—a deacon. Who sent him to Samaria, a city hated by the Jews? Who laid hands on him and commissioned him to go? We have no evidence that he had any word except from the Lord to go tell the good news. As he proclaimed the gospel, great signs followed. Stephen was another of those “table servers” who “...full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people.” (Acts 6:8) These were God’s corporals doing what today’s church would consign to the generals and colonels.

In his little book, “Beauty for Ashes”, part 2, George Warnock makes the following observation: “We recognize that there is a very individual and personal appropriation of Canaan life, and we would not minimize that. But what God is about to do in the earth is so vast, so mighty, so terrible, and so awesome that no individual could possibly appropriate it in any sense of fullness. Caleb and Joshua must wait for the new generation to be trained and disciplined of the Lord, before they themselves could go in. In the meantime they could walk before the Lord in faith, in hope and expectation. But Canaan life in its fullness is for a corporate people. It is simple too vast for any individual to apprehend or appropriate.”—end quote

“...That ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend (or apprehend, seize, to take eagerly) with all the saints what is the breadth, and the length, and the depth, and height; and to know the love

of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with (unto) all the fullness of God.” (Eph. 3:17-19)

The above Scripture is so expansive, so boundless, so immeasurable in its scope; yet most Christians rush over the words with hardly a pause, never meditating on the “...**glory which shall be revealed in us.**” (Rom. 8:18) I dare say not one of us can grasp in any measure what it means to be filled with the fullness of God. But, you see this is a land that must be apprehended corporately. Your vision may be flawless. Your faith may be unwavering. You may be armed and geared for battle. Yet, God has bound you to a corporate man. We may make forays into Eshcol and plunder the enemy, bringing back the spoils of grapes, figs and pomegranates; nevertheless, the Lord will require that we do battle for our brother’s inheritance before we can dwell in peace in our own. To return with the spoils of the land is admirable, but God intends for us to take not only the spoils of the land but the land itself.

The old generation of unbelievers must die off. In the meantime, God is raising up and training a new generation. Don’t be discouraged as you look around and behold the multitudes of fearful, unbelieving Christians who are still in that system of wilderness worship. Most are already dead. Merely because they are moving about involved in temple worship is no indication of life.

The Lord has allowed us to see just a glimpse of what He is doing in the earth. He has purposely hidden the finished product and the means to that end. If He were to reveal His plan, men would grasp it unto themselves and run with it, ever desirous to arrive at the goal independent of the guidance of the Holy One. Man has adulterated everything he ever touched. God will not trust something so immense—so boundless—into the hands of carnal man.

We know that God is preparing an army with which He will conquer the enemy. Man, in his reasoning, looks at the armies of wicked nations and tries to emulate their governmental framework. They devise a pyramid system of authority where those in the higher ranks of the order receive the rule over the greatest number of subjects. Submission is extracted from those of lower rank. Jesus did things somewhat differently as He commanded, **“...whosoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and give His life a ransom for many.”** (Matt. 20:26-28)

I have no idea how God is going to bring this all about. I'm sure I will be as bewildered as Ezekiel of old when he prophesied to the dry bones and to his amazement watched them come together. Man always wants to help God as did Uzzah and often with the same results. Many of those who fill the pulpits have been slain by the Lord, and they are walking dead men.

We hear sermons, listen to tapes, read pamphlets and view VCRs and DVDs concerning man's great ideas on how to bring unity and oneness into the vast army of God. They usually suggest or demand some conformity to a man-made system, which has worked in the world; and they conclude the same should work in the Kingdom of God. I am confident that the Lord is still in control and will bring this all together in His time. He is not a gambler. He has left nothing to chance. I'm very confident that how it comes together will amaze us all. So I urge you, **“Be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.”** (Eph. 5:21) **“...Yield your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”** (Rom. 6:13)

CHAPTER 12

DEATH—THE LAST ENEMY

We have been exploring Israel's conquest of the land of Canaan and how those events in the natural realm were but a type of our spiritual conflict to annihilate every enemy in our Canaan, which is our bodies, or our realm of life. Canaan is not a geographic place we're destined for; but rather, it is a place of relationship with the Father through the Way—our Lord Jesus Christ—by the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

In the fourteenth chapter of John's gospel, as Jesus reveals His heart to His disciples, we read a very familiar portion of Scripture, which we have perverted to fit our convoluted theology. He is not speaking of heaven as we have been taught. He begins with these words, **"In My Father's house are many mansions,"** but instead of the word "mansions" the correct translation should be "dwelling places." Notice! He does not say, "In your Father's house are many mansions," but "In My Father's house are many mansions." There's a world of difference. He is not speaking of where you will eventually live but where the Father presently lives.

While speaking along this line, Paul makes this interesting observation. **"In a large (great) house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor. Therefore, if a man cleanses himself from these things he will be a vessel of honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work."** (2Tim. 2:20,21) The great house, to which Paul is referring, is none other than the people of God, which is the dwelling place of our Father. In His house, there are vessels

(individuals, instruments) of honor, made of gold (divinity) and of silver (grace, redemption); but there are also vessels of less honor—common folk like you and me—vessels of clay and wood who can only give at times a drink of cool water. Notice these are all in the Father's house and are His dwelling places.

“Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?” (1Cor. 3:16) **“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you...?”** (1Cor. 6:19) We are a dwelling place of God who inhabits us by His Holy Spirit. Of course, all who have studied these Scriptures already know this.

Men for years have used John 14 as a proof text for heaven, quoting the verse, **“I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself: that where I am, there you may be also.”** (John 14:3) The place He went to prepare is not geographic nor is it structural. It is not a building in which you dwell, but rather it is a “building” in which the Father dwells. It is the “mansions” (dwelling places) Jesus is speaking of. The place He prepared was a relationship with the Father. He prepared a place for your standing with God. Pay close attention to the wording—**“That where I am, there you may be also.”** He places His relationship in the present tense. He does not say, “where I shall be” but “where I am”. In other words, “The relationship I now enjoy with the Father, you may soon enjoy because I am going to open up the way to the Father for you.” Remember, in these same passages He says, **“I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father, but through Me.”** (John 14:6)

The fourteenth through the sixteenth chapters of John's gospel deal with the life Jesus will impart to those who

believe. The portion that reads **“And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself”** has been projected into some dim and distant future. I believe He surely will come in the consummation of the ages, but He has already come in the person of the Holy Spirit. **“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come and make our abode with him.”** (John 14:23) In this passage, the word “abode” is the identical word in the Greek that has been erroneously translated “mansions” previously. So you see, we have now become a mansion of our Lord. These three chapters (John 14-16) deal with the coming of the Holy Spirit and how He will impart the life of God unto us. Many typical examples of the Spirit of God are used throughout the Scriptures. He is referred to as rain, fire, wind and life to name a few. Each typifies a particular facet of the work of the Spirit.

We want to touch on the work of the Spirit as the “Spirit of Life” at this particular time. As a young Christian I thought the entire Bible was a book concerning heaven and hell. I saw neither degrees nor depths in either. I wrestled over the concept of a God who ordered the slaughter of men, women, babies and heathens. They logically could not enter heaven through ignorance or else ignorance becomes a savior. The other alternative was hell, which left me uneasy about the mercy and justice of God. But the bible is not a book that deals primarily with heaven and/or hell but about life and death—about light and darkness. **“I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendents.”** (Deut. 30:19) You see, we’ve always been looking to heaven as a place we shall go. I tell you, heaven is an experience long before it’s a place. I am not suggesting that heaven will not entail some

geographic change; but if you have walked in this earth without heaven in your spirit, you'd be miserable in that land of eternal praise and worship.

