

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said,  
"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"  
– John 1:29

# behold

"And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained to  
them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself."  
– Luke 24:27



**Lockport Alliance Church**  
[www.lockportalliance.org](http://www.lockportalliance.org)

555 Davison Road  
Lockport, New York 14094  
Phone: 716-433-3571  
Email: [lifedup@lockportalliance.org](mailto:lifedup@lockportalliance.org)



## Behold Bible Class Notes

### Table of Contents

First Class	September 20, 2009	.....3
Behold the Lamb of God	September 27, 2009	.....7
Jesus, the target of Scripture	October 4, 2009	.....9
Descent of Man; Yahweh/Elohim	October 11, 2009	.....11
Distortion of God's Word; the Tree	October 18, 2009	.....15
The Temptation of Jesus	October 25, 2009 & November 1, 2009	.....16
Cain & Abel	November 8, 2009	.....20
Enoch & Noah	November 15, 2009	.....23
Noah & Rapture	November 22, 2009	.....28
Abraham & faith	November 29, 2009	.....30
Abraham continued	December 6, 2009	.....32
Jacob	December 13, 2009	.....34
Jacob & Esau	December 27, 2009	.....39
Jacob & Esau continued	January 3, 2010	.....41
Joseph	January 10, 2010	.....43
Joseph continued & conclusion	January 31, 2010 & February 7, 2010	.....45
Moses	February 21, 2010	.....47
Aaron	February 28, 2010	.....51
Aaron & Pharaoh	March 7, 2010	.....54
Joshua	March 14, 2010	.....56
Joshua & Judges	March 21, 2010	.....60
Judges & Ruth Intro & conclusion	March 28, 2010 & April 11, 2010	.....64
Samuel & Saul	April 18, 2010 & April 25, 2010	.....68
David & Goliath	May 2, 2010	.....74
King David	May 16, 2010	.....78
David's Friends & Family and Relationship to the King	May 23, 2010 & May 30, 2010	.....82
Kenosis; Elijah & Elisha	June 6, 2010 & June 13, 2010	.....86
Book of Job (last Behold class)	June 20, 2010	.....91

Preliminary--

**Stand in the Rain (with Charlie!)**

"Stand in the Rain"--booklets and blog at lockportalliance.org

"First Sunday Stars!" Give your star away!!

\*\*\*\*\*

**The Bible is a storybook**--the story of Jesus Christ. He is the scarlet thread of redemption, which runs from cover to cover in your Bible and sews it all together, giving it cohesion and coherence. When you connect the dots of the Bible, they coalesce to form the face of Christ.

**Christ holds creation together:** Because of Him, the cosmos--universe, galaxy, solar system, planet, molecule, atom, nucleus--doesn't just fly apart. (See Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3.)

**Just so, Christ holds the Bible together;** it's parts--66 books comprised of thus so many chapters, verses, words, letters, jots, and tittles--are a cohesive whole because of his presence. Because of Him, its sense doesn't come undone.

Without him, scripture would be a disconnected mess of fragmented pieces; a jumble of verses, signifying nothing--or worse yet, signifying whatever an enemy wants it to signify.

**Is and isn't.**

The Bible is a biography--not history or philosophy or a manual for self-improvement. The Bible isn't about redemption; it's about the Redeemer. The Bible isn't about grace; it's about the Gift-giver. The Bible isn't about salvation; it's about the Deliverer. It's not about creation, it's about the creator; it's not about friendship; it's about the friend; it's not about love; it's about the constant lover.

Certainly we can learn parenting from the Father who pities his children, remembering that we are but dust.

Certainly we can learn brotherhood and friendship from Jonathan and David.

Certainly we can learn compassion from the Good Samaritan who intervened for your revival and paid the price for your recovery.

But it is not about parenting, it's about our Father; it is not about brotherhood, it's about the eldest brother in Our Father's house. It is not about compassion, but about the Samaritan half-breed--his mother a Jew, his father unknown--from Nazareth of Galilee.

It's not about forgiveness, but the forgiver. It's not about the law, but the Lawgiver, it's not about judgment, but the Judge; it's not about prophecy but the prophet; it's not even about the kingdom. It's about the King.

It's not about the many mansions in our Father's house; it's about the carpenter building them.

**Even the parable of the prodigal son isn't about the prodigal son, or the elder son.**

**It's about the Other Brother.**

It's not about reconciliation; it's about the Reconciler.

It's not about the younger brother who went when he should have stayed, or about the older brother who stayed when he should have gone. It's about the Other Brother--who went in search of the lost and brought him back home. There is no biblical reconciliation without an Other who stood in my place--who lived the life I should have lived, and shunned the sin I sinned.

At its deepest level, the parable is not about the characters in the story, but about the storyteller--Jesus.

At its deepest level, the Word of God, even when it might not say so, is about the Author.

### **Genesis 1:1--The voice of the Spirit:**

The function of the Holy Spirit is the Revelation of Jesus Christ. That's why it would be better to refer to scripture as the Revelation of Jesus Christ. (see Rev. 1:1)

The narrative voice in Genesis 1:1 is the voice of Moses, the author of Genesis. But actually Moses is just the scribe here, recording what the Holy Spirit is telling him. Obviously, Moses couldn't have known the beginning. ("Where was (Moses) when I created the heavens and the earth?" (Job 38:4).

### **Alpha and Omega** (Gen. 1; Rev. 1 & 22)

No matter how far back you leap in imagination, "the Beginning was" (John 1:1)--it's always further back, always a 'yesterday.' Thus there is no 'beginning' as we define the term. 'The End' is, in the same way, always a tomorrow. Time and its designations--beginning, end--do not exist in eternity; God always *is and was and is to come, the Almighty.* (Rev. 1:8)

The first quoted voice we hear is the Alpha voice--the eternal Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, co-equal with the Father and the Spirit. ("Jesus" is the name of his incarnation; see Matthew 1:21.) All things were made through him: John 1:3; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11.

### **Genesis 1:3: "Light."**

The Word of God is light.

Light is inherent in His word. There is a wild synaesthetic blending of the senses here where light is heard; Light is an echo of his voice.

### **Whatever he says or does is light.**

Whatever He speaks is light. (Thy word is a lamp....Psalm 119:105)

His life--what he does--was the light of men. (John 1:4)

**He** is the light of the world.

Your wild Bible: God wasn't living in darkness, but he had not yet revealed light to us.

The word of God is revelation--it reveals (uncovers) things to us that previously only God knew. It is the mind of Christ in that sense. There are many things like light that exist but that we are not aware of until God makes them known. The fact that light existed but was not revealed until God chose to reveal it is a mind-boggling concept. It opens up possibilities in the eternal realm that are beyond remark. What else hasn't he uncovered--but someday will? My guess is "we ain't seen nothin' yet."

More from your wild Bible: A shadow of the rock, an echo of the Word.

Creation is but the physical manifestation of his word. His word is a rock; creation is the shadow in its shape. The wise man builds his house upon this rock. Upon this rock Jesus built his church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. By His word he spoke the universe into existence. The physical universe is a mere echo of his word.

### **"Formless and void"--no longer. The physical world is a shadow of the spiritual realm.**

He spoke light into creation. His word speaks light into your heart.

By his word, empty lives are filled with hope.

Formless lives are shaped, made purposeful, fruitful, even beautiful.

Physical creation is by his Word.

By his word, what was darkness becomes light.

By His word he will recreate--a new heaven and a new earth.

By his word he will de-create (2 Pet. 3:5, 7)

Spiritual creation--the new creation--is by his Word (Rom. 10:17)

The natural realm is subject to His word (Calming of the sea).

The supernatural realm is subject to his word (*Come out of him!*--Luke 4:35)

Nothing becomes something at his word.

Death becomes life at his word. (*Lazarus, come forth!*--John 11:43; see James 1:18)

The believer takes on the shape of the Word. (Rom. 8:29)

The unbeliever will conform to his word. (Every knee shall bow)

**Shelley's warning:** No Bible riffs on the first day!

But we tax ourselves to even begin to evoke the majesty of this word.

In John 5:39, Jesus reminds us that **the purpose of scripture is to point to him.**

In Luke 24:27, after his resurrection, Jesus gave two travelers on the road to Emmaus **a crash course in the Bible:**

*Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the scriptures concerning himself.*

He told them about the seed of the woman, the thorn of the curse, the lamb of sacrifice, the sin bearing scapegoat, the scepter, the star, the rainbow, Jacob's ladder, the brazen serpent, the stone the builders rejected, Passover, Red Sea, burning bushes and hardening hearts, wilderness, manna, Jordan, the law, the offerings, the feasts, the tabernacle, the curtain, the ark of the covenant. **We looked for those pictures in his Word last year.**

He also told them about Adam and Eve and the distortion of His word, about Abel bearing sacrifice and Cain bearing his own works, about Enoch, and Noah, and Abraham and Melchizedek. He told them lots about Abraham; and Sarah, And Isaac, and Rachel and Jacob, and Joseph, and Moses, and Aaron, about Levites and priests, about Pharaoh, and Joshua, Caleb, Baalam, Rahab, Gideon, Samson, about judges, about Ruth, about Samuel, Saul, and David. He told him lots about David, about Jonathan, Absalom, Mephibosheth, and Ahithophel, about Solomon, about kings, both good and bad, about Elijah and prophets, about Daniel and Hosea, and Amos, and Jonah, about Ezra and Nehemiah, and Esther, Haman, and Mordecai, Haggai. **We'll be looking for these portraits in His Word this year.**

**He told them about the forerunner, who would point the way.**

The forerunner ran just steps ahead of the King's chariot, heralding his arrival, calling out to all who would hear that the king has arrived.

Just steps ahead of Jesus birth, John the Baptist was born. Just as importantly, he was born only steps away.

One day as Jesus approached, John cried out, *Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.* (John 1:29)

**That's our theme verse. Our syllabus is Luke 24:27** (above, and on the cover of your folder.)

**John 1:29--Behold!**

Here comes Joe from Jericho. He brings a lamb to the temple. It is inspected by the priest, in order to verify that the lamb is without blemish. If it passes inspection, Joe from Jericho places his hands on the lamb and confesses his sins over it. Then the lamb is sacrificed on the altar of burnt offering.

**John--the priest at the door: "This is the lamb of God!**

Priesthood was 'in the family'--the tribe of Levi.

John's father was a priest (Luke 1:5) so John is a priest.

John verifies that Jesus is without blemish, spotless. Having 'inspected' Jesus all their lives, he verifies Jesus' sinlessness.

But Jesus went to the 'altar' alone. Offerer and offering were to approach the altar of sacrifice together. In this case, offerer and offering are one. God placed the sins on himself and died for them. Prophetic of this moment is Isaac's question--*But where's the lamb?* (Gen. 22:7-8) Abraham knew that Isaac himself was to be offered. John knew that Jesus himself was to be offered.

**Knowing Aaron, we know John; knowing Aaron we know Jesus.**

We studied the lamb last year. But in order to know what John was doing in John 1:29, we have to know Aaron, the priest. In order to know what Jesus was doing in John 1:29, we have to know Aaron, the high priest. In order to know what Jesus is doing right now, we have to know Aaron, the high priest. In order to know what God is doing in John 1:29, we have to know Aaron, the priest.

The Bible characters reveal and verify Jesus. Beholding them, we behold Jesus in deeper depth and closer relationship. As John the Baptist said, the reason these characters were sent is to reveal Jesus. (See John 1:31). A deeper relationship with a deeper, bigger Jesus is the reason we study the Bible. Those who study the Bible for other reasons, in my experience, pretty soon aren't studying anymore. **If Bible reading isn't about relationship with Jesus, pretty soon it isn't being read at all!**

**A short course on the Bible: Let's look at the whole before we look at the pieces.**

**God's Word points to Jesus.**

**Creation points to Jesus.** (*"Let there be light!"... "I am the light of the world."*)

**Fall of man points to the need for Jesus.**

**The patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph) point to Jesus.**

**Israel points to Jesus; Israel is Jesus: salvation is of the Jews--because Jesus is Israel.**

**Moses, the sacrificial system, the tabernacle, and the law point to Jesus.**

**The Judges point to Jesus.**

**The Kings point to Jesus.**

**The temple points to Jesus.**

**The exile points to life without Jesus ("hell").**

**The Prophets point to Jesus.**

**The incarnation is Jesus.**

**John the Baptist points to Jesus: *Behold!* (The hinge--John stands at the door--John 1:29.)**

**Jesus points to the cross.**

**The cross and resurrection of Jesus don't point anywhere. They are the point!**

**The Spirit points to Jesus (not to Himself!)**

**Re-creation (by means of the Word--full circle) points to Jesus.**

**The church--body of Christ--points to Jesus (*You are the light of the world*--full circle.)**

**Heaven is Jesus (not a place or a kingdom, as much as it is a person. Not a kingdom, but the King.)**



The target graphic represents the process of elimination which the Bible uses to reveal the Messiah to Israel. **The field is narrowed and narrowed and narrowed until finally--Behold!--there can be only one.**

**The scriptures, through name & genealogy, through prophecy and covenant and character and even curse, perform this ongoing process of elimination.** The process leaves only one person who is qualified to be the Messiah/Christ. [Christ and Messiah are the same word in the Greek and Hebrew languages, respectively. "Christ," then, is not a name like "Smith" or "Jones." "Christ" is a title, like "King." It is helpful to refer, as the Bible often does, to "Christ Jesus," for that gives the proper relationship between his title, Christ, and his name, Jesus. It is even more helpful to refer to him as "Messiah Jesus." Referring to him in that way gives us a handle on the unique significance of his title and his name.]

**The first verse of the New Testament is a list of names.** To the disciplined and systematic Bible student there is nothing more thrilling than this--

*The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham*  
--because that line is the summation of the entire point of the Old Testament!

**A name doesn't tell who I am as much as it tells who I am not.** I am Franklyn Pfeil. Knowing that, you still don't know exactly who I am, because I can probably google a few more of 'me' (perish the thought!) But you know from my name that of the world's 7 billion people, there are very close to 7 billion that I am not! So, it's not what's in a name--it's what's not in a name.

**Jesus called Himself Son of Man.** In fact, it was his favorite self-reference. The title has bottomless depths of meaning. One thing it signifies is that he is in line to fulfill the "seed of the woman" prophecy in Genesis 3:15. **So whom does that name eliminate?** Couldn't "seed of the woman" or "Son of Man" be any person? Certainly, but "Son of Man" is the biggest eliminator of all--because it meant that the Messiah would be a human being, eliminating countless gazillions of angels and other spiritual entities.

He had to be a **Son of Abraham**, eliminating a significant percentage of the world's peoples (Gen. 18:18).

**Of Abraham's sons, he had to come through Isaac**, not Ishmael. So another great chunk of humanity is out of the picture.

**Of Isaac's sons, he had to come through Jacob**, not Esau.

Jacob was also called "Israel." "Israel," seen genealogically, is the small pool of people where Messiah could come from. That's all Israel is. Thus, with just a few names, we have gone from the nearly infinite number of possibilities in the universe to just a relative few--from a nation which was soon to be enslaved in Egypt.

**And of the twelve tribes of Israel, Messiah would come through the tribe of Judah** (Gen. 49:10). The concentric circles are getting smaller. The target is coming into view.

**Of Judah's descendants, he would come through David** (2 Sam .7). While Jesus' favorite self-reference, as mentioned, was "Son of Man," the people--the man on the street--referred to Messiah as "**Son of David.**" It was Son of David that the multitudes were looking for (Matthew 12:23; 21:9). That's why Matthew 1:1 sets hearts aflame--then and now.

Even amongst David's sons there was further elimination: **he would not come through the line of Solomon**, because of a curse on that branch of the family (see Jeremiah 22:30).

He would be born in a little town named **Bethlehem**. (Micah 5:2)

He would be **born a designated number of years following the decree to rebuild Jerusalem** (see Daniel 9 and Nehemiah 2)--which had been destroyed at the time of Israel's exile to Babylon.

Furthermore, **he would calm the seas and heal the sick**. (Isaiah, Psalms (65:7, et al.), etc.) [Please note that some of today's references are not exacting, because there are just so many of them! So when I say "Isaiah" or "Moses" or "Psalms" as a reference, that's the point!--**the Bible is shot through with these references.**]

**He would offer himself as a sacrifice, paying the wages of sin not his own**. (See Isaiah 53 and all of Leviticus and all of the Mosaic system of sacrifice). He would die by a means of death unknown at the time. **Capital punishment in Israel was by stoning. The Bible writers didn't have a name for whatever was going on in Psalm 22, but it was not stoning**. It remained for the nation of Rome (not yet in existence at the time of the writing of Psalm 22) to invent what we now call crucifixion.

**Himself without sin, death had no claim on him**. So, three days later, he was alive again. (Psalm 16, Psalm 72:15, Hosea 6:2, Psalm 22:22, Jonah, the entire Old Testament...)

The Bible so obviously, so meticulously, so systematically whittles it down to just one: Jesus, of Nazareth of Galilee, circa 0 to 33 A.D.

**Scripture placed a target on his back**. The targeted one then carried his cross to Golgotha-- ground zero of the universe, of creation, time, space, and eternity; to Golgotha, where the heart of the heart of God was revealed.

**We don't know his birthday**. We celebrate Christmas, but the Bible gives us no real indication of even the month of his birth.

**What we do know is his deathday**. The Lamb of God had to be offered on Passover. The Passover prophecy tells us precisely which day the great Messiah would suffer for our sins. But it tells us much more: it tells us there are 364 days of the year when Messiah would not die, could not die. So Daniel 9/Nehemiah 2 tells us the year; the system of sacrifices and feasts tells us the day of that year. The gospels tell us the hour of that day. Time and space had narrowed to a single ultimate: a commingled drop of Son's blood and Father's tear.

Through covenant and genealogy, God boiled it down to a handful of people. Through prophecy, he boiled it down to a scant few years, a sliver in time. Through the system of sacrificial offerings, he boiled it down to 1/365t of the year. And then, through prophecy and the system of feasts, he said that the man who fulfilled all of the above would also fulfill the ultimate identifier: he would rise from the dead:

*He will deliver the needy when he cries, the poor also, and him who has no helper.*

*He will save the souls of the needy.*

*He will redeem their life from oppression and violence;*

**And He shall live.** (Psalm 72:12-15)

And thereby, so shall you. **That's the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

### **Yahweh-Elohim.**

Up until Gen. 2:4, Moses used only one designation for God, the name *Elohim*--a majestic portrayal of God as creator of the universe.

At Gen. 2:4, the name of God switches to *Yahweh-Elohim* ("the LORD God" as our translations have it.) This is the dominant name through the end of Gen. chapter 4, which concludes the second section of the creation account. The reason for this is that *Yahweh* is the personal covenant name of God who relates to and redeems his people (see Gen. 15:7 and Exodus 3:14, 15). The saving covenant would be a person. Significantly, the only place in chapters 2-4 that *Yahweh-Elohim* is not used is 3:2-5, when the serpent and Eve consciously avoid the personal name of God as she is lured toward sin. The God they are talking about is malevolent, secretive, concerned to restrict man: this character is so different from that of *Yahweh-Elohim* that the narrative pointedly avoids the name in the dialogue.

Beautifully, *Yahweh-Elohim* combines the Creator and Covenant-Redeemer aspects of God into one magnificent name. So whenever we come across "the LORD God" in scripture, *selah*:  
It was He who made blood in order to spill it for you.

### **A living being, God-breathed. (Gen 2:7)**

God breathed life into man, making him unlike the animals. He has immense capacities. He is responsible. And he has such a great potential for glory--and for disaster.

### **What was the temptation?**

The temptation to eat from *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil* was to seek wisdom without reference to the word of God. It was an act of moral autonomy--deciding what is right without reference to God's revealed will. (This is confirmed by Ezekiel 28--the closest parallel to Genesis 2-3, which tells how the king of Tyre was expelled from Eden for his pride and for claiming that his heart was "*like the heart of a god.*") Adam and Eve desired wisdom, but they desired it outside of the word and will of God. They usurped God's will in determining what is right and wrong. They sidestepped God and his word and will in order to become wise.

### **Knowledge of good and evil is not wrong in and of itself.**

Jesus had the knowledge of good and evil, but was not in any way tainted by sin.

The way we get to our destination is as important as the destination itself. In fact, way and destination are seamless. You can't have one without the other.

Whether knowledge or salvation, God has a Way, and you can't get to the desired destination otherwise--Jesus is not only my life (Col. 3:4), He's the way to life (John 14:6). You don't get one without the Other.

These are implications of the cross before sin ever was.

**In contrast, Jesus**, the second Adam, lived "*by every word that comes from the mouth of God.*" Jesus lived every second of his life in radical dependence on God's word (Matthew 4:4).

The first Adam did obtain "the knowledge of god and evil," but it killed him--because he got wisdom his way. [Example: a cup of water, rightly understood, could light the world...but we sought wisdom our way, outside the will of God, and so we created a bomb that can reduce a metropolitan area to a cinder, leaving a residue of killing radiation.

By God's will and power, we could light the world. On our own, we got just enough wisdom to kill us.]

### **So it is with us.**

What we do with the word of God is everything.

Imagine that you do not know how this story ends. Adam has the whole garden before him. He could have partaken of the tree of life and all that it promised. But he decided to seek wisdom from the tree of knowledge, apart from God's word and God's will. In so doing he died.

That is the great temptation for all of us today--to establish our wisdom apart from God's word.

**The choice remains--**

The tree of life or the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?

We know how their story ends. But the great question is, **how does our story end?**

**Jesus didn't have more than we do. Jesus had less.**

We (and Adam/Eve) have the image of God, the breath of God--God inside and out. We have his Word.

On top of that, we added a layer of selfishness. Jesus has the image and the breath and the Word without the added baggage. At the cross, he took the baggage upon Himself, selflessly.

**God did not withhold good. We've added bad.** Any good that's been withheld, we've withheld from ourselves.

**Can't get any closer.**

Eve was Adam's daughter (she came out of him),

his sister (she had the same Creator-Father),

and his wife.

Their one-flesh relationship reflected the eternal intimacy and order of **the Holy Trinity** and foreshadowed the intimacy and order of **Christ and his bride, the church** (Eph. 5:31-32). **Thus they were a reflection of what always was and a glimpse of what was to come.**

Adam's authority in the relationship was part of creation before sin entered the picture:

Adam was created first (1 Tim. 2:13);

Eve was taken out of man (1 Cor. 11:8, 9);

Eve was designated Adam's helper (Gen. 2:18).

The authority structure of Genesis 2-3 rests upon the careful order of God, the man, the woman, and the animal (serpent). This was **tragically reversed by the fall:**

The woman listens to the serpent, the man listens to the woman, and no one listens to God.

Before sin, there was no need for disciplined devotion. **All of life was devotion.** Loving God was as natural as breathing, and as effortless.

They were naked with one another. Clothing had never occurred to them. There was nothing to hide or protect.

**The gravitational pull of self did not exist.** Neither one was the center of his or her life. God and each other were their centers.

**"Nakedness" shows the radical contrast of innocence and sin--**

Gen. 2:25--the pinnacle of innocence and intimacy

Gen. 3:7--the pit of guilt and estrangement

**The Dialogue of Descent--**

A talking snake! (But Eve was not startled or taken aback by its talking.)

The snake was not a bad snake--everything that God created He called "good."

Neither is it a good snake gone bad. Sin had made no entrance into the world at this point.

That the snake was crafty or shrewd does not imply evil. The scriptures encourage the naïve and simple to cultivate such an attitude (Prov. 1:4; cf. Matt. 10:16).

The snake was a naturally shrewd creature under the control of Satan--a tool. The New Testament identifies this serpent as the devil, referring back to this scene in Paradise (Rev. 12:9; 20:2).

Adam and Eve are real individuals and their story is specific history recorded by Moses under the direction of the Holy Spirit. But it is also , describing what has happened countless millions of times down through the ages--**the descent into sin.**

**God's word attacked.** Through the snake's voice Satan attacked God's Word. This is the beginning of the descent.

God's Word had been responsible for everything Adam and Eve enjoyed. God speaks into existence day and night, sun and moon, the blue sky, flowers, singing birds, all the adoring creatures.

**"Did God really say..."**

So shrewd. The serpent didn't directly deny God's Word, but he smuggled the assumption that God's Word is subject to our judgment. Such a thought had never been verbalized before, and it was enticing.

The devil avoided the use of God's covenant name, Yahweh/Jehovah (the LORD).

Chapter 1--Elohim, the Creator

Chapter 2-4 --Yahweh Elohim (the LORD God) is used **except in 3:1b-7.**

[Carefully note the shift in voice and form of address from 3:1a to 3:1b.]

Jehovah/Yahweh/LORD is **the Covenant name of God**, the Redeemer God. It is with Jehovah that we have a personal relationship, because salvation is personally received.

Our salvation is entered into by covenant, by choice, by personally receiving it; we have to sign on, so to speak. Our natural creation is not entered into by covenant. (We had to be made sentient beings before we could choose).

Elohim's natural creation is received by everyone. No covenant of trust ("faith") or personal relationship is necessary:

"He sends his rain on the just and unjust." (Matt. 5:45). We are all subject to natural laws--the law of gravity for example.

That is why the dropping of the name Yahweh in 3:1-7 is significant; as much of God that they could deny they are denying in the dropping of "LORD." "Elohim" cannot be 'dropped'--denied--by any, ever.

**The default state in the Garden was life:** do nothing and you live.

**The default state now is death:** do nothing and you die.

**The hegemony of the heart.**

We do not choose our creator. We choose, or receive, our Savior (re-creator).

Elohim is king of the universe, which is by unanimous acclamation (every knee shall bow).

Yahweh/LORD is king of the individual by personal invitation. Not all are subject to salvation.

Hell is fenced off for those who have fenced off their hearts. God did not build the fence. **See**

**Isaiah 59:2.**

**Jesus is Jehovah/Yahweh/the LORD:**

*Before Abraham was, I AM*--John 8:58. Note the reaction in 8:59.

