Signs in John's Gospel

Signs Relating to Israel and the Kingdom

A Study about the Structure of and Purpose for John's Gospel

Arlen L. Chitwood

According to John 20:30, 31, Jesus performed numerous signs during His earthly ministry (far more than the thirty-six recorded in the four gospels). And the Spirit of God singled out eight signs from among the numerous signs which Christ had performed and moved John to record them in his gospel, for *a STATED PURPOSE*:

> "…that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (v. 31b).

Thus, the Spirit of God, after He had moved John to record these eight signs, then moved John to provide *the REASON why this had been done* — something stated in such a manner that *it should NOT be missed by anyone.*

These eight signs were originally performed and later recorded in order that those requiring a sign, the Jewish people (I Cor. 1:22), might "believe that Jesus is the Christ [the Messiah, the One Who was to rule and reign], the Son of God [God's Firstborn Son, the One Whom God recognized as possessing the rights of primogeniture]." And, through believing the preceding, resulting from the manifested signs, the Jewish people "might have *life* through his name [*NOT* eternal life (which they already possessed) *BUT life* in keeping with that to which the signs pointed — *life in the proffered kingdom*]."

The recipients of and the subject matter surrounding the appearance of "signs" in Scripture *are ALWAYS the same. WITHOUT exception*, "signs" in Scripture *ALWAYS have to do with two inseparable things*:

1) *Israel*
2) *The Kingdom*

The signs in John's gospel were recorded for and directed to the same people for whom the signs had previously been performed and directed — *the Jewish people.* And these signs, in both instances — both during Christ's earthly ministry and following His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension — had to do with *the subject matter at hand.* These signs had to do with *the offer (in the gospels), then the re-offer (in Acts), of the kingdom of the heavens to Israel.*

Signs
in
John's Gospel

Signs Relating to Israel and the Kingdom

“And many other signs truely did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” (John 20:30, 31).

Cover Photograph: The Rio Grande valley in southwest Texas, looking southwest into Mexico, 2006.

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John's Gospel

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by
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The
Lamp Broadcast, Inc.
225 S. Cottonwood Ranch Rd.
Cottonwood, Arizona 86326

www.lampbroadcast.org

Original Printing 2007
Revised 2012, 2019
(Revisions for Web-Site Only
Not Reprinted)

By the Same Author —

RUTH
ESTHER
BY FAITH
RUN TO WIN
LET US GO ON
MOSES AND JOHN
END OF THE DAYS
IN THE LORD'S DAY
DISTANT HOOFBEATS
THE BRIDE IN GENESIS
SO GREAT SALVATION
SEARCH FOR THE BRIDE
GOD'S FIRSTBORN SONS
WE ARE ALMOST THERE
SALVATION OF THE SOUL
HAD YE BELIEVED MOSES
THE MOST HIGH RULETH
THE SPIRITUAL WARFARE
THE STUDY OF SCRIPTURE
FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN
MYSTERY OF THE WOMAN
COMING IN HIS KINGDOM
SEVEN, TEN GENERATIONS
REDEEMED FOR A PURPOSE
JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST
THE RAPTURE AND BEYOND
FROM ACTS TO THE EPISTLES
MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM
PROPHECY ON MOUNT OLIVET
NEVER AGAIN! OR YES, AGAIN!
THE TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE
BROUGHT FORTH FROM ABOVE
ISRAEL — FROM DEATH TO LIFE
JUDE — ACTS OF THE APOSTATES
O SLEEPER! ARISE, CALL…! (JONAH)
THE TIME OF THE END (REVELATION)
MIDDLE EAST PEACE — HOW? WHEN?
SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH
MESSAGE IN THE GOSPELS, ACTS, EPISTLES
ISRAEL — WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

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FOREWORD

The New Testament, a continuation of the Old, opens with four gospel accounts. These four gospels record God dwelling among the Jewish people for a period of time once again, though in a manner *quite different* than previously seen in the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament God had dwelt among His people, in the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle and Temple, within a theocracy (Ex. 25:8, 9, 21, 22; 33:7-11, 18-23; 40:33, 34; Lev. 16:6, 7, 17, 18; II Chron. 5:1-14).

In the New Testament God is seen becoming flesh and dwelling (tabernacling) among His people in the person of His Son (John 1:1-14). And God dwelling among His people after this fashion at this time was done apart from an existing theocracy.

> ("Dwelt" in John 1:14 is a translation of the Greek verb, *skenoo.* The noun form of this word, *skene,* means a "tent" or a "dwelling place," often used in the New Testament to reference the Old Testament "tabernacle," which was a tent; and, textually, the type dwelling seen through the use of the verb, *skenoo* — Christ dwelling among the Jewish people — draws from *the tabernacle* in the Old Testament [typifying, in its entirety, different aspects of the person and work of Christ].)

The Old Testament theocracy came to an end at the time of the Babylonian captivity (Ezek. 10:4, 18; 11:22, 23). And though a temple existed in Israel six centuries later, at the time of Christ's first coming, *there was NO Glory in the temple and, thus, NO existing (NO restored) theocracy.*

> (Note in the preceding respect Ezekiel's account of the future restoration of the Glory, and thus a restoration of the theocracy. The Glory will be restored to the temple which Messiah Himself will build [Zech. 6:12, 13], following His return. Then God will, once again, tabernacle among His people [Ezek. 43:2-5].)

God, tabernacling among His people in the person of His Son, as seen in the four gospel accounts, offered to the Jewish people *a restoration of the theocracy, contingent on national repentance* (Matt. 3:1, 2; 4:17-25; 10:5-8; *cf.* Acts 1:6; 2:37, 38; 3:19-21 [an offer of the kingdom is seen in the gospel accounts, and a subsequent reoffer of the kingdom is seen in the Book of Acts]).

This restored theocracy though would not come at this time through an offer and reception of the kingdom covenanted to David (that facet of the kingdom which had existed in the Old Testament for about eight centuries and which will exist once again yet future [II Sam. 7:12-16; II Chron. 6:16; 7:17, 18]). Rather, the restored theocracy at this time would come through an offer and reception of *the kingdom of the heavens* (*cf.* Gen. 22:17, 18; Matt. 4:17-25).

Two Realms of the Kingdom

The kingdom as it relates to this earth, whether past, present, or future, consists of two realms — *heavenly* and *earthly.* "The heavens do rule" (Dan. 4:26b), whether from God's throne in the far reaches of the north or from the throne of a ruler whom God has placed over a province in His kingdom (the earth being one such province).

The proffered kingdom of the heavens had to do with *the heavenly part of the theocracy,* not the earthly part which had previously existed. That is, at the time of Christ's first coming, the Jewish people were offered *the heavenly part of God's overall kingdom in relation to this earth, ruled at that time (with a continuing, unchanged rule today) by Satan and his angels from a heavenly realm* (*cf.* Dan. 4:25, 26; Eph. 1:19-21; 3:9-11; 6:12).