I want us to consider overcoming that greatest of enemies in our "land." It is an enemy that has gone undefeated for millenniums. Death has stalked the earth laughing at its adversaries—sometimes delayed but never avoided. With only three exceptions, Enoch, Elijah and Jesus, death has always been victorious. Jesus laid down His life and His soul was taken down to hell. In doing so, He broke the power of death, for in three days He arose with a new body and death was forever conquered. If you look about you, this seems like a lie for death is as much a charlatan king as he has ever been. In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul declares, **"He must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be abolished is death."** (1Cor. 15:25,26) If you choose to be like the majority of Christians, you will put the conquering of all our enemies somewhere in the future "after Jesus comes." The attitude of most Christians still remains that "healing, miracles and a walk totally free from sin are all future experiences."

There are some Christians who believe that God heals occasionally. Some will agree that, even today, God performs miracles. Some reluctantly admit that demons still inhabit the world; however, most will never admit that demons can inhabit a Christian. They will look you in the eye and tell you that you must be some sort of fanatic to believe the Lord will heal your every sickness and that there is a place where you can walk in divine health. Then there are a few who believe that the atoning work of Jesus conquered every facet of man's weakness. They believe that He has already **"...delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of**

His dear Son.” (Col. 1:13) Notice the past tense is used in this as well as other Scriptures revealing the same truth.

Now I wish to reason with you if I may. Do you believe God’s kingdom is something that is future or do you believe it is even now a ruling dominion? If you agree that it is now present and we are a part of it, then you consent with what the Scriptures say. **“...The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed, nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’, or ‘there it is!’ For behold the kingdom of God is in your midst.”** (among you or within you) (Luke 17:20,21) King Jesus does not willingly surrender His children to the power of the wicked one. It is because of our unbelief and fear that we’re dead long before we die. While they were yet in the wilderness, ancient Israel was held captive by those in Canaan; although, Canaan’s inhabitants had never crossed Jordan to attack them. Israel was held captive by their own fear. Little did they know that the Canaanites were terrified of them long before they crossed over Jordan opposite Jericho.

All “Full Gospel” Christians believe in divine healing. Ask them why they believe it, and they will answer with one of two responses—“because I’ve experienced it myself” or “because the Scriptures promise our healing. Jesus healed all that came to Him. What He did for one, He will do for all.” Although there may be some prerequisites for healing, the theology is basically accurate for those who contend for the faith. Ask those same people if Jesus raised the dead, and you will get a, “Yes, but!” Not only did Jesus manifest His kingship by demonstrating His power over sickness, but He also had power over death.

I have received more scoffs and ridicule over this message than any other I have ever preached. “Oh! This is just that old “never die” message that surfaces every so

often. Who wants to drag an old decaying body around trying to pump life into it?” Well I, for one, do not; but hear me out in what I believe is for us, yet most of us are too fearful to even voice it much less reach for it.

When Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, He purposely stayed there until Lazarus had died. “Some friend!” we’re tempted to think. That’s what Mary and Martha thought. **“Martha therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him; but Mary still sat in the house.”** (John 11:20) In the dialogue that follows, I want you to pay particular attention to Martha’s faith. It is little different from ours. Her faith is placed either in the past or in the future. Jesus is attempting to move her faith from these two extremes into a functioning faith of the now. For, you see, if your faith is not in the present—if it is not now—it is not faith at all, but hope.

Martha immediately confronted Jesus with these scolding words, **“Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died.”** (John 11:21) She is saying in effect, “Here you are capable and sufficient, there you are anemic and powerless.” I’ve seen this repeated countless times in Pentecostal and Charismatic circles. While there is a great stir of excitement, the minister says something like this, “While the waters are being stirred, anything can happen. You can be healed, delivered and set free.” While there is truth in this statement, it leaves the subtle implication that says, “If there is not great excitement and joy, you cannot be healed, delivered nor set free.” “When You are here Jesus, anything can happen, but if You are there—nothing is possible.” The truth of the matter is, the Lord is always here. He is always present. I do not mean to imply that because He is ever present you can make demands on His grace and benevolence. You must fit into His will and timing.

Martha tried to cover her anger and disappointment with these added words, **“Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give you.”** (John 11:22) Jesus now takes her fragile faith and begins to build on it. **“Your brother shall rise again.”** (John 11:23) Previously, Martha had escaped to the past. Now she flees to the future. **“I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.”** (John 11:24) Notice, her hope is future. Jesus jars her into reality with these powerful words, **“Martha, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies.”** (John 11:25)

Hear carefully what Jesus is saying to Martha. “Resurrection is not an event—it is a Person. You’re looking for a time—a happening—an incident. You’re faith is in a day—someday. You’re faith is misplaced. Resurrection is a Person. I am that Person.” Are you looking and waiting for a time when you will be healed—when you will experience deliverance—when your prayers will be answered? Stop looking to the future, to some point in time. Rather, begin looking to Jesus in whose person is the embodiment of all your needs. It is as you seek Him—not an answer to your problems—that your needs will be met.

Now I wish to point out the explosive truth contained in these next verses. Jesus had just said, **“...he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies.”** May I pose this question? Is Jesus speaking of the natural death or the spiritual death? Of course, Jesus always spoke with the spiritual man in mind; but in this instance, He is referring primarily to physical death. If a man dies and he is a believer, he shall live again. This we all believe. It is Jesus’ next statement that is the shocker. **“Everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”** (John 11:26) Martha is so stunned by the implications that she can only mutter, **“Lord, I believe that**

You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He Who comes into the world.” (John 11:27) With these words she went away and called her sister.

Is Jesus speaking purely of the spiritual in the above verses? Of course, He is speaking of the spiritual. I also believe that He is offering a promise to believers which we have lightly regarded and scoffed at its prospects because we consider death an unconquerable enemy before whom all are brought low.

I'm sure, by now, some of you are already quoting the famous Scripture in Hebrews that says, **“...It is appointed unto man once to die and after that the judgment.”** (Heb. 9:27) I would be the first to agree. However, let me remind you that when Jesus died on the cross, every created being on earth died with Him—or rather in Him. **“I have been crucified with Christ...”** (Gal. 2:20) **“Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him...”** (Rom. 6:6) Death has already occurred. Some will protest saying, “You're comparing spiritual with natural. You're offering an erroneous analogy.”

Then let us approach this from an entirely different perspective. Many times we get entangled trying to prove one certain Scripture. There are many men of renown who agree with me when I say—everything Jesus did on earth, He did as a man totally surrendered to God. He had willingly laid aside His divine rights and became in all points as we are. He was so human He could say, **“...as My Father has sent Me into the world, so send I you.”** (John 20:21) **“As Thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.”** (John 17:18) **“As you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the leper, cast out demon; freely you received, freely give’.”** (Matt. 10:7,8)

My response to the above is, “Lord, if You healed the sick, raised the dead and cleansed the lepers as God incarnate, then don’t expect me to duplicate those acts as a mortal man.” However, if Jesus did these things as a man saturated with God—Who is available to all—then to emulate Him in doing those works is available to every believer. If you can concur with what we’ve just said, then let us proceed one step further.