See John 18:6--note the italics (NKJV)

See Matthew 1:21: You shall call His name the LORD saves, for He will save his people from their sins.

(back to the garden...)

**Ominously, Eve follows suit and does not use the personal name of God.** The devil continues with an incredulous tone of questioning--smuggling in the assumption that something may be wrong with God's Word. This sets up Satan's systematic distortion of God's Word.

God gives what is his (grace).

Satan steals what is yours. **See John 10:1, 10.**

Satan's scheme (which will fail) is to get them--and you--to sin; God will love them too much to condemn them and in so doing God will have abrogated his own word, placing him on the same level with Adam and Eve--on the level of sin.

**"Did God really say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"** (Genesis 3:1)

This is a complete distortion of God's Word and his generosity.

[Compare Genesis 2:16--*"free to eat,"* or *"freely eat"*  
with Gen. 3:2--*Did God really say, "You must not eat..."*]

Whereas God was generous in his original statement of 2:16, he is made to seem stingy and miserly, by suggestion. Satan is subtle--not coming out and directly attacking the Word of God--he just asks an "innocent" question. The seed of doubt has been planted and it will bear surprisingly quick fruit.

This would have been a great opportunity to defend God, but Eve didn't. She descended to her own revisions of God's Word:

She **diminishes** God's Word

She **adds to** God's Word.

She **softens** God's Word.

**Diminishes--**

3:2--She leaves out 'any'. (See 2:16) She discounted God's gracious generosity. This is a tacit agreement with the serpent. This subtle shift of heart indicates something bad is happening inside of Eve.

**Adds to--**

3:3: *"...and you must not touch it."* God never said that; Eve added it. She magnified God's strictness. Then, paradoxically, she...

**Softens--**

3:3: leaves out the *"surely"* of 2:16. She removes the certitude of death.

Her revisionist approach to the Word of God has placed her in harm's way. She placed herself in harm's way.

This emboldens the serpents' reply in 3:4--"You will not surely die." This is not subtle.

Together, they have arrived at the place of saying that God's Word is wrong.

The doctrine of divine judgment is the very first doctrine to be denied. Satan attacks it from the beginning. Modern culture's loathing of this doctrine indicates that our culture is in the bonds of Satan, *the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient*. (Eph. 2:2)

But note that **judgment did come** upon Eve and Adam--as it surely will fall on all.

3:5--Emboldened further by Eve's participation in the distortion of God's Word, the serpent shifts from attacking the Word of God to attacking the very goodness of God Himself.

According to the serpent, the threat of death is nothing but a scare tactic to keep them in their place. So God is repressive, and jealous--that they not ascend too high. This is an incredible, unbelievable on God, in light of the thousand "goods" of creation.

This lie would alter life on earth forever. It bore the lure of divinity for Eve: *You will be like God*. Sin had a promise, which God's Word withheld.

By reaching out for the fruit and eating it, she would be like God; she would decide what was right and wrong apart from God's Word. What an intoxicating thing it was--and is today: she would do it her own way. This is the lure of moral autonomy--to be your own moral compass. The godlike prospect of moral autonomy drew her to take and eat the fruit.

This was cosmic, and eternal:

"Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat  
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe  
That all was lost." (John Milton, Paradise Lost)

**Adam was there.**

In 3:1-5 the serpent addresses Eve with the plural "you"--implying that someone else was there. In 3:6, we read, "*Her husband, who was with her...*"

**Adam was not deceived.** (1 Tim. 2:14; cf. Romans 5:12, 17-19)

He sinned willfully, eyes wide open, while hiding behind his wife.

He watched Eve eat the fruit, and nothing happened to her. He sinned willfully, assuming there would be no consequences.

Everything is upside down:

Eve followed the snake; Adam followed Eve; no one followed God.

Adam and Eve had come from the pinnacle of innocence and intimacy to the pit of guilt and estrangement. **See 3:7.**

What Satan said was true--half true.

They didn't die that day as might have been supposed. Adam lived 930 years. Yet they did die. Their relationship with God died. They would go to earthly graves. They would need a Savior. They would have to labor to love God and each other.

**Do not be unaware of Satan's schemes.** (2 Cor. 2:11)

What we learn from Genesis is that sin takes hold when we begin to doubt God's Word and God's goodness.

When this begins to work in us, we begin to leave out the great pluses in God's word and character. We begin to minimize the promises and the graces and the goodness of his Word. They evaporate in our minds. We become less enthusiastic.

Then we add to and exaggerate the things we don't like, making it grievous in our minds.

When we do these things, we are in harm's way. We begin to regard God as someone who is withholding something, keeping us down, repressing us.

That's why Moses, who wrote Genesis under the inspiration of the Spirit, at the very end of his writing, will say:

**See Deuteronomy 6:6-9; and Deuteronomy 32: 46, 47a:**

*Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. They are not just idle words for you-- they are your life.*

**And when we come to the New Testament we find Jesus facing Satan--in the wilderness, not in the Garden.**

He defeats Satan with three quotations from Deuteronomy, including "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God*".

The Word of God is our life and our food. Reach out for it--*take and eat*.

The tree in scripture is emblematic of the cross (Deu. 21:23; 1 Peter 2:24; Gal. 3:13)

The tree/cross is a transformative symbol:

where man fell, where man was redeemed;

**where God became sin; where we became the righteousness of God in Him** (2 Cor. 5:21).

**Marah: The tree/cross transforms bitter experiences:**

*So he cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet.* (Exodus 15:25)

**Everyone goes to the tree--**

Adam and Eve fell at the tree. It is not known whether they got back up.

Absalom and Judas died at the tree, bearing their own sin.

Jesus bore my sin on the tree, where I was born again.

What is it--what does it mean--to go to the cross of Jesus Christ?

It's to **go God's Way--the way we should have gone in the first place**. We go to the cross and we receive the fruit of the Spirit.

It's not ours for the taking, **as if God weren't there. It's ours for the receiving**. The essential conspiracy of Eve and the serpent was to cut God out of the deal. But there is no good, except that which is given by the hand of God. (James 1:17)

**Everyone goes to the tree--**

We will hang there for our own sin if we cut God out of the deal/covenant. If we include God, He will hang for us. But one way or another, every sin will be paid for. That is the deal. That is the law and the covenant. Jesus came to fulfill that law, to the last stroke. (Isaiah 53:8/NASB; Matthew 5:18/NASB)

Adam and Eve would have been given knowledge.

Not by experience, but by God's word--by faith

**But...** *professing themselves to be wise, they became fools* (Rom. 1:22) and *changed the truth of God into a lie* (Rom. 1:25). *Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.* (Rom 1:28)

**Is the tree in our own backyards? Certainly...**

That extramarital affair? Don't do it. Love's not there; **love's not gotten that way**. Love is a relationship with God, and with your wife.

A religion of works so that ultimately your faith is in yourself, cutting out *the offense of the cross* (Gal. 5:11)? Don't do it.

**Salvation does not lie that way.**

A hoarding and material possessiveness; a house on the hill and a lifestyle which precludes giving your paltry 10% to the kingdom of the King who gave it all up for you? Don't do it--*for moth and rust destroy, and thieves break in and steal*.

**Peace does not lie that way. Security is not in accord with the size of our pensions.** Don't do it.

That's what not to do. What to do?

Adam and Eve thought to reach out and become like God. But we are told to-

*Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, **did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped**, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself **by becoming obedient** to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name.* (Phi 2:5-9)

The Lord Jesus Christ tasted the fruit of death (Rom. 6:21/ESV) so that you would taste *the fruit of the Spirit* (Rom.

6:22/ESV; Gal. 5:22)--*love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against these there is no law.*

**The completeness of the incarnation of Jesus Christ.**

Nestled in our understanding of the incarnation is the thought that though Christ had a human body, his mind was not completely that of a human.

**This borders on an ancient heresy called *docetism***--that Christ only *seemed* to be a man.

But scripture says that Christ *had to be made like his brothers in every way* (Hebrews 2:17). His likeness to humanity **was not simulated, it was not a resemblance**, it was absolute--except for sin.

When he became a man he placed the exercise of his divine knowledge and power under the discretion of God the Father (Phil 2:5-11). His human mind progressively acquired a divine awareness as his Father willed it (John 5:19; John 8:28). There was a time when he didn't know he was the Son of God. There came a time when he did know he was the Son of God.

**When did He know and how did He know it?** {Warning: **Speculation Ahead!**}

It is the opinion of this Bible student that Jesus' studies led to the dawning realization that He was "the Christ, the Son of God." As a man he had to come faith in the redemptive purpose, the redemptive power, and the redemptive plan of God in the same way that you and I--and Peter--did, through the revelation from God:

*"But who do you say that I am?"*

*Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

*And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.*

Follow very carefully here: *God is no respecter of persons* (Acts 10:34), and there were no advantages afforded this Man in the flesh that are not afforded you. He got to know His Father's heart, will, purpose, and plan through Scripture--and then He labored as a carpenter, observing how the truths of Scripture worked themselves out in the rough and tumble of the world. The record we have might not be incomplete after all.

Permit some wild, wild speculation:

In the synagogue in Nazareth, when the attendant handed him the scroll, and He unrolled it to Isaiah 61, read from it, then announced, *"Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing,"* it may be that He was announcing His identity to the people with the same scripture passage which had announced His identity to Him--wistfully recalling the day when, while reading this passage, a gathering realization finally crystallized before His eyes:

*I AM the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world...*

**Wild speculation aside, it is scripturally sound to surmise that you are holding in your hands the Book that God used to tell God He is God.**

At his temptation Jesus fully knew he was the Son of God, but he withstood the onslaughts of Satan as a real man, deriving his power to resist by depending on God for strength.

**His help comes to us from the reality of the incarnation.** (See Heb. 2:18)

Jesus' temptation was clearly arranged by the Holy Spirit. It concluded a **two-part final preparation** for Jesus' public ministry.

The first part was positive: Jesus' baptism: see Luke 3:22.

The second part was negative: Jesus' temptation, during which he was made aware of the perils and errors he had to resist. It was a moral education, which gave him an insight into all the ways in which his messianic work could be marred.

**Echoes, and echoes of echoes:**

Echoes of Eden--image of God /fellowship with God; both broken

Echoes of Israel: a. Red Sea; b. wilderness

The Spirit led Jesus into the desert/wilderness where he spent 40 days, an obvious parallel with Israel's 40-year sojourn during which (unlike Jesus) God's people repeatedly failed God.

Echoes of you (church): a. baptism of the Holy Spirit, sonship, righteousness of God ("well-pleased"--see Matthew 3:17); b. resistance from Satan. The church will prevail--see Phil. 1:6; Phil. 2:13.]

The (sometimes immediate) temptation and resistance many new believers experience is an established scheme of Satan.

**Eunuchs of the kingdom.**

If we can be made to doubt whether we are born again (through the blood of Christ) and empowered (by his Spirit), then we are saved but spiritually emasculated--powerless to engender new brothers and sisters for the Kingdom of heaven.

**The setting.**

Between the inhabited hills of Judea and the Dead Sea stretched a terrible wilderness called *Jeshimon*, which means "The Devastation." It was a desolate, monotonous wasteland, an anti-Eden.

The first Adam (see Luke 3:38) lacked nothing when he fell to the gorgeous serpent in Eden. The second Adam (see Luke 4:1) was forty days hungry when he withstands Satan's alluring presence.

**The first temptation.** (Luke 4: 3,4)

*Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."*

*But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.' "*

This temptation is real--because **Jesus is real**. He'd been without food for six weeks.

And the temptation is mighty, precisely **because** he is aware of his sonship. It is no temptation to me to turn stones into bread, because it's impossible. But Jesus knew that if he elected to do this, it could and would be done. His body is screaming to him, "You can do it--so do it!" The temptation seems innocent--just turn a stone into bread, but it was a temptation to sin, because the incarnate Son had come to do the will of the Father--and nothing else. Here, had he followed his own desires, he would be outside of God's will, meeting his needs apart from the will of the Father.

Furthermore, he had committed himself to living within the natural order, as a human. To turn stones into bread would have stepped outside of the natural order and returned to his previous state.

Had he returned to his previous state--it would have been just like the Israelites, who longed for the foods of Egypt, and would have returned to their former state--if they could (Num. 11:4b-5). Jesus could, but didn't.

We know Jesus was referencing Israel in his mind, because **he answers with Deuteronomy 8:3**.

[Look at the context in Deuteronomy 8:2.]

Jesus is saying that he lives by the Word of God and will not step outside of it. Jesus is demonstrating that nothing could drive him to drop his humble existence as a man who lives by trusting God's Word. He would live by the parameters of God's Word; he would not take things into his own hands.

God had found the one *upon whom he could set his seal* (John 6:27). Adam and Eve had broken the seal. Israel had broken the seal. The seal--the imprint of God--had been restored.

We regularly succumb to the temptation to go beyond the parameters of God's Word to satisfy our needs or desires.

We are graspers, over-reachers like Eve. Jacob--the supplanter, the heel-grabber--is in all of us.

We want and need things and somehow we figure God doesn't have it figured out, so we'll figure it out for him.

We'll spend money we don't have to get what we don't need.

We'll promote ourselves because God's not doing it on our timetable.

Slapped by God's Word, the devil must have visibly recoiled. Clearly, it would be unwise to further pursue that line of thought.

**The second temptation.** (Luke 4:5-8)

*The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. So if you worship me, it will all be yours." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'"*

Satan presented Jesus with a fantasy-like vision of the world in which the nations stood ready to abandon their idols and accept Christ as Lord--without pain, without the crucifixion.

**It was Satan's to offer.**

Three times (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) Jesus would call him *the prince of this world*.

Paul called him *the ruler of the kingdom of the air* (Eph. 2:2) and *the god of this age* (2 Cor. 4:4). It was a derived sovereignty given him by the reigning God, but it was a sovereignty. The offer was legitimate.

Satan was prepared to give it all away for the brief bow to him, a split second of idolatry which would have thundered through the universe: no atonement--our sin would not have been dealt with: no real forgiveness, no righteousness; only a fleeting political salvation instead of eternal soul salvation. Jesus would have, effectively, *come down from the cross* (see Matthew 27:40-42).

Jesus answers with Deuteronomy 6:13, where Moses warned his people who had been attracted to idolatry:

*"It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'"*

There would be no compromise, no concessions, no ease, no idolatry. Again, we must clearly understand that these temptations were excruciating. Jesus met them as a human totally dependent on the Father, not as a quasi-man.

**The third temptation.** (Luke 4:9-12)

*The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down from here.*

*For it is written:*

*" 'He will command his angels concerning you  
to guard you carefully;*

*they will lift you up in their hands,*

*so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.*

*Jesus answered, "It says: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"*

From the southeast corner of the temple roof, it's a 450-foot drop into the ravine of the Kidron Valley. Having seen Jesus vanquish the first two temptations by quoting scripture, Satan now quotes it for his own purposes. Satan was trying to take advantage of Jesus' determination to trust and obey God's Word--"You're committed to God's Word, so do it!" Add to this the tendency of the godly to be attracted by the challenge to "step out in faith." It was a powerful spiritual and psychological temptation: "Psalm 91 is you!"

But Jesus knew otherwise. There had been no word from the Father directing him to leap off the temple. He was committed to never doing anything in his own power, for that would put God to the test. Thus he answers with Deuteronomy 6:16: *Do not put the LORD your God to the test.* The Israelites had tested God by making complaints about provisions. God provided water by having Moses strike the rock. *"And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the LORD saying, 'Is the LORD among us or not?'"* (Exodus 17:7)

Do not attempt to force God to act. Unless we are told to do, we are not to do. We are responders in this dance.

Jesus did what the Father commanded him. **Nothing less and nothing more.**

Why Jesus, for example, did not heal everyone as he walked down the road is a mystery--but not on Jesus part. He wasn't directed to do so by the Father.

\*\*\*\*\*

1. **Live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.** (Our sustenance is supernatural.)
2. **Worship the LORD God and serve him only.**
3. **Never put the LORD to the test.** (Do not attempt to force God to act.)

**Jesus resisted real temptation--as a real man in real history--because he was *full of the Holy Spirit and led by the Spirit.*** (Luke 4:1) Call upon Christ in your temptation and he will be at your side.

**Jesus was filled with God's Word. He knew the truth of *I have hidden thy word in my heart that I might not sin against you* (Psalm 119:11).**

\*\*\*\*\*

Adam and Eve--tested in Eden; exiled.  
Israel--tested in the land of milk and honey; exiled.  
Jesus--tested in deprivation; separated (*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*) for sins not his own

The temptation of Jesus Christ was not a test. **It was a proving ground.** He proved worthy to carry the cross. Heaven and hell--John the Baptist and Satan--had inspected him and could find no flaw. There was no moral barrier in the way. The only thing now between Jesus Christ and the cross was time:

*And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.* (4:13/KJV)

**Abel**--Without shedding of blood is no remission (Heb. 9:22, Heb. 11:4). Abel brought a blood offering, thus confessing himself a sinner. Abel is my older brother, who went forward first, following God by faith. He went forward alone, rejecting his generation and his family's values. The rebel was not Cain.

**Abel came God's way--**

(Heb 11:4) *By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.*

**Cain came his own way**, with his own offering. That's religion.

Abel by faith brought his sacrifice—see Hebrews 11. This is by revelation, for *faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God* (Rom. 10:17). Abel's offering was given in obedience to what God had revealed to them (though not recorded in Genesis).

**Cain**-- In Cain began all false religion, the essence of which is man's coming to God in his own way. (See Jude 11—the way of Cain is not by faith, but by his own way.) God wanted a lamb brought, which points to the sacrifice of Christ. The offering of Cain denied that human nature is evil and in need of a Redeemer. We are not right with God—we are not born children of God, we are born again children of God.

**The difference between these boys wasn't a character difference. The difference was the offering they brought.** No Christian takes the position he is better than anyone else. He takes the place of a sinner like everyone else, needing a sacrifice—someone to take his place and die, to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.

Religion is man's search for God. Salvation is God's search for man.

**Cain and Abel—Together**, they stand as two great systems, two classes of people:  
the lost and the saved;  
the self-righteous and the broken spirited;  
the formal professor and the genuine believer.

### **Nothing but the blood of Jesus.**

There are only two kinds of people--**sinners that are saved, and sinners that are lost.** What's the difference? Jesus. Last week we said that there was no inherent difference between Cain and Abel. The only difference was Jesus (or the blood offering which prefigured Jesus). The saved have no reason to feel superior. There is no inherent difference between two thieves, sentenced to die. Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

"Keep his commandments" would mean to meet God's conditions for salvation—in any age—grounded on faith in God. For Cain it meant bringing a lamb. For Abraham it meant believing the promises of God. For the people of Israel it meant approaching God through sacrifice in the tabernacle and in the temple. For us it is to "... Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved ..." (Acts 16:31).

**More of the same old garbage:** Patterns of apostasy—then and now.

1. "The way of Cain." (1:11) Cain believed in religion and God, but "in his own way," not God's Way—atonement by blood sacrifice (of Christ).

### **Sin is conformity.**

Cain is romanticized as a rebel. Puhleeze. Cain followed the way chosen by his daddy-- who chose the way his wife had dictated. The father was wrapped around her little finger and the son was tied to her apron strings. Cain went along with the serpent. Spiritually, if you do not rebel, the serpent has already made your choice for you.

The rebel was Abel, who broke from his family and walked the Way of the LORD alone. He is the Christ-like figure who chose what would become the Way of the cross-- and paid the consequences of his rebel freedom.

The word "conformed" occurs just twice in the KJV. Cain conformed to this world (see Rom 12:2); Abel conformed to the image of Jesus Christ (see Rom. 8:29). Abel's conformity makes him my favorite rebel. Think of it: he faced what then was the entire world and, seeing that their ways were not God's ways, he went the way which was to be the Way of the cross—and he went that way alone.

Conformity to the image of Jesus Christ is rebellion in this world.

The "Adam's Family" were religious to the core. Cain later brought the fruit of his works to God as an offering.

Abel broke free of religion and by faith (see Hebrews 11:4) he brought the offering God prescribed, "the first and the best" of the flock. A distant glimmer of Christ, The Lamb of God, can be seen in Cain's offering. Abel is the first person in Scripture who depicts the pattern of righteousness by faith. His rebellion against the prevailing culture--against everyone, it would seem, but God-- and his death at the hands of his own kin prefigure the supreme rebel, Jesus Christ, who was condemned to die by His own nation.

**Against the wind.**

The notion that Satan and Cain are rebel figures is upside down. Follow the Word of God in this world and you will, defacto, be the biggest rebel on the block. Cains and antichrists are amongst their own in this world. Abels and the prophets and the Christ were murdered

4:5-6: He thought God favored Abel. God did not favor Abel, but Abel's sacrifice. This is the error of thinking that salvation is works based--that the good are saved, the bad are not. His hostility was toward God, whom he could not kill. His anger fell on Abel, whom he could kill.

All of the prophets were killed for this reason. Jesus was killed for this reason:  
*If we had lived in the days of our fathers....see Matthew 23:30-39.*

4:7--Amazing grace. The offer of salvation still stands. See Romans 5:20.

Augustine famously said of Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden, "Felix culpa!"--"fortunate transgression." From the reality of the disaster of sin and death those words may seem blasphemous.

They are blasphemous from the point of view of human religion--works based salvation. But these words are at the heart of scripture's grace-based salvation: by grace are ye saved.

**"He's talking to Cain, not to me."** (See 4:6-7)

As he kids used to say, "Not!"

This misconception comes from the basic error that goes like this:

"Cain bad; Abel good." Scripture des not teach that!

Scripture teaches this: Cain has not Jesus; Abel has Jesus: see 1 John 5:12.

4:7-- Abel was not accepted because God was partial toward him. Abel wasn't accepted at all. God had accepted Abel's sacrifice.

We just don't want to get it. God has already weighed in on our righteousness:

Filthy rags...no, not one...all we like sheep have gone astray...every thought was only evil all the time.

What remains? The righteousness of God. And the LORD himself will provide the sacrifice.

The law demands *life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth* (Exo. 21:23-25). Each of these is prefigured in Abel's offering. The *first* and the best (*'fat'*--see 4:4) also prefigure Christ.

We don't think of a carrot as 'alive.' This is the realm of the **archetype**--a language in the substrate beneath language, shared by all humanity:

"innate universal psychic dispositions that form the substrate from which the basic themes of human life emerge." It is a picture language God has not allowed to be sun, muted, or distorted; they don't lie. Scripture is "My Picture Bible" for this reason--and for the poeticism in pictures; God can't help being gorgeous!

This language was not confused at Babel. We instinctively understand that the life is in the blood (Lev. 17:11)--and that without shedding of blood there is no remission (Heb. 9:22).

(Aside: the language of tongues in prayer is a even deeper language--*deep calling to deep*.

Franklyn's Prayer in English: Franklyn by the Spirit through Jesus to the Father.

Franklyn praying in "gifted language": God talking to himself.)

4:8--Cain rejected the Word of the LORD, spoken to him by the LORD himself, in 4:6-7. He refused to repent--to bring the offering God prescribed. The murderer within him (Matt. 15:18-19) found expression when he killed his brother.

We either open the door to sin or to Christ. (Gen. 4:7b; Rev. 3:20) (James)

The intimacy of sin and salvation

A personal relationship with Christ.

A personal relationship with the devil.

James: sin as conception:

**"Conceived"**—**How sin is born.** (1:15; cf. 1:18)

Conception is the union of two. Here the desire of the soul is joined to the outward temptation and we sin.

Temptation itself is not sin.

**"Begot"**—**How we are born again.** (1:18; cf. 1:15)

There is a union of two "wills" here:

The will of God is joined with our will and we are born again. It is His desire that none should perish. We are responsible for our will in believing the Word of God and accepting Jesus Christ as Savior.

Mary: the life of Christ in terms of conception. See Luke 1:35

You: See Luke 1:35.

### **I am Cain.**

Without Jesus, I am Cain. I know because I have seen it played out in my life. I didn't have any Bible, but the word of the LORD had been revealed to me:

Rom. 2:12-16

What is the law? Life for life; the life is in the blood; the lamb and the scapegoat: **The law is a picture of Jesus.** "I came not to abolish the law but to fulfill it: 'for the soul that sins it shall die.'"

### **The mark of Cain:**

A mark of grace, of protection. At the same time, a mark left by sin.

I think, in some strange way, that the marks on Jesus' hands are the mark of Cain, in this sense:

The mark of Franklyn, Doug, Dan, Shelley, Cordelia, Chris, and Carrie--each was transferred to the sin-bearer, a sign, at once, of God's grace and the shame he bore.

**Enoch**--Gen. 5:21-24

*Walked with God*--this phrase is only applied to Enoch and Noah (Gen. 6:9). It describes the closest personal relationship with God. See Heb. 11:5-6. It seems that God just plain liked having him around.

**The God of the ordinary:**

God likes to be part of something--Trinity/marriage/church/relationship--where two or three are gathered in his name.

He likes friends (Moses--Exodus 33:11; Abraham--James 2:23) and taking a walk (in the Garden; with Enoch) and dinner (invited himself to Zacchaeus' house). He even put the cross in terms of friendship: John 15:13

**I searched the skies and the scriptures for a picture of Trinity, and I found it here, in these often overlooked commonplaces: 1 Corinthians 13:4-8; cf. 1 John 4:8.**

Trinity is **affinity**--"he is leaning out for love and he will lean that way forever..."

See Psalm 44:3: God--all of God--likes me. And, best of all, his affection springs from somewhere within him. See Psalm 87:7.

**God loves the world. He likes me.**

God is great and grand. Better yet, he's good.

Long prayers tire him out. He'll be found where it's quiet. He often displays a delicate hand in the sunset sky, a sense of fun and humor in the puppy.

**Walking with God:**

Franklyn: "Can you tell me about hypostatic union? About kenosis?"

God: "Maybe later. Now tell me about Chip when he was a puppy."