But the Jewish people *spurned the offer* (Matt. 12:22-32), *rejecting the One Who had made the offer* (Israel's announced King [Matt. 2:2], God Himself, dwelling in the nation's midst once again). And the Jewish people climaxed this rejection by not only crucifying their King (very God of very God) but also by pledging their allegiance to the Gentile ruler of the world power of that day — Caesar — a pagan ruler exercising power directly under Satan and his angels (Dan. 4:25, 26; 10:12-14, 20; Matt. 21:38, 39; John 19:14, 15).

Nothing in the annals of Israel's history presents a bleaker picture than can be seen in the events surrounding Israel's crucifixion of the nation's King. God's firstborn son (Ex. 4:22, 23), *the only nation on the face of the earth in possession of the rights of primogeniture,* which included *the regal rights among the nations, not only called for their King's crucifixion but placed themselves in subjection to a pagan Gentile ruler.*

Through so doing, the people comprising the one nation on earth which existed apart from Satan's kingdom and rule (Dan. 10:21) removed themselves from any possibility of a restored theocracy at this time and placed themselves, *regally,* in subjection to a ruler and nation which existed within Satan's kingdom and under his rule.

And, through this means, the nation called into existence to be the channel through which God would bless all of the Gentile nations further removed itself from this position. This left all of the Gentile nations continuing in their estranged and alienated position (Eph. 2:11, 12), with God's blessings for the nations, through Israel, withheld because of Israel's actions (Gen. 9:26, 27; 12:1-3).

Then the gospels end by recording Jesus' resurrection and brief accounts of His earthly ministry prior to His ascension, with Mark and Luke including a statement at the end of their gospels concerning Jesus' ascension back into the heavens (Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51).

Same Message in All Four Gospels

All four gospels present *exactly the same message,* though each presents the message from *a different perspective.* Each gospel has *its own peculiar place* in presenting *one part, one facet, of a complete word picture.* And the picture becomes complete, as God would have man to see it, *ONLY through viewing that revealed in all four gospels together.*

This same thing is seen in the types, the parables, and other parts of Scripture.

NO one type on a subject records the complete picture pertaining to that subject. Rather, *ALL of the types, set alongside the antitype(s),* record the complete word picture.

Likewise, *NO single parable* on a subject records the complete picture pertaining to that subject. Rather, exactly as in the types, *all of the parables, set alongside that to which they relate (prior revelation),* record the complete word picture.

And, *Scripture as a WHOLE* can be viewed in exactly the same light. *NO single book* out of the sixty-six books comprising the canon of Scripture presents the complete picture in and of itself. Rather, *ALL sixty-six books taken together* present the complete word picture of God's revelation to man concerning Himself, His plans, and His purposes as they pertain to man and the earth.

And God's plans and purposes pertaining to man and the earth have to do with man not only exercising *regal power and authority* over the earth (millennial) but with man ultimately exercising *regal power and authority* out in the universe itself (beyond the Millennium, in the eternal ages).

> (Scripture throughout is centrally about the former [man and the earth], with very little stated about the latter [man and the universe at large]. Scripture has to do centrally with events relating to man and the earth, extending over 7,000 years of time — from the creation of Adam to the end of the Messianic Kingdom, covering Man's Day [6,000 years] and the Lord's Day [1,000 years].
>
> Very little is stated about that which occurred before this time or that which will occur after this time. God though has provided enough information about conditions outside the 7,000 years of time that man can take this information, in conjunction with the remainder of Scripture, and see the complete picture of God's plans and purposes relating to His government of the universe — past, present, and future.)

The gospel of John records one facet of the complete word picture as it would pertain to the message presented by the four gospels; and John presents this in *a manner quite different than that seen in the other three gospels.* John records historical information, structured after a particular fashion, as do the other gospels. But John, led by the Spirit, recorded eight signs around which this historical account is built, *for a specifically stated PURPOSE* (five of these signs are peculiar to John's gospel); and *this PURPOSE* is revealed near the end of the gospel, in John 20:30, 31 (see rear cover data of this book):

> "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:
>
> But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that by believing ye might have life through his name."

The recording of John's gospel, in this respect, stands alone. None of the other three gospels records a statement of this nature.

But, though the gospel stands alone in this respect, it forms an integral part of the complete, overall word picture presented by all four gospels. And, in this manner, John's gospel can only reflect upon and show *the PURPOSE for a manifestation of signs* seen throughout Jesus' earthly ministry, set forth in the other three gospel accounts as well.

And viewing *the PURPOSE for these signs after a correct fashion forms a major KEY necessary to properly understand the central message seen throughout all four gospels.*

> (Israel in the Old Testament was made the repository for both spheres of the kingdom, *both heavenly and earthly* [Gen. 22:17, 18]. And at some point in time Israel must come into possession of, or at least be offered *the complete kingdom, both heavenly and earthly spheres.*
>
> The Gentile nations were, remain today, and will always remain, *completely estranged from anything having to do with God's dealings with Israel in this respect* [Eph. 2:12].
>
> Israel realized the earthly portion of the kingdom during and following Moses' day. But, because of continued disobedience over about an eight-hundred-year period, the kingdom was eventually taken from Israel; and the Jewish people then found themselves uprooted from their land and driven out among the Gentile nations, to effect repentance, with a view to the restoration of both the Jewish people and the theocracy.
>
> Apart from repentance, the Jewish people will remain scattered among the nations; but, with repentance, the Jewish people will be regathered from the nations, restored to their land, and the kingdom will be restored to Israel [Lev. 26:40-42; II Chron. 6:24-27; 7:12-14].
>
> At the time of Christ's first coming, Israel was offered *the heavenly portion of the kingdom.* But the Jewish people spurned the offer and crucified the One making the offer, God Himself, manifested in the flesh in the person of His Son.

This aspect of the kingdom was then taken from Israel [Matt. 21:33-45], the nation was set aside for a dispensation [lasting 2,000 years], and an entirely new creation [*the one new man*, "in Christ"] was called into existence to be the recipient of that which Israel had rejected [II Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:14, 15; I Peter 2:9, 10].

The earthly sphere of the kingdom though is an entirely different matter. This can never be taken from Israel; and once the nation has been brought to the place of repentance [through persecution at the hands of the Gentile nations where Israel has been driven for this very purpose], the kingdom will be restored to Israel.

Repentance on the part of the Jewish people and the restoration of the Jewish people to their land, with the theocracy restored to Israel, will occur during and following the coming Tribulation [repentance during, restoration following].