“And six days later Jesus took with Him Peter, James and John his brother and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun and His garments became white as light. And behold Moses and Elijah appeared to them talking to Him.” (Matt. 17:1-3) As we consider this portion of Scripture, it is clear how even before the crucifixion and resurrection He could step right out of the physical realm into that spiritual realm. He reinforces the fact that no man took His life from Him, but He laid it down of His own free will. Jesus refers to the transfiguration as an outgrowth of His kingdom. (Matt. 16:28)

If Jesus did this as a man and not as God, then He has thrown wide the door for us also to be transfigured. The same Greek word (metamorphosis), which is translated transfigured here, is translated as two other words in the New Testament. The first is found in the twelfth chapter of Romans, verse two. **“Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed** (transfigured—metamorphosed) **by the renewing of your mind.”** Paul is saying, “It’s the way you think that is keeping you earthbound. You need to be reprogrammed. You need your thinking changed if you ever want to have any hope of being transfigured. Stop allowing your carnal mind to dominate your life. Resist and refuse the psychological reasoning our godless society has thrust

upon us. Cast aside the world's concept of life and death and refuse to be pressed into its mold."

The other place this Greek word metamorphosis is found is used as follows, "**But we with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being changed (transfigured—metamorphosed) into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.**" (2Cor. 3:18) It seems, as we simply fix our eyes on Him, transfiguration will be the normal outgrowth. (Heb. 12:2)

It should be clear to all, from the above Scriptures, that I am not attempting to preserve a weak, frail, tired, decaying old body. What I am stretching for and believing for is a transfiguration which will deliver me from the jaws of death and prevent me from seeing corruption, "But that's going happen at the rapture", some will protest. You see, this is that "Martha faith", which rests in a time or an event rather than a Person. It amazes me how thousands can have faith for a transfiguration someday but yet reject it for today.

Paul expresses a desire that, at first, appears to be a paradox of his teachings. He recounts that familiar testimony saying, "**that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already attained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Jesus Christ.**" (Phil. 3:10-12)

As I read those verses, I said, "Hey Paul! You're saved! You're going to be resurrected in the last day!" But perhaps Paul was speaking of more than a last day resurrection. Could it be that he was looking for a transfiguration prior to the general resurrection? Most assuredly, he was pressing

for something that we have lost sight of and is alien to the thinking of most Christians.

There are those who mock and scoff at this hope that I have. Yet, I have found none who can give me a reasonable answer as to why God would permit men of the Old Testament, who lived before the finished work of Calvary, to be caught up in the air to be with the Lord, not tasting of physical death or decay. Surely, we live under a better sacrifice with better promises. Paul utters this remarkable statement, “**...we shall not all sleep (or die), but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.**” (1Cor. 15:51,52) Here again, most prophetic scholars will agree that the trumpet sound is not something that is heard for ten seconds or one hour or even one day, but that these trumpets (messages) have been and possibly could be sounding for many years.

There is nothing so alien and so utterly foreign to true Christianity as death. It is as repulsive as sickness or demon possession. We readily accept death as a certainty of life because we have been programmed to believe that it is an inescapable fact. David, looking by the Spirit, sees “**...a generation yet to come, that a people yet to be created may praise the Lord. For He looked down from His holy height; from heaven the Lord gazed upon the earth, to hear the groaning of the prisoner to set free those who were doomed to death.**” King James’ version is quite emphatic in its declaration, “**To loose those who are appointed to death.**” (Ps. 102:18-20) While in Hebrews it says, “**...it is appointed unto man once to die...**” (Heb. 9:27) The psalmist says there will come a generation who will break their appointment with death.

Now here is our problem. Christians have for generations confused activity for life. Life, however, is the aggregate of those functions that resist death. Just as it is impossible for darkness to exist where there is light, neither can death advance where there is life. Love, faith and life are aspects of the Lord Jesus Christ and cannot be separated from Him. You cannot partake of them in any measure without sharing in the Person of Jesus.

I stood one day in Israel, on a parched hillside, overlooking a lush valley filled with fruit trees and vegetables. Our guide, a British educated archeologist who was a captain in the Israeli army, made a startling comment. "Few people are aware that beneath the fresh waters of the Sea of Galilee there is a layer of salt water. During a recent drought, the fresh water was so scarce we had only four to six feet of fresh water lying atop the brackish water. If the water had ever turned, you could have written off the land of Israel for our whole country is totally dependent on this water for its existence. In fact, when we want to use a parcel of land for agriculture, we must wash it with fresh water for about two years to rid the soil of the salt."

I thought how very similar to our own lives. Our very spiritual existence is totally dependent on the flow of the life-giving stream called the Holy Spirit. **"The wind (Spirit) blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."** (John 3:8) It is clear from this statement, that if you want to get into the stream of the Spirit, you must go where the stream is flowing. Many times that will involve a geographic move. Naomi had to leave the land of Moab, where she had lost a husband and two sons, and return to Bethlehem where the **"Lord was visiting His people."** (Ruth 1:6) The visitation

of the Lord is a precious thing, and we should hold it in highest esteem and pursue that presence with all our being.

Life is not imparted, nor does proxy or some surrogate representative partake of it. By that I mean no one can partake of life for you nor stand in your stead for life's impartation. Though I have been guilty in the past, I have always been somewhat uncomfortable by those who have come to sit in proxy for another who needs God's intervention in their life. Life is an intimate thing. In a normal situation, the life sperm is not transmitted into the womb by long distance or by some mechanical means. It is transmitted by an intimate relationship. Your Pastor cannot partake of life for you, neither can your husband, wife nor parent. You must run after Him with such abandon that He is moved with compassion and gives you what you cry for.

The beloved John, that Apostle who enjoyed a relationship with Jesus as no other man has, expressed truth with these words, **"In Him was life; and the life was the light of men."** (John 1:4) He is not saying that some life was in Him. He is categorical in his statement—all life is in Jesus. All who came before Him and all that followed, who claimed to offer life, were and are deceivers. There is no life apart from Jesus Christ.

As a youngster, I picked my way one morning through the cactus plants and mesquite of south Texas and came upon the carcass of a cow I knew had died there some weeks earlier. The skin still enveloped her frame showing the outline of every rib. Suddenly, that dead carcass began to move as if life was returning to her. There was a rather eerie feeling as if I was witnessing a miracle. Then I saw the reason for the "miracle." Out of the carcass emerged an armadillo, which for some reason known only to itself, had gone inside to explore the contents of the bony cavern. It

had become excited and did a few leaps inside the carcass, giving me the impression of life. Movement or motion in itself is no indication of life. Also neither shouting, dancing, leaping nor running bear any evidence of life. The demonstration and testimony of life is the absence of death. Where life flourishes, death is absent. Where death is conqueror, life is then held subservient.

In the interpretation of Scripture, we need to exercise the greatest of care to “**...interpreting spiritual things to spiritual.**” (1Cor 2:13) Although there is a spiritual truth hidden within every parable, miracle and healing, which the Scriptures record, there is a present tendency to over-spiritualize every segment of God’s word. For instance, we are commanded, “**Thou shalt not commit adultery.**” Men have said, “That really means, we should not become spiritually involved with the whorish, religious system of this world.” It certainly means that, but it also means not to be joined in fleshly adultery. Many have spiritualized the coming of the Lord to mean that He will appear only in His people, and it will be through them that the world will behold Christ. That is partially true, but there is a reality in Jesus’ coming where we shall see Him face to face.

In Pilate’s hall, Jesus suffered the scourge of the cat-o’-nine-tails. The whip, embedded with pieces of bone and metal, cut his flesh to the bone so that He appeared as less than human. Isaiah boldly declared, “**...by His stripes we are healed.**” (Isa. 53:5) Peter, exultant in his praise, agrees, “**...by His stripes you were healed.**” (1Pet. 2:24) Some have insisted that this healing was only for those early Christians. Others maintain it is referring only to the healing of the soul. Surely, He suffered in order that I might have healing for my soul; but let us not detract from the whole salvation, which includes healing for my body as well. David gives us some insight in the following verses as to what

pleases the Lord. **“What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.”** (Ps. 116:12,13) It pleases the Lord when we believe and lay claim to everything He has provided for us—especially since the provision was so very costly.