**Humility will cling to him. In some nearly pathetic way, he will always be too eager to please. He will be fascinated by the commonplace and the ordinary: *For I am gentle and lowly in heart* (Matthew 11:2).**

**God pleasing faith looks like this:**

*And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.* (Hebrews 11:6)

God is pleased with those who wholly believe what his Word says about him.

God is pleased with those who believe that his inclination is to be positive.

(Enoch also believed the negative side of this--see Jude 14, 15.)

**God took him.** How?

Elijah: 2 Kings 2:11, 12.

Paul: 2 Corinthians 12:2.

Ezekiel 8:3.

Philip: Acts 8:39.

He was exempted by God from the law of death and decay--just as it will be for the faithful who will be alive at the rapture of the church. They, like Enoch, shall not taste death but will be *changed* (1 Thes. 4:15-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-52; John 14:3).

**God took him.** Why?

For the encouragement of believers, and to awaken them to hope of life after death. See 1 Thes. 4:18. See Titus 2:13.

The word 'rapture' does not appear in the Bible. It is derived from the Greek word "harpazo," which is translated as "caught up" in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 and in 2 Corinthians 12:2. (Cf. John 10:28-"G726" in Strong's numbers.)

*After that, we who are still alive and are left will be **caught up** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.*

Jesus described the rapture in John 14:1-3:

*"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.*

*In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. 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 to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."**

Note that Jesus says He will receive those who believe in Him to Himself; He's not coming down to us, we are going up to Him.

Old Testament stories teach New Testament concepts. Lot, who believed in God, was taken out of Sodom just before it was judged. The story of Lot typifies God's mercy towards those who trust Jesus Christ—those whose sins were judged when Jesus died for us on the cross.

**Just as Lot was removed from Sodom, it looks like the church—made up of those who place their trust in Jesus Christ—will be out of the picture during the Great Tribulation.**

#### **A startling revelation from "Revelation"—**

Chapters 1, 2, and 3 of the book of Revelation consist of letters from Jesus Christ to the seven churches of Asia. After chapter 3, the church seems to have dropped off the face of the earth—never mentioned again in Revelation. Where did they go? They didn't drop off, they were "caught up!"

In Revelation 3:10, we read—

**Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth.**

While many think that Jesus' words in John 14:1-3 (above) indicate that the church will be evacuated prior to the start of the Great Tribulation, other sincere Bible believers place our 'meeting the Lord' after the Great Tribulation.

But Jesus left no way for us to mistake, or need to interpret, His very next words:

*Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?"*

*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except **through Me.**" (John 14:5-6)*

Whether or not we avoid the Great Tribulation, the Bible teaches us that all those trusting in Jesus Christ will escape the Greatest Tribulation—eternal separation from God. Any way you look at it, those who follow Jesus won't be 'left behind.'

And that's what "Rapture" is really all about--

*I will exalt you, O LORD,*

*For you lifted me out of the depths. (Psalm 30:1)*

#### **We're outta here...**

The "Rapture" was taught by Paul to fledgling believers in Thessalonica who had been Christians for all of one month. The rapture is not an exotic notion in scripture; it is basic to God's program. The Rapture signals the end of the era of grace in which we now live and the beginning of "The

Day of the LORD. The Day of the LORD begins with the 7-year Great Tribulation period (see Matt. 24:21) and continues throughout the Millennial period.

The Day of the LORD is a technical expression which includes the time when God puts down rebellion and establishes His rule. It begins with trouble (the Hebrew day began with darkness--*"the evening and the morning were the first day"*). God begins in night but moves to light. So the Great Tribulation leads into the glorious millennial reign of Christ

The Day of the LORD is found in Joel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. Also spoken of by the prophets as "that day," as in Zechariah.

The Rapture is found (by type) in the Old Testament-- in the departures of Enoch (Gen 5:24; cf. Heb. 11:5) and Elijah (2 Kings 2:11).

It is first found in the New Testament in the gospels (of course) in kernel form (of course)--see John 14:2-3.

The Rapture is imminent; *it's the next thing on God's prophetic calendar*. Note that "next" can mean "soon," but it does not have to mean "soon." Next means next.

**The Rapture is not the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.**

Jesus does not come down at the rapture. *The church goes up--it is "caught up" to meet the LORD in the air* (4:17).

In John 14:3, Jesus tells us that He will *receive you unto myself* (KJV and NASB) / *take you to be with me* (NIV). The Rapture is when the body of Christ joins the Head.

**Q: What is the difference between the Rapture and the Second Coming?**

**A:** The rapture and the second coming of Christ are often confused. Sometimes it is difficult to determine whether a scripture verse is referring to the rapture or the second coming. However, in studying end-times Bible prophecy, it is very important to differentiate between the two.

The rapture is when Jesus Christ returns to remove the church (all believers in Christ) from the earth. The rapture is described in Thessalonians 4:13- and Corinthians 15:50-. Believers who have died will have their bodies resurrected and, along with believers who are still living, will meet the Lord in the air. This will all occur in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye. The second coming is when Jesus returns to bring the Tribulation to an end--to defeat the Antichrist, destroy evil, and establish His millennial kingdom. The second coming is described in 19:11-.

Q. *"The day of the LORD comes as a thief in the night,"* says 1 Thessalonians 5:2. But in 5:4 it says "the day of the LORD will not overtake the brethren as a thief." I'm confused.

A. Take a hard look at the intervening verse--5:3--and note the pronoun change.

***Not appointed to wrath.*** God has not destined the church for wrath—for the Great Tribulation—because Christ bore our judgment:

*For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. (5:9-10)*  
(Note: you will hear a great deal of discussion about exactly when the "rapture" takes place relative to the Great Tribulation, but if you want to get it right, join the "pre-Trib" delegation! The Groom will not let his Bride go through the tribulation coming upon the world.)

**Hurry, escape there. For I cannot do anything until you arrive there.** This was spoken to Lot in Gen. 19:22. Judgment cannot fall until God's children are taken out. Judgment could not fall until God put Noah in an ark, safe on the inside. But the very minute they were taken out, the judgment fell.

**Enoch**—represents the church, raptured.

**Noah**—represents those to be sealed and kept through the Great Tribulation—144,000 Jews and a great company of Gentiles.

**Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.** (Genesis 6:8)

Looking at me through my own eyes, I don't look too good. But through God's eyes, I'm just like Jesus!

Our salvation isn't in our goodness. It's in our trusting that God is good. This is a glimmer of the gospel--the Good News. We learn the details of the plan--the cross--later. Noah and Abraham had faith in the heart behind the plan--in the person who would later go to the cross.

Noah responded, like Enoch, to the grace of God. He, like Enoch, *walked with God* (Gen. 6:9).

The first mention of *grace*--unmerited favor--appears in the Bible in Genesis 6:8, just after the all-encompassing indictment of mankind in 6:5 (*every...only...all*). Carefully note who found what where: Noah found grace in God.

Just so, Noah's righteousness--like ours--is found in God. Noah, like all men, is included in Gen. 6:5; and he is included in Genesis 6:12. His justification and perfection were not of himself, but of God.

Grace is never bestowed as a reward for merit. Grace is not because of who you are, but despite who you are.

Noah was *just* in the same way I am--because God is *just and the justifier*:

*To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him who believes in Jesus.* (Rom 3:26)

'Just' in Romans 3:26 means that God paid the price--the wages of sin--to see Noah (representative of any believer) as justified. He paid when he placed the penalty on Himself at the cross. Never place a Bible character in some super-duper situation before God. Sinner that you are, you as a believer have *found grace in his eyes*; you are justified and perfected in Christ.

**The world before the flood gives us a peak into the future:** Matthew 24:37-39

**And the LORD shut him in.** (Gen. 7:16)

You're safe in the ark--in Christ. Once in the ark, you're not going to fall out, because you are *sealed unto the day of redemption*:

*And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you are sealed unto the day of redemption.* (Eph. 4:30)

**Your faith isn't a process, it's a Person.**

God is not only the planner, he's the plan. (See Eph. 1:9ff; Rev. 13:8)

He's not only the savior, he's salvation. (See Luke 2:30)

God's not only the sealer, he's the seal: *In Him you trusted, after you heard the gospel of your salvation; having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.* (Eph. 1:13)

**"Separation" and the Christian:**

The old saying that we are to be "in the world but not of the world" is true. Noah's ark illustrates the principle:

It's OK for the boat to be in the water, but it's disaster when the water gets in the boat.

**The whole heart of God.**

Glimmers of the cross: Everything--and all at once.

The full range--every note--of God's heart is displayed at the cross, from His pitiless wrath against sin to his utter forgiveness. At the cross, we see God's justice and mercy seamlessly combined in the person Of Jesus.

The Old Testament seems to present facets of God's character which are mutually exclusive, impossible to reconcile: see Exodus 34:6-7.

But the Old Testament contains hints of the cross in images which represent God's utter forgiveness and his uncompromising hatred of sin--all at once, combined in a single act.

The closing of the door of Noah's ark (Genesis 7:16) is a subtle prophecy of both God's mercy and judgment, combined in the image of God shutting Noah in. [How? Hint: It depends upon which side of the door we're on.]

*By faith, Noah...*(Hebrews 11:7)

Noah was a righteous man, not because he was perfect, but because he believed God. Like Abram after him, who *believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness* (Gen. 15:6).

**But God remembered Noah...** (8:1)

The act of remembrance is more than merely a recollection. Here and throughout the biblical text, God's remembrance is the first step in his doing good to those remembered--delivering and encouraging them. God "remembers" in order to perform good. (Nehemiah 13:1)

**He took God at His Word:**

*He believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness*

The figure of Abraham dominates the book of Genesis. His shadow extends across the whole Bible: See Matthew 1:1; see Hebrews 11:8-19; see Romans 4; see Galatians 3:6-10; John 8:56, etc.

Abraham believes the Word of the Lifegiver:

There is life in you though you are dead.

We have the same promise from the same Word: *dead* though we are *in sins and trespasses* (Eph. 2:1), we can be *born again*.

Abraham models faith in God's saving grace.

Faith never saved anybody: *By grace you are saved...*(Eph. 2:8)

**Faith is a conduit** by which we receive the salvation of the LORD God.

But faith is a moral neutral.

Faith can also be a conduit for falsehood and great evil.

**The conduit doesn't save** the man who is dying of thirst. It's the "*living water*" that saves (John 7:38). Literally, *by grace you are saved through faith* (Eph. 2:8). The grace comes through the conduit ("pipe") of faith. Pipe isn't good or bad; pipe is pipe. What comes through the pipe is either good or bad. We receive Christ by faith. (John 1:12)

Everyone taps into something.

**Faith is only as valid as its object.** I may have great, sincere, zealous faith in something.

Unless it is faith in the life-giving YHWH/Jesus, my faith (great, sincere, and zealous though it may be) is dead idolatry.

*He believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness* (Gen. 15:6):

This is a prophecy of the cross.

The righteousness had to be purchased. Because it was not yet purchased in "time," it was paid on credit.

The righteousness wasn't in Abraham's belief. It was in the LORD, who...

*Became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

\*\*\*\*\*

When we talk about saving faith, the faith that saves--the first instance of it is in the life of Abraham: *He believed the LORD, and the LORD counted it to him for righteousness* (Genesis 15:6).

God promised that Abraham and his wife Sarah would have a child in their old age--and that through this child all the earth would be blessed. The child would be Isaac. Through that child came Jacob, Judah, David, Jesus Christ--through whom all the world has been blessed.

Romans 4--the entire chapter-- is an explanation of the faith that saves--the faith of Abraham:

**Faith is facing the facts.**

And the verse which forever changed my concept of faith was Romans 4:19:

*Abraham faced the fact that his body was as good as dead and that Sarah's womb was also dead.*

Another translation says *he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb.*

He faced the fact, he contemplated--he considered long and hard--every relevant factor.  
He contemplated the facts. He did not deny the obstacles.

Biblical faith in God is not devoid of reason. It is a faith that does not deny the existence of obstacles, but **evaluates them in the light of God's word and power.**

*Abraham considered his own body, now dead.* He weighed the human impossibility of becoming a father at his age against the divine impossibility of God being able to break His word. He decided that it was more impossible for God to break his word, and *so he believed God. And God counted it to him for righteousness.*

So Romans 4:19 marked a deepening of my understanding of faith.

Faith turned from screwing my head on differently to an honest analysis of the situation. It was no longer, "This isn't a problem."  
Instead it became, "**This is a big problem, but it's not as big as Jesus.**"

Do any of you have a big problem? Don't deny it. **It is what it is.** But it is not as big as Jesus.

**Faith is not a leap in the dark.** It is a well-contemplated decision in the cold gray light of dawn.

**Faith isn't screwing your head on differently** in order to deny reality.  
I've seen a lot. So have you. We don't need to deny our eyes.

I turned a bright light on everything I've seen, everything I know--and I decided to follow Jesus. That's biblical faith.

**Faith is the motivating principle of lives--**of all lives. Inside and outside of the church, we all live out our faith. In effect the apostle James said, "you **show** me your life and I'll tell you what you believe in." In Matthew 9:2, "*Jesus saw their faith.*" The Lord God said, "*When I see the blood, I will pass over* (Exo. 12:13)." Every life is a display of its faith, for better or for worse.

A few examples of applying faith in something other than Jesus...

**Faith in self** is pride. If you are the biggest deal in the picture of your life, that's a faith called pride.

**Faith in progress--** progress itself as an abiding principle of the universe--is a faith called evolution.

**Faith in money** is a faith called materialism.

**Faith in nothing** even has a name. It's a faith called nihilism.

**Faith in faith itself** is a faith called optimism.

Faith is as "big" or "great" as its object.

Or as small or even as perverse as its object.

**Faith is only as valid as its object.**

The classic example: Sincere and fervent faith in **thin ice** leaves you wet--or worse.

**God's covenant with Abraham.**

*And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.* (12:3; cf. Luke 2:10-11)

Biblical Covenants are the terms of relationship between man and God--it is a statement or depiction of how we relate to God.

[In one Word (hint, hint) describe the covenant between God and man.]

How do we relate to God? See 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 9:15.

For better or worse, Jesus defines each individual's relationship to God. Jesus is the eternal covenant. *He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life.* (1John 5:12)

**Faith.**

*Abraham believed the LORD, and He counted it to him as righteousness.* (15:6; cf. Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6)

This is justification by faith alone, which means that salvation = faith in Jesus + nothing. This is the essential covenant of Scripture. (This verse is the John 3:16 of the Old Testament, and the child of God should store it in her heart.)

**Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness [Gal. 3:6].**

This verse is a quote from Genesis 15:6 concerning Abraham, "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness." This verse is also quoted in Romans 4:3. Abraham is the great illustration of justification by faith. Paul uses him as an example in both Romans and Galatians

It cannot be said that Abraham was justified by the Law because the Mosaic Law was not given until four hundred years after Abraham. Neither can it be said that he was justified by circumcision because he was justified before God gave him the commandment of circumcision. Circumcision was the badge and evidence of Abraham's faith, just as baptism is the badge and evidence of a believer's faith today. Neither circumcision nor baptism can save. In fact, they make no contribution to salvation. They are simply outward evidences of an inward work.

**Covenant: Smoking Furnace and Burning Lamp** (while Abraham slept).

It was customary that the parties to an agreement walked together between the pieces of a butchered animal (see Jer. 34:18), symbolizing that if either party were to break his word, he would be sundered like that animal had been.

**Cutting a deal.** (15:17)

A contract was sealed by both parties passing between the pieces (see Jer. 34:18). Here only God passed between the pieces; Abraham doesn't promise to do anything (works).

*And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.*

Abraham was asleep when God guaranteed both sides of the covenant, when He passed between the pieces alone. (The word covenant derives from the verb form "to cut." The term itself is predictive of the cross, of the *New Covenant in His Blood*.) See Jer. 31:31; Luke 22:20.

**Where were you?**

*Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding.* (Job 38:4)

**Where were you?**

We can't achieve salvation. In fact, we weren't even there when we were saved.

God made a fiery appearance as a smoking furnace and burning lamp in the darkness and glided down the aisle between the glistening pieces. It was a theophany, a visual manifestation of God. (A similar phenomenon is seen at the burning bush and in the pillar of cloud by day and the cloud of fire by night.)

The promise was unilateral and unconditional; only God passed between the pieces, while Abraham slept. When Jesus, on the cross, fulfilled every requirement for my salvation, I wasn't there. I didn't have to be, 'cause he hung there in my place.

**Circumcision: sign of the Old Testament/Covenant;**

**Baptism: sign of the New Testament/Covenant**

Note well: God declared Abraham righteous by faith before he was circumcised. The child of God is righteous by faith before any good work is performed.

Note: Baptism has additional symbolic significance, but for now we confine our notes to baptism as the parallel in the New Testament/church to circumcision in the Old Testament/Israel.

*And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all. (14:18-20)*

**Melchizedek walked onto the pages of scripture out of the blue, then walked off into the blue. Like Jesus, he is not of the Levitical priesthood.** Melchizedek and Abraham celebrated the Lord's Supper, looking forward to Christ.

Melchizedek, whose name means "king of righteousness," is a mysterious individual. He is mentioned only a few times in the Bible, appearing and disappearing without warning.

He was king of Salem (later called Jerusalem) and a priest who worshipped the true God. We first meet him when Abraham, following a mighty military victory, gives Melchizedek a tenth of the plunder. Melchizedek, as priest, blesses Abraham in the name of God Most High.

The Jewish law later called for all priests to be descended from the tribe of Levi. But Abraham acknowledged the legitimacy of Melchizedek's priesthood with his offering. In fact, because Abraham, as Levi's ancestor, gave gifts to this king, Melchizedek was shown to be the greater priest.

King David prophesied that the Messiah would be in the order of Melchizedek, and indeed Jesus was not a Levite either.

Jesus is also compared to Melchizedek because, though Melchizedek obviously had parents, no record of either of them exists. As God's eternal Son, Jesus is without beginning or end, "a priest forever."

Jesus Christ is our king and high priest--not appointed by the law, but appointed by God, as was Melchizedek.

Jesus priesthood is eternal and perfect; it does not require a new sacrifice every day, as the Levitical priesthood did:

The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool."

The LORD sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies!

Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power, in holy garments; from the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours.

The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, "**You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.**" (Psa 1101-:4)

**Genesis 15:6--selah!--**

Rom. 4:3-8 (cf. Psalm 32:1-2); Gal. 3:3-6; James 2:21-23.

Gk. *logizomai*--count; reckon; impute. It means *to put to one's account*.

It occurs 11 times in Romans 4--vv. 3,4,5,6,8,9,10,11,22,23,24.

(In James, we draw from the account! Promise!)

**Isaac--**

...typical of Christ as **Son of Promise** (Gen. 15:4; 17:16; 18:10; born Gen. 21:2).

(See Matthew 1:20-25; Isaiah 9:6-7).

...typical of **the church as composed of the spiritual children of Abraham** (Gal. 4:28).

...typical of Christ the Son "**obedient unto death**" (Gen. 22:1-10; Phil. 2:5-8)

...typical of Christ as **the Bridegroom** of a called-out bride (see Gen. 24).

Note: "church" (Gk. *ekklesia*, from a verb meaning to *call out*.)

**Rebekah** is a type of the church, the *ecclesia*, the called-out bride of Christ (See Genesis 24:4; Eph. 5:25-320.)

Israel is also a type of the church--*called out* of Egypt and assembled in the wilderness (see Acts 7:38/KJV).

**Isaac**--typical of the new nature of the believer as "born after the Spirit (see Gal. 4:28-29).

**Isaac--picture of rapture** (from Jesus' point of view; see also Song 6:10)

It is natural that we look at the Rapture from the viewpoint of our expectations: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thess. 4:16).

But the Lord looks at it from His side. He will be calling His own. When the church comes into His presence, the angelic hosts will see one of the greatest sights that will be beheld in all of eternity. This will be the most thrilling event for us and for Him, too. Then they will say about the church,

*Who is this that appears like the dawn,*

*fair as the moon, bright as the sun,*

*majestic as the stars in procession?* (Song 6:10)

**This same union of Christ and the church is pictured for us in the lives of Isaac and Rebekah.** Isaac was walking in the field when he looked up and saw the caravan of camels coming. Rebekah was on one of the camels in that caravan. She got off the camel and came to meet her bridegroom, a picture of the time when you and I will go into the presence of the Lord Jesus.

**Mount Moriah.** (See Genesis 22:2; cf. 2 Chronicles 3:1; 2 Samuel 24.)

Jesus died in Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah, at Passover.

He had to.

The pictures and prophecies of the Old Testament foretold that the Lamb of God must die for the sins of the people in Jerusalem, on a ridge called Moriah which cuts through the city; the same ridge where Abraham had enacted the prophetic picture of the cross when told to sacrifice Isaac, his son.

And it had to be at a specific spot on Moriah--on the threshing floor of Araunah, which God had directed David to purchase, so that the Temple could be built there;

right where the ultimate altar would be built, from just two beams of wood.

**Genesis 22: The sacrifice stayed by substitution--**(see 2 Samuel 24:21, 25)

**Isaac**--a type of Christ "obedient unto death" (Phil. 2:5-8)

**Abraham**--a type of the Father, "who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all (Romans 8:32; John 3:16).

**the ram**--a type of substitutionary sacrifice: Christ offered as a burnt offering in our stead (Hebrews 10:5-10).

**Resurrection.**

How could Abraham do such a thing?

In a word, "Faith."

His faith was in the LORD's goodness...

Abraham, too, *found grace in the eyes of the LORD* (see Gen. 6:8).

His faith was in the LORD's power to **resurrect**: see Hebrews 11:17-19; note that the expression "in a figure" confirms the intended typology.

**The unnamed servant** of Genesis 24: **The advance Man.**

The Holy Spirit moves over the surface of a dark, broken world today, preparing the soil for the seed. See Genesis 1:2; John 16:8.

**The unnamed servant...**

**...typical of the Holy Spirit**, Who never shines a light on Himself (John 16:13-14), but goes forth in order to procure a bride for the Son of promise.

...is typical of the Spirit as enriching the bride with the bridegroom's gifts (1 Cor. 12:7-11).

...typical of the Spirit as bringing the bride to the meeting with the bridegroom (Acts 13:4; 16:6-8).

**Jacob is us.**

Jacob was a person whose faults are catalogued for chapter after chapter in God's book.

However, in chapter 11 of Hebrews we find Jacob listed in the Hall Faith. And you can read-- at the end of his life as he's blessing the children-- how he's changed. (Gen. 47:9; 48:15-16)

Remember he grappled, and then he held on; he was blessed in the holding on. And then he was made to yield—because it wasn't within him to yield, but God blessed him with an injury which made him learn to yield.

There in Heb. 11:21 we see a touching scene—where Jacob is leaning on the top of his staff. Why?—because he's crippled. God crippled him to bless him; bad for good.

Jacob was Rebekah's favorite—and because of their conspiracy to deceive Isaac, Jacob was forced to leave under threat from Esau. And she never saw him again:

He wasn't Momma's only boy, but her favorite one, it seems.

She began to cry as he said goodbye, saddled to their schemes.

Look at 27:12, 13: *Upon me be thy curse, my son.*

There followed for a short while some sunny days. Jacob worked seven years that he might marry Rachel, but the years seemed but a few days to him, he loved her so.

Then it grows dark again. He watched Rachel die giving birth to little Benjamin. She died on the way to Bethlehem, when she delivered the son of her sorrow--the son of his right hand, his strength.

He was so attached to this little one that his life was said to be bound up in the life of the lad.

He had another favorite—Joseph, Rachel's other son. But he had lost the child long ago. In his heart he had lost the child. He must have often wondered about him over the years. But he had to tuck his sorrow away, like people do.

But can you imagine his kids not telling him as they watched him grieve, not telling him that they had dipped Joseph's coat in goat's blood to deceive him—just as he'd deceived his father with the skins of a goat.

What we're dealing with here is a God who has gone to great lengths to show us that if Jacob can end up in the hall of faith, so can you, & so can I. He Who saved Jacob—*the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob* (Mat. 22:32)—can save you, & me.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Sin causes separation.**

No need to get theological; sin causes separation.

*The wages of sin is separation* is a valid spiritual extrapolation of Romans 6:23.

**Sin causes separation.**

Divorce isn't sin; it's the consequence of sin.

Hell isn't sin. Sin caused it.

The sin's inside the sinner and the sinner's inside hell. Hell is just a wall; *a great gulf fixed.*

God doesn't like walls, compartments, cubicles or any other means of separation:

Trinity is one.

Marriage is one.

Church is one.

Sin built the tabernacle.

Sin built the temple.

Sin hung the curtain.

**Jesus ripped the curtain.** (See Ephesians 2:13-16)

From last week: The opposite of life is hell.

Just so, **the opposite of sin is reunion** (reconciliation).

What do we get when we get the righteousness of God? We get reunion.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Out of Jacob's fault-ridden family came a fault-ridden nation that brought forth, in the fullness of time, a faultless Jesus.**

"I'm not going to church. There are too many hypocrites"

God works with what he's got to work with. Left with only flawed people, He makes good out of bad. (Gen 50:20)

Who can say what he's doing with the "hypocrites" of our day?

**The Bible introduces us to ourselves before it introduces us to Jesus.** See John 2:25.

One of the great truths of the Bible is how absolutely truthful it is about me. It knows me better than I know myself. It provides no place to hide from myself, from who I really am. Jacob is us.

After he dissected me, then I trusted His Word about Jesus.

I got no farther than Jacob and knew God knew me--better than I cared to know myself. Meeting me on ground I knew, painting me more realistically than I cared to paint myself, gave the Bible credence in matters more important than me.

**A believer has two natures within him, the new nature and the old nature. They are opposed to each other. Esau pictures the flesh, the old nature, and Jacob pictures the spirit, the new nature.**

*For the flesh lusts [wars] against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that you cannot do the things that you would." (Gal 5:17)*  
(God has given to the human race, a lost race, an opportunity to be delivered from the guilt of sins (not the nature of sin; you and I will have that old sin nature throughout our lives--until the body (flesh) is renewed.)