Then God's complete purpose for calling this nation into existence will be realized during the ensuing Lord's Day, the 1,000-year reign of Christ over the earth.

For additional information on the two spheres of the kingdom — heavenly and earthly — refer to the author's book, *Message in the Gospels, Acts, Epistles*.)

INTRODUCTION

When studying the Scriptures — whether the Old Testament or the New Testament — one is studying about *Jesus the Christ,* Whom God has "appointed heir of all things" (Luke 24:25-27; Heb. 1:2). There is *NOTHING* in the New Testament that is not seen *after some fashion* in the Old. The New Testament is simply a revealing, an unveiling, of God's Son, as previously introduced in the Old Testament Scriptures.

"Jesus" is *the Word made "flesh,"* referring, in an inseparable sense, to both *the Old Testament Scriptures* and to *God* becoming "flesh" in the person of *His Son.*

"Jesus" is NOT ONLY God manifested in the flesh BUT the Old Testament Scriptures manifested in the flesh as well.

There is "the written Word," inseparably identified with "God," and there is this same Word manifested in the form of "flesh," *with life and inseparability seen throughout.*

> "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
>
> The same was in the beginning with God…
>
> And the Word was made ['the Word became'] flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:1, 2, 14).

One Person, One Goal

Thus, "studying Scripture," one is simply *studying about God's Son.* And note that *the Word* became "flesh" *after* the whole of the Old Testament had been penned but *before* a single word of the New Testament had been penned. In this respect, one would have to conclude that *there is NOTHING in the New that is not seen after some fashion in the Old, ELSE God's Son — the Word becoming* "flesh" — would have been *incomplete* at the time of His incarnation.

Then, in John 1:14, *the Word* becoming "flesh" is seen in connection with two things:

1) Christ's Sonship, God's Firstborn ("sonship" implies *rulership,* and it is *firstborn sons* who rule in the human realm).
2) Christ's Glory.

All of this can only take one back to the beginning of God's revelation of His Son, back to the opening verses of Genesis. That which God desires man to know about His plans and purposes, which He will bring to pass *through His Son,* begin at this point.

And *everything* from this point forward is *REGAL. Everything* has to do with *God's Son, God's Firstborn, Who has been "appointed heir of all things."* And *everything moves toward that day when God's Son will come forth in all His Glory and realize this inheritance.*

The Old Testament opens this way, providing *the complete story in the opening book.*

And *the New Testament opens EXACTLY the same way,* providing commentary on the manner in which the Old Testament opens, providing *the complete story, after another fashion, in one book as well.*

Scripture begins in Genesis with, "In the beginning… [*lit.,* 'In beginning…'],"and the New Testament begins exactly the same way, though a problem exists because of the manner in which man has arranged the four gospels beginning the New Testament.

The Gospel of John is the only gospel which begins the same way Genesis begins, "In the beginning… [*lit.,* 'In beginning…'],"along with the fact that both Genesis and John parallel one another completely, from beginning to end.

Thus, if the Gospel of John occupied its proper place in the arrangement of books in the New Testament, both books, Genesis and John, would not only introduce each Testament *EXACTLY the same way but both of these books would relate the COMPLETE story of each Testament — the COMPLETE story of Scripture as a WHOLE — at the beginning of each Testament.*

(John's gospel, over the years, has been the one gospel among the four which has provided problems for those arranging the order of the

four gospels introducing the New Testament. New Testaments have been printed in the past with John occupying different places among the four, even placed at the beginning of the four gospels.

However, the Gospel of John is presently in the wrong place in relation to the other three [placed after the other three rather than at the beginning]. And this, along with Christians not understanding the structure of both Genesis and John — paralleling one another, introducing each Testament, and relating the complete story of Scripture — can only be responsible, in no small part, for an existing Biblical ignorance among Christians concerning the central message of Scripture.

And a purported late date for the writing of John's gospel [usually seen as about 90 A.D.] has not helped matters in the preceding respect. John's gospel, of necessity, by its own internal evidence, had to be written much earlier.

Since the gospel was directed to the Jewish people during the reoffer of the kingdom of the heavens to Israel [evident by *the signs* (*cf.* I Cor. 1:22) in conjunction with that stated in John 20:30, 31 concerning *the purpose for these signs*], it could not possibly have been written after about 63 A.D. [when this reoffer closed] and may have been written as early as about 40-45 A.D. [an early date accepted by a number of scholars on the basis of late manuscript evidence].

In fact, because of the place which John's gospel occupies in relation to the other three [paralleling the place which Genesis occupies in relation to the other four books of Moses], it is very likely that John's gospel was written first, before the other three.

> [For additional information on the preceding, refer to Chapters I, V and XVIII in this book, "Purpose for John's Gospel" "Genesis, John," and "These Are Written, That…"].

Also, note that placing John's gospel at the beginning of the New Testament would allow Luke's gospel to be followed by the Book of Acts. And these two books [both written by Luke] belong together as much as John belongs at the beginning of the gospels.

Luke ends his gospel by relating things about *Christ's ascension*; and he continues this in Acts, with added detail. The only other gospel writer mentioning this is Mark, apart from detail such as Luke provides.

The four gospel writers present *the offer of the kingdom of the heavens to Israel.* Acts, forming a continuation and somewhat of a fifth gospel, presents *the reoffer of the kingdom to Israel.*

Then, with the New Testament structured in this manner, *a Pentateuch* is seen beginning both Testaments.)

Comparing Genesis and John

Genesis, in the opening two chapters, begins with:

1) A creation at a beginning point (1:1).
2) A subsequent ruin of the creation (1:2a).
3) A restoration of the ruined creation (material creation), through Divine intervention, over six days time (1:2b-25).
4) Man created on the sixth day, following all of God's restorative work, for a revealed purpose having to do with the seventh day (1:26-31).
5) God resting on the seventh day, following all of His work (2:1-3).

John, in the opening two chapters, begins with:

1) A creation at a beginning point (1:1-3).
2) A subsequent ruin of the creation (1:4, 5).
3) A restoration of the ruined creation (ruined man), through Divine intervention, over six days time (1:6-2:1 [1:29, 35, 43; 2:1]).
4) Man seen as redeemed at the end of six days, following all of God's restorative work, for a revealed purpose having to do with the seventh day (2:2-11).
5) God resting on the seventh day, following all of His work (2:2-11).

In Genesis, the restoration is that of the material creation, foreshadowing the restoration of man even before his creation and fall.

In John, the restoration is that of ruined man, foreshadowed in the Genesis account.

In both, the purpose is the same — placing restored man (redeemed man) on a restored earth (a redeemed earth), in a regal position, on the seventh day.

And this septenary, foundational overview, seen in the opening two chapters of each book, relates *the complete story of Scripture.* Each of the six days of God's restorative work, foreshadowed in either account (Genesis or John), has to do with days of *1,000 years each* (*cf.* II Peter 1:15-18; 3:3-8).