Jesus became poor that I may be rich. He fulfilled the Law to set me free from the Law. He suffered the beatings that I may be healed. He became a sin offering to set me free from sin. He died that I might have life. He went to hell to deliver me from the clutches of hell. In all of the above works, are they merely in the spiritual realm or is there an outworking in the physical also? If these are only for the spiritual realm, then the Christian’s life is indeed one of misery and despair, having hope only in some future day when all shall be set right. I declare unto you, God is not only a God of the past and future but is **“...an ever present help in time of trouble.”** (Ps. 46:1) If the above statements are dealing only with the spiritual realm, then I am still subject to the pangs of sickness, sin, death and hell. What does that offer me that surpass other religions? Most of the above statements men will readily accept as being applicable to us until you come to the problem of death. Did Jesus die that I may not have to die? The answer is always the same. **“Yes! But that means spiritually.”** I contend that it means both, just as the other statements pertain to both the spiritual and physical.

Let us examine a portion of Scripture that most have always skimmed over rather hurriedly. Hold onto your seats for if the impact of this ever gets into your spirit—you may find it difficult to remain in your present status. **“By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before he was translated he had this testimony, that he**

pleased God.” (Heb. 11:5) The very next verse says, **“Without faith it is impossible to please God.”** (Heb. 11:6) As you go down the list in this chapter, you will find this one vital ingredient exhibited in their lives. When you look at Abraham, Moses, Rahab, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah and David, you will not see perfect people—you will see people of faith. If we had available the details of Enoch’s life, I’m sure we would not see a perfect man, even in this man who escaped death long before Jesus died in our stead. I believe any transfiguration, whether it is in the case of Enoch or some future “rapture”, will occur only as faith is exercised and men begin to overtake that reality.

Turn with me to the book of Revelation and let us consider an interesting portion of Scripture. **“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands...and one of the elders answered saying unto me, ‘these who are clothed in the white robes—who are they and from where have they come?’ And I said to him, ‘My Lord, you know.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the ones who are come (are coming) out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb...They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb in the center of the throne shall be their Shepherd, and shall guide them to springs of the water of life; and God shall wipe every tear from their eyes’.”** (Rev. 7:9-17)

In the above passage, it does not appear that this entire multitude has arrived at their present state at the same time. There seems to be a coming up as they arrive at a certain

stage of maturity and faith. Notice the words **“they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”** Look with me to another Scripture which says, **“Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.”** (Rev. 22:14)

Now let me say categorically, I do not believe any person can enter into translation, transfiguration or “rapture” passively. I do not believe that we can sit unconcerned with the attitude, “Oh well, when Jesus comes, He will change me.” I agree, He is the One who will ultimately change us; but it is predicated on our faith in Him and cooperation with Him.

Elijah was not just suddenly caught away without his knowledge. He knew he was going and when he was going. Elisha, his servant as well as the sons of the prophets, also knew he was going. **“And the sons of the prophets who were at Bethel came out to Elisha and said to him, ‘Do you know the Lord will take away your master from over you today?’ And he said, ‘Yes, I know; be still’.”** (2Kings 2:3) Elijah entered into the translation over a long period of his life; it was not just some impulsive whim. His walk with God had become a way of life with him. He walked more and more in the Spirit until one day he was more in the Spirit than he was in the natural and just stepped over to the other side. May I suggest that if you have not developed a walk with the Lord—a relationship with Jesus provided by the Holy Spirit—your faith will be too weak and anemic to enter into any degree of metamorphism. Transfiguration is never an instant thing. It is a process of growth and change.

I believe we are entering into momentous days as the Lord begins to appear to those who are intensely looking for Him. As the days progress, there will be, I’m convinced,

those who simply “are not” for they will have been “taken.” The upward pull will simply be greater than this earth’s gravity; then “**...this mortal must put on immortality.**” (1Cor. 15:53)

How can men believe that Peter stepped out of that boat and walked on the water or that Phillip was translated by the Spirit from a road south of Jerusalem to a community called Azotus (Acts 8) and yet find it impossible to believe that we can step out of this life into the next without tasting death? Let me reaffirm, I am not trying to preserve this old weak decaying body. I’m stretching for a transfiguration where the new creation will totally consume the old—where death is swallowed up in victory.

Let me reiterate an astonishing statement. Any sickness, regardless of its seeming insignificance, unchecked will result in death. To accept any sickness passively is to sign a covenant with death. We need to develop our faith and strengthen it by confronting with swiftness and tenacity every sickness, every evil, and every weakness that attacks us. Our faith is thereby emboldened and made stronger until one day it can be said of us, as was said of Enoch, “**By faith he was translated that he should not see death...**” (Heb. 11:5)

Just as surely as pride, lust, greed and sickness are all enemies that we should conquer, the Lord also calls death an enemy. God also promises death’s abolition. Let us not be as those who draw back in fear; but let us agree with our victorious Captain in saying, “**...Yes, there are giants in the land; but they are bread for us...**” (Num. 14:9)

CHAPTER 13

WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE

“Okay! I’m ready. I’ve read all the proceeding chapters. I even know all the “ites” that are waiting for me in Canaan. Give me my sword, hand grenades, flak jacket, gas masks and whatever else I will need.”

Hold on! Just sit quietly while we first contemplate a few more things. First and foremost—**“...we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.”** (2Cor. 10:3-5) **“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the full armor of God that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, take up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish the flaming missiles of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With all prayer and petition, pray at all times in the Spirit...”** (Eph. 6:12-18)

I realize that the above quotation is lengthy, but it is very necessary that we understand the danger in having one piece of armor missing. If any of the above armament is missing or defective, we will be vulnerable in that area.

Christians often refer to the hedge the Lord has erected about us as He did for Job. May I suggest that the Christian, since the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, is not hedged about as was Job; but rather is provided with armor and weapons we are to use in our battle to defeat the enemy. I am not implying that the angels of the Lord do not encamp about us; but I do contend that our primary line of defense is not a hedge but an armor.

Paul begins the list of God's armor in a most unusual place, and I dare not rearrange it to suit our reasoning. We would normally start with the head and work downward to the feet; but Paul, by the leading of the Holy Spirit, starts in a different place. He begins with the loins. What a strange beginning; yet, that is man's most vulnerable area. That is the area of reproduction. Paul is saying, in effect, "You need to make sure that what you reproduce is truth." We all know enough of the law of sowing and reaping to know that seed will sprout and reproduce after its kind. In the natural realm, there will be some seed that will not reproduce; however, may I be so bold as to submit that in the spiritual realm all seed reproduce—some after the Spirit and some after the flesh. As you observe the number of different "gospels" being preached today and wonder at the naive multitudes who follow these "pied pipers," you will understand that a man does not have to preach truth to have a great following. In fact, just the opposite seems to be true. May I remind you again, the majority is always in error. The greater multitude will invariably follow the lie. The Lord, speaking through Paul, begins with this first piece of armor. If you want to overcome the wicked one, you cannot play loose and careless in this area of reproduction.