**Jacob's ladder.**

*And he dreamed, and behold, there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it! Genesis 28:12*

*"I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." John 1:51*

Jesus is the connection and conveyance between man and God; the commerce between heaven and earth will be upon him. The transaction at the cross, and the ongoing transaction in prayer are through him. He is the covenant; he's where the deal goes down.

Jacob's story is the closest the Old Testament comes to a conversion story. There are other conversions, but we don't know the stories behind them to the extent we know Jacob's story.

Jacob's story is the single richest repository of humor in the Bible.

Much of the humor stems from Jacob's role as the trickster. When he gets together with Uncle Laban, a trickster at least the equal to Jacob, the comedy ensues. Jacob gets his comic comeuppance.

Comedy occupies the space between who we are and who we could/should be. It is related to the fall of man, as in the expression, "I didn't know whether to laugh or cry."

**New person, new name.**

In the ancient world, a name captured a person's identity

"Grabby"--Jacob = "supplanter" or "he grabs the heel"; Israel = "struggles with God"

Paul, Peter, Gideon, Abraham, Sarah, Jacob--all had names changed by God, reflecting an encounter with him.

You're not the same person you were: 2 Cor. 5:17.

Name changes will be standard procedure in heaven. See Rev. 2:17; Isaiah 62:2; 56:15

**"Israel," a man and a country.** Jacob was devious, greedy, and grasping, and he went into exile for it. Yet he had an eagerness to meet God and be blessed by him.

Though Jacob went into exile, as would Israel, he came back with God's blessing on his future--as would Israel.

**The chickens come home to roost.**

Uncle Laban tricked Jacob, pretending the older daughter was the younger, just as Jacob had tricked Isaac, pretending to be the older brother. (29:25; cf. Gal. 6:7; cf. Psalm 7:15)

**Jacob begins to change.** (32:10)

**If it's break your leg He must, it's break your leg He will.**

God will take your legs—or your “life” out from under you in order to save your soul. (32:25)

**Bethlehem.** (32:19)

(Note this place. There will come a night when the hopes and fears of all the years will meet on the dark streets of this little town.)

David was born there. Jesus was born there. Ruth lived there. Rachel died there, giving birth to Benjamin. God literal shone a spotlight on this place.

**Jacob begins to lead:**

*“Put away your strange gods.”* (35:2)

**Favoritism.** (37:3-4)

Jacob should have known about the troubles of favoritism—Isaac's favorite was Esau.

**The old “goat trick.”** (37:31)

Jacob is deceived in the very same way he and Rebekah deceived Isaac (with a goat.)

**Jacob has changed.** (47:9; 48:15-16)

No longer boastful about himself: *Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been.*

His only boast is of his Redeemer:

*The God who fed me all my life long unto this day, The Angel which redeemed me from all evil...*

**When we pray the promises of God, faith begins to soar.**

Jacob takes the promises given to him and lifts them back to the Lord in prayer:

Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me and the mother with the children.

**For You said,** 'I will surely treat you well, and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.' " (Gen 32:11-12; cf. Hebrews 11:6)

Note well: This is not "name it and claim it;" we do not deal with God on that basis. This is "believe it and receive it" -- the basis on which we relate to God.

**Faith turns promises into prophecies.**

Make God a prophet today! (See 2 Peter 1:4.)

George Mueller, the great prayer warrior of the last century, who founded scores of orphanages and funded them solely through prayer said this: “I take the promises of the Word and I argue with the Lord—not in order to convince God, but to convince myself.” You see, as we repeat the promises God has so graciously given to us regarding provision, health, peace, salvation, understanding, guidance, direction, we are reminded of them ourselves. That’s why we come to Bible study. That’s why we take in the Scriptures. **The Word is our bank account—and we’re far, far richer than we think.**

**Slow degrees of salvation.** (See 2 Corinthians 3:18)

At Bethel, Jacob was saved.

Running away from Esau, Jacob found himself in the middle of nowhere at a place called Luz, where God appeared to him in a dream. Realizing God was indeed with him, Jacob changed the name of Luz to Bethel, from “Separation” to “House of God,” and became a believer at that point (Genesis 28).

But at Peniel, on the other side of the brook Jabbok, he will be sanctified, for a deep work is about to take place in his heart:

*Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. (Gen. 32:24)*

This Man was Jesus Christ.

*And when he saw that he prevailed not against him...*

In Jacob, the Lord found one who put up a good fight, one who didn’t give up.

*... he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob’s thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.*

Jacob’s hip is dislocated—which means he will no longer be able to do something he’s relied on for years: He’ll no longer be able to run.

*And he said, Let me go, for the day breaks. And he said, I will not let you go, except you bless me.*

Even though he was pinned to the ground in pain, Jacob innately, intuitively understood he deeply, desperately needed to be blessed.

*And he said unto him, What is your name?...*

The Lord knew Jacob’s name, and now He’s giving Jacob an opportunity to be reminded of it as well. You see, years earlier, his dad had asked him, “Who are you?”

“I am Esau,” Jacob had answered (Genesis 27:19).

It’s as if here, the Lord is saying, “Let’s try it again, Jacob. What is your name?”

*... And he said, Jacob.*

“Jacob. Heel Snatcher. One who trips people up, one who is a conniver, a con man, a scoundrel—that’s who I am.”

*... And he said, Your name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel...*

No sooner does Jacob confess and come clean regarding his true identity than the Lord changes his name entirely—from Jacob to Israel, from “Heel Snatcher” to “Struggles with God.”

*... for as a prince you have power with God and with men, and have prevailed.*

“When did I prevail?” Jacob must have wondered.

And God would answer, “It was when you were broken, when you were pinned by Me, when you were weeping, but wouldn’t let go of Me, when you said, ‘I can’t go through another day without You’—that’s when you prevailed.”

From Hosea's commentary on this wrestling match, we gain further insight...  
*He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God: Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him.* (Hosea 12:3, 4)

When did Jacob have power and prevail?

When he "wept and made supplication." In other words, although Jacob was the one who said, "*I will not let you go except you bless me,*" Jacob was the one who was weeping; Jacob was the one who was pinned. Even though he was weeping, even though he was "losing" the match, even though he was pinned to the ground in pain, nonetheless Jacob didn't give up.

*And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray, your name. And he said, Why is it that you ask after my name? And he blessed him there.*

"You know who I AM, Jacob. Unlike you, My name doesn't change—for I am the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

*And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And as he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.*

#### **Esau.**

Even though he had reason to be angry, Esau does not hold a grudge against Jacob. Furthermore, he only accepted Jacob's gift when pressed. Finally, he offered to accompany Jacob on his way as a means of protection for Jacob and his family. Thus, Esau would be considered refined and polished in our society. Yet the Bible says he is a picture of the flesh--doomed and damned, with no place to repent:

*Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For you know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.* (Hebrews 12:16, 17)

The difference between Esau and Jacob is that Esau is a self-made man. He has no need of grace. He does not need to look outside of himself. Jacob has lots of problems, so he looks outside of himself--outside of his own strength, his own "goodness"--for the blessing, the answer. Jacob found grace outside of himself: He, like Noah, *found grace in the eyes of the LORD.* (When you wrestle with a person, you get closer to his eyes than anything outside of a kiss.) Jacob is a picture of those who are spiritually in need: *Blessed are the poor in spirit. Esau has a self-satisfied spirit.*

**Esau is Edom.**

*Now this is the genealogy of Esau, who is Edom. (Genesis 36:1)*

*So Esau dwelt in Mount Seir. Esau is Edom. (Genesis 36:8)*

*These were the sons of Esau, who is Edom. (Genesis 36:19)*

God sees the end from the beginning.

That's how he sees you--conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

Pre-destination means that God sees through time (that's the "pre" part) to the essential (that's the destiny part. It means he sees you "there" before you arrive.

God says something which we might think is out of his character:

*"Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated." (Malachi 1:2-3; Romans 9:13)*

What God sees is what Esau will become: Edom.

Let the consequences of the spirit of Esau (the natural man, the self-made man) play themselves out and you have Edom.

Let the consequences of Jacob (the poor in spirit, needy of God, seeking the blessing of God) play themselves out and you have Israel.

Thus Esau is Edom. **Thus Jacob is Israel:**

And He said, *"Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel\*"; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed." (Genesis 32:28)*

*\*he struggles with God (NIV note)*

*\*literally, Prince with God (NKJV note)*

Typically, you are not Israel. Nor are you Edom.

**You--the church--are, typically, Rebekah--**bride-to-be (for now, betrothed; i.e. Mary) of the son of promise, with the two natures struggling within:

*But the children struggled together within her; and she said, "If all is well, why am I like this?"*

*So she went to inquire of the Lord. (Genesis 25:22)*

**But the old nature (Esau) will serve the younger:**

And the Lord said to her: *"Two nations are in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; One people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger." (Genesis 25:23)*

**The new nature (the life of Christ by the Spirit) is in ascendancy.** This is true within the individual believer (depicted in Jacob's old nature v. Jacob's re-born nature) and within the wider world (depicted in Jacob v. Esau / Israel v. Edom).

**This is, finally, pictured in the time of Christ:** in Jesus of Nazareth, in the line of Judah; and in Herod, the Idumaeen, the Edomite, in the line of Esau.

When a warning came to Jesus to flee because Herod would kill him, He said, *"Go and tell that fox..." (Luke 13:32).* When He was finally brought before Herod for judgment, He would not deign to speak a word to Herod. Such a far cry from Jacob groveling before Esau (Gen. 33:3).

The younger (born again, after the old nature had been born) will supplant the old nature.

Our old nature, noted John the Baptist, *will become less and less*, while the re-born nature, the Spirit of Christ, will become *greater and greater*. Note that this is by degrees. See 2 Corinthians 3:18--and don't get discouraged if it's by slow degrees. See Prov. 4:18; Rom 1:17; 2 Cor. 2:16; Psalm 84:7.

*Of the increase...there will be no end... (Isaiah 9:2-7)*

*for he gives the Spirit without measure.. (John 3:34)*  
*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us. (Ephesians 3:20)*

**Esau desired God's blessing, but he did not want God:**

*For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears. (Hebrews 12:17)*  
Her sought "it," not God.

The well-meaning godless will comprise much of the population of hell.

The prevailing nature is Jacob's, which Jesus noted at Peniel (Gen. 32:28):

*And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; [60] for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed." (Genesis 32:28)*

**He prevailed in prayer....**

For this Bible student, the greatest picture of prayer (outside of Gethsemane) in scripture is the wrestling at Peniel (literally, *Face of God*) at the ford of the Jabbock:

And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." (Genesis 32:30)

**Prayer is relational, above all else.**

Prayer consists of holding on to the Blessor. The blessing will not emanate from our strategy nor our eloquence. The blessing is the Blessor.

**Prayer isn't pretty.**

Prayer is the grunt work of the spiritual life. Like football, the battle is won or lost "in the trenches."

**Ask away.**

The modern teaching that prayer should not be a "laundry list" does not mean that prayer should not include supplication! We've gone too far the other way, I fear; so don't throw out "the list!" Ask away!--

*So I say to you, **Ask and keep on asking** and it shall be given you; seek and keep on seeking and you shall find; knock and keep on knocking and the door shall be opened to you. (Luke 11:9/AMP--"present participles in present imperative")*

*Teach us **to** pray.* (see Luke 11:1)

To pray is to learn how.

**Pray first, work later.**

When pressed for time, the natural man will work first and pray later. The spiritual man, counter-intuitively, will pray first.

**Wrestle until you get a decision.**

Flat-out persistence and tenacity:

*And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? (Matthew 26:40)*

**Benjamin: One life bound up in another.** (44:30; cf. 1 Sam 25:29; Gal 2:20)

**Judah: "I'll take his place, Dad."** (43:8-9; see also 44:32-33; cf. Rev. 5:5)

Judah's sacrificial offer to be a substitute—as a guarantee for Benjamin's life—mirrors the actual sacrifice made by Judah's descendant, the "Lion Of Judah."

**Jacob has changed.** (47:9; 48:15-16)

No longer boastful about himself: *Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been.*

His only boast is of his Redeemer:

*The God who fed me all my life long unto this day, The Angel which redeemed me from all evil...*

More on the Angel which redeemed Jacob...

**The preincarnate Christ.**

(32:24; c. Hosea 12:1-5)

## **The Angel of the Lord**

### **Angel of the Lord**

Genesis 16: 7,13

Genesis 48:15-16

Exodus 3:2-14

Exodus 23:20-23

Joshua 5:13-15

Judges 13:15-18

Isaiah 63:9

### **Activity or attribute**

Called "LORD"

called "God"

"I AM"

Sent from God

Commander of the Lord's army

Name is "Wonderful"

Redeemed his own

### **Jesus**

John 20:28

Hebrews 1:8

John 8:58

John 5:30; 6:38

Rev. 19:1-14

Isaiah 9:6

Ephesians 5:25

When the "angel of the LORD" appears in the Bible, he is identified with God and yet distinguished from him. He is also referred to as "the angel of his presence" (Isaiah 63:9). The same statements that are made about the nature, character, mission, and activities of the angel of the Lord are stated of Jesus. The "angel of the Lord" is thought by many to be God the Son, appearing in human history before Jesus came to earth as a man.

This particular angel, as distinguished in scripture from all others, is often referred to in the O.T. (Gen. 16:9; 22:11; 48:16; Ex. 3:2; 14:9; Num. 22:22; Jud. 2:4; 6:11; 13:3; 2 Kgs. 19:35; Is. 63:9; Zec. 1:12; 12:8)

...Gen. 31:11-13: "I am the God of Bethel."

...Exo. 3:2-6: "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham."

Divine attributes are ascribed to this angel. He said to Hagar, "I will surely multiply your offspring..." (Gen. 16:10) and Hagar spoke of him as "the God who sees" (16:13). Jacob referred to him as "the angel who has redeemed me from all evil" (48:16). The place where this angel appeared was holy ground and he was to be worshiped (Ex. 3:5-6), whereas worship is sternly forbidden in the case of ordinary angels (Rev. 22:8-9). The angel of the LORD was the keeper of Israel, and his voice had to be obeyed, for the name of God was in him (Ex. 23:20-23).

In light of N. T. Revelation, this O. T. angel may properly be identified with the preincarnate Son of God. In Judges 13:18 the angel referred to his name as "wonderful" and Isaiah 9:6 gives this name to the predicted Messiah of Israel. Malachi affirmed that "the Lord" who "would suddenly come to his temple" would also be the messenger [angel] of the covenant" (3:1).

The identification of this angel with Jesus harmonizes with His distinctive function in relation to the Godhead, for He is the eternal Word through whom the invisible God speaks and manifests Himself (John 1:1, 18). --Scofield Study Bible

**Joseph—a type of Christ**

<b><u>Joseph</u></b>	<b><u>Parallels</u></b>	<b><u>Jesus</u></b>
37:2	A shepherd of his father's sheep	John 10:11, 27-29
37:3	His father loved him dearly	Matt. 3:17
37:4	Hated by his brothers	John 7:4,5
37: 13,14	Sent by father to seek his brothers	Heb. 2:11
37:20	Others plotted to harm him	John 11:53
37:23	Robes taken from them	John 19:23,24
37:26	Taken to Egypt	Matt. 2:14,15
37:28	Sold, by his own, for the price of a slave	Matt. 26:15
39:7	Tempted	Matt. 4:1
39:16-18	Falsely accused	Matt 26:59-60
39:20	Bound in chains	Matt. 27:2
40:2,3	Placed with two other prisoners (one who was saved, one lost)	Luke 23:32
41:41	Exalted after suffering	Philemon 2: 9-11
41:46	30 years old at beginning of public recognition	Luke 3:23
42:24; 45:2,14,15; 46:29	Both wept	John 11:35
45:1-15	Forgave those who wronged them	Luke 23:34
45:7	Saved their nation	Matt. 1:21
41:1-57	Became a blessing among the Gentiles	Acts 15:14
45:1-15	Reconciled with their brothers & exalted them	Rom. 11:1, 15, 25-26
50:20	What men did to hurt them, God turned to good	1 Cor. 2:7,8

**Also...**

\*Miraculous births; \*Coat of many colors set him apart; Christ separate from sinners; \*Joseph ruled over brethren; \*Christ presented Himself as Messiah and was ridiculed; \*Both raised out of the pit (grave); \*Both mocked; \*Delivered to the Gentiles; \*"Numbered with the transgressors;" \*Seemingly died (or so his father thought) and was "brought to life" again as a triumphant king instead of a suffering servant. \*Both had gentile "brides."

**God never appeared to Joseph.**

But His leading and shaping hand is more in evidence in Joseph's life than anyone else in Genesis, many of whom God appeared to. In fact, there is no person in the Old Testament in whose life the purpose of God is more clearly seen.

This should be an encouragement to every child of God. None of God's children today have ever had a direct revelation from God. When the Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us, God's expression to our age was finished, complete. It is for our encouragement that God did not appear to Joseph directly because we can still know that He is leading and directing us.

**The butler didn't do it. (40:23)**

If the butler had helped Joseph out of prison, he would not have been around to interpret Pharaoh's dream.

**He will reveal Himself to Israel.**

When Jesus returns a second time, He will reveal Himself to Israel, His brethren—as did Joseph, who was handed over to his captives, by his own.  
(43:31; 45:3; cf. Zechariah 12:10, 13:6; Luke 24:35)

**Bad for good. (50:20; cf. Rom. 8:28)**

Joseph is the Old Testament example of Romans 8:28:

*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

**(Joseph will return next week)**

**Above all, the story of Joseph is about God working his will through the everyday events of life.**

There are no miracles here. God does not suspend his natural laws to make things happen. God's hidden hand arranges everything without show or explanation or violating the nature of things. See Gen 45:7,8. "**Providence**" is the hand of God in the glove of human events. See Psalm 77:19-20.

**God is not just a God of the extraordinary, but a God of the ordinary as well.**

His power and infinitude take the good and evil actions of Joseph's family, of Pharaoh and his servants, and use their actions for good (Gen. 50:20). God **providentially** brings about Joseph's rejection so that Joseph might ultimately be used to effect his people's salvation.

There is probably no one in the entire Old Testament who is more closely a type of the Lord Jesus Christ than is Joseph; however, he is never spoken of as a type in Scripture.

(Oddly enough, the most overtly providential book in scripture--Esther--never mentions the name of God and is never mentioned in the New Testament. There is not even a casual reference to it.

The Bible student is left to conclude that, to God, it goes without saying that God's hand is in everything; that it is so self-evident to the Spirit, the author of scripture, that it would be condescending to have to point out the direct typological correspondence between the life of Joseph and the life of Christ; that it would be condescending to have to point out the fingerprints of God all over the books of Esther and Ruth. (Ruth is mentioned only in genealogy in the New Testament.)

If God is blind (that's the hypothetical "if," God! See Gen 16:13, below!) then He is only blind to how blind we are.

**"There are no coincidences."**

Shellster holds this view. I resist it as I look ahead.

But as I look back, she is right and getting righter!

Our vision backward gives us just a dim inkling of God's vision forwards! God's vision is not impeded by time; nor is it distorted by (culturally- or personally-generated) lies; nor is it clouded by unbelief. God sees forward in time better than we see backward in time. (Consider the study of "history;" The Bible's prophecies are pure vision, whereas history is tainted by self-interest and vested interests. The Bible's prophecies are truer than textbook history.)

**"God Who sees me."** (Genesis 16. Note that 'the angel of the LORD' is the LORD!--see v.13)

(As far as I know) the Egyptian wife of Abraham, Hagar, is the only person in scripture who gives God a name. (God in every other instance names Himself). Outside of LORD (*Jehovah/Yahweh*)--God's all-encompassing Name; and *Jesus*--God's incarnate Name, this is my favorite name of God.

(Note: in Matthew 1:21, Jesus is the LORD (Jehovah/Yahweh) who saves.

At the end of this day, you will look back and see that he has led you.

So, why not look forward to it!

**Let's grow God!** (Providence is the prettiest word.)

Jesus does not get bigger--because Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Our cognizance of Him grows. Then we enter tomorrow with a bigger Jesus!

Our righteousness in Christ, our sonship, and our inheritance does not get bigger, having been fulfilled by Jesus already. What grows is our cognizance of it, our recognition of it. Then we enter tomorrow more like Jesus, even though he has already blessed us with every spiritual blessing...!

(Read Ephesians chapter 1 until your eyes ache. You will begin to get a glimmer of providence! Your eye-ache will go away.)

**Providence.**

Providence is the means by which God directs all things--animate and inanimate, seen and unseen, good and evil, toward a worthy purpose. See Psalm 103:19. See Ephesians 1:11.

**Creation, preservation, and providence** are to be understood in their inter-relation, their interplay with each other. It's more like "play" than "relation"--in the sense that the instruments play together to form a symphony. Think of providence in artistic terms, instead of technical or clinical or even theological terms.

Providence is God Being Who He Is Because He Can! (*El-Shaddai*--God Almighty or God All-Sufficient--see Genesis 17:1 and the book of Job.)

**Creation**--Hebrews 11:3

**Preservation**--Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 1:17

**Providence**--Psalm 77:19

God by His fiat word spoke the universe into existence. We understand creation by faith or we understand it not at all. See Hebrews 11:3.

Christ, the Word, is not only the means of creation, but He is the means by which we comprehend creation; see Psalm 36:9: For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

Q. How does light create light?

A. We can't answer that with natural eyes. We can't see tomorrow with natural eyes, let alone that far back.

Begin to exercise eyes of faith to answer your own question; see Heb. 11:3. We can only see light by His light. That means that the physics of light is only truly apprehended by the light of faith!

Q. How do I begin to exercise eyes of faith?

A. Go to Bible class! Stand in the Rain! Endeavor to see biblically. By His Word He also creates faith (Rom 10:17). The creation of faith is ongoing (Romans 1:16-17).

He is light; he by His Word created light; He is even how we perceive what he made and who He is. He is the all in all. (1 Corinthians 15:28)

He is cause and cognizance; in between is truth (what is). This begins to give us a glimmer of his all-pervasive providence. His name, LORD (Jehovah/Yahweh)--which means I AM THAT I AM--also gives us a glimpse of all-pervasive providence.

By His redemptive heart, every problem is its own solution. Genesis 50:20; Romans 8:28.

He made creation--the stars and the galaxies, every grain of sand and every blade of grass--with his fingers (Psalm 8:3); with one hand tied behind his back.

He made redemption with His heart. Redemption (making good out of bad) is His all-encompassing creation. It took both hands nailed to a cross.

It is by His Word that we hear. Spiritual ears are "ears to hear."

See Romans 10:17.

It is by His word that we see. Psalm 119:105.

### **Full circle.**

Jacob's sons used their brother's clothing and the blood of a slain goat to deceive Jacob--just as Jacob had long ago deceived his own father Isaac with his brother's clothing and the skin of a slain goat (cf. Gen. 27:9-17). Jacob's deceit had come full circle.

### **Victimhood.**

Joseph had ample reason for self-pity, rage, anger with God, and revenge. He had immense reasons to become enslaved to victimhood. But there is not a "poor me" hint anywhere in the entire Genesis account of Joseph. Though enslaved, Joseph chose to reject the slavery of self-pity and victimhood.

### **How and Why?**

Like his great-grandfather Abraham, he believed the bare word of God (cf. Gen. 15:6). He believed the promise handed down from Abraham, Isaac, and his father Jacob.

### **Big God.**

Second, he had an immense view of God and thus reasoned that God was doing his will throughout the inscrutable drama and convolutions of his enslavement in Egypt.

### **Joseph dwarfs the monuments.**

Never once, whether in prosperity or adversity, had Joseph doubted God. Ripped out of his house at 17, hauled down to Egypt, one thing after another happening to him--and yet he believed God was with him. He had sensed and appropriated God's presence in every circumstance. He dwarfed the monuments of the Nile. **You are as big as your perception of Jesus.**

### **Amongst the garbage and the flowers.**

Joseph's life teaches us that life is full of inequities and unfairness and tragedies. But it also teaches us that we have a great God who works amidst the rich compost of human life to do his will.

### **Rest.**

We must rest everything on the awesome God of the Bible, believing that the awesome God of Genesis *is, and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him* (Hebrews 11:6). Biblical rest doesn't imply weightlessness. It doesn't mean that problems have no weight. It means we've shifted the weight to stronger shoulders than our own: We rest the weight on Jesus. (See Matthew 11:28-30.)

### ***Because The LORD was with him.***

Joseph was successful because the LORD was "with" him. See the incident with Potiphar's wife: the story is bracketed by the reason for Joseph's success in 39:2, 21, 23. The centerpiece of the story is God, who was present and working on Joseph's behalf. The story of your life, when seen from a distance, will follow this same pattern. We are recipients of the initiatives of God. **Your biography won't be about you.**

***The LORD was with Joseph.*** (Gen, 39:2)

### **Your Bible says the same about you.**

*All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).* (Matthew 1:22-23)

*And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.* (Matthew 28:20)

### **God-reflexed.**

As soon as the cupbearer and baker stated their plights, Joseph referenced God: *Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell them to me.* (Gen. 40:8)

We all know that what people do in reflex is very revealing of what is within. Turning to God was the habit of his mind (cf. 39:9; 41:16, 51, 52; 45:8).

In this, Joseph also foreshadowed the way Christ himself would live.

### **An in-your-face to the prevailing culture.**

*"Do not interpretations belong to God?"* (40:8) was an in-your-face polemic to the idolatrous culture of Egypt. Interpretation was not a pseudo-science of the specialists with their dream books, but a gift that only God can give. The events of the future lay in Yahweh's power.

### **Disappointment.**

Now that the cupbearer was back in Pharaoh's good graces, he would certainly tell him about Joseph!