That is to say, God is presently working six days, 6,000 years, to bring about the restoration of both man and the material creation. Then, at the conclusion of His work, man will be in a position *to realize the purpose for his creation in the beginning.*

Man, *during the seventh day, the seventh 1,000-year day,* will be in a position *to rule a restored earth with the second Man, the last Adam.*

The preceding is the parallel manner in which both books begin; and from this point in both books, the parallel continues.

Genesis is built around *numerous types,* and John is built around *eight signs.*

The types in Genesis have to do centrally with Abraham and his seed through Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's progeny through his twelve sons — the nation of Israel. And all of these types provide different facets of *God's present restorative work,* ending at the same place as *His past restorative work,* on the seventh day, the seventh 1,000-year period.

The signs in John have to do with, and are directed to, the seed of Abraham through Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's progeny through his twelve sons — the nation of Israel.

And all of these signs, exactly as the types in Genesis, provide different facets of *God's present restorative work,* ending at the same place as *His past restorative work,* on the seventh day, the seventh 1,000-year period.

(Scripture was established in this type structure at the beginning of each Testament. And, within this structure, the relationship of John to Genesis is typical of the relationship of the whole of the New Testament to the whole of the Old Testament.

The New Testament, through various means [signs, parables, metaphors, other means] simply provides commentary, opens up, that previously seen after some fashion in the Old Testament [types, metaphors, the Prophets, etc.].)

The whole of Scripture is about *Jesus the Christ.* And the whole of Scripture moves toward *a seventh day, a seventh 1,000-year period,* when God's firstborn Son, *God's Christ*, will come into possession of His inheritance; and *Israel* [presently God's firstborn son (Ex. 4:22, 23)] and *the Church* [to be revealed as God's firstborn son in that coming day following the adoption (Rom. 8:14-23; Heb. 12:22, 23)] will inherit with God's Son and realize that seen in the opening chapter of Genesis at the time of man's creation:

> "…let them have dominion [Heb., *radah*, 'rule'; '…let them rule']" (Gen. 1:26, 28).

1

Purpose for John's Gospel

Plainly Stated in John 20:30, 31

"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30, 31).

Each of the four gospels beginning the New Testament — Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John — provides an overall account of events occurring during Christ's first appearance to the nation of Israel, concluding with accounts in each gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of *the One Who had been spoken of in various and sundry ways throughout all of the Old Testament Scriptures* (*cf.* Luke 24:25-27, 32, 44, 45; John 5:39-47; Heb. 1:1, 2). In this respect, the four gospels simply form *a continuation of the Old Testament, providing additional light for and commentary on that which God had previously revealed.*

The four gospels are divided into two main categories — the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) and the one gospel which stands separate and alone in this respect (John).

The term "synoptic" in relation to the first three gospels has to do with two things:

1) A common arrangement of events.

2) A synopsis of events covering the whole of Christ's earthly ministry.

Though each of the three synoptic gospels has its own peculiar structure and was written for a particular reason, all three are classed together in the preceding respect. Most of the same material found in any one of the three synoptic gospels can be found in the other two.

For example, more than ninety percent of the material found throughout Mark's gospel can be found in both Matthew's and Luke's gospels. Then each one of these three gospels presents a similar overall synopsis covering numerous events which occurred throughout the three to three and one-half-year ministry of Christ.

John's gospel though is *completely different in both respects.* More than ninety percent of the material found throughout John's gospel is *peculiar to his gospel.* Even while covering events surrounding Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, John provides *numerous details not seen in the other gospels.* And, as well, John does not cover events after a manner which provides *a synopsis of Christ's overall ministry, as seen in the other gospels.*

Thus, the gospel of John contains *these two distinctive features* when compared to the synoptic gospels.

But there is *an additional distinctive feature,* which has to do with *the revealed reason surrounding the purpose for the existence of John's gospel, governing the manner in which this gospel is structured.* And this is something which would *evidently necessitate a gospel structured quite different than the other three.*

Central Message in the Gospels

Revelation in all four gospels centers around *events occurring during the time when the kingdom of the heavens was being offered to Israel,* and each gospel has its own peculiar structure in this respect. The offer of the kingdom of the heavens to Israel *began* with the ministry of John the Baptist, and it was *continued* by Christ and His disciples — first the Twelve, then Seventy others (Matt. 3:1-12; 4:12-25; 10:1-42; Luke 10:1-24; John 1:15-36; 3:22-24).

The message, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand," was proclaimed to *the Jewish people ALONE* (Matt. 3:1; 4:17; 10:5-7; 15:22-24). It was a call for *Israel's national repentance,*

with a view to the nation coming into possession of that which lay under the control of Satan and his angels — *delegated regal power, from a heavenly sphere, over the Gentile nations.*

In keeping with the subject matter of the gospels, numerous *signs* (miraculous works performed by Christ, directed to Israel) can be seen in each. There are *thirty-six separate signs* recorded in the four gospels, with many of them repeated in each of the three synoptic gospels.

John, in his gospel, records *eight signs.* But, even in this respect, John's gospel is again markedly different. Five of the eight signs which John records are *peculiar to his gospel alone.* And, along with this fact, *the stated purpose for recording these previously performed signs occurs near the close of his gospel — something also peculiar to John's gospel.*

According to John 20:30, 31, Jesus performed numerous signs during His earthly ministry (far more than the thirty-six recorded in the four gospels). And the Spirit of God singled out *eight signs* from among the numerous signs which Christ had performed and moved John to record them in his gospel, *for a stated purpose*:

> "…that ye [the Jewish people] might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (v. 31b).

Thus, the Spirit of God, *AFTER* He had moved John *to record these eight signs,* then moved John *to provide the REASON this had been done — something stated in such a manner that it should NOT be missed by anyone.*

These eight signs were originally performed and later recorded in order that those requiring a sign, *the Jewish people* (I Cor. 1:22), might not only believe that *"Jesus is the Christ"* (the Messiah, the One Who is to rule and reign) but also *"the Son of God"* (not only God's Son, but *God's firstborn Son*, the One Whom God recognizes to possess the rights of primogeniture).

And through believing the preceding, *resulting from the manifested signs, the Jewish people* "…might have life through his name [*NOT eternal life (which they already possessed) BUT life in keeping with that to which the signs pointed — life in the proffered kingdom*]."

The recipients of and the subject matter surrounding the appearance of "signs" in Scripture are ALWAYS the same. Without exception, "signs" in Scripture *ALWAYS* have two things in view:

1) They are directed to Israel.
2) They pertain to the kingdom.