"Put on the breastplate of righteousness." This covers the area of the heart. The heart is referred to as the seat of the emotions. This is not our natural heart but that

area where our emotions lie. We are by nature emotional creatures. Whether it be laughter or tears, peace or turmoil, fear or faith, love or hate, these are emotions which spring forth from the heart. There is nothing wrong with emotions; but God says we need them ruled by righteousness. The writer of old leaves us with this observation, **“As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he...”** (Pro. 23:7) It’s one thing to be holy and think good thoughts in the midst of a good service where the Spirit is moving, but what do you think about when you’re all alone. What are your daydreams? Are they holy? **“For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness and slanders. These are the things which defile a man...”** (Matt. 15:19,20) Our heart must be right or the walls to our city are broken down, and we become easy prey for every predator.

From the heart Paul moves to the feet. **“...having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.”** This phrase, “the gospel of peace” seems like a glaring contradiction when you read church history and number the martyrs who have given their lives for the gospel. Jesus gave us this warning, which should prepare our path, **“Think not that I came to bring peace to the world; I came not to bring peace, but a sword.”** (Matt. 10:34) Paul, however, is not speaking of peace with this world but rather peace with God, with whom we have been at odds. This gospel persuades us to lay down our arms against God.

Peace in the midst of turmoil has proven to be one of the most effective sermons the world has ever heard. One old saint, while being led to his death, requested of his captor, “Place your hand over my heart.” The one who was free was so impressed by the peace of the captive that he too became a Christian and joined with him in his martyrdom.

The one element that has proven more decisive in my life than any other when it comes to finding the will of God for a situation is—am I at peace about the matter? If my spirit is troubled, I know I have not yet found the perfect will of the Lord. **“Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body...”** (Col. 3:15)

What more can be said about the shield of faith that has not already been said? Paul promises that the shield of faith will quench all the flaming missiles of Satan. Now that’s a huge promise. The ancient soldier fought from behind a shield that covered his entire body. Any faith, which is this large, comes from having an intimate knowledge of the Lord, for it is the trust in a person. Volumes have been written to tell you what faith is, how you can get it, how to release it and what it will accomplish. It is really no more than relying on the word of One who has never lied and, in fact, is incapable of lying. The fiery darts of uncertainty, unbelief, trembling and fear are extinguished by confidence in the veracity of His word.

Next we come to the piece of armor most of us would have started with. **“Take the helmet of salvation.”** This salvation that Paul has reference to is not being “saved or born again.” It has to do with being delivered out of a pressing danger, situation or circumstance. The Scriptures state, **“He (God) put on righteousness like a breastplate and a helmet of salvation on His head...”** (Isa. 59:17) Surely, the Lord didn’t get “saved.” This helmet has to do with how we think. Most of us allow our minds to graze in the pastures of the world. We’re so influenced by the world that our faith fluctuates like the stock market. The Lord says, “I want you to quit thinking like the world. I want you to think as I think. **“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.”** (Phil. 2:5) The helmet is worn continually in times of warfare. Whether you realize it or

not, we are in warfare daily. You cannot relax and let your mind go wandering in the streets and back alleys of the world. Your mind must be programmed with the Word of God, which is the Sword of the Spirit.

You may have been saved forty years, baptized in the Spirit, speak in tongues and waiting for Jesus to come; but if you have not fed your mind on the Word of the Lord, you have left the Holy Spirit without a sword. Hear what Jesus has to say, **“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you.** (John 14:26) In other words, the Spirit will quote the Word of the Lord.

When confronted by Satan, Jesus thrust him through with the Word of the Lord. The sword coming out of Jesus' mouth thwarted Satan's attack. In the book of Revelation, we see the pattern is kept as the Scripture states, **“From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He might smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron...”** (Rev. 19:15) This makes it very clear that He will rule this world by His Word. **“And the rest were killed with the sword, which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.”** (Rev. 19:21) A quick study will readily reveal that the sword is the Word of the Lord and the birds of the air are demons, which feed upon the fleshly man.

If our minds have been fed with the Word of the Lord, then in our times of need the Spirit can take that Word and use it effectively against our adversary; however, the sword must be available to Him. Many people are trying to fight spiritual battles by merely mouthing the name of Jesus. That name cannot be used as a magic wand. It is

inseparable from His Word. To use it otherwise is to take His name in vain.

I marvel at the genius of some computer hackers that can gain access into various secret files. I think to myself, “My, I wish I could do that.” But when you question them about their daily activities, you will find it is not so much genius, as it is familiarity with the computer. They spend countless hours on that equipment. We must develop the same intimate knowledge with our heavenly Father if we are to discover the secrets of His heart. This cannot be accomplished by the casual occurrence of yawning prayers.

Only deep cryings and intense searching can bring about that intimacy. **“And you will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.”** (Jer. 29:13) Jesus well knew the indifference, which is a peculiar distinction found in most Christians. He makes this remarkable statement, **“...the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.”** (Luke 16:8) It seems unthinkable that any person would choose toying with a computer for hours over fellowshiping with the King of the universe; yet, Christians choose even more foolish diversions on which they waste their time. It is no small wonder that in our time of need when our spirit cries for faith, we find the shelves have been emptied—the inventory depleted. We stand before a merciless enemy stripped of our armor, ineffective in our warfare.

CHAPTER 14

KEYS TO THE KINGDOM

I recently saw a book written by a certain “Bishop” of one of our larger cities. In his book, he states how remarkably easy it is to understand the Bible. He contends that we simply have to find the keys to interpretation. From my standpoint, it is typical human pride and fleshly wisdom that thinks it can wrest from God the secret things by the use of human intellect and certain rules of hermeneutics. Your definition of the Scriptures may be flawless, yet merely scratch the surface, not having reached the real meat of the text. If the Scriptures were given to men of old who were moved on by the Holy Ghost, it will require nothing less than the anointing of the Holy Spirit for you and me to understand the import of their meaning. Your library may be filled with volumes of well-read commentaries; and you may have a degree with letters behind your name, which will entitle you to some measure of earthly respect. Commentaries on the Bible are merely what other men think the Scriptures mean. However, with divine revelation, an unschooled pea-picker will be able to grasp the real meaning. The Pharisees knew the letter of the Law but missed the true Word.

John, the Beloved, hears words the other Apostles seem not to have heard. It would seem that he is tuned into a different frequency. Listen! Jesus cries, **“It is the Spirit which giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing...”** (John 6:63) The other Apostles did not record these words of Jesus. On the surface, they seem hardly worthy to be compared to the raising of the dead or the feeding of great multitudes; yet, they surely will alter your religious activity.

Most Christians are caught up in the clamor and carnival of frenzied church activities. The church’s calendar is normally filled from Sunday to Sunday—men’s fellowship

meeting, women's missionary meeting, family night, youth meeting, visitation, deacons' meeting, new converts class, church school, morning worship, evangelistic service, jail service and building planning committee meetings are the norm for the average Christian. These activities are referred to as "ministry opportunities." I have yet to hear, either in the new converts class or in Bible schools, where they are taught how to pray. Ministers are not taught how to reach God but how to reach people. It will profit little how many people we reach if we cannot introduce them to a personal God. Why were all those meetings so conspicuously absent from Jesus' little flock? Did He not lay down the pattern for His church or did that emerge some hundreds of years later? So much of this would be eliminated if we simply spent more time in His presence discovering His will for a situation.

I asked a young Christian recently, "Aside from the blessing of our meals and our short prayer in the church assembly, how many hours a week do you suppose the average Christian prays—just between him and God?" My question was met with a blank stare. Prayer has become a forgotten and unnecessary burden; because we can accomplish with the media, entertainment and mail-outs those requirements necessary for church growth. Or can we? If after we have packed the auditorium with those who have come to watch the electronic gospel flashed on the giant screen, which has been piped in from the satellite dish in the parking lot, can we find one who truly knows the mind of the Lord? Is it easier to find the mind of the Father today than it was when Jesus, God's own Son, prayed all night on several occasions to find His will and purpose? Prayer is the necessary, but missing, ingredient in the lives of too many Christians who desire to be overcomers.