But it did not happen: *Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.* (40:23)

A year passed, and then another. The experience of delay is common to the lives of God's greats. Moses' 40 years of preparation in the desert; David's anointing as a boy, and then the long years of delay in the fields of Judea, then the flight from Saul, hiding in the caves...

Joseph's life teaches us that disappointments are essential to spiritual growth because they demand faith and resting all hope upon God.

### **Honed to a redemptive edge, an instrument in the hand of God.**

The LORD was with him, and that reality dominated his life. He'd resisted temptation, disillusionment and victimhood because he knew God was with him.

His greatest successes were not at the top, but in the pit in Egypt.

Joseph's whole being had undergone the renovating grace of God. He had grown to be a man sensitive to others. His soul was God-reflexed; it was to God he instinctively turned.

Though life was difficult those long years in the pit, he sent his delays and disappointments up to God.

And God used disappointment to polish and hone Joseph to a fine redemptive edge, a fine sword in the hand of God.

### **The text in the subtext of the context of the story of a life.**

God could have conveyed these truths about Joseph's preparation by simply listing them. But instead he has chosen to illustrate them in the fabric and context of a human life--so that, life to life, it can be impressed upon our lives.

### **Pot, don't resist the Potter.**

May we **invite** God's shaping hand upon our lives. Something wonderful is in the making:

*For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.* (Jeremiah 29:11)

Genesis wasn't about Abraham and Joseph.  
Exodus isn't about Moses and Aaron and Israel.

**The Big Picture:**

The Bible is the story of redemptive history, which means the Bible is the Story of the Redeemer.

The Bible is **story**.

It is one big story revolving around one big character. Until taught and seen that way, it is never understood.

Played out in narrative form--plot and character--it enables sentient beings to see faith (Abraham) and deliverance/rescue/salvation (Moses) and hope (Joseph) and love (Jesus/the cross).

Faith is never shown as a concept. It is weight-bearing, something we rest our weight upon.

Hope is never shown as a concept. Hope is a person.

Redemption isn't a theory. It's a transaction, paid for in blood.

The incarnation shows the necessity of story. God is Spirit. As such, I have less of a chance of relating to him than my dog has of understanding the Stand in the Rain blog. The incarnation brings the central character onto the stage, though he had been referred to throughout the play by the other supporting actors, and his Spirit infuses every scene.

We are now in the very same position that Old Testament characters were in. The difference is only that they awaited his first coming, while we await his second coming. We are now the supporting actors, and his Spirit infuses us.

In the big picture, the central character is waiting in the wings.

Genesis: *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.*

(John 8:56)

Exodus: *Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.*

*For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?* (John 5:45-47; cf. John 12:41)

Why the odd interplay between Moses and Aaron:

Aaron is Moses' prophet, which means he speaks for Moses. (See Exodus 7:1)

**Aaron is us.**

Aaron, then, is in the position of the church today. We speak God's words as his prophet.

**Instrumentality.**

Aaron's staff is an instrument, expressing and effecting God's will.

We will see this arrangement before Pentecost when the disciples are sent out to preach.

After Pentecost, we will see instrumentality in the church. The gifts of the church are the instruments through which God effects salvation.

Today, you are an instrument of redemption in the time and place God has put you.

**What Moses wasn't.**

Moses spoke God's Word. Jesus, as God, **spoke his own Word**:

*You have heard that it was said...but I say to you... (Matthew 5:21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43).*

Jesus, as the Word made flesh, **lived his own Word:**

*Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. (Matthew 5:17)*

### **What the church isn't.**

The church is not Moses. No one in the church plays a leading role.

The church is Aaron.

The people were baptized (identified) into Moses:

Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. (1 Corinthians 10:1-2)

The church is baptized (identified) into Christ:

(1 Cor. 12:13 / Gal. 3:27)

Until we see the Bible as a cohesive story coalescing around a central character, we will never understand the Bible and we will never begin to understand God.

Nature reveals God's hand.

The Bible reveals God's heart.

There is no gospel in nature. The gospel is only revealed in God's Word:

*For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)*

### **Ultimately, the gospel is only revealed in the Word made flesh, Christ.**

The law is fulfilled in Christ.

The prophets are fulfilled in Christ.

The genealogies are fulfilled in Christ.

Israel is fulfilled in Christ.

The sacrificial system is fulfilled in Christ:

The tabernacle is a picture of salvation in Christ.

The exiles of Israel and Judah are a picture of life without Christ.

The Word of God is more real and enduring than the world we see:

*Heaven and earth may disappear. But I promise you that not even a period or comma will ever disappear from the Law. Everything written in it must happen. (Matthew 5:18)*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Exodus**

God makes a way: Red Sea

God shows the way: Pillar of cloud and fire through the wilderness

God is the way:

Ten commandments and the sacrificial system pointing to the cross:

**Ten Commandments**--*Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. (Galatians 3:24-25)*

**Sacrificial system:** *Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*

(John 1:29)

### **God to the rescue!**

The people cried out to God. He remembered his promise to Abraham, to set them free. He sent a deliverer to lead them out of Egypt.

Grace:

**I. Deliverance** by blood **from sin** (Passover): "When I see the blood, I will Passover."  
God will see the blood and know that the Lamb died instead of you.

Faith (hyssop) is in something else. Everybody has faith in something. Faith can kill.  
Saving faith applies grace, which is Christ. Grace saves:  
For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God--  
For God so loved the world that He **gave** His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him  
should not perish but have everlasting life.  
(Ephesians 2:8/John 3:16)

What God **gave** saves. Those who believe in him are **the saved**.  
God is the saver, the do-er. We are the receivers.  
God is active in salvation. We are in a passive position:  
Abraham slept while God passed between the pieces.

The trail of blood (Leviticus 17:11)  
Skinned animals for a covering (atonement) in Eden.  
The covenant (God passing between the pieces while Abraham slept).  
The knife poised over Isaac.  
The ram in the thicket (Jehovah-Jireh--"God will himself provide the sacrifice").  
The Passover Lamb's blood applied to the threshold.  
The sacrificial system (the heart of the Mosaic law).  
The scarlet thread of redemption which will mark Rahab's house.

**II. Deliverance by power (Holy Spirit) into the righteousness of God:**

**"There's nothing we can do!"**

In front of them the sea; behind them Pharaoh's army:  
God knows you can't do anything. God will do it for you.  
Trust him. And watch.

**"There's no way out!"**

God will make a way.

God shows the way!  
He led them through the wilderness--pillar of smoke and fire.

God protects and defends. The pillar of smoke moved behind the people and hid them from the Egyptians. (Cf. John 8:1-11)

**Judgment is an ingredient of salvation.**

Plagues and Red Sea: judgment on the world

Passover: Judgment fell on the lamb

The cross: Judgment fell on Jesus.

There is no remission without the shedding of blood (Matthew 26:28; Heb. 9:22) for *the life is in the blood* (Lev. 17:11).

**Judgment always precedes forgiveness.** Only God can forgive sin because only God can provide a worthy sacrifice (himself). See up above where it says, "Judgment is an ingredient of salvation." It's more than just an ingredient; it causes salvation, in a cause and effect relationship. The cause of judgment is salvation.

When the Egyptians tried to follow, the walls of water crashed down on them and swallowed them up.

Many years later, God would make a way where there was no way. God knew the way, and he would show them.

### **Moses, type of Christ the Deliverer**

61; 4; Corinthians 1; Thessalonians 1:

(1) A divinely chosen deliverer 3:7-; 7; 3:

(2) Rejected by Israel he turns to the Gentiles 2:11-; 7; 5; 17-

(3) During his rejection he gains a Gentile bride 2:16-; 12:14-; Corinthians 11; 5:30-

(4) Afterward he again appears as Israel's deliverer, and is accepted 4:29-; 11:14-; 15:14-

(5) Officially, Moses typifies Christ as Prophet 3:22, Advocate; 32:31-; John 2:1,2, Intercessor; 17:1-; 7; and Leader, or King; 33:4; 55; 2; while, in relation to the house of God, he is in contrast with Christ. Moses was faithful as a servant over another's house; Christ as a Son over His own house 3:5,

### What, pray tell, is going on in Chapter 33?

We are told that the Lord speaks to Moses *face to face, as a man speaks to his friend* (33:11).

But then the Lord says to Moses *You cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live* (33:20).

Say what?

**What's going on is Trinity.** There is no contradiction. Moses has no problem with the God who is one, and yet Who is presented as these two Persons. Nor is there a problem with the fact of the Holy Spirit, Who—only two chapters on—is said to equip the people of God, and Who is also stated to be 'the Lord' (Exodus 35:30-31; cf. 36:1). Other helpful references are Nehemiah 9:20; Isaiah 63:9-14; Matthew 28:19; John 5:17,19 and John 10:28-30.

It is a pattern throughout Scripture; there is **the Father** Who has never been seen—Who lives in the heavens above His people; there is **the Son** Who has been seen and Who makes Him known (John 1:18) and comes among His people; there is **the Spirit**, Who is unseen, yet lives within and equips His people. The Trinity is basic to our salvation – for these three Persons in the one Godhead have combined to save us from our sins; in the **will** of the Father, the saving **work** of the Son, and the indwelling **witness** of the Holy Spirit (see also John 14:16, 23-26; Romans 8:16-17).

**Aaron.**

According to the genealogy of Ex. 6:., Aaron was one of the two sons of Amram and Jochebed (the other being Moses) and third in line of descent from Levi (Levi-Kohath-Amram-Aaron). According to Ex. 7:7 he was 3 years older than Moses. Miriam, their sister, was older still, if she is Moses' unnamed 'sister' of Ex. 2:4, 7ff.

**Aaron and his descendants are set apart to serve God as priests.**

All priests of Israel from Aaron forward were Levites. The tribe of Levi consisted of several clans. Only descendants of Aaron could serve as priests. The rest of the Levites assisted with other religious responsibilities.

**Aaron, as Moses' prophet,** speaks Moses' word. (Exodus 7:1)

Aaron is a picture of both priest and prophet. He is not Deliverer.

Moses is a picture of prophet and Deliverer/King. He is not Priest.

It is helpful to remember that the prophet speaks "down"--from God to the people.

The priest speaks "up"-- from the people to God.

Because Jesus was priest, prophet, deliverer-savior and King, it takes both Moses and Aaron to convey different aspects of him. It takes all the brethren in the church (body of Christ) to express Christ.

Jesus was one of us when he died on the cross. This Servant, Son of Man, is seen in the gospels of Mark and Luke, respectively. The Jesus of Mark and Luke is foreshadowed by Aaron. He is of the people.

The Jesus of the Second Coming is depicted in the gospels of Matthew and John as King and Son of God, respectively. He was among the people, then was out of their sight--as Moses was. Upon His return, he will dismantle the idolatries and the power structures of man--as Moses did upon his return to Egypt, as Jesus will at his Second Coming.

Pictorially, we think of Moses on the mountain while we think of Aaron on the plain. We see Jesus as both: he is one of us, while He is one with God.

**Anointed.** (See Leviticus 8.)

Aaron's anointing differed from the anointing of the other priests. The distinction points directly to Jesus as High Priest:

1. Aaron is anointed before the sacrifices are slain, while in the case of the priests the application of blood precedes the anointing. Christ the sinless one required no preparation for receiving the anointing oil, symbol of the Holy Spirit.

(The believer, like the lesser priests, goes to the cross for the application of the blood of Christ before the anointing of the Spirit can occur.)

2. Upon the high priest only was the anointing oil poured. Upon lesser priests it was sprinkled. See John 3:34 and Heb. 1:9 for the typical fulfillment of this pattern in Christ.

**Aaron as a picture of the body of Christ:**

pronounces the Word of God (Exodus 7:1)

appointed priest

anointed (see Psalm 133; Lev. 8:12)

prone to idolatry and threatened by factionalism

re-affirmed by God despite sin

**Brethren.**

Moses and Aaron, as *brothers*--are together representative of the church. (See Psalm 133)  
Furthermore, Moses as leader and Aaron as his prophet are "one" in the sense that the head and the body are one in *the unity of the Spirit*. (Ephesians 4:3; see 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:5).  
We are one with Christ in the same sense: we are not the Head, but we are one with the Head; we are not the Groom, but the Bride is one with the Groom. (Gen. 2:24 and Eph. 5:31-32)

**There is only one High priest.**

Under the Old Covenant, the priest with the highest God-given authority could enter the holiest part of the Temple in order to make sacrifices on behalf of all the Israelites  
Out of all of Israel, one person went onto the Holy of Holies to present the blood of the sacrifice.  
This is a striking picture of One who would die for all.

**Mediator.**

Jesus is the only go-between for us with God.

**Aaron's rod as death:**

The rod linked specifically with Aaron appears first when Moses and Aaron have their first meeting with Pharaoh. On this occasion the rod assumes miraculous powers by being transformed into a serpent when Aaron throws it on the ground, and then swallowing the serpents that had been called forth by the Egyptian magicians' rods (Ex. 7:8-12).

**Evil swallowed up evil.**

Jesus would become sin to defeat sin. (2 Corinthians 5:21; see also John 3:14-15)

**In resurrection, death will be "swallowed up in victory."** (1 Cor. 15:54)

**Aaron's rod as life:**

Following the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram against the authority of Moses and Aaron, Moses collected a rod from the leaders of each of the twelve tribes, plus Aaron's rod for the tribe of Levi. In the evocative account of the biblical narrative, "*On the morrow Moses went into the tent of the testimony; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds*" (Num 17:8 KJV).

Aaron's priesthood had been questioned in the rebellion of Korah, so God Himself will confirm it (Numbers 17:5). Each of the tribe-heads brought a perfectly dead rod; God put life into Aaron's only. Just so, all the authors of religion have died, Christ among them, but only Christ was raised from the dead, and exalted to be a high priest.

**Resurrection:**

The budding of Aaron's rod confirmed his position as priest.  
The resurrection legitimizes our resurrected position in Christ. The resurrection is validation of Christ's work on our behalf.

As both life and death, the rod of Aaron is one of the Bible's most complete pictures of the cross of Jesus Christ.

That the rod was put into effect by one on behalf of another deepens its evocation of the cross to come.

**The final reference to the rod occurs when Moses doomed himself by striking the rock instead of speaking to it (as God had directed him to do).**

The cross at God's direction is the salvation of the world.

The cross at man's (Rome's) direction is just a means of death.

#### **Nadab and Abihu.**

Unauthorized access to God is not recommended!

**God defined precisely one way to approach Him--no matter how offensive or confining we might find that to be.**

*Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them. So fire went out from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord. (10:1; cf. Exodus 4:24-26)*

*And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then **the offense of the cross** has ceased. (Gal. 5:11)*

*...but we preach Christ crucified, **to the Jews a stumbling block** and to the Greeks foolishness (1 Cor. 1:23)*

*He will be as a sanctuary, but **a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense** to both the houses of Israel, as a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. (Isaiah 8:14)*

(If you try to access God through any other way--works, for example--your access is unauthorized, you are a stranger to God ("I never knew you"--Matt. 7:23) and you will die.

**"Strange fire"**--presenting your own sacrifice instead of God's sacrifice--*the Lamb of God* (Christ). See Lev. 10:1/ KJV; "*unauthorized fire*" in NIV and ESV.

#### **Nadab & Abihu / Ananias & Sapphira**

When we come to God, we are coming on his terms; we are not making the arrangements. The holiness of God is set forth at the beginning of the age of law by this incident. The holiness of God is set forth at the beginning of the age of grace by the incident concerning Ananias and Sapphira. This does not mean that a believer in Christ can lose his salvation. Physical death is often a judgment for a child of God; there is a sin unto death (1 John 5:16). But the child of God is not condemned with the world (1 Cor. 11:31-32). These examples in both the Old and New Testaments are examples to believers that *will worship* (Col. 2:23) is detestable to God. The believer must come to God in God's way. The believing sinner must worship God's way.

Nadab and Abihu, brothers of mine, who happened to be around when the holy character of God needed to pronounce an example. They took the heat for screw-ups like me, in order that we wouldn't so soon forget that *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*.

***"That they may know that I am the LORD."***

**Pharaoh**--Told he was a god, God set out to re-educate him.

*Then I will harden Pharaoh's heart, so that he will pursue them; and I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD."*

(Exodus 14:1-4)

**In today's culture**--we've been told that we are gods, taking it upon ourselves to define right and wrong; taking issues of life and death into our own hands. God is no respecter of persons, and he has / will set out to re-educate us. Stay tuned.

**"Harden his heart..."** (Exodus 7:3, etc.)

In order to reveal what was in Pharaoh's heart, God forces his hand. Pharaoh wanted to appear benevolent, but God made Pharaoh's heart firm enough to reveal what was in it. God makes Pharaoh come out with it, so he can no longer say one thing and do something else.

**Every person will be forced to reveal—at judgment—what is really in his/her heart.** When we come into His presence all will be revealed; there will be no camouflage, no double dealing, no speaking with forked tongue.

C. S. Lewis says hell will be locked from the inside. They will be there because they chose to be there. When God hardened Pharaoh's heart, God forced Pharaoh to make the decision that was already in his heart. **He solidified the decision that Pharaoh had already made.** We are experts at fooling ourselves. God hardens our heart so we can't fool ourselves any more.

**He hardened Jesus Christ's heart, who set his face like flint for Jerusalem.** Those of us who have decided to follow Jesus are undergoing solidification, a heart hardening into the heart of the Lion of Judah.

When God is "hard" on Pharaoh, he becomes repentant (see Exodus 10:16). But when God eases up on him, **Pharaoh hardens his own heart** (see Exodus 8:15).

\*\*\*\*\*

He will not display his power unless it will achieve His purpose. Sometimes, as in the case of Pharaoh, God will exhibit His power in order to display the unbelief of the unsaved. The miracles hardened the heart of Pharaoh in the same way that the sun will harden clay, while at the same time it is melting butter. A close reading reveals that Pharaoh started out with a hard heart (Exodus 5:2).

The Word of God is continuously hardening hearts--for better or for worse. Those who will not be saved are getting 'dead-er' each day (*death to death*--2 Cor. 2:16). Those who are being saved are becoming more steadfast in the faith, day by day, as the Word of God hardens their resolve to live like Christ. Even Jesus was hardened (Isaiah 50:7; Luke 9:51; see also Luke 2:52).

The Christian should desire, even pray, that his heart is increasingly "hardened" in the same sense that Daniel *purposed in his heart* (Dan. 1:8) to live a life which pleased God.

\*\*\*\*\*

Jesus' preferred method of teaching was through parables. These brief stories express God's truth in terms of everyday objects and incidents, but they are intelligible only through the working of God's grace to those who are willing to listen. **They are designed so that those who won't hear don't hear:**

*"Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says:  
'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand,  
And seeing you will see and not perceive;  
For the hearts of this people have grown dull.  
Their ears are hard of hearing,  
And their eyes they have closed,  
Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears,  
Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,  
So that I should heal them.'"* (Matthew 13:13-15)

When Jesus spoke the parables, the same word was delivered to every person, but it fell on **different "soils."**

So Jesus' parables tell us **as much about the hearer as about the characters in the story. They reveal who has ears to hear.**

The parables are designed so that if a person wants to understand, **he will.**  
The parables are designed so that if a person does not want to understand, **he won't.**

*He who has ears to hear, let him hear!* (Luke 14:35)

\*\*\*\*\*

**The veil doesn't come off Christ when we study the Bible, the veil comes off of us:**  
*But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away.  
Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts.  
But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed.* (2Corinthians 3:14--16)

\*\*\*\*\*

**Judgment is forward-looking. Its purpose is salvation.**

*Then I will harden Pharaoh's heart, so that he will pursue them; and I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD.*  
(Exodus 14:1-4)

\*\*\*\*\*

Just as the judgments will cause multitudes to turn against God, they will cause other multitudes to turn towards God. The judgments of the Tribulation will have the effect of the sun shining down on clay and wax—one is hardened while one melts.

**The next miracle worker will come from the devil.**

*The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders... (2 Thessalonians 2:9)*

Who will fall for these lying wonders?—

Those who don't stand for something will fall for anything:

*...and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because **they refused to love the truth and so be saved.** For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness. (2 Thes. 2:10-12)*

The person who will not receive the truth is open to believing the lie. God will force that person (as He did when He hardened Pharaoh's heart) into a situation that will reveal what was already in his heart.

**When you think “Joshua,” think “Jesus.”**

Joshua’s name means “Jehovah saves.” The same word in the New Testament is *Jesus*. (See Matthew 1:21)

**The names *Joshua* and *Jesus*** derive from the same Hebrew name, *Yeshua*, which means "The Lord Saves." Both Joshua and Jesus were used by God at different times in history to bring deliverance to His people.

Joshua succeeds Moses and gains the victory Moses could not deliver; Jesus succeeds the Mosaic law and wins the victory over sin and death that we are not able to achieve through law.

**Possession, by faith** is the theme of the book of Joshua.

The resources God promised Joshua are the resources he's given to us:  
God's presence (1:5) and the book of the law (1:8).

**But we've got more:**

1. Old Testament--God is **with some**. New Testament--God is **in all**.

In the book of the law, they had pictures: the blood of a lamb on the threshold.

In our Bible, we've got the Son of God on the cross, in fulfillment.

**The step of faith.**

The step of faith is a step into a land already conquered. It is conquered whether you take the step or not. You will not take possession if you don't step into the land, but the land has been conquered, the blessing procured.

**With or without you.**

Salvation at the cross of Christ has been achieved. Those who do not step forward to receive it will not possess it, but it has been achieved. Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world, with or without you.

**\*\*\*Step by step:**

*I being in the way, the Lord led me.* (Genesis 24:27)

We learn to walk in the Spirit by walking in the Spirit every day.

**Michael rowed the boat ashore**, he did not steer.

He grabbed an oar, showing his willingness to be led and his trust in the Helmsman.

**\*\*\*Faith to faith.**

The Christ-likeness in you is revealed one day at a time, one step at a time, from faith to faith:

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

***For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*** (Rom 1:16-17)

Q. What does it mean, *revealed from faith to faith*?

A. It means that the righteousness of God--all of it--is imputed to you when Christ became sin and you became the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5:21; cf. Gen. 15:6). *From faith to faith* means that the revelation is progressive—day by day, step by step, you look more and more like Jesus. (Cf. 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Pet. 1:5. See also 1 John 3:2.)

The revelation of who you are in Christ is revealed to you. It is no revelation to God--he sees you with the righteousness of Christ already. This accounts for the sense that we are and we are not yet. What is being revealed to us step by step along the way has already arrived in the sight of God. See Joshua 6:2--the delivery of Jericho was past tense to the LORD, Jesus. In Joshua's sight, the walls were still there.

### **Commander of the Lord's Army--**

In the view of many Bible students Jesus Himself appeared in the book of Joshua as the "commander of the army of the LORD" with a sword in his hand (Joshua 5:13-15). This "commander" is thought to be God the Son for a number of reasons. First, he accepted the honor Joshua gave him (an ordinary angel would never have done so.) The visitor also informed Joshua that he was standing in a "holy place" (Joshua 5:15), implying that he was in God's very presence. Finally, Scripture indicates that it was the Lord Himself who spoke: "Then the LORD said..." (Joshua 6:2). Now that the people were on the verge of conquering the land God had promised them, the preincarnate Jesus appeared once again and reminded Joshua who was really in charge of the battle.

### **Jericho = "the world" / "Sin City"**

*This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. (1 John 5:4-5)*

### **Marching around Jericho--the "foolishness" of God**

*Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? **For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.** Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. **For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.** (1 Cor 1:20-25)*

### **Caleb--** the whole-hearted believer who takes possession of God's promises by faith.

*But my brothers who went up with me made the hearts of the people melt with fear. I, however, followed the LORD my God wholeheartedly. So on that day Moses swore to me, 'The land on which your feet have walked will be your inheritance and that of your children forever, because you have followed the LORD my God wholeheartedly.' (Joshua 14:8-9)*

**Rahab--** God saw all in Jericho on the same basis--they were all sinners. Rahab was just a more open sinner. All who believed would have been saved.

### **Rahab's "scarlet thread of redemption."** (Joshua 2:17-20)

*So the men said to her: "We will be blameless of this oath of yours which you have made us swear, unless, when we come into the land, you **bind this line of scarlet cord in the window** through which you let us down, and unless you bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father's household to your own home.*

*So it shall be that **whoever goes outside the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we will be guiltless. And whoever is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head if a hand is laid on him.** And if you tell this business of ours, then we will be free from your oath which you made us swear."*

### **The scarlet thread of redemption**

#### **The trail of blood from Eden to Golgotha** (Leviticus 17:11)

Skinned animals for a covering (atonement) in Eden.

The covenant (God passing between the pieces while Abraham slept).

The knife poised over Isaac.

The ram in the thicket (Jehovah-Jireh--"God will himself provide the sacrifice").

The Passover Lamb's blood applied to the threshold.

The sacrificial system (the heart of the Mosaic law).

The scarlet thread of redemption which will mark Rahab's house.

### **The scarlet thread of redemption**

Jesus is the scarlet thread of redemption, which runs from cover to cover in your Bible and sews it all together, giving it cohesion and coherence.

### **Christ holds creation together:**

Because of Him, the cosmos--universe, galaxy, solar system, planet, molecule, atom, nucleus--doesn't just fly apart. (See Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3.)

**Just so, Christ holds the Bible together;** it's parts--66 books comprised of thus so many chapters, verses, words, letters, jots, and tittles--are a cohesive whole because of his presence. Because of Him, its sense doesn't come undone.

Without him, scripture would be a disconnected mess of fragmented pieces; a jumble of verses, signifying nothing--or worse yet, signifying whatever an enemy wants it to signify.