The signs in John's gospel were recorded for and directed to *the SAME people* for whom the signs had previously been performed and directed — *the Jewish people.*

And these signs, in *BOTH* instances — *BOTH* during Christ's earthly ministry and following His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension — had to do with *the subject matter at hand.* These signs had to do with *the offer of the kingdom of the heavens to Israel.*

(The first of only two manifestations of *signs* in the O.T. occurred during Moses and Joshua's day; and it had to do with *Israel* and *the kingdom.* [*cf.* Ex. 4:29-31; 7:10ff; Deut. 6:22, 23; Joshua 3:7ff; 10:12, 14]. *This established an UNCHANGEABLE, first-mention principle concerning signs.*

And the only other manifestation of *signs* in the O.T. occurred during Elijah and Elisha's day; and, *because of the way in which the matter had previously been introduced and established, these signs could only have had to do with the SAME thing* [*cf.* I Kings 17:1ff; II Kings 2:13ff (note also the account of Jonah, a *type* referred to by Christ as a "sign," which, again, has to do with *Israel in relation to the kingdom* — Matt. 12:38-41)].

Thus, in the N.T., both *during* and *immediately following* Christ's earthly ministry, the manifestation of signs, of necessity, *had to surround EXACTLY the SAME subject* — in this case, *a message to Israel pertaining to the kingdom.*)

BOTH Israel and the kingdom MUST be present for "signs" to exist.

If EITHER is absent (*Israel,* or *the kingdom*), "signs" of the nature seen in the four gospels (where there is an offer of the kingdom to Israel) or in the Book of Acts (where there is a re-offer of the kingdom to Israel) *CANNOT exist.*

And a knowledge of this fact will provide a window for dating the time John would have had to write his gospel. Because of *the stated reason* for writing the gospel, it could *ONLY* have been written *during the time when the re-offer of the kingdom was still open to Israel* (a period covering about thirty years, from 33 A.D. to about 62 A.D.).

(Some expositors over the years have sought to date John's gospel as early as 40-45 A.D., though most today contend for a much later date — closer to 90 A.D. However, with its structure and stated purpose, writing the gospel at a time following the close of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel *could NOT possibly be correct.* And there is really *NO valid reason* for assigning a late date to John's gospel.

The subject matter and content of John's gospel, of necessity, place the writing *sometime prior to about 62 A.D.* Note the prevalence of "signs" in the Book of Acts, which historically covers the period during which the kingdom was re-offered to Israel, from 33 A.D. to about 62 A.D. [*cf.* 2:43; 5:12-16; 6:8; 8:6-8; 9:36-41; 14:3, 8-18; 15:12; 19:11, 12; 20:9-12; 28:3-9].)

Also, viewing John's gospel in its correct setting — *calling specific attention to eight previously performed signs, signs now directed to Israel during a time when the kingdom was being re-offered to the nation* — will, for the most part, *do away* with the numerous textual problems which often surface through viewing the gospel in an incorrect setting. The eight signs, forming a framework around which this gospel was structured, were recorded for *a stated purpose.* And that purpose, as previously shown, clearly had to do with *Israel* and *the kingdom,* not with salvation by grace (as is so often erroneously read into the text).

Ignoring this fact and reading salvation by grace into John 20:30, 31 *can only result in confusion when seeking to properly understand different parts of John's gospel.*

The recording of past events, forming John's gospel, as previously stated, was directed *to a people who were already saved* (as were the events when they had previously occurred during the original offer of the kingdom).

It is EXACTLY the SAME message proclaimed to the SAME people, at a later time, referencing the SAME signs previously performed.

An offer of this nature *could NEVER be extended to the unsaved.* The unsaved are in *NO* position to be the recipients of such an offer. That is to say, spiritually dead people *could NEVER* be expected to understand that which is *spiritual, dealing with life* (*i.e.,* the things to which these "signs" pointed), whether recorded in the four gospels or in the Book of Acts (I Cor. 2:9-14).

(The Gospel of John, as often erroneously taught on the basis of an incorrect understanding of John 20:30, 31, is *NOT* the one gospel written to tell a person how to be saved — *a thought COMPLETELY out of line with the revealed purpose for signs.* It is no more the one gospel written to tell a person how to be saved than Romans is the one epistle written for this purpose [a parallel, erroneous misconception concerning Romans in relation to the remainder of the N.T. epistles].

John, in his gospel, deals centrally with *EXACTLY* the same overall message seen in the other three gospels, though from a particular and peculiar perspective [which includes the reason for recording eight previously performed signs, around which the gospel is structured].

And Paul, in Romans, in like manner, deals centrally with *EXACTLY* the same overall message seen in the other twenty epistles, though from a particular and peculiar perspective [which includes numerous verses relating to the subject matter at hand (*cf.* 1:1-4; 2:5-10, 16; 3:23; 5:2; 8:14-23; 16:25)].

All four gospels belong together in one respect, all twenty-one epistles belong together in another respect, the Book of Acts forms a bridge between the two, the Book of Revelation forms the climax to the matter, and the whole of the N.T. is simply a continuation of and conclusion to the O.T.

For additional information pertaining to different things dealt with in the several paragraphs preceding this indented material — the central message proclaimed throughout the four gospels and the Book of Acts, the true nature of signs in this overall section of Scripture, and the saved status of the Jewish people at the time of Christ's first coming — refer to the author's books, *Message in the Gospels, Acts, Epistles* and *From Acts to the Epistles*.)

Israel and the Kingdom
Old Testament, New Testament

With the call of Abraham in Genesis, the nation emanating from his loins through Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's twelve sons was made the repository for *BOTH heavenly and earthly promises and blessings* (Gen. 13:16; 14:18, 19; 15:5; 22:17, 18; 26:3, 4; 28:14; 32:12; 37:5-9; Ex. 32:13; Heb. 11:12). And *BOTH* are brought into full view in relation to Israel in Scripture — the latter in the Old Testament, the former in the New Testament.

The earthly promises and blessings, to be realized through Israel, were brought into full view in the Old Testament theocracy. Israel, in this respect, was called out of Egypt under Moses in *a dual capacity* — as both *God's firstborn son* and *the wife of Jehovah.*

The first (God recognizing Israel as *His firstborn son* [Ex. 4:22, 23]) was necessary for the nation under Moses to exercise *the rights of the firstborn in a national respect.* Israel was called into existence to be *the ruling nation among the nations of the earth.* Israel was to exercise the rights of primogeniture within God's house. And exercising these rights, Israel was not only to rule within the house but was to be the nation through which blessings would flow out to all the surrounding Gentile nations.

And *the second* (God recognizing Israel as *His wife* [Isa. 54:5; Jer. 3:8-14; Hosea 2:19, 20]) was necessary because of the way God had established matters in *the opening two chapters of Genesis.* Man had been created to rule the earth, in Satan's stead. But, for revealed reasons, the man could not rule alone. The man and the woman *MUST rule together,* he as king and she as consort queen.