Let me now quote from a little book called “Destined for the Throne” by Paul Billheimer concerning prayer. “Has it ever occurred to you that the design of prayer in the divine economy is a fantastically puzzling mystery? Why should there be a system or plan of prayer at all? Is not God almighty and self-sufficient? Could He possibly need any help outside of Himself? Self-sufficiency is one of the attributes of God. Does He need anything which man or any other of His creatures can supply? Could not He who spoke the world into existence and who upholds them by the same word accomplish His purpose without the help of puny man? Why then did He devise the plan of prayer? Why and how did He become “dependent” upon the intercession of men? Why can He do nothing in the realm of human redemption apart from human cooperation through prayer and faith? How did He get Himself into such a “fix”? When God is wholly self-sufficient; when He, by His will and spoken word, can accomplish any conceivable end—why does He not arbitrarily and without reference to any other being or intelligence or will, proceed to speak the word?”—
End quote

In His earthly life, Jesus was a man of prayer Who sought the will of the Father in every aspect of His life. When He said, “**The Son can do nothing of Himself.**” (John 5:19) He was not saying, “The Son can do little” nor “The work of the Son would not be notable,” but “The Son can do absolutely nothing apart from the Father.” When you consider the “Son” portion of that statement, you will understand that Apostles can build and establish works without the blueprint of the Father. Prophets can prophesy out of their own spirit. Teachers can teach with the aid of helps and commentaries. Evangelists can witness and win converts because many have become great actors who can turn the tears on and off while yet going their own way. Pastors can have growth and apparent success with their

flock while distancing themselves from the Lord; but a son is so inextricably joined with the Father, he cannot move except by the Fathers' direction.

I have been in many meetings where people try to make the gifts of the Spirit work. By that I mean, they force the issue; and rather than there being a flow of the Spirit, there is a parody or comic imitation. In a crowd of five hundred people, we hear such statements as; "Someone out there is suffering from sinus problems and God wants to heal you." "I see someone out there with pain in your knee or shoulder joint." Now, in a crowd this large, this may be true and God may graciously heal those who call upon Him; but this is not the gift of the word of knowledge in operation. It is playing the odds.

Jesus never played the odds. He never said, "I think," or "I hope so." When the centurion came and entreated Him concerning his dying servant, Jesus did not say, "I will come and pray for him." He said, "**I will come and heal him.**" (Matt. 8:7) How could He be so sure when faced with an obstacle of such proportions? Why was there never a doubt in His mind or in His words? The answer, of course, is that He knew His Father's will for every situation. To hear a word from the Lord will erase all our doubts and fears. Faith is borne on the wings of His Word. However, it is a perplexing thing to take a promise from the "promise box" and attempt to make it work for you.

Let us suppose you withdraw your hand from the promise box with a card that contains this Scripture, "**Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons; freely you have received, freely give.**" (Matt. 10:8) Later in the day, you find yourself in a mortuary gazing down on the lifeless body of a departed loved one. In your ear, you hear a voice saying, "Go on! Do it! This will open many

doors for you.” But there is neither faith nor peace, only bewilderment and confusion. Because there is no faith, you will meet with certain defeat if you attempt the resurrection. Satan would then take that situation and browbeat you the rest of your life because of your “failure.”

However, suppose one night in your time of prayer, the Lord begins to speak to you and in the spirit shows you a paralytic in a wheelchair. You see him clearly. His age, his race, the color of his eyes and hair are imprinted graphically in your mind. As you look upon this young man in the Spirit, the Lord speaks, “Tomorrow, as you enter the post office, you will see this young man receiving a package. Go to him and heal him. Take him by the hand, and I will raise him up.” The next day as you enter the post office, your eyes fall upon this same young man receiving a package. Do you think you will have a problem with faith or direction—of course not? Faith comes by hearing a word from the Lord. If we will cease our endeavors to make the gifts work and begin to spend time in the presence of the Lord to find His mind and will, we discover that “these signs will follow.” They will be an outgrowth of a life relationship rather than the product of working the odds or playing the numbers.

In response to the disciples’ request to, “**...teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples to pray.**” (Luke 11:1) Jesus began by giving them what has been called “The Lord’s Prayer.” I do not wish to deal with that prayer as much as I do some others that are also recorded in the book of Luke.

Jesus leaves this pattern of prayer and continues to teach them the possibilities and the enigma of prayer. **“Suppose one of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has come to me from a**

journey and I have nothing to set before him’; and from inside he shall answer and say, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.’ I tell you even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.” (Luke 11:5-8) For the word “persistence,” King James Version uses the word “importunity” which means “shamelessness.”

Now you must see that in the above parable Jesus is picturing the Father as an uncaring friend who does not wish to be disturbed. Let us see how the Holy Spirit will interpret this to us. Let us suppose that this concerned man goes to his neighboring friend at midnight with his petition for the loaves of bread. Now these three loaves that he asked for were not loaves, as we know them but three biscuit sized loaves. Not much to ask for, but from within he hears the words, “Go away—I’ll talk to you in the morning.” So the man outside reasons within himself, “I’ll not leave until I get the bread. I’ll just camp on his doorstep.” So he quietly sits down and waits for some response from within. This will accomplish nothing. His neighbor inside will go to sleep again. The visiting friend will go hungry. The concerned friend will go without bread and sleep.

Assume again he hears this seemingly heartless response from within, and he is overwhelmed with disappointment and anger by the action of his friend. He reasons within himself, “I thought he was my friend. I never dreamed he would put his comfort above my need. I’ll just run down to the all night deli and pick up some bread. So he runs down to the corner store and buys the needed supplies and feeds his hungry friend. The next day, as he meets his neighbor, there is a decided chill in their relationship. Would you agree that the next time he faces a

need at midnight, he will not even bother his neighbor? He will go directly to the corner store.

Now this is infinitely important to us if we are to understand the solution to getting our prayers answered. As we approach the Father with a need, let us bear in mind this parable. Suppose I go to the Father and say, "Lord, my little girl is running 104 degrees temperature and is convulsive. I know you can heal her." From His throne is absolute silence; or perhaps, there is a small voice which says, "Call Me in the morning." You're now faced with a choice every Christian has faced or will face—an apparently uncaring God who is reluctant to answer your prayer. You can sit down at His door to await the breaking day, and the Father will still be silent. Your daughter may get worse and even die. Regardless, you will suffer the loss of sleep, perhaps the loss of your daughter and surely the loss of your faith. Because of the Father's silence, you can run to the nearest pharmacy and purchase some remedy for your daughter's illness. Perhaps, the medicine works beautifully and your daughter is restored to her former health; but I can promise you this—there will now be a chill in your relationship with your Father. The same or similar situation may take place a number of times with the same results, and each time your faith grows weaker until finally you seek the doctor or the pharmacist first and the Lord as an afterthought. Now, because of the Father's lack of response, your prayer for the sick will be lifeless words not lasting more than five minutes. They will be empty words arising from a nonexistent faith.

How many of you realize that it's easier, most of the time, to get your needs met by man rather than by God? Our Lord is after much more than curing you of some disability that would allow you to again be self-sufficient and self-reliant. He would prefer to cripple you so that you might realize your total dependency upon Him. That is precisely

what He did to Jacob even as Jacob wrestled with Him for a blessing.