Q. What does (write any Bible book or verse here) mean?

A. Anything you want it to mean.

Q. What does the Bible--66 books; 31,173 verses--mean?

A. Jesus, and nothing else.

There are two ways to read the Bible. The one way to read the Bible is that it's basically about you: what you have to do in order to be right with God, in which case you'll never have a sure and certain hope, because you'll always know you're not quite living up. You'll never be sure about that future. Or you can read it as all about Jesus. Every single thing is not about what you must do in order to make yourself right with God, but what he has done to make you absolutely right with God. And Jesus Christ is saying, "Unless you can read the Bible right, unless you can understand salvation by grace, you'll never have a sure and certain hope. But once you understand it's all about me, Jesus Christ, then you can know that you have peace. You can know that you have this future guaranteed, and you can face anything." --**Tim Keller**

The hermeneutical (interpretive) question about the whole Bible correlates with the question, "What do you think of Christ?" ... The hermeneutical (interpretive) center of the Bible is therefore Jesus in his being and in his saving acts – the Jesus of the gospel. ... We can say that, while not all Scripture is the gospel, all Scripture is related to the gospel that is its centre. ... The Bible makes a very radical idea inescapable: not only is the gospel the interpretive norm for the whole Bible, but there is an important sense in which Jesus Christ is the mediator of the meaning of everything that exists. In other words, the gospel is the hermeneutical (interpretive) norm for the whole of reality. --**Graeme Goldsworthy** from *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics*

**'Joshua' is about** the commander of the LORD's Army; the Captain of your Salvation--Jesus. (See Hebrews 2:10.)

**Jericho is about** "the foolishness of the cross."

'Biblical theology' involves the quest for the big picture, or the overview of biblical revelation. It is of the nature of biblical theology that it tells a story rather than sets out timeless principles in abstraction. It does contain many timeless principles, but not in abstract. They are given in an historical context of progressive revelation. If we allow the Bible to tell its own story, we find a coherent and meaningful whole.--Graeme Goldsworthy

(Whole-Bible aspects of the current preaching series--)

1. **The parable of the prodigal son** is not about reconciliation; it's about the Reconciler.
2. At its deepest level, the parable is not about the characters in the story, but about the storyteller--Jesus.
3. At its deepest level, the Word of God, even when it might not say so, is about the Author.

**In the parable of the Good Samaritan**, "a certain man" is mankind--that's us, folks--as we went from Jerusalem, the place where we approached God, to Jericho, Sin City. That is the descent of man--the fall of man. The Good Samaritan is Jesus Christ, who healed the broken and paid for them--and will complete the deal upon his return. (Luke 10:30-35; see Philippians 1:6; see 2 Cor, 1:22/KJV)

**The story of the Battle of Jericho.**

The whole point of the story is that Joshua didn't fight the battle of Jericho.

**What faith does...**

Faith lays hold. Faith seizes God's promise. Faith takes the land.

The Promised Land is called the Promised Land because God told them, 'It's all yours.'

But then he told him, *Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you.*

(Joshua 1:3)

**It's all yours, but you've gotta go get it.** You got to search out the land.

**If it's mine, why do I have to go get it?**

Let's say your hungry, you're starving. God comes up to you and says, "Tops is yours. The title and the deed have been made out to you."

Are you still starving? Yes.

Even though it's yours, you've got to go open the door and enter in and take hold of what's yours. Maybe you take hold of a bagel. You're not starving anymore.

So you can possess something, but it's not changing your life at all. You could own Tops and starve.

**You can be a new creation in Christ and it's not doing you one bit of good.**

Have you taken the milk of the word; have you progressed to the meat. Have you tasted the fruit of the Spirit.

The promises are yours. Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Jeremiah (???) was told to eat this book.

So many of us, years ago, applied the blood. We were saved from the penalty of sin. But we've lived in the wilderness since.

We've been *blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus* (Eph. 1:3). But they're not doing us any good until we take possession.

All the promises in the Word of God are yours. The spies were not to go into the land to see if they could take it. They were to go see what was theirs.

We don't enter into the promises to see **if** we can possess them. We enter into the promises to see who we **are**.

The Bible is the revelation of Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:1). De facto, it is the revelation of ourselves--because the only way to find out who you are is to get to know him.

### **The Promised Land.**

The Promised Land cannot be a type of heaven since heaven is not a place of conflict and conquest.

The Promised Land represents the place to which believers are brought right here in this world today.

### **Ephesians.**

The book of Joshua corresponds to the epistle of Ephesians in the New Testament, where we see that the believer is blessed with all spiritual blessings, but we've got to go get it.

The practical possession and experience of our possessions depends upon conflict and conquest: see Ephesians 6:10ff.

They are never attained through the energy of the flesh, but through the power of the Holy Spirit--*in the strength of his might.*

### **God gets the victory. We get possession.**

#### **Contradiction?**

*Joshua took the whole land and gave it to Israel. (Joshua 11:23)*

*There remains much land to be possessed. (Joshua 13:1)*

The Christian has been given all spiritual blessings, but how many have we possessed?

The "contradiction" between 11:23 and 13:1 is not a contradiction in the Bible, but a contradiction in the lives of Christians. We've been given blessings, but we must lay hold of them.

### **Move in and possess the land which God has given you. (18:3)**

#### **City of Refuge. (Joshua 20:1-3)**

Christ is both the slain and the City of Refuge. All people--Jew and Gentile, you and me--are guilty of Christ's death.

#### **As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.**

Sadly, many "houses" did not serve the LORD; see the sad unraveling in the book of Judges.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **JUDGES**

*In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes. (Judges 21:25)*

**Judges** ruled between Joshua and Saul. They were limited in their capabilities; none of them were national leaders as Moses and Joshua were.

#### **So soon forgotten. (cf. Deuteronomy 6:4-12; cf. Rev. 2:4-5).**

After Joshua and his generation had died, the succeeding generation turned away from God. Any generation is only one step away from forsaking God, from breaking His heart.

**We live on the page between Joshua and Judges:**

“In this day of gathering storms, as moral deterioration of political power spreads its growing infection, it is essential that every spiritual force be mobilized to defend and preserve the religious base upon which this nation is founded; for it has been that base which has been the motivating impulse to our moral and national growth. History fails to record a single precedent in which nations subject to moral decay have not passed into political and economic decline. There has been either a spiritual reawakening to overcome the moral lapse, or a progressive deterioration leading to ultimate national disaster.” --Douglas MacArthur

**At the other end of the Bible, we live in the page between Jude and Revelation.**

“*The way of Cain.*” (Jude 1:11; cf. Judges 21:25) Cain believed in religion and God, but “in his own way,” not God’s Way.

**The day the music dies, we will pull the plug.**

God won't have to send the USA to hell. We will vote ourselves in (maybe today):

*“What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. (Genesis 4:10-11)*

I personally feel we are in the very last verses of Jude, just prior to Revelation. I’m not certain that Jesus Christ is coming back soon, but I know He will come back, on that day of Our Father’s choosing.

It’s right around there, in the closing verses of Jude, that I feel the current waves swelling and today’s wind blowing where the Spirit will--as He broods over a world soon to be born, again:  
*...shepherds that without fear feed themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds;  
autumn leaves without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;  
Wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the blackness of darkness hath been reserved forever. (Jude 1:12-13)*

Your symmetric, symphonic Bible.

The first perfect notes (chapters 1 and 2 of Genesis) will be reprised in the last two chapters (21 and 22 of Revelation).

**In between was sin--**from Genesis 3 all the way to Revelation 20.

**They are in the Promised Land but apparently no tribe lays hold of their possessions.** See Judges 1:27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34.

**Deliver us from evil/out of and into.**

(Complete salvation demands the complete character of God: cf. Matt. 12:43-45; 2 Cor. 5:21).

The Deliverer saves us to something.

The Judge saves us from something.

**In the Messiah, the Deliverer and Judge are one and the same.**

**The waters of the Red Sea are illustrative of the Deliverer and Judge—at the same time.**

**“I did it my way...”**

(the most often-played song at American funerals)

The last verse in Judges is the first verse in the oft-repeated tale of anemic, powerless, defeated, inconsequential Christian lives:

*In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*  
(21:25; cf. Prov. 14:12, 21:2; John 14:6; Matt. 27:35; Rev. 19:11-16)

**The powerlessness of the church.**

Very carefully note: These people were not overtly evil; in fact, they were doing what they determined was the right thing. When we neglect the King’s objective authority--His Word--we are not taking God seriously, and we are taking ourselves too seriously. Be very wary of Christians—they constitute the vast majority of them--who don’t take the objective authority of God seriously. This ‘dis’-ing—disregard for and disengagement from God’s Word by professing Christians--is the reason for the powerlessness of the church. I didn’t say that; God says that: *Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.* (Matt. 22:29)

**The LORD as Judge**--the Judges delivered the Israelites from their enemies and decided disputes, but behind them stood the ultimate Judge: Jesus Christ.

*Let the Lord, the Judge, decide the dispute this day.* (Judges 11:27)

*Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.* (John 5:22-23)

There are different kinds of judgment in the Bible:

1. The judgment of Jesus:

*He became sin who knew no sin, that we might become the righteousness of God in him.*

2. Judgment against unbelievers—“**Great White Throne**” **Judgment.** (Rev. 20:11-15)

At the great white throne, those who have not by faith received Jesus’ death as sacrifice will pay the wages of their own sin--eternal death (see Romans 6:23).

3. Judgment for believers—“**Judgment Seat of Christ.**” (2 Corinthians 5:10)

Believers will not be judged for their sin, because Jesus Christ paid the wages of sin for them.

Believers will be awarded to the degree we have served him. Everything we have done will be “revealed by fire.” Those deeds of faith which have lasting value (“*gold, silver, and other costly stones*”) will come out of the fire glowing more brilliantly than before. But those things which have no lasting value (“*wood, hay, and straw*”) will leave behind only a pile of ashes. Thus God will determine each believer’s reward:

*For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames. (1 Corinthians 3:11-14)*

**Gideon, 'lite'**-- The ironic/comic vision of God.

Threshing ("separating the wheat from the chaff") is done atop a hill where the winds prevail; winepresses were at the bottom of the hill. The picture of Gideon repetitively tossing wheat in the air in a windless winepress while hiding in terror of the Midianites is a picture of comic futility. Addressing Gideon with the mock-heroic, "The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valor," (6:11) makes many Bible students think that God was in a fun-loving mood. However, God's humor eludes other Bible students...

**Gideon 'regular'** — (6:15; 7:2-4)

While it cannot be denied that Gideon became a man of great faith who led his people to victory, his story teaches us that God uses the weak to confound the strong, and to display His glory. As a corollary, many of us are too capable to be used of God, liable to confuse our talent for His power. (cf. 1 Cor. 1:26-31; 2 Cor. 12:9-10)

**300 men, trumpeting the Word of the LORD.** (Judges 7; see Ephesians 6:17)

In the end, it is the Word of God which will prevail. Numbers have nothing to do with it: *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.* (Matthew 24:35)

**"Putting out a fleece."** (6:36-40; cf. 2 Cor. 5:7; John 20:29; Matt. 4:7)

This is a type in reverse. It is the ultimate opposite of the Christian walk; Jesus Christ commended those who believe without seeing:

*Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."* (John 20:29)

**Samson.**

Samson's strength was not in his muscles or his hair. He was only strong when the Spirit of the LORD moved him. He is often depicted as a big bruiser, but he is not a he-man. When the Spirit is not upon him, he is a weakling.

*I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.* (John 15:5)

**Just when his mocking enemies thought they'd conquered him,** Samson sent their temple crashing down. In his death he defeated more of the enemy than he had during his life (Judges 16:30).

**Just when His mocking enemies thought they'd conquered him,** Jesus turned the tables and through His death overcame Satan, sin, and all the powers of darkness.

**Samson's legacy:** (Grieve the Spirit)

How tragic it is to live a life without the power of the Spirit of God.

*And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.* (Ephesians 4:30)

*Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab... (1:1)*

Out of the dark period of the judges comes the love story of redemption. It is an unwavering Biblical principle that darkness gives way to light:

*And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep...and God said, Let there be light... and the evening and the morning were the first day. (Gen. 1:2,3,5)*

Ruth's striking faithfulness stands in contrast to the dark backdrop of faithlessness *in the days when the judges ruled.*

**Time frame.** (cf. Matt. 1:5-6; Joshua 6:25; Heb. 11:31)

Boaz is the son of Rahab, the prostitute in Joshua (and a charter member of the Hall of Fame of Faith in Hebrews 11.) Boaz and Ruth are the great-grandparents of King David.

**Bethlehem** ("house of bread") is a small, nondescript village 5 miles south of Jerusalem. But it is one of the most significant locations in the Bible:

Jacob's wife Rachel died there, giving birth to Benjamin. (Gen. 35:18-19)

Ruth and Boaz met there and became parents in the line of the Messiah.

David, their great-grandson, was born there. (1 Sam. 16:1)

Micah the prophet predicted that the Messiah would be born there. (Micah 5:2)

Matthew 2 and Luke 2 record the Christmas story, when the prophecy was fulfilled.

**Salvation is a love affair...**

*We love him because he first loved us. (1 John 4:19)*

*I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives within me.*

*And the life I now live I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if justification were by the law, then Christ died in vain (Gal. 2:20-21).*

In Ruth we see a man who is a kinsman-redeemer, but he doesn't have to act in that capacity. Another, closer kinsman had the opportunity to take action, but he turned it down. He did not care for Ruth, but Boaz loved her. That made all the difference. God did not have to redeem us. If He did not, He would still be a just and holy God. But He loved us.

Boaz is a type of Jesus Christ as our Kinsman-Redeemer. The kinsman redeemer did not act—he did not have to act—by statute of the law. He was, you see, in love...

**The unsearchable heart of love... (What does He see in me?)**

*Then she fell on her face and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger? (2:10)*

The answer is not in us, but in Him. (see Deut. 7:6-10)

**Refuge of trust...**

*The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings (Strong's # 3671) thou art come to trust.*

The KJV translates Strong's # 3671—'kanaph'—as 'wings' in Ruth 2:12. The same word is translated as "skirt" in Ruth 3:9. The book of Ruth implies no hanky-panky! All the while, Ruth's reputation remains sterling (3:11).

The Bible reveals the ultimate kinsman-redeemer as Christ, the LORD, under whose wings all believers have 'come to trust'—see Psalm 91:4. In Ezekiel 16:8, the LORD covers the sin of his people (their 'nakedness')--with his robe of righteousness (his 'kanaph,' translated as 'skirt' in the KJV.)

**Don't go anywhere else to glean...** (2:8)

*The said Boaz unto Ruth, Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here...*

**Protected...**

*Watch the field where the men are harvesting, and follow along after the girls. I have told the men not to touch you. (2:9)*

**Provided for...**

*And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not. (2:16)*

\*\*\*\*\*

**Handfuls--of purpose!**

In some of the darkest days in the Bible, *in the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab* (Ruth 1:1).

One of this man's sons married a local girl named Ruth. When both the man and his sons died, Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi, returned to Bethlehem upon hearing that the famine in the land of Judah had ended.

There a wealthy man named Boaz falls in love (at first sight!) when he "happens" to see Ruth, *who went out and began to glean in the fields behind the harvesters and, as it turned out, found herself working in a field belonging to Boaz* (Ruth 2:3).

In the book of Ruth, the Bible reader knows that Boaz told his workers to *let handfuls of grain fall on purpose* (2:16 KJV), so that Ruth will be able to gather enough to sustain herself and Naomi. But Ruth does not know that Boaz is deliberately providing for her in this way, behind the scenes. She must have thought that the workers weren't harvesting very carefully!

This story illustrates a concept known as God's providence. The invisible, providing, protecting hand of the LORD is behind every word and circumstance in the book of Ruth.

Very often we, like Ruth in the fields, do not realize the provision God makes for us. We might attribute our circumstances to chance or happenstance, and fail to see the guiding and sustaining hand of God in our lives.

The conditions of Ruth's life--the hunger, untimely death, and poverty--made it particularly difficult for her to see that *all things work together for good to those who love God* (Rom. 8:28).

Later, when Boaz and Ruth are married, Ruth's fallen estate is restored, and a family--life--is restored to that which was dead. Once she had been *in Adam* (represented in the story by her first husband.) Now she is joined to her Redeemer, Christ (represented by Boaz):

*For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive* (1 Cor. 15:22).

How could Ruth know, when she "happened" upon Boaz' field, that **the handful of purpose would fall to us as well**--for from their marriage would proceed a great-grandson, King David. Out of David's line would come the Son of Man, Jesus Christ.

Out of that wheat field, out of that 'chance' meeting, came the *Bread of Life* (John 6:48), God's provision for our lives, now and forever:

*And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12:23-24).*

Because He loves us, God decreed that the wheat should fall for us, **on purpose**. (See Gen. 22:7-14).

\*\*\*\*\*

**Kinsman-Redeemer**— (See also "Salvation is a love affair," above)

We were sold into sin, slaves to sin. Christ the Kinsman-Redeemer paid the price for our sin. *"The LORD bless him!" Naomi said to her daughter-in-law. "He has not stopped showing his kindness to the living and the dead." She added, "That man is our close relative; he is one of our kinsman-redeemers."* (Ruth 2:20; cf. Exodus 6:6; Isaiah 59:20; Rom 3:24; Eph 1:7)

*Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)*

*For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. (1 Pet. 1:18-19)*

*For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (Col. 1:13-14)*

*If one of your countrymen becomes poor and sells some of his property, his nearest relative is to come and redeem what his countryman has sold. (Lev. 25:25)*

*If an alien or a temporary resident among you becomes rich and one of your countrymen becomes poor and sells himself to the alien living among you or to a member of the alien's clan, he retains the right of redemption after he has sold himself. One of his relatives may redeem him: An uncle or a cousin or any blood relative in his clan may redeem him. (Lev. 25:47-49)*

**The redeemer must be a "near kinsman"...so Christ had to be "born of woman, born under the law" to redeem us. (Gal. 4:4-5)**

*But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.*

**The redeemer must be "able to redeem"...he must be "good for" the price of payment.**

*Which of you convicts Me of sin? (John 8:46)*

[Redeemer--pays the wages of sin; see Rom. 6:23.]

**Steps on the way to redemption...**

\*Wash (turn from sin; turning to Christ naturally causes repentance—turning your back to sin)

\*Anoint (eyes opened by the Holy Spirit)

\*Put on the robe of righteousness by faith in Christ

*Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor. (Ruth 3:3)*

**Ruth enters into a new life.**

But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you."

(Ruth 1:16-17)

**It is our responsibility to claim the Kinsman-Redeemer, and His covering robe of righteousness.**

Just as Ruth claims Boaz as her kinsman-redeemer, we must claim Christ. Christ can't claim us—just as Boaz could not claim her. If you love Christ, tell him you do!

*And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman.* (3:9)

*These are they which...have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.* (Rev. 7:14)

**We can rest, for Christ will finish the work of redemption.**

*Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.* (3:18; cf. John 19:30)

**The kinsman who will not redeem represents the law, which cannot redeem us.**

*Then the next of kin said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it."* (4:6)

**The Redeemer takes a bride...**

*Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and to Mahlon. Also Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, I have bought to be my wife.* (4:9-10)

*Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.* (Rev. 19:7; cf. Eph. 5:25)

**The Redeemer takes a Gentile bride...**

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.<sup>29</sup> And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.* (Gal. 3:28-29; cf. Matthew 8:11; Eph. 2:11-18)

*I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."* (Gen. 12:3)

*And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.* (John 10:16)

The sheepfold is the Jewish people. Here Jesus told the fold that He would bring in non-Jews as well to form a new all-encompassing family, the church.

### **Samuel--**

The only person in the Old Testament who was at one and the same time a prophet (1 Samuel 3:20) priest (1 Samuel 7:9) and judge (1 Samuel 7:6, 15).

From the time he was a small child, Samuel was devoted to God's service, and later in life he became a great leader, moving his people from leadership by judges to rule by a king. He anointed both Saul and David as kings.

Like John the Baptist, Samuel was a great transitional figure, a hinge between two ages. Like John, he identified and proclaimed *the man after God's own heart*. (1 Sam. 13:14)

### **Hinges and the Door.**

While Samuel and John the Baptist are hinges, connecting eras and dispensations and testaments, Jesus Christ is the ultimate transitional figure; the only mediator between God and men, life and death, heaven and hell, darkness and light, justice and mercy, truth and grace. The Door, he is the difference between what your life was and what it is.

I went through the Door from hopelessness to hope, from pointlessness to purpose.

You went through the Door from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

(See John 10:9 and 1 Timothy 2:5.)

**God revealed himself to Samuel by the Word of God.** God is not revealing (adding to) but He is illuminating his Word today by his Spirit, that we might come to know him.

*The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh, and there he revealed himself to Samuel through his word.* (3:21)

### **Hannah.**

Hannah was unable to conceive a child. For years she lived with this disappointment. But she never stopped praying, and God finally granted her a son. She named him Samuel, which means "heard of God." Since God had granted her request, she relinquished Samuel back to the LORD.

Then Hannah prayed and said:

*"My heart rejoices in the LORD; in the LORD my horn is lifted high.*

*My mouth boasts over my enemies, for I delight in your deliverance."*

(Hannah's prayer: 1 Samuel 2:1-10).

And Mary said: *"My soul glorifies the Lord*

*and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful*

*of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed...*

(Mary's song: Luke 1:46-55).

(2:26) *And the boy Samuel continued to grow in stature and in favor with the LORD and with men.*

(cf. Luke 2:52) *And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.*

### **Mary to us, she was "Mom" to Jesus.**

Who taught the Word of God the Word of God? It is apparent from the song she composed that Mary memorized and skillfully weaved together many Old Testament phrases in her praises to God. Knowing Scripture by heart, leaving Bethlehem with her child in her arms as they escaped from Herod to Egypt, this new Mom was thinking of Hannah. Hannah's song at the dedication of her child, Samuel, inspired Mary's own song.

Read her brief moments in Scripture and you'll be able to discern not only who taught the Savior to walk and talk, but also who taught him to fear the Lord, and to trust in God's amazing,

unfathomable, tenacious grace. If you're going to turn the world--and the tables in the Temple--upside down, this is the kind of Mom you'll need.  
Far and away the greatest influences in Jesus' life were his Father and his Mom. (See John 8:28.)

**Samuel** was the last of the judges, and **Saul** was the first of the kings. Saul was never meant to establish the dynasty, because he was from the wrong tribe (Gen. 49:10). God chose **David**, from the tribe of Judah, to be His ruler. Saul was given to the people as a discipline because they rejected the LORD in order to have a king like the other nations (Hosea 13:11). Men are free to make decisions, but God still guides and sees to it that His purposes are fulfilled.

We can call anyone 'king,' and we often do. But He Who is King is King because God says He is King. The universe is not subject to our vote. The universe is subject to the Sovereign King.

**At God's discretion, Satan is the temporary prince of this domain.** He could offer a crown to Jesus in the wilderness, because it was his to give. (Matthew 4:8-10)

### **Who's in charge?**

"I'll rattle my chain whenever I feel like it." (Satan)

Saul is Satan's man.

Today's situation--the arrangement of *the principalities and powers of this present darkness*--is unintelligible until the Bible student can bring these elements to the discussion:

1. the simultaneous kingship--seen in 1 Samuel--of the peoples choice (Saul) and God's choice (David).
2. God's discretionary utilization of Satan in the "trial" of Job (Job chapter 1).
3. Satan's temptation of Jesus in Matthew 4 and Luke 4.
4. *the principalities and powers of this present darkness* (Eph. 6:12/RSV).
5. the "antichrist"/ "many antichrists"/ "the spirit of antichrist"-- in the epistles of 1, 2, 3 John. (See below for further information).
6. Yet to step into the scene is the *abomination of desolation*, most notably predicted by the major prophet Daniel (chapter 9) and the ultimate prophet, Jesus Christ. The abomination does not arrive until Daniel's "70th week." The 70th week does not arrive until the end of the church age. This expositor, along with many other evangelical commentators, does not think he will see the abomination of desolation, because between him and me (thank God) stands something known as the Rapture of the saints. (See below for further information.)

### **Why does God utilize evil?**

He has to. It seems that there is no other way. Evil was the only raw material left to him in re-creation. Evil is utilized at the cross for salvation. This was predicted throughout scripture, from Genesis 50:20 to Romans 8:28.

Some cosmic justice that we are not entirely privy to (see Job chapter 1) decreed that God utilize evil towards his ends. In order to defeat evil, God had to get Satan to swallow his own tail; evil defeated itself at the cross.

### **"antichrist"/ "many antichrists"/ "the spirit of antichrist"--**

Note: the word "antichrist" appears only in the epistles of John (1 John 2:18; 2:22; 4:3; 2 John 1:7).

(More concerning the character this term refers to is found in Dan. 8:9-11; 11:31-38; 12:11; Matt. 24:15; 2Thess. 2:1-12; Rev. 13:1-5; 19:20.)

The singular “antichrist” (2:18a) refers to the coming final world ruler energized by Satan who will seek to oppose and replace the true Christ. The plural “antichrists” (2:18b) refers to false teachers whose false doctrine distorted the truth and opposed Christ (Matt. 24:24; Mark 13:22; Acts 20:28-30).

The term refers to a principle of evil, incarnated in men who are hostile to God. “The spirit of antichrist” (4:3) refers to the demonic deception that will work to produce the final world ruler who rules as the false Christ. The spirit of antichrist is always actively seeking to distort Jesus Christ’s true nature, perverting the gospel (4:3b). The final antichrist will not be something new, but will embody all the antichrist spirits that have perverted truth. See 2 Thess. 2:3-8, where the man of lawlessness (Antichrist) is still to be revealed, but the mystery of lawlessness is already at work.

### **The unholy spirit.**

See Ephesians 2:2. It is instructive towards the understanding of the Holy Spirit to be able to recognize his opposite.

**The "abomination of desolation"** of Matthew 24:15 is "the beast" of Revelation 19:20; the little "horn" of Daniel 7:8, 24-26; the "devastator" of Daniel 9:27; the "lawless one" of 2 Thessalonians 2:4-8. He is earth's most awful tyrant, Satan's cruel instrument of wrath and hatred against God and the Jews who will testify of their belief in Jesus during the Great Tribulation Period. To him Satan gives the power which he offered to Christ (Matthew 4:8-9; Revelation 13:4).