And God having established matters in this respect in the beginning could rule in the kingdom of men *ONLY in accord with that which He Himself had previously set forth.* He could rule, with man exercising the rights of primogeniture, *ONLY through a Husband-wife relationship, else He would violate His Own Word.*

(For additional information on the preceding [Israel as both *God's firstborn son and God's wife*], refer to the author's books, *God's Firstborn Sons,* pp. 11-21 and *Salvation of the Soul,* pp. 22-25.)

After the Old Testament theocracy had been established, with Israel in the land, problems began to emerge because of Israel's actions. Israel, the wife of Jehovah, *rather than remaining faithful to her Husband and doing that which He had commanded, became unfaithful.* The wife of Jehovah began *to commit harlotry* through having illicit and forbidden relationships with the surrounding nations (*cf.* Isa. 1:21a; Jer. 3:1b, 3b).

Time after time *Israel went astray* in this manner, and time after time *judgment befell God's people.* The people would then *repent,* with *deliverance* following; but it was never long before the cycle,

beginning with Israel going astray, would be repeated all over again (*cf.* Judges 2:16-19; 3:7-15).

Continued cycles of this nature — *disobedience, judgment, repentance,* and *deliverance* — relate the story of the Jewish people throughout the Old Testament theocracy. And though God, in His longsuffering, allowed these cycles to continue for centuries, He could not allow them to continue indefinitely.

God is longsuffering as He deals with mankind (His people, et al.) relative to disobedience, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (*cf.* I Tim. 1:16; I Peter 3:20; II Peter 3:9, 15).

But once one's cup of iniquity becomes full (whether an individual, a nation, or nations [*cf.* Gen. 15:16]), God invariably steps in and often moves swiftly in definite and particular ways, *always in COMPLETE accord with that which He has revealed in His Word.*

And this is *EXACTLY* what occurred when matters reached the state vividly revealed to Isaiah in a vision (Isa. 1:1-15).

With the nation's cup of iniquity *having become full,* God allowed the Assyrians to come down about 722 B.C. and take the northern ten tribes into captivity and the Babylonians to come over slightly more than one hundred years later, about 605 B.C., and take the remaining southern two tribes into captivity.

In Leviticus chapter twenty-six and Deuteronomy chapter twenty-eight God had issued *BOTH His promise* concerning that which would result from *obedience* (Lev. 26:3-13; Deut. 28:1-14) and *His warning* concerning that which would result from *disobedience* (Lev. 26:14-39; Deut. 28:15-68).

And at the time of the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, God *began* to bring about *the FULL force* of that which He had warned would result from *disobedience* on the part of His wife (though 2,600 years later, during the present day, *God has yet to complete His announced judgment surrounding His warning to the Jewish people*).

Following the Babylonian captivity, beginning about 605 B.C., God brought the Old Testament theocracy to an end. And, with the dispersion of the nation and the theocracy brought to an end, that period known as "the Times of the Gentiles" began.

Because of *disobedience,* the Jewish people found themselves

scattered among the nations. But this dispersion was for *a purpose — to effect repentance through Gentile persecution in order that God's divorced wife might eventually be restored, with His complete purpose for the nation's existence then being realized.*

Israel remains scattered among the nations even today, as Gentile dominance and rule continue (as the Gentile nations continue ruling the earth under Satan and his angels [*cf.* Ezek. 28:14; Dan. 10:13-20; Luke 4:5, 6; Eph. 1:20, 21; 3:9-11; 6:12]). But God's *purpose* for that which He brought to pass over two and one-half millenniums ago is *about to be realized.*

The Times of the Gentiles is about to end. And God is about to once again step into the affairs of man and bring to completion Israel's FINAL cycle of disobedience, judgment, repentance, and deliverance.

The *conclusion* to the matter will be brought to pass during and immediately following the closing seven years of Daniel's Seventy-Week prophecy — during and immediately following the remaining seven unfulfilled years of the prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27), with *the completion of judgment pertaining to God's warning to the Jewish people being brought to pass at this time.*

God will view His unfaithful wife in that coming day — *occupying a forbidden place among the nations in Antichrist's kingdom, in dire need of cleansing and forgiveness* — as *"the great whore"* (*cf.* Rev. 17:1, 15).

> (For information on Israel in the preceding respect, particularly as the nation is seen in parts of Revelation chapters eleven through the opening verses of chapter nineteen, refer to the author's book, *Mystery of the Woman* [this book deals centrally with *the harlot* in Rev. 17:1-19:6, in the light of preceding chapters and O.T. revelation].)

Then, God's adulterous wife, through the severity of *judgment* brought to pass as Daniel's prophecy is fulfilled, *will find herself at the long-awaited place of repentance.* And when *repentance* occurs, *in complete accord with that which has been promised,* God will remember His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and, exactly as in Moses' Day (and numerous other succeeding times), God will send the Deliverer, with *the fullness of His promised blessings* then being brought to pass (*cf.* Ex. 2:23-3:10; Lev. 26:40-46).

Thus, the completion of God carrying out *the full force of His warning* will be followed by a manifestation of *the fullness of His promised blessings,* after Israel has been brought *to the place of repentance. Judgment surrounding God's warning to His people* will ultimately be completed, and *blessings surrounding God's promise to His people* will ultimately be brought to pass.

This complete story of Israel — past, present, and future, revealed in its entirety in the Old Testament Scriptures — sets the stage for the manner in which the New Testament begins. The ministry of John the Baptist, Jesus, the Twelve, and the Seventy occurred during the closing years of Daniel's Seventy-Week prophecy. The call went forth for *Israel's repentance.* And, in line with Daniel's prophecy, the time for the establishment of the kingdom was *at hand.* Thus, the message seen beginning with John: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand [or, 'has drawn near']" (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:7).

Then, in line with the preceding and the content of John's message, *the kingdom, in its fullness,* could not have been established apart from the Seed of Abraham occupying *both heavenly and earthly spheres in the kingdom.*

The earthly was seen in the Old Testament theocracy, *the heavenly* was seen in both the New Testament offer (in the gospels, beginning with John the Baptist [Matt. 3:1-12]) and the re-offer (in the Book of Acts, beginning with Peter [2:14-40]).

And *BOTH* will be realized by the Seed of Abraham, *at the same time, following Israel's future repentance — both heavenly and earthly promises and blessings, in heavenly and earthly spheres of the kingdom.*

(Note that the Seed of Abraham which will occupy *the heavenly sphere of the coming kingdom* — aside from Christ and certain O.T. saints — will not be the lineal descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. Rather, *the heavenly sphere of the kingdom,* in that coming day, will be occupied by the "nation" spoken of in Matt. 21:43, following both *Israel's rejection of the proffered kingdom* and *the kingdom subsequently being taken from the Jewish people,* exactly as stated in this same verse in Matthew's gospel.