If our crying is for bread, we need to be careful not to use “shotgun petitions.” If we are beseeching the Lord for healing for a loved one, don’t begin to add, “Oh! Yes Lord! While you’re at it, I need a new roof for my house and my pickup needs new tires.” Elijah was specific when he prayed. First he prayed that God would withhold the rain and it rained not upon the earth for three years and six months. Secondly, he prayed that it would rain, and he prayed until he saw evidence of the coming downpour.

It was said of Hannah, the mother of Samuel, that **“...year after year...she wept and would not eat.”** (1Sam. 1:7) Her prayer was singular. She prayed for a son. She did not pray for riches, beauty or position. She prayed for a son and would be satisfied with nothing less.

“Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not lose heart, saying, There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God, and did not respect man. And there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him saying, ‘Give me legal protection from my opponent.’ And for awhile he was unwilling; but afterwards he said to himself, ‘Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, lest by continually coming she wear me out.’ Hear what the unrighteous judge said; now shall not God bring about justice for His elect, who cry unto Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? I tell you He will bring about justice for them speedily. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:1-8) As the Lord implies, faith matures as prayers are answered. Each time you get an

answer to a prayer, your faith takes a giant leap upward. But the Lord suggests that there will be little faith on the earth when He returns; in other words, there will be few people who will be “pray-ers” in that day.

James, the Apostle, gives us the reason most prayers go unanswered. **“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, Who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.”** (Jas. 1:5-8) If you will be honest, you will recognize the double-mindedness of our prayers. I’m not trying to be critical but only to make clear the reason we get so few answers to our prayers. Let us look at the following example:

“Lord, you see the indebtedness of our church. We’ve tried colorful evangelists, piped in the satellite gospel, hired a new choir director and youth minister, bought seven new buses for our bus ministry, had numerous chili suppers, pie auctions and fellowship banquets—and still our crowds are off and our debts mounting. If you don’t help us Lord, we may have to resort to some worldly tactics to pay our bills. We may even have to refinance.” Now this may be a little tongue in cheek; nevertheless, it is true. We have recently witnessed the most outrageous schemes to raise money by popular electronic evangelists, who are trying to resuscitate something the Lord has clearly spoken death unto. They try every method and scheme possible to pump life into something that may not have been the will of God in the first place. What if God had said, “Let it collapse! Let it go bankrupt!” How many men could ever believe that was the

will of the Lord? I heard someone say, “Once you create a monster, you have to feed it.”

I stand in amazement of Jesus’ little group—ignorant and unschooled in high finances and mass psychology—who had to catch a fish in order to pay taxes one day. Yet, these same men shook kingdoms, caused rulers to tremble, and turned the world upside down for the cause of Christ. How could they do that? They had a single eye. They had burned their alternatives. They were not double-minded. If God did not choose to save their vessels, they would just go down with the ship. If God did not choose to deliver them, they would lay down their lives. Our trouble is, we have built too many escape hatches. All our causes are expendable.

Although I was deeply touched by the loss of our space shuttles “Challenger” and “Columbia” and their crew, there was a certain pride within me concerning those astronauts. They risked it all. There were no parachutes, escape hatches nor second chances. It was all or nothing. Most Christians have lost their sense of purpose. We dread being labeled “fanatics.” I have watched the Pentecostals devolve from a people who suffered ridicule, the attack with rotten eggs and over-ripe vegetables because of the way they worshipped the Lord. These same ones are now very acceptable in world affairs, aspiring for governmental offices; but sadly, the majority of them are devoid of His glorious aura. It is not my desire to be branded a fanatic, but I’m well aware that the path Jesus trod is diametrically opposed to this world’s methods and philosophy. I recently learned that in one part of a certain communist country there were many members of a non-Christian cult who chose to go to jail rather than curtail the preaching of their ideology; however, there were no Pentecostals in jail because they were playing by the rules. This is an indictment against Christians.

Let us go a step further and listen in on another prayer some Christians pray. “Father, I’m believing You to heal me of this condition in my body, and I pray that when the doctors operate on me they find nothing imperfect.” Please hear me! I am not condemning anyone for going to doctors. I have gone to far too many myself. Let us be honest—what we’re really saying is, “Lord, if you don’t heal me, I have a paid up hospitalization policy in my pocket, just in case.” You know something, you’ll probably have to use that health insurance.

I am very familiar with human reasoning in regard to our health. “What possible good can you do if you’re sick?” “Physicians are one of God’s methods of healing.” “What if you should die? What glory would that bring to the Lord?” Can you see that this is the same argument Satan used against Jesus as Peter presumptuously rebuked Him? **“From that time Jesus Christ began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, ‘God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You’.”** (Matt. 16:21,22) The literal translation reads, **“Lord, pity Thyself.”** Peter had chosen to align himself with Satan rather than with the testimony of Jesus. He was saying, in effect, “You’re so young. You’re doing so much good. To submit to death is a senseless thing.” He did not realize the necessity of Jesus’ death; although, he would later join with those countless martyrs who have seeded the world with their blood and have watched that seed spring up into a field “white unto harvest.” I’m most assuredly not reaching for martyrdom, but do you not realize that there are some who accomplish more in death than they did in life? Whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s and our lives are in His hands.

Christians need to burn their bridges. They need to cut loose the lifeboats and deal with the alternatives in their lives until there is no other option but Jesus Christ. Social Security, Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Visa, MasterCard and gasoline credit cards to name a few, have been instrumental in the weakening of our faith. None of these are a sin in itself; but they are, in a sense, our under-girding in the event God chooses to delay the answer to our prayer. They serve as a security blanket, in many cases, in which we can wrap ourselves after God has jerked the covers off our lives.

As we began our walk with the Lord, we found that it was a love relationship and that we yearned for the times we could be alone with our Lover. As lovers do, we whispered many things to each other and shared the secret longings of our heart. It made little difference if all those about us were disgruntled, bitter and hateful. We hardly took notice of their snickers and derisive remarks. We were in love, and lovers act peculiar to “normal” people. Then we thought them strange and uncaring that they would want to spend so little time with their Lover. One day it all began to fall into place. They were no longer in love. The “marriage-lover” relationship with God had grown stale. It had now become a predictable routine. Prayer and praise had become a burdensome thing. It was not an outflow of a heart filled with love and adoration. It was now form and program and keeping account of the time. Once there was a time when nothing could keep them from the Lord—now almost anything will. What happened to the relationship they had with their Lover, God? They don’t talk anymore. They don’t seem to have anything to say to each other.

You can almost feel the pain in the voice of our Lord as He gently chides the church at Ephesus with these words, “**...you have left your first love.**” (Rev. 2:4) You have labored and not fainted. You have persevered and endured

for My name's sake and have not grown weary; but it has become more out of duty—more at keeping laws and commandments—more out of habit than of love. I desire your love rather than sacrifices.

Prayer cannot be more graphically contrasted than by the example set by Jesus and the Pharisees. The Pharisees loved to say prayers while standing in the public places, but Jesus loved to pray as He slipped away to some secret place. The prayers of the Pharisees were based on the number of spectators; however, Jesus would arise a great while before day to do His praying or He would pray all night—for lovers don't like a lot of company, and Jesus was in love with His Father.

Great musicians will spend five to six hours or more daily with their instrument until it literally becomes an extension of themselves. Computer wizards spend countless hours daily with that maze of chips, transistors, keyboard and screen until it is an integral part of them. Most Christians think it commendable if they spend fifteen minutes per day in the presence of the One Who holds all things in the palms of His hands—what an indictment—is it any wonder that He is a stranger to most of us? Of course, we don't talk much to strangers. He desires more than a speaking relationship. He desires that you become an extension of His very person. You are chosen to be His ambassador to this perverse generation. Prayer is the key to the kingdom. You will never know Him without it, and the needs of your life will go begging apart from it.