### **We want a king!**

1. They wanted to be like the other nations. 2. They wanted a national judge. 3. They wanted a leader in battle. (8:20)

These desires contradicted God’s specific purposes:

1. Israel was to a holy nation, not like any other. 2. God was their ultimate Judge. 3. God fought their battles for them.

Israel’s real desire was less about having a king than it was about replacing God with a human ruler.

1 Samuel 8:4-20 (cf. 10:17-19; 12:17-19) reveals that their motive actually involved a rejection of God. They exchanged an awesome and powerful ruler they could not see for one they could see—who was utterly capable of failure.

### **Saul, the ‘made-for-TV’ king.**

He certainly looked the part: tall and striking in appearance, he was the people’s choice. His name derives from the Hebrew for “asked of God;” God appointed Saul because the people had requested a king (8:10). However, God’s choice would have been from the tribe of Judah (see Gen. 49:10).

### **Just visiting.**

The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament is a visitor, coming upon a particular person for a specified task or message. The Spirit's presence did not necessarily indicate salvation. (1 Sam. 10:6; 11:6; 16:13-14; 19:20,23; 2 Sam. 23:2, et. al.)

**No vacancy.** Since Pentecost (see Acts 2:1-13) the Holy Spirit takes a permanent resident presence in the life of every believer. (John 14:26-28, 15:26-27, 16:7-15; et. al.)

*You shall solemnly forewarn them. (Be careful what you ask for.)* (8:9; see 8:10-18; cf. Psa. 106:15)

God grants their request for a king, but warns them that they must be ready for the consequences.  
**Corollary: Thank God for both His 'Yeses' and His 'Noes.'**

### **Have it your way.**

The people stepped out of bounds in 1 Samuel, rejecting God's leadership. God gave them what they wanted; the 'gold cure' was administered (see Exo. 32:20; Psalm 106:15; Num. 11:20).

### **In His faithfulness, the rejected God's choice as King then rescues the people from their choice as 'king.'**

The sovereign will of God decreed our free moral choice, then by His sovereign will He rescues us from our free choices. This is the pattern of Scripture—from Eden to the cross of the King. He is sovereign, you see—and we are free. Then we are captured in our own nets, in the pit we dig for ourselves (Psalm 7:15; 9:15). Then the King comes to free us. And we are free, indeed (John 8:36). **So all freedom emanates from the King's sovereign choices. Through eternity, He remains sovereign and we are free.**

Impossible? Not at all; just read 1 and 2 Samuel; as you do, **remember your elements:**

Samuel represents God's leadership; Saul represents our chosen 'leadership;'

David is God's leadership, restored, as he walks *after God's own heart*. Then a remnant brings their broken lives to the King, who, in the time of his rejection, *becomes a captain over them* (1 Sam. 22:2)—*the Captain of their salvation* (Heb. 2:10).

### **You are what you follow.**

The concept of like king, like people as depicted in 1 Samuel is a prophecy of Christ in its broadest fulfillment, culminating at the cross where *He became sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him* (2Co 5:21).

We become what we follow. David, the man after God's own heart, may have started far behind his brothers, but he was tending after God—and *the LORD looketh on the heart* (16:7); He discerns the leaning, the tendency, the direction of the heart.

Following after the heart of his King (see Psalm 110:1) David is *accepted in the Beloved* (Eph. 1:6)—and God sees Christ in him, when natural eyes can't see that.

**Men see us fail and fall. God sees us get back up—and follow.**

\*\*\*\*

**Resist the urge** to tell God you've got a better idea than His. (15:19-23)

Saul disobeyed God when he did not destroy the livestock, then told Samuel he did it to honor God with a sacrifice. "**To obey is better than sacrifice,**" Samuel told Saul. "*Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has rejected you as king.*"

**Just 'cause "Everybody else is doing it"...**

(8:4) *So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. [5] They said to him, "You are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have."*

(8:6-7) *But when they said, "Give us a king to lead us," this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the LORD. And the LORD told him: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king.*

(cf. Rom. 12:2) *Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

**God makes it clear to Samuel that, in asking for a king, they'd rejected God, not Samuel.**

*And the LORD told him: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king. (8:7)*

(cf. Luke 18:31-33) *Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, "We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him and kill him. On the third day he will rise again.*

**God's sovereignty / man's free will**

The neglected lesson of the dual kings is the tension between God's sovereignty and man's choices.

**The kingdom of heaven is now and not yet.**

**You are where you're going.**

The kingdom of heaven is a direction as well as a destination.

**Jesus is the once and future king.**

**The future is a promise.**

Don't think of it as time, but as the enactment of the Word of God.  
*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my Word is the future.*

\*\*\*

**"Scales"--**

Exercises in kingdom living; putting on the mind of Christ.

**More than conquerors.**

Roman 8:35-37

**Every place the sole of your foot touches.**

Is yours.

**Prayer is prophecy:**

Knock, and it shall be opened to you.

**Natural.**

We are not equipped to live by God's standards. See Romans 7.

*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.* (Romans 8:7)

**Supernatural.**

**The super-nature** (the Holy Spirit within) **lives out the word.**

It will create by prayer. There is a world that would not be there without prayer.

It will serve and not seek ascendancy

It will give.

It will forgive.

**The super-nature is a dependent nature.**

Don't tell anybody, but if the Father and the Son are dependent on the Spirit, why wouldn't we have to be.

**The Spirit-filled life lives out God's Word** (*At thy word, I will...*-Luke 5:5) **and so proves God's Word.**

"Prove God's perfect will." (Romans 12:2)

Living biblically proves it.

If we wait for proof of God's word before living it, we wait forever.

If we wait for proof of God's Word before trusting, we wait forever.

The pattern in the natural is cause then effect.

**The pattern in the supernatural is trust, then effect.** (Abraham believed the LORD, and he credited it to him for righteousness.)

**The milk and the meat of the Word:** (Hebrews 5:12-13)

A young man is faced with the challenge of sharing a Bible lesson to a group of children during a Sunday School Anniversary service. The big question is how to apply a familiar story from the Old Testament to his young hearers. He has recently seen someone tell the story of David and Goliath, but he was troubled with the application...

"The fellow dressed up as Goliath had progressively revealed a list of childhood sins by peeling cardboard strips off his breastplate one by one, as the speaker explained the kind of 'Goliaths' we all have to meet. Then a strapping young David appeared on cue, and produced his arsenal - a sling labeled 'faith' and five stones listed as 'obedience', 'service', 'Bible reading', 'prayer', and 'fellowship'"

Was this a legitimate application of the familiar story?

"We must not view these recorded events as if they were a mere succession of events from which we draw little moral lessons or example for life." For example, to apply the story of David and Goliath with the exhortation that believers should overcome the giants in their lives as David did Goliath ignores a significant contextual consideration--namely that "David is the one who, immediately prior to the Goliath episode (I Samuel 17), is shown to be God's anointed king . . . So when it comes to his slaying of Goliath it is as the unique anointed one of God that he wins the battle."

(Excerpted from Graeme Goldsworthy, Gospel and Kingdom.)

Therefore, the application shouldn't be that we ought to be more like David so we can defeat our Goliaths. Rather, the story ought to point to Jesus, God's greater anointed King, who would come and defeat the greater Goliath! The story points to Jesus and such an interpretation encourages awe and faith in its hearers, rather than making them feel defeated that they lack obedience, faith, etc (which we all do). Through the story of David and Goliath, we see the gospel of Jesus Christ and we become thankful and desire to live for Him. The Bible is not primarily about moral lessons and principles. It's primarily about Jesus Christ

\*\*\*\*\*

Now, some people think the Bible is a book of rules, telling you what you should and shouldn't do. The Bible certainly does have some rules in it. They show you how life works best. But the Bible isn't mainly about you and what you should be doing. It's about God and what he has done.

Other people think the Bible is a book of heroes, showing you people you should copy. The Bible does have some heroes in it, but (as you'll soon find out) most of the people in the Bible aren't heroes at all. They make some big mistakes (sometimes on purpose). They get afraid and run away. At times they are downright mean.

No, the Bible isn't a book of rules, or a book of heroes. The Bible is most of all a Story. It's an adventure story about a young Hero who comes from a far country to win back his lost treasure. It's a love story about a brave Prince who leaves his palace, his throne - everything - to rescue the one he loves. It's like the most wonderful of fairy tales that has come true in real life! (continued...)

... **There are lots of stories in the bible but all the stories are telling one Big Story.** The Story of how God loves his children and comes to rescue them.

It takes the whole Bible to tell this Story. And at the center of the Story, there is a baby. **Every Story in the Bible whispers his name. He is like the missing piece in a puzzle - the piece that makes all the other pieces fit together; and suddenly you can see a beautiful picture.**

(Excerpted from Sally Lloyd-Jones, The Jesus Storybook Bible.)

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Your brand new Bible.**

When we come to realize just where we stand in the story of David and Goliath, we have turned a corner in biblical understanding, and the Bible will never be the same again. A typological understanding of David v. Goliath has been for some a road to Emmaus experience, "opening the scriptures" before their very eyes and inflaming their hearts (Luke 24:32).

The character of David, the story Of David v. Goliath, and the object (a slingshot) were, no doubt, amongst the *things concerning himself* which Jesus highlighted as they walked down the road as he conducted a guided tour of scripture. (Luke 24:27).

Your Bible might be dog-eared after 20 years of constant use, but it will become brand new before your very eyes on the day you "join the ranks."

### **Join which ranks?**

Depends on whether you *have the Son* or not.

*He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.* (1 John 5:12)

If you have the Son, you are what we call saved.

The very word--*saved*--begs the question: Saved by whom?

That's what the story of David v. Goliath answers.

While we were helpless against evil, a solitary soldier stood for all of us and single-handedly took down evil.

His victory became ours as well.

The story of David and Goliath tells us that we don't fight the battle. *We stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD.* (See Exodus 14:13; 2 Chronicles 20:17.)

### **Important preliminary introductory statement:**

David is an all-encompassing prefigurement. Therefore, when we say "David," we are talking about

1. the type of Christ --in the story of David v. Goliath;
2. a type of you, the saved believer--in Psalm 51

There are many other stories and Psalms concerning David, but for shorthand we will refer to "the David v. Goliath David" (as type of Jesus) and "the Psalm 51 David" (as type of you and me).

**David is not us** (in the David v. Goliath story).

David is king; in the entire kingdom, there is only one.

David is the man after God's own heart; in scripture, there is only one so designated.

Christ will physically arrive through David's lineage.

**David is us** (in Psalm 51).

David is representative with us in that he is anointed.

He is king, but subject to a greater king (the Lord said to my Lord).

Even though he is anointed and a king, he is dependent on the atoning sacrifice (wash me with hyssop) for justification and forgiveness.

\*\*\*\*\*

Back to David v. Goliath...

Your Bible might be dog-eared after 20 years of constant use, but it will become brand new before your very eyes on the day you join the ranks.

### **Join which ranks?**

When I first read the Bible, I was an unbeliever. I did not understand it at the time, but in the story of David v. Goliath, I wasn't David and I wasn't in the ranks of his soldiers because, as an unsaved person, his victory was not yet mine. The unbeliever, as I was, is the Philistine soldier in the story of David v. Goliath.

When I came to faith in Jesus, his victory became mine, so I deserted the ranks of the Philistines to join the ranks of the living God. I moved under the headship of the King.

In the Bible at large, we occupy the same relative place as the soldiers in David v. Goliath. The Bible is not about us. In it, we are bystanders; **we don't fight for our salvation, but we receive it from another.** We then enter the service of the King.

In order that we recognize the king, God told a story of an unrecognized shepherd who would not wear the armor of Saul--the standard issue of the world--but who went before the power of the world, the power of the flesh--wearing "the whole armor of God" (Eph. 6). Against all odds, with a single shot, the victory was won. There would be no need for another Rock. (1 Samuel 2:2; Isaiah 44:8)

\*\*\*\*\*

He was just a boy with a slingshot to the soldiers of Israel. What foolishness. He became their savior and they would acknowledge Him as King. Their worldview would begin to change; they would come to see that it was not by might nor by power, but by God's Spirit--that *the battle belongs to the Lord.* (1 Samuel 17:47; 2 Chronicles 20:15)

The Philistine soldiers who were given the gospel message in germinal form as David addressed the giant, were not saved by might and power of the flesh (nine feet of flesh in the form of Goliath). No doubt some had a change of heart and **gave place** to the God of Israel as time went by in their lives.

### **Giving place (the Bible is not about us).**

The new Christian undergoes a change of heart, giving place to Jesus Christ in his life.

The growing Christian puts on the mind of Christ, giving place to Jesus Christ on every page of scripture. It is then that we experience what the disciples on the road to Emmaus experienced.

(Luke 24:27, 32)

**And we begin to see...**

When we give place to Jesus on the cross;  
Then, moving to the margins of scripture, we give place--in stories like David & Goliath--to the  
rightful king who secured our victory alone.

At that moment we see, as never before, the first prophecy of the Victor. The seed of the Woman  
would strike a fatal blow to the head of evil (Genesis 3:15). And we begin to see.

Then we go forward to Isaiah, when the woman--as it were, alone; no human man involved--  
brings forth a Seed, who is Emmanuel, God with us (Isaiah 7:14). And we begin to see.

The to the New Testament--

...and she brought forth a child and laid him in a manger

...and the child grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with god and man.

Always about his father's business, he left his home and his family, whereupon the Spirit  
drove him into the wilderness to be proven.

He gathered about him a motley assortment of followers--as we can surely see.

"Hosanna to the Son of David," cried those who could see.

A woman--Mary of Bethany-- anointed him before battle, like Samuel had anointed  
David before he met Goliath--because she could see.

Like David before him, he stood to battle alone.

We watch, transfixed, from our places, far away--because the battle belongs to the LORD, and  
because a grain of wheat must fall to the ground and die to make many seeds. But if it never dies,  
it remains only a single seed. (John 12:24)

We follow him through the valley to the other side, his victory now ours.

And we see him, as he is.

**“The Anointed”—the Messiah.** This is the first time the word, used in this way, appears in scripture:

*The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.* (1 Samuel 2:10)

Anointing of priests, kings, and prophets suggested they had been consecrated by God for a special function and endowed by him with power to carry out that task. The three offices of prophet, priest, and king come together in the Messiah.

David was anointed by God as Israel’s king:

*So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power.* (1 Samuel 16:13)

As the first king in the Messiah’s family line, David furnished an early picture of Jesus. Jesus Christ is the One whom God anointed –his promised Messiah, filled with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to carry out his ministry, and destined to reign on David’s throne forever.

*“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”*

*Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”* (Luke 4:18-21)

*He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.* (Luke 1:32)

### **David--and the Son of David.**

David—shepherd, poet, warrior, prophet, king—is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of David. He was born in Bethlehem and misunderstood by his family; he was an obedient son and a conquering hero. The name ‘David’ means ‘beloved,’ and Jesus is the Father’s “*beloved Son*” (Matthew 3:17). David was anointed king long before he took the throne and ruled—and Jesus Christ is King of kings even though He is not yet reigning on this earth. Like David, Jesus has had to experience rejection and exile before reigning.

### **The least likely.**

Saul was the most-likely-looking king in all of Israel.

David was the least-likely-looking king in his family! But...

*...The LORD looketh on the heart.* (16:7; cf. Acts 1:24-25)

He searches the heart (1 Chron. 28:9) and knows our thoughts and motives (Heb. 4:12-13). We think we know our own hearts, but we do not (Jer. 17:9), so we had better accept God’s verdict. We should be wary of judging others since we cannot know their hearts (John 7:24; 1 Cor. 4:5).

The following characters are a peek into the *mind of Christ*. If you want to see the world through God’s eyes, according to the mind of Christ, begin to consider who he commissioned to lead his “church.”

Gideon was too timid to lead (as seen from the mind of man);

Samson’s morals were questionable, at best; he was a vow-breaker and was dominated by lusts and domineering women (as seen from the mind of man);

Moses had insecurities (as seen from the mind of man, including Moses’ own mind);

Aaron was swayed by the crowd;

David had a tempestuous temper, was a parental failure, and succumbed to (accidental) pornography;

Jacob was the supreme flim-flam artist; that is, until he met Uncle Laban, the con of cons;  
Joseph was cocky;  
Elijah was prone to melt-down under depression;  
Jonah, the Bible's greatest evangelist (batting 1000 in Nineveh) did not want to save a single soul in Nineveh;  
Amos was a country yokel, placed in sophisticated surroundings;  
Esther and Mordecai should have removed themselves from their sophisticated surrounding and returned to the land, but they didn't;  
John the Baptist didn't fit in anywhere or with anybody (except Jesus);  
Peter was at the mercy of his own spontaneity; his muscles and mouth often moved before his mind was engaged;  
Paul--Pharisee of Pharisees--attempted to stamp out Christianity before he became Christ's foremost ambassador.

The great principle is that God sees **Christ in us**:

*To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27)*

Seeing Christ in Doug, Shelley, Ernie, Carol, Chris, Carrie, and **in your mirror**, you are seeing through God's eyes. Neat, huh! By God, Jesus is everywhere! The church, in fact, can be defined as "Jesus everywhere" (by his Spirit). Consider:

*Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. (John 16:7)*

Jesus Christ was born in a stable; of indeterminate parentage; obtained no degree; held no office or formal title; was institutional religion's severest critic. Fighting alone, he lost every battle (as seen from the mind of man). Losing every battle, he won the war. It is this commentator's studied opinion that Jesus Christ, for one reason or another, would be denied ordination by nearly every denomination of Christianity today. Religion and government today, like religion and government in his own day, would string him up and hang him high. Dying, of course, he would prevail.

**The church is should be a misfit in society.**

If you are a misfit, you'll blend right in here:

*And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto (David); and he became a captain over them; and there were with him about four hundred men. (22:2)*

*(Cf. Matt. 22:8-10) "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.' So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.*

**We are living in the days of Jesus' rejection. He is now calling out a people—those who are "in distress, in debt, and discontented."** *(Blessed are the poor in spirit.)*

**Corollary #1--**

Where and whenever the church fits in, we have failed.

**Corollary #2--**

Wherever the individual Christian fits in, he has failed.

Whenever the church has adopted means that make sense to the world, we have miserably failed. Leaning on methods that make sense to the natural mind, we short-circuit the supernatural.

Supernatural means--prayer, waiting on the LORD, sacrificial lifestyles, a tenacious adherence to teaching and living out the Word of God--**have never failed.**

When the man who went against Goliath alone, because the battle belongs to the LORD, decided to quantify his force--counting his soldiers (1 Chron. 21)--he reduced his power from the infinite to the quantifiable. The natural inclination to count things left him with only what he could count--a certain x-number of soldiers.

The young David did not count, but counted upon the infinite LORD God. The natural man counts. The supernatural man counts upon Jesus.

### **Size & Splendor.**

The Bible student is to bear in mind that the simple, portable tabernacle was God's idea. The Temple was man's (David's) idea. God knows that externals often overshadow essentials in the mind of man.

### **Volume.**

While we wait for fireworks and a flourish of trumpets as evidence of God's presence, the Lord was not in these. The Lord was in a still, small voice (1 Kings 19:9-12).

### **Stature.**

Man's idea of a king was Saul, first in all of Israel in apparent ways:

*There was not a more handsome person than he among the children of Israel. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people. (1 Samuel 9:2)*

God's idea of a king was last in the eyes of his own family, but he was moving in the right direction:

*But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you. (1 Samuel 13:14)*

The great Catholic cathedrals built in Europe and in the USA; and the great main-line Protestant denominations of America became empty shells. Supernatural power is almost always effected in the unseen realm:

*Your way was in the sea, Your path in the great waters, And Your footsteps were not known. (Psalms 77:19)*

We see men, and we say they are 'in power.' But we forget to account for the power that moves them, the unseen hand inside the visible glove:

*You led Your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron. (Psalms 77:20)*

Supernatural power is seldom exercised in the apparent realm:

*We walk by faith, not by sight.*

*Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD.*

The church (that's us, folks) are *partakers of the divine nature*. Super-natured, we are fish out of water when implementing natural means:

*The sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light. (Luke 16:8)*

We cannot defeat the devil, on the devil's home field, using the devil's own devices. David understood this as a young man, disdaining Saul's armor for the foolishness of a slingshot.

In Saul's armor, there is no way David beats Goliath.

But by "the foolishness of God," there is no way David loses:

*For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (1 Corinthians 1:18)*

*For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." (1 Corinthians 1:19)*

*Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? (1 Corinthians 1:20)*

*For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. (1 Corinthians 1:21)*

*For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; (1 Corinthians 1:22)*

*but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, (1 Corinthians 1:23)*

*but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. (1 Corinthians 1:24)*

*Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. (1 Corinthians 1:25)*

*For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. (1 Corinthians 1:26)*

*But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; (1 Corinthians 1:27)*

*and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are. (1 Corinthians 1:28)*

Supernatural living does not mean that we are going to snap our fingers and the lawn will be mowed. That is in the apparent realm (the realm we can see) and it is the farthest thing from supernatural.

Supernatural living means adherence to the principal that God's ways are *higher than our ways*, *his thoughts higher than our thoughts*. (Isaiah 55:9)

**Supernatural living means reliance on God.** It looks anything but supernatural:

Reliance on God---prayer, waiting on the LORD, sacrificial lifestyles, a tenacious adherence to teaching and living out the Word of God--doesn't look supernatural at all.

Prayer, for example, looks like madness to natural eyes.

--Why, you might as well march around the city seven times, for all the good it'll do.

--Why, you might as well bring a slingshot to a war.

**The supreme supernatural moment in history happened in this way:**

A man without apparent means or education or pedigree was nailed to a cross atop a hill after needing help from a bystander to carry it there.

The crowd taunted him, demanding a supernatural display:

*"If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." (Matthew 27:40)*

The taunt was not new. He'd heard it all before:

*"If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." (Matthew 4:3)*

*"If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from the pinnacle of the Temple." (Matthew 4:6)*

He could have summoned twelve legions of angels. (Matthew 26:53)

The real miracle was that he didn't.

**Jonathan is reminiscent of John the Baptist:**

(I Sam. 23:17) *"Don't be afraid," he said. "My father Saul will not lay a hand on you. You will be king over Israel, and I will be second to you."*

(See John 3:30: *"He must increase, but I must decrease."*)

Like Jonathan, you will step aside for the rightful King. You will desert the nature inherited from your father as you initiate your own *kenosis*: 1 Sam. 18:1, 4; see Phil. 2:7

Like John the Baptist, you will intentionally decrease. By the axiomatic ironies of His Kingdom, your determination to become less and less will make you more and more like Him.

**You become one with the King.** 1 Samuel 18:1/KJV; see 1 Samuel 25:29

**You will initiate your own kenosis.** See Philippians 2:7. See 1 Samuel 18:4 (KJV)

Jonathan was king to come. He stripped himself of the title and the position and proclaimed David the rightful King to come.

**You will depose yourself,** divesting yourself of your "robe." You will desert the nature inherited from your father.

You will become *less and less*; ironically making you greater--because you will be *more and more* like him. (See John 3:30)

**Progress of the Spirit.**

The kingdom of heaven is a direction (all the way from here to there). Even quantitatively (from more to more) we see the movement of the Spirit in our lives.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Bible is the Story of Jesus Christ, from front to finish. But every once in a while, you appear in its pages.

**Mephibosheth is you. Mephibosheth is me.**

Mephibosheth is the sinner, spared for the sake of another, with all the riches of the kingdom restored to him because of the sheer grace of the king. He's you, me, and any person who has ever received salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

Mephibosheth is the son of Jonathan and the grandson of Saul. When Saul and Jonathan had been killed in the same battle, a little son of Jonathan's was hidden lest David find him and kill him: *Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son who was lame in his feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel; and his nurse took him up and fled. And it happened, as she made haste to flee, that he fell and became lame. His name was Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 4:4).*

According to the code of that day, David would have been justified in putting to death any of the offspring of Saul, for anyone in the previous line of succession was a potential threat to David's position as king. So when Mephibosheth is brought before David, he falls on his face before him, expecting to be executed. Instead, David speaks kindly to him, calling him by name. Then David restores his inheritance to him and gives him a permanent place at the king's table—honoring him as one of his own sons!

The parallels between Mephibosheth and those who are saved through Christ are helpful to remember:

1. A child of God recognizes that he is a cripple in God's sight.

The feet and the condition of our souls are closely aligned in scripture. Our feet go astray (Isaiah 53:6); our feet slip (Psalm 73:2); our "walk" wanders from the path (Proverbs 16:25).

2. David extended kindness to Mephibosheth for the sake of another--for the sake of Jonathan:

*Then Jonathan said to David: "By the LORD, the God of Israel, I will surely sound out my father by this time the day after tomorrow! If he is favorably disposed toward you, will I not send you word and let you know?"*

*But if my father is inclined to harm you, may the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if I do not let you know and send you away safely. May the LORD be with you as he has been with my father.*

*But show me unfailing kindness like that of the LORD as long as I live, so that I may not be killed, and do not ever cut off your kindness from my family--not even when the LORD has cut off every one of David's enemies from the face of the earth."*

*So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David. (1 Samuel 20:12-16)*

3. David saw something of Jonathan in the boy. You are at the Father's table because he sees something of Jesus in you. (See Ephesians 1:6/KJV)

Sometimes we do "appear" in the Bible. But be very careful about "reading yourself into scripture." Many see themselves in David; they are going to do great things for God.

Rather, we should see ourselves in Mephibosheth...

because we don't do great things for the King. The King does great things for us.

\*\*\*\*\*

**The covenant isn't with us, or Mephibosheth. The covenant was between David and Jonathan.**

*Covenant* is a big word. It shouts out, "Theology." And few of us, thank God, major in theology.