The "nation" spoken of in Matt. 21:43 is that "holy nation" referred to in I Peter 2:9, 10, comprised of those forming *the one new man* "in Christ" [*cf.* Eph. 2:11-15], those comprising "Abraham's seed" through being *in Christ* [Who is Abraham's Seed; Gal. 3:16, 29].

And *this new nation,* brought into existence on the day of Pentecost in 33 A.D. [comprised of individuals who become "Abraham's seed" after a different fashion — whether Jew or Gentile — which allows them to be "heirs according to the promise," *i.e.,* inherit the heavenly promises and blessings taken from Israel], was the entity which God used to proclaim the message surrounding the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel.

For additional information in this respect, refer to the "Foreword" in this book.)

John's Gospel and the Proffered Kingdom

As previously shown, the gospel of John has to do with both *the offer and the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel.* That is to say, the gospel records events, forming "signs," occurring during *the offer* (directed to *the Jewish people ALONE*) but could only have been written during *the re-offer* (again, directed to *the Jewish people ALONE*).

The offer of the kingdom of the heavens to Israel in the gospel accounts occurred during a time when the message was *to the Jew only* (*cf.* Matt. 10:5-8; 15:22-24; John 1:11). *The re-offer of the kingdom of the heavens to Israel* though occurred during a slightly different time — a time during which the message pertaining to the kingdom was "to the Jew first" but now "also to the Greek" (referring to saved Gentiles as distinguished from saved Jews [Rom. 1:15, 16; 2:5-10, 16]).

The re-offer of the kingdom, seen beginning with Peter's message on the day of Pentecost, 33 A.D. — *to the Jews in Jerusalem*, "out of every nation under heaven" (Acts 2:5ff) — occurred during that time when the offer of the kingdom was being extended to *the one new man* "in Christ." *And though the kingdom was extended to the one new man during this time, the re-offer of the kingdom, carried over from the gospel accounts, associated with "signs," was another matter entirely. This was STRICTLY Jewish.*

(Note: *The one new man* "in Christ" [made up of believing Jews and believing Gentiles, though neither Jew nor Gentile (Gal. 3:28, 29)] could not possibly have been included in the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel. This re-offer of the kingdom was attended by *signs* and involved

national repentance on Israel's part. And neither could possibly have had anything to do with *the one new man* "in Christ." Nor did the matter have anything to do with the reason for *the one new man's existence.*

For additional information, note the indented data at the end of this page.)

Beyond the time covered by the Book of Acts (33 A.D. to about 62 A.D.), once the generation of Jews living on both sides of Calvary had passed off the scene, the priority held by Israel in relation to the proclamation of this message, of necessity, ceased. Beyond that point, for about the past nineteen and one-half centuries, the message has been *STRICTLY to the one new man* "in Christ," where a distinction between Jew and Gentile *does not, it cannot, exist.*

These things *MUST* be understood and kept in mind, else the Gospel of John *CANNOT be seen in its proper perspective* in relation to the New Testament as a whole, as the Spirit of God intended when He moved John to pen this account.

(Of necessity, there had to be *a saved generation of Jews* present when Christ came the first time, else *there could have been NO offer of the kingdom of the heavens.* And *this same generation* had to continue in existence for several decades beyond the events of Calvary, else *there could have been NO re-offer of the kingdom.*

But once this generation of Jews began to rapidly pass off the scene [about three decades later], the re-offer of the kingdom, of necessity, had to cease. *A saved generation of Jews NO longer existed to which the offer could be extended.*

And a saved generation of Jews *could NOT continue* through individual Jews believing in Christ following the time of the re-offer of the kingdom, for believing Jews during this time [continuing until today] ceased / cease to be a part of the nation of Israel, becoming *new creations* "in Christ."

Individual believing Jews were *NOT* in view in order to effect God's acceptance or rejection of the nation, during either the offer or the re-offer of the kingdom. *"Repentance," in this respect, had to do with the ENTIRE nation. It was either ALL or NOTHING during both the offer and re-offer of the kingdom.*

And when the nation didn't repent during the re-offer of the kingdom [as during the original offer of the kingdom] — though many individual Jews believed during both periods — the nation was set aside, awaiting "the fulness of the Gentiles" [*cf.* Acts 15:14-18; 28:25-29; Rom. 11:25, 26].)

2

Structure of John's Gospel

A Septenary Structure, the Seventh Day in View

"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30, 31).

Signs were performed in the presence of the Jewish people during Christ's earthly ministry, *during the time when the kingdom of the heavens was being offered to Israel.*

And, following Christ's death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, *eight of these signs* were singled out and recorded in John's gospel, *which could ONLY have been during the time when the kingdom of the heavens was being re-offered to Israel.*

The original offer (during time covered in the gospel accounts) was made by Christ, the Twelve, and the Seventy; and *the re-offer* (during time covered in the Book of Acts) was made by individuals comprising "a nation" separate from Israel, *the one new man* "in Christ," along with Jews being saved out of the nation (*cf.* Matt. 21:43; Acts 2:38-40, 43; 6:5, 8; Eph. 2:11-15; I Peter 2:9).

The entire history of Israel, beginning with Moses leading the people out of Egypt and continuing throughout the remainder of Man's Day, can be summed up in four words:

1) *Disobedience.*
2) *Judgment.*
3) *Repentance.*
4) *Deliverance.*

The people would *disobey* that which God had commanded, and *judgment* would then follow through God using the surrounding Gentile nations to subjugate and persecute His people. God's use of the surrounding nations in this respect was to effect *repentance;* and, following repentance, God would then *deliver* His people.

This cycle was repeated time after time, particularly during the days of the judges (*cf.* Judges 2:16-19; 3:7-15; 4:1-4; 6:1-14; 10:6-18; 11:1ff; 13:1ff). And the culmination of the matter — *a closing and final cycle, still to be completed* — began during the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, over two and one half millenniums ago (II Kings 17:4ff; Dan. 1:1ff; 9:24-27).