CONCLUSION

Time nor space will not permit me to justifiably deal with the nature of this subject matter. To enlarge on each phase of importance would leave us with volumes larger than the Bible. For in actuality, this is the subject matter of the Bible—The Kingdom of God.

Regardless of the approach we take to Canaan, this land is the mirror image of The Kingdom of God—not the land itself but the people occupying a land under the rulership of its one head—Jesus Christ. From Adam to the end of the book of Revelation, God has used the natural things of the earth to speak of those things that are of the Spirit. If we fail to understand these basic truths, we will not understand the simplest truths of the Scriptures. How do we unlock the treasures of truth if we do not recognize the key that lies even before our eyes?

I realize redundancy is often times frowned upon by the scholarly; however, for us to brush aside redundancy is to discard the greatest teaching tool available. How many different ways did Jesus use in teaching about The Kingdom of Heaven? The Ad-men of Madison Avenue know this truth very well. They will repeat the same sales pitch five times in a thirty-second commercial.

Canaan is a type of the homeland and relationship for the people of God. He shows in the natural what He intends to do in the Spiritual. He said, **“The desert shall blossom like a rose.”** Flowers are but the harbinger of the fruit that follows. He does not necessarily mean that only the natural desert shall blossom, but that a people whose lives have become barren and unproductive shall suddenly begin to show forth the fruits of the Spirit. A dear brother wrote a song some years back that stayed #1 on the gospel charts for many weeks. The song was called “Beulah Land.” I’m

sure he knew what he was writing about, but I'm not so sure most of his listening audience do. The term Beulah is only used once in the entire Bible and it is found in the sixty-second chapter of Isaiah. It has to do with marriage. It's not a marriage of a man to a woman but of a land to God. As you read the following Scripture, remember—you are the land. **“It will no longer be said to you, ‘Forsaken,’ Nor to your land will it any longer be said, ‘Desolate’; But you will be called, ‘My delight is in her,’ And your land, ‘Married’ (Beulah); For the Lord delights in you, and to Him your land will be married.”** (Isa. 62:4) You see, God doesn't look upon this land as so much soil. He looks upon it as His bride. To allow our bridal garments to become sullied is a reflection on Him. Any enemy in our land soils our garments. To allow these terrorists—these predators—these insurgents to remain with us in peace disqualifies us from our rightful place of rulership.

There is a phrase that sounds so good—so grand—so benevolent and has been used for thousands of years, always with the same outcome—**“Peace at any price.”** i.e. “We will make any journey.” “We will pay any price.” “We will embrace any enemy.” “Anything other than shedding the blood of one more of our young men.” “Any government is better than war.” “Better red than dead.” Almost from its conception, Israel, as we know it today, has been pressured from within and without, from friend and enemy, to give up land that is rightfully theirs, in order that peace could “have a chance.” Look at how much land they have “traded for peace.” They seemingly do not have an appreciation for the land and what it represents. They look upon it only as real estate. They do not see that their future is inextricably woven to the land. They have failed to see that it represents their inheritance. Do their enemies appreciate the significance of the land? Will they be satisfied with more land? I seriously doubt that they are really after real estate.

They're attempting to annihilate the cohesiveness of Jacob's family. Saudi Arabia, Iran, Syria, Egypt, Jordan and Iraq all have much more land; plus, they're bathed in oil. Israel has no oil so why are they so covetous of this land?

If one would only take the time to investigate God's promises concerning the land Israel was to inhabit, it would be a surprise as to how much territory has been given away or passively surrendered for the sake of peace. The first promise was to Abraham and it contains these words: **"...To your descendents I have given this land, from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates."** (Gen. 15:18) This land extended from the Red Sea, or Sea of Reeds, which is the present day Suez Canal, to the center of the country of Iraq. Almost the entirety of the Sinai Peninsula was included. The next promise was to the children of Israel, and it repeats God's promise to Abraham. **"And I will fix your boundary from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the river Euphrates..."** (Ex. 23:31) This land again, extends from the Suez Canal to the Euphrates in Iraq, including almost the entirety of Lebanon almost to Damascus in Syria. The land extends from the Mediterranean Sea to the land east of the Sea of Galilee. Remember, Rueben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh took their inheritance on the East bank of the Jordan. Compare that territory to the little splinter of land that is today Israel, and we have to wonder how much longer this land can continue to endure with the existing mentality. Were it not for the United States and the United Kingdom, Israel would have long since disappeared; but the Lord will preserve His pattern.

As we contemplate this scenario, we see a land pressed in on every side, with every neighbor screaming for its annihilation. "Israel is a trespasser, it has no right to exist!" "This is our land and Jerusalem is our Capital!" "We will

never rest until Israel is obliterated from the earth!” These are a few of the defiant screams we hear against this little country. Neighbors from North Africa to Asia and southern Europe have united themselves together with one purpose in mind, the extermination of Israel. We think, “How unreasonable.” God made an astounding statement concerning these people who scream for Israel’s demise. Concerning Ishmael, God said to Hagar, **“He will be as a wild ass. His hand will be against everyone, and everyone’s hand will be against him...”** (Gen. 16:12 Amplified) Ishmael is the father of the Arabs. He is also a half-brother to the Jews. Consider that for awhile.

God gave us ample warning about endeavoring to co-exist with those who want us dead. **“Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols?...”** (2Cor. 6:14-16)

As Christians, what do you think is the attitude of the enemies of our “land” when Christ has come into our hearts and demanded we sweep away the former occupants of our land? All our neighbors in residence about us have formed an alliance against us to exterminate us from the face of the earth. Notice the gathering body of intelligentsia that has steadily strengthened itself with the sole purpose of destroying or discrediting everything about a Supreme Being. In your study of the Bible, you will discover that we have been promised some great and wonderful assurances. Look at what we were promised and compare that with where most of us are living today. You will find that we have relinquished great amounts of territory because most of us fear the battle, or because our “faithless friends” have

shamed us into thinking we're totally out of step with spiritual realities. This devolving condition of this downward spiral cannot long continue—neither in natural Israel nor in our spiritual Canaan. God will soon bring us to an Armageddon where we have no choice but to fight or be killed. All other options have long since been resolved.

If, in your spiritual progress, you find awaiting at the gates of your land the spirit of alcohol, lust, homosexuality, greed, anger, pride, violence etc.; you may be shocked, but do not be discouraged. There is not one spirit that is not subject to the higher powers. Whether it is drugs, witchcraft or incest, all must bow before the Lord and to His Christ. Believe me, your land will be occupied with unclean rebel spirits. You may choose to join in “lockstep” with the religious community in agreeing that conquering this land is just a pipe-dream, or reach out to embrace a life free from the entanglements of the spirits of darkness. The choice is yours.

“...Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.” (Rom. 13:11,12)

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in! Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle (Ps. 24:7,8)

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness,

against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.” (Eph. 6:10-12)

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There was a time when the Old Testament read like an enigmatic novel to me; written by authors whose designs were to confuse their readers. There were so many apparent contradictions. It seemed that God broke His own commandments. *“Now go smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, oxen and sheep, camel and ass.”* Because Saul did not fulfill this command to the letter, he was rejected from being king. David, on the other hand, committed adultery with a woman, had her husband killed and was yet called “...a man after Mine own heart.”

If we do not see the Old Testament as a blueprint, carried out in the natural realm, we will not understand the spiritual outcome that is to be achieved. It is not an accidental accumulation of random occurrences. This book explains somewhat that process of moving from the natural to the spiritual.

The author