Not only is covenant a big word, but there are so many of them:

the Edenic Covenant;  
the covenant with Adam;  
the covenant with Noah;  
the covenant with Abraham;  
the covenant with Moses;  
the Palestinian Covenant;  
the covenant with David; and, finally,  
the New Covenant.

What are we to make of all this? Where do we even begin?

**Begin with Jesus.** The key to understanding the covenants is to understand that covenant is between Jesus and the Father, *the foundation of the world.* (Rev. 13:8)

Forget time; and forget cause-and-effect, and begin to think big--very big. Ready?

Jesus was Redeemer before he was Creator. That's what Revelation 13:8 means when it says he was *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

The covenants all boil down to this: where we fall short, Jesus takes our place.

Although the contract was made from eternity, it could not be sealed until Christ had paid, for us, *the wages of sin, which is death*. When he cried, "It is finished!" he addressed His Father. The contract between them was now fulfilled. The price had been paid.

Now the fellowship between man and God could not be broken even if the weakest link--man--should fail. The relationship would endure for eternity because should we fail, Christ in our place did not.

**The eternal covenant with Christ was the reason why God could keep renewing His covenant with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Israel, David and the Christian church.** Backing every pact that God made with the human family was God's covenant with Jesus Christ. Time and time again divine wrath was suspended **only because it was put to the account of Jesus Christ**, who in due time would pay all debts to eternal justice.

If you, today, ask Jesus to take your place, he will. At that very moment, the covenant between the Father and Jesus includes you.

At that very moment the eternal covenant is new, because you are.

\*\*\*\*\*

**"My son, my son."**

*And the king said to the people, "I also will surely go out with you myself." But the people answered, "You shall not go out! For if we flee away, they will not care about us; nor if half of us die, will they care about us. But you are worth ten thousand of us now. For you are now more help to us in the city." (2 Sam. 18: 2b-3)*

*Then the king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept. And as he went, he said thus: "O my son Absalom--my son, my son Absalom-- **only I had died in your place!** Absalom my son, my son!" (2 Sam. 18:33)*

**A glimpse into the genesis of love.**

David's lament over Absalom echoes a Father's reaction to the cross, when the noble heart of God will crack. We can see through the crack into the genesis of love.

The Trinity is revealed through the Son. We see Jesus on the cross and we see what love means. We sense what love cost.

We glimpse love's cost in the lament of a Father who--due to cosmic necessities beyond my ability to grasp--could not Himself go to the cross, but would gladly have gone rather than watch his Son die there.

I don't think a Roman soldier's flail, nor his lash, nor his fists; nor his hammer, nor the spikes killed Jesus.

I think Jesus died of a broken heart. Listen very closely and you'll enter into the depths of the oneness of the Trinity:

*Then the king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept. And as he went, he said thus: "O my son--my son, my son--if only I had died in your place! O my son, my son!"*

It may be that Jesus died of **his Father's** broken heart.

\*\*\*\*\*

David is perhaps scripture's most comprehensive picture of Jesus to come: a man after God's own heart.

Solomon is a type in reverse, as was Adam.

Solomon begs the question, "*What is a man profited if he gains the whole world and loses his soul.*"

Jesus told us to *seek first the kingdom of God* (Matthew 6:33). Solomon sought first his own kingdom, *under the sun*. (*Under the sun* is the thematic phrase of Ecclesiastes, repeated nearly thirty times.)

Solomon ends up a pathetic figure, under the influence of foreign wives and their foreign gods.

Ecclesiastes is about a man who sought "*all these things*" first. He lived in reversal of Jesus' wisdom:

*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.* (Matthew 6:33)

Born in splendor, Solomon ended up in submission.

Born in a manger, Jesus ended up King of Kings.

**Jonathan (King Saul's son) teaches us that we can turn...**

*from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that we may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in Jesus.* (Acts 26:18)

**Solomon (King David's son) teaches us that we can turn...**

From light to darkness, from the power of God to Satan.

The Kingdom of heaven has nothing to do with where you started. It's about where you are going.

Heaven is all the way from here to there. Hell, it seems, is all the way from here to there, as well.

After self-kenosis, then what?

Jonathan (1 Sam. 18:4) and John the Baptist (John 3:30) initiated their own kenosis, as did Jesus (Philippians 2:7).

We are to undergo the same process: **Putting on Christ.** (Galatians 3:27; Romans 13:14)

**How do we put on Christ?**

Just like Jesus did:

*Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.* He did not come pre-packaged.

He came re-packaged; emptied of his attributes, he reloaded--primarily through scripture and fellowship with God in prayer.

If you wonder what he was doing in "the lost years," here's a hint:

It seemed that he, too, had to put on Christ.

This brings the basic premise of this class--that Christ is found on every page of the Old Testament--to a whole new level, when we realize that not only is he found on every page of what was then his Bible, but as he searched the scriptures, he found and even became himself there.

(Saying, "Jesus isn't in the Bible from age 12 to 30" reaches new heights (or depths!) of irony when we realize that Jesus probably wasn't anywhere but in the Bible from 12 to 30.)

We, too, by means of the Word and the Spirit--the same means available to Jesus--are able, even expected, to put on Christ, to gain *the mind of Christ* (1 Cor. 2:16).

**Think of heaven as a direction (more than a place.)**

God magnifies the tendency of the heart:

The timeless eye of God sees us already complete in Christ as we are in the process of growing into ourselves.

The man after God's own heart is already there. God accounts, or credits, righteousness that we have not yet lived out. God can see where you are going. (Genesis 15:6)

(The phrase from Malachi--*Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*--is contrapositive of this. God never hated Esau in Genesis. But the tendency of Esau's heart will eventually bring him far from God.)

Remember that Jesus cleanses the temple. The Spirit fills it. (See Matthew 12:43-45.)

\*\*\*\*\*

**Elijah and Elisha--a package deal**

The widow had no money. She had nothing but a little oil at the bottom of one jar.

Elisha told her to gather every jar she could find, every jar in the neighborhood. Then he told her to pour the oil she had into the first jar. She filled it. Then she filled another. And she kept pouring. The oil never stopped flowing until there were no more jars to fill.

In scripture, oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

The Hebrew word "Messiah" means "Anointed One." Jesus' title--"Christ"--is the Greek word for "Messiah."

Nora, who has the Spirit without measure or limit?

Who is filled with the Spirit?

**That one jar--that's a picture of Jesus. And those empty jars that aren't empty anymore--one of them is you!**

**What does "Christian" mean?**

You are a christ--with a little 'c'--an anointed one.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Elijah and Elisha--combined--foreshadow the New Testament church in many ways:**

**1. Like the church, they are of the same spirit:**

*And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?" Elisha said, "Please let **double portion of your spirit be upon me.**" (2 Kings 2:9)*

*For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--Jews or Greeks, slaves or free--and all were made to drink of one Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:13)*

**2. Elijah is caught up--"raptured"--while still alive. Prior to Jesus' Second Coming, the church who are still alive will be "caught up" to meet Jesus in the air:**

*Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and **went up by a whirlwind into heaven.** And Elisha saw it, and he cried out, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!" So he saw him no more. (2 Kings 2:11-12)*

*Then we who are alive and remain shall be **up** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. (1 Thessalonians 4:17)*

**3. Combined, Elijah and Elisha represent a wide range of the attributes of the Savior to come.**

**The church is composed of individual believers who, when combined, form the body of Christ.**

Elijah's powerfully dramatic miracles, combined with the common, healing touch of Elisha (who actually performed twice the miracles of Elijah) point out the power and the humility, the strength and vulnerability, the kingly and the lowly, the poetic and the prosaic...the justice and mercy... the seemingly impossible reconciliation of mutually exclusive virtues; in short, the grace and truth of the breathtakingly human Son of God:

*For the law was given through Moses, but **and truth** came through Jesus Christ. (John 1:17)*

**Jesus' ministry to official Israel was in the power of Elijah;** he began his ministry by cleansing the temple with a whip, a voice of thunder, and eyes of fire. (John 2:13-17)

**Jesus' ministry to the individual was the ministry of Elisha**—the ministry of grace. (See Matthew 11:28-30.)

\*\*\*\*\*

*When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked. "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."*

*And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. (2 Kings 6:15-17 )*

Sometimes, we can't see things that are actually there. This is a fact of perception.

This should not surprise us. Our ears can't hear sound frequencies that our dogs can hear. So why should we presume that our eyes can see everything that is actually there?

We are being watched. We are an exhibition of God's grace to *principalities and powers* that we can't see:

*His purpose was that **the church** all the rulers and powers in the heavenly world will now know God's wisdom* (Ephesians 3:10).

Are you getting the creeps yet? I am, just writing about this stuff.

Let's see how this works in reverse. Did you know that we can see things that angels long to look into--but can't:

*The things which you have now heard from the messengers who announced the Good News...are things which **the angels would like to understand.*** (1 Peter 1:12)

So--we can't see some things that angels can.  
But--angels can't see some things that we can.

Guess who else couldn't see everything? This may surprise you: Jesus.

Jesus *emptied himself* (Philippians 2:7) of many divine attributes in order to become just like us. As the eternal Son of God, he was omniscient (all-knowing) and omnipresent (everywhere at once). But at his incarnation he became just like us in order to take our place. ('Incarnation' is a big word for what happened at Christmas--when *the Word became flesh and arrived among us* (John 1:14) as a baby in Bethlehem.)

And so, as one of us, with limited sight, he depended on the Holy Spirit to lead and guide him:  
*Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was **by the Spirit...***(Luke 4:1)

The Holy Spirit sees everything, even before it happens, so he knows the way. And he is always leading.

**And those who will follow are led.**

\*\*\*\*\*

*Now Elijah the Tishbite...*

Elijah is one of the Bible's unforgettable characters.

He enters the Bible all at once, at a single stride: *Now Elijah the Tishbite...*

He leaves the Bible just as suddenly--in a whirlwind, caught up into heaven on a chariot of fire drawn by horses of fire. (Only Elijah and Enoch were taken up to heaven--"raptured"-- without experiencing death. Many Bible commentators think the church will be raptured to heaven prior to the second coming of Jesus.)

He doesn't occupy a lot of space in your Bible, but we get the feeling that he's about to pop up just about anywhere!

The Old Testament closes with the expectation that Elijah would return before the day of the LORD (Malachi 4:5-6), an expectation that John the Baptist fulfilled, at least in part (see Matt 11:14; 17:10-13; Luke 1:17).

Elijah appeared with Moses at Jesus' transfiguration (Matt 17:1-13; Luke 9:28-36).

In Rev 11:3-12, one of the two witnesses is either Elijah himself or is modeled after Elijah.

He is the ever-ready prophet who keeps going and going and going and going. Be on the lookout for this radical tower of power. He enters and re-enters without knocking, and without introduction.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Scales.

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy." --Shakespeare, Hamlet

The New Covenant believer lives in Christ who lives in him, in dimensions of being and becoming, in the now and the not yet.

**I am not equal to this task** (he wrote) **but here goes...**

Ezekiel's vision of God (Ezekiel 1) shows us the shifting planes and dimensions which God occupies, all at once.

We do well to think of God in terms of Jesus, because those are the terms God has chosen:  
*He who has seen Me has seen the Father.* (John 14:9)  
*God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son...the express image of His person.* (Hebrews 1:1-3)

God as the Immanuel-being (not a name but a state of being) is Jesus.

Jesus put on us, in order that we might put on God. We will put on what Jesus emptied himself of.

Note well: Jesus never emptied himself of his deity at kenosis. That's why we will be glorified (he laid aside glory) but not deified (he never laid aside deity).

### **Shekinah shorn.**

In Philippians 2:7, Jesus divested himself of Shekinah. It is obvious to anyone who reads the vision of Ezekiel that we could not relate to God clothed in the glory.

### **But,**

There is grave danger in limiting our comprehension of God to the emptied Immanuel, Jesus. We know him after the flesh no longer. He is now in glory. We confine his present person by keeping him shorn of Shekinah.

We live in shifting planes and dimensions as well.  
Limited in the flesh, we are without measure in the Spirit.  
Earth-bound, we are seated in the heavenlies in Christ..,

The New Covenant believer is bound in the bundle of the living with Christ. Saturated in the Spirit, we are born again into his body. At the same time (prefigured by Mary) the Spirit overshadows us and Jesus is born in us.

The New Covenant believer lives in Christ who lives in him, in dimensions of being and becoming, in the now and the not yet.

Seated in Christ, we have all heavenly blessings. What these are, we do not know. They may be realms of fruit and gifts which we cannot even dare to dream.

A rule of thumb: Jesus is bigger.

**Whatever you think of Christ has shorn him.** Think again and think bigger. Now think bigger yet again. Your thought will not outrun him. Your imagination will never capture him.

Think bigger. Then think again. You have not shrunk the infinite. There remains as much to know as when you knew nothing of Him.

"When we've been there ten thousand days bright shining as the sun, there's no less days to sing god's praise than when we first begun."

Just so, when we have learned, and glorified God for, his 35 God-zillionth attribute, we have not shortened the list of attributes which we have yet to discover.

The disregard of /d disdain for/disavowal of limitations is seen in the prophets Elijah and Elisha. This is pictured most pointedly by the jar of oil that never runs out no matter how much is poured. This prefigures Christ--Jesus' title is "Anointed"--who had *the Spirit without measure*. This prefigures the feeding of the five thousand:

There were more fish left over than were there at the first, changing the song to--

"When we've been there ten thousand days...there are far more days to sing God's praise than when we first begun."

In the infinite realm, quantity doesn't exist (or--this is nuts, I know) quantity is reversed: pick one grape and two remain where one had been; refer to the 2-for-1 blessings of Job.

(Not to mention the shifting functions and ordinates of the Trinity, where pronouns (I, you, we) couple and uncouple like the colors in a kaleidoscope.)

If you can turn arithmetic upside down, you can turn relativity upside down, and overturn gravity. At that point you walk on water like a sidewalk. Time accelerates so that what happened tomorrow seems like yesterday and miracles aren't strange. What's strange is when they are thwarted: it seemed to catch Jesus by surprise when he could do no mighty miracle.

The reader must understand that Job is **never** made aware of many things the reader knows. Job doesn't know anything about the conversation between God and Satan which prompts Job's testing and all his calamities.

The Bible doesn't claim to reveal everything about God. It doesn't claim to reveal everything about His universe. We are given only what we need to know. We are left in the dark about so many things.

Cosmic purposes--that we are not aware of--are behind many of the things we find inexplicable. Job's suffering has a purpose that he could not understand.

We are not going to be shown every card in God's hand. There are times when all we're going to know is that God is in charge and He's putting his whole heart into it as He works out a perfect plan. Whatever we're dealt, we're to trust that God knows about it and has a purpose for it.

Job's suffering has a purpose that he couldn't understand; he and the friends were not even aware of the cosmic struggle. The friends and Job remind me of the disciples with Jesus. The disciples didn't understand why Jesus had to suffer and die, but the happiness of the universe rests upon His suffering. And God staked His name, everything He had, on Jesus' day-by-day faithfulness, right up to the cross. And then Jesus was restored--resurrected--like Job was restored. **That's what Job is all about. When you know Jesus, you know "Job." Without Jesus, Job makes no sense; nothing makes much sense.**

\*\*\*\*\*

One of the ironies of life, and of Scripture, is that often **the problem is its own solution**. Whatever was going on in Job's life--it worked; all of the suffering and anguish--it worked.

What was going on throughout the book of Job? Looking at the big picture, God is delivering, transforming, saving, winning. Job is a picture of your transformation ("Ouch!"). **The book of Job is about a process.**

Don't look for answers in Job. Look for process. The process **is** the answer; Job's problems are the solution.

Bible reading isn't so much a search for answers as it is time spent with God. The answer isn't in a verse or a theological principle. The real answer is the Bible's effect upon you--*the Word becomes flesh* not only for Jesus, but for all who avail themselves of its transforming power day by day.

\*\*\*\*\*

*How then can man be righteous before God?* (Job 25:4)

The wonder isn't that bad things happen to good people. **The wonder is that good things happen to bad people.**

The exchange between Satan and God reveals that there seems to be some measure of overarching universal justice which allows God to use only broken tools--the circumstances left in the wake of our sin-- to repair and renew lives:

Satan: "Look what sin has wrought."

God: "Then with these very circumstances, I will restore them."

This is making **good out of bad, which is God's greatest miracle by far. The primary example is, of course, the cross of Christ** where what sin has wrought--death, "the wages of sin"--was used to save the people.

Jesus Christ, growing up in Nazareth, immersed in scripture (1), came to the realization that only through suffering could there be salvation. And then came the realization that only His suffering would suffice. The cross, you see, is for all to carry. But there would be only one Christ. We suffer in vain, for we have brought it upon ourselves. He suffered, *the just for the unjust* (2 Peter 3:18), to pay the wages of our sin. There was no other Way (3).

\*\*\*\*\*

*There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil. (Job 1:1)*

*"I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job 42:5-6)*

### **Q. Job is righteous, but he must repent. How's that work?**

**A.** We say to the unbeliever, "*Believe in Jesus Christ, and you will be saved* (Acts 16:31). Have faith."

Well, Job already has faith: *I know that my Redeemer lives* (Job 19:25). He has faith like Abraham, whose *faith was accounted to him as righteousness* (Genesis 15:6). Thereby, Abraham is accredited with the righteousness of Christ; and so is Job--and so are you, if you have the faith that proclaims: "I know that my Redeemer, Jesus, lives."

So, why does Job need to repent?

**'Repent' means to turn**--from your own way to God's way. So when Job sees God, he says, *I'd heard of you, but now I see you. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes* (Job 42:5-6).

The more we learn about God, the more we learn about ourselves as well. The believer will see in himself attitudes and actions that are not in accordance with the attitudes and actions of Jesus. When we fall short of His standards, we repent--we re-align our lives.

Repentance--turning from our way to God's way--is how the **redeemed** child of God becomes more and more like his **Redeemer** every day.

\*\*\*\*\*

*I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. (42:5-6)*

Any understanding of the book of Job must arise out of these 2 verses. Job has reached a new comprehension of God. He is in a new relationship.

Repentance at its core is an acknowledgement of the truth.

Here is a sampling of some statements of repentance. Feel free to pray whichever of them fits your situation:

"You are God, and I am not." Praying this prayer of repentance, we enter into a brand new relationship with God.

"I cannot fix this life that I've broken. I tried every way I knew before I decided to try your way. Help me to do it your way this time." Praying this prayer of repentance, we enter into a brand new relationship with God.

"I had You figured. I was sure I could predict your next move. I'm sorry I boxed you in." Praying this prayer of repentance, we enter into a brand new relationship with God.

"I wondered where you were when I needed you. I'm sorry I doubted your heart and intentions." Praying this prayer of repentance, we enter into a brand new relationship with God.

You get the picture. I've prayed all of these and a thousand more. With every prayer of repentance, we open a gift--a brand new relationship with God.

For the child of God, repentance isn't about rules. It's about entering into a deeper trust and a deeper understanding--a deeper relationship with Jesus.

I had heard that the book of Job was a study in patience. Oh dear.

I had heard that the book of Job was about the question of why bad things happen to good people. Oh double dear.

I had heard that the book of Job was about repentance. I was getting closer.

Closer. That's where Job is at the end of the book. The book of Job is about relationship. The book of Job is about love.

\*\*\*\*\*

*I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You.  
Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*

***Therefore...***

Notice that Job repents **after** he enters into a new comprehension, a new relationship. We don't enter a new relationship because we repent, we repent because **we have entered** into a new relationship.

The ardent lover in scripture, the pursuer, is God. As our relationship with God deepens, it is God who initiates each new stage. God makes the first move:

*We love him, because **first** loved us* (1 John 4:19).

The revolutionary truth of Christianity is this:

**God doesn't save us because we're good. We're good because God saved us.**

The revolutionary truth of the book of Job is the same principle:

God doesn't love Job because he repents. Job repents because God loves him.

*It's His kindness that to repentance, we are taught in the New Testament (Romans 2:4).*

*Draw me, we will run after you, we read in the Song of Solomon (1:4). This is the expression of one who is in love with God, who desires a closer relationship with Him. But she realizes that we can't reach that state; we cannot attain to it because it is too high for us. So, "**Draw me (first)--then we will run after You.**"*

Consider:

*No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him (John 6:44).*

*And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself (John 12:32).*

God would move heaven and earth in pursuit of you. Why, He'd die on a cross, if that's what it took.

\*\*\*\*\*

*I put on righteousness, and it clothed me. (Job 29:14)*

Pride is a kind of spiritual madness, an insanity.

We define insanity as a detachment from reality. In the same way, **pride is a detachment from spiritual reality.**

Pride happens when we don't know God. When we don't know God, we can't know ourselves. Everything gets out of whack. The things that are most important are seen as less important; the central becomes tangential. We turn the realities of the universe on their heads.

We crown ourselves king, and place ourselves in God's stead. We won't admit it, because **the insanity of pride has blinded us to the truth.**

That's where Job is in chapters 28 and 29. He claims to have **put on righteousness**. But the Bible teaches that we have no righteousness in which to clothe ourselves. Therefore, Jesus had to *become sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him*. It is God who puts **His righteousness on us**.

Job has clothed himself in a non-existent "righteousness." Job is seeing things that don't exist. Job's pride has made him spiritually insane.

But God, through methods that include suffering, is in the process of restoring clarity to Job's mind.

Job is being prepared to meet God. When he does, Job will once again see things as they really are.

\*\*\*\*\*

*So these three men ceased answering Job, **he was righteous in his own eyes.***

*Then the wrath of Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, was aroused against Job; his wrath was aroused because **justified himself rather than God.***

*Also against his three friends his wrath was aroused, because **had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.** (Job 32:1-3)*

Throughout the speeches of Job and his three friends, a young man had been intently listening, without speaking. But now, he's heard enough. Enter Elihu.

Elihu is the voice that will come closest to the **whole truth** of God. Elihu won't get everything right in his reply to Job and the friends, but he comes closer than all of them. He prepares Job for the voice of God to follow.

Job is a tricky book, as has been previously noted, because not all of the thoughts presented are thoughts which God agrees with--and God will soon say so.

But Elihu is the voice which comes closest to the **whole truth**.

We take an oath before courtroom testimony--to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Why do we have to add "the whole truth." Isn't just "the truth" good enough? The answer is a resounding, "No."

The reason we must read the whole Bible is because unless we do, we can get a picture of Jesus that is out of balance. For example, it is true that He is the forgiving Savior. That's "the truth." But the whole truth is that He is also the Judge of all those who bypass the blood of His cross, and seek to come to God on their own terms.

Whole churches, entire denominations, present "the truth," but do not present the whole truth about Jesus Christ. Job and his three friends say many things that are "the truth"--but not the whole truth.

Be careful to read the entire Bible and decide for yourself whether your pastor, teacher, church, and denomination are presenting "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

If they are not--and even though you, like Elihu, may be young--listen respectfully, then step up and tell them that their picture of Jesus is distorted.

But before you do, you must study scripture--all of scripture. You must pray and serve God and, perhaps, suffer in His service. These are the prerequisites to the comprehension of the whole truth about Jesus.

\*\*\*\*\*

*...he multiplies words without knowledge. (Job 35:16)*

There is a lot of *multiplication of words without knowledge* going on around us.

Our faith is based on the Bible's revelation of Jesus Christ. The Bible has stood firm, unchanging for thousands of years.

Many have tried to take it down, to topple it. Its detractors have come and gone. Not one of them has disproved a thing about scripture.

Scripture's view of man's lost, sinful nature has proven more and more obviously true: just open your newspaper, your internet, your window.

Scripture's prophecies have aligned before our very eyes. The central prophetic vision--predicting in minutest detail the coming of the Messiah, the Savior from sin--was exactly fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Billions are devoted to him. He turned time and space and thought upside down.

If anyone (perhaps at school or from your neighborhood) assails you for your faith in Jesus and for reading your Bible, then here's what to do: **be like Jesus and ask him a question or two.** (In the gospel of Matthew alone, Jesus asked over 80 questions. He knew the truth. **What he was looking for were their versions of it**, in order to set the record straight.) Don't go on the defensive, but put them on the defensive about what they believe.

Somebody might reply that they believe in nothing. That is a faith. Ask them how that's working out for them. Is it sustaining, inspiring?

Or maybe they say they believe in "science." Point out that God created science--the laws governing the physical universe. Then point out that man's "scientific" theories have changed about as often as the wind has changed direction. What was taken as scientific fact just years ago has proved laughable, embarrassing. "Science" is a moving target, but it's easy to shoot down.

The Bible stands tall, firm, never changing. And still they cannot shoot it down. Scripture, over time, makes monkeys out of its detractors.

Say so, with a calm voice and demeanor. Turn the tables on them. Ask them to prove their beliefs. Peel back the onion, layer by layer. It won't be long before your questioning will reveal an emptiness at the core of their beliefs.

\*\*\*\*\*

*For He is not a man, as I am, that I may answer Him, and that we should go to court together. (Job 9:32)*

Sometimes we picture Judgment Day as the day when we shall stand before God to plead our case. This is a misleading picture. That we will stand before God is true. **But we will not speak (\*\*\*)**. The truth of Jesus' sacrifice, when he took our place on the cross, will be the only "voice" at Judgment:  
*The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground (Genesis 4:10).*

By this "voice," God will determine whether or not we placed our trust in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins.

If you are God's child through faith in Jesus Christ, then *your brother's blood cries out to God*. But if you have not taken your sins to the cross of Christ, there will be heard no voice--neither God's voice nor your voice nor the voice of your Brother's blood--to plead your case:  
*He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life (1 John 5:12).*

The blood of Christ will speak forgiveness, or there will be heard no voice at all.

--"Next."

(\*\*\*) See Matthew 22:1-12, a picture of Judgment. The symbol of the "wedding garment" is used to depict the righteousness of God, imparted to those who trust in the blood of Christ for forgiveness of sins. Note especially *speechless* in 22:12. (2) Genesis 4:10; (3) 1 John 5:12

\*\*\*\*\*