Christ's First Appearance

When Christ came the first time, *past disobedience* on the part of the Jewish people, which had lasted for centuries, had resulted in the existing state of affairs. God's people found themselves under Roman rule, the Gentile world power of that day. And the reason and purpose for this state of affairs was *the SAME as it had been numerous times in the past*:

> *God was again using a pagan Gentile power to judge His people in order to bring about repentance.*

The Deliverer had appeared *before repentance,* calling the people to *repentance. Deliverance* was at hand, for the Deliverer Himself was present, proclaiming *a message of deliverance, based on national repentance.*

Though the Deliverer was present before repentance, calling the people to repentance, *deliverance could NOT come UNTIL the people had repented.* This was the order which had previously been set forth in the Book of Judges — *disobedience, judgment, repentance,* and *deliverance* — which, of necessity, would have had to remain *the SAME,* for this was *a Divinely established order which could NEVER change.*

The matter surrounding *the time* of the appearance of the different deliverers whom God had sent in the past is seen both ways in the Book of Judges. Throughout the repeated accounts in this book concerning *disobedience, judgment, repentance,* and

deliverance, God sent the first eleven of the fourteen judges (the deliverers) *following repentance* (3:7-9, 12-15; 4:1-4; 6:1-14; 10:6-18; 11:1ff). But, after the death of the eleventh judge (12:15), when the same sequence began again with *disobedience* on the part of the people and *judgment* on God's part, God, *prior to repentance,* sent a twelfth judge — Samson.

The angel of the Lord had revealed to Samson's mother, prior to his conception, that she would bear a son and that this son would be the one *to BEGIN a deliverance* of "Israel out of the hands of the Philistines" (13:5). But *FULL deliverance could NOT be brought to pass UNTIL the Israelites had repented,* something not seen *UNTIL* the days of Samuel the prophet, the fourteenth and last judge (following Eli, the thirteenth judge [I Sam. 7:1ff]).

Thus, Christ appearing *BEFORE deliverance,* calling the people *to repentance,* was not something new in God's dealings with His people; nor was it a break in the Divinely established order of things, for, *though the Deliverer was present BEFORE repentance, deliverance could NOT come UNTIL the people had repented.* Christ's appearance to Israel followed exactly the same order seen through the appearance of Israel's last three judges, with that foreshadowed by Israel's repentance during Samuel's day *STILL awaiting a future fulfillment today.*

Thus, in keeping with Israel's refusal to repent during the days of the twelfth and thirteenth judges, there was *NO repentance* when God sent the Deliverer 2,000 years ago.

But repentance and deliverance are ultimately seen in *BOTH instances* — one in history under the fourteenth judge, and the other yet future under the same Deliverer Whom God sent 2,000 years ago, Who will one day return to His people.

When Israel's Deliverer, Jesus the Christ, appeared the first time, the Jewish religious leaders — mainly the Scribes and Pharisees, the largest of the religious sects, the keepers and teachers of the Law — continually followed Him about the country, seeking at every turn to find fault with both the Messenger and His message.

And, resultingly, the Scribes and Pharisees were the ones directly responsible for the nation rejecting both the Deliverer and His offer of deliverance, resulting in His crucifixion at the hands of the only nation which could slay the Paschal Lamb, the nation of Israel.

(The preceding is why Christ, near the close of His earthly ministry, singled out the Scribes and Pharisees — the fundamental religious leaders in Israel, the ones occupying Moses' seat — for a rebuke of a nature unlike anything seen at any other time in His ministry (Matt. 23:1ff).

They were the ones who had "shut up the kingdom of the heavens against ['before,' 'in front of,' 'in the presence of'] men." *They had NO interest in entering the kingdom, and they had been doing EVERYTHING within their power to prevent others [the general populace in Israel] from entering as well* [v. 13].

Christ pronounced one "woe" after another upon these religious leaders because of that which they had done. He referred to them as "hypocrites," "fools," "blind guides," individuals likened to "whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."

Christ stated that these individuals were "the children" of them which had "killed the prophets." And, because of that which the Scribes and Pharisees had done — *bringing about rejection on the part of the Jewish people* — "all the righteous blood shed upon the earth," beginning with "the blood of righteous Abel" and extending to "the blood of Zacharias" over three millenniums later, would "come upon this generation" [vv. 13-36].)

Then, following Christ's crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, *a re-offer* of the kingdom was extended to Israel. A message surrounding repentance and baptism, attended by signs, *EXACTLY as previously seen in the gospels, marked the re-offer of the kingdom, seen in the Book of Acts* (*cf.* Matt. 3:1-12; Acts 2:37-43).

The Deliverer had returned to His place in the heavens, seated at the Father's right hand (Ps. 110:1). And, in relation to Israel, He was going to remain there *UNTIL the Jewish people repented.*

As stated in Hosea 5:15, He was going to remain there *UNTIL the Jewish people acknowledged their offense, and sought His face. ONLY following this would the Deliverer be sent a second time* (Acts 3:19-21).

(Note, in the previous respect, Jesus *standing* at the right hand of the Father in Acts 7:56 rather than being *seated*, as in Ps. 110:1. This is what God allowed Stephen to see, through the opened heavens, following his address to the Sanhedrin [comprised of Jewish religious leaders from both the Pharisaical and Sadducean sects].

Stephen's address [vv. 2-53] was evidently of such a nature — drawing from a number of O.T. types which dealt with the whole panorama of Jewish history, but climaxing with an emphasis on the crucifixion — that it moved Powers in the heavens to the extent seen in v. 56 [Jesus *standing*, rather than seated, at His Father's right hand], awaiting Israel's reaction, with a fulfillment of that stated in Acts 3:19-21 in the offing.

Note Stephen's use of the words, "the Son of man" [v. 56], describing Jesus at God's right hand. This is *a Messianic title* [Dan. 7:13, 14; *cf.* Ps. 110:1], used extensively by Christ during His earthly ministry.

And Israel's reaction toward Stephen's message — particularly since he had proclaimed Jesus as "the Son of man," at God's right hand — *was EXACTLY the same as it had previously been toward Christ's message — rejection, followed by the death of the one who had brought the message. Thus, since there was no repentance, there could be no deliverance*; and the Deliverer, consequently, remained in heaven, at His Father's right hand, evidently no longer standing but *seated,* in accord with Ps. 110:1 [*cf.* Heb. 1:3].)

The preceding forms a picture of the unchanging mind-set among Israel's religious leaders at the subsequent time when the Spirit of God moved John to write a gospel built around eight signs, with a declared purpose near the end of his gospel (20:30, 31).

This gospel was directed to a people whom Stephen, immediately before his death, had described as "stiffnecked ['hardened'] and uncircumcised in heart and ears" (Acts 7:51); and, as clearly stated, was another means which God used in His attempts to reach the Jewish people during the time when the kingdom of the heavens was being *re-offered* to the nation.

John's Opening Chapter

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God…

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world…

Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples;

And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God" (John 1:1, 2, 29, 35, 36).

The gospel of John opens in a manner quite different than the other three gospels. It opens in a manner in complete keeping with the way Scripture as a whole opens in the first four chapters of the Book of Genesis.

In both instances, Scripture takes the reader back to a beginning point in time, prior to creation itself (*cf.* Gen. 1:1ff; John 1:1ff); and, again in both instances, Scripture then quickly moves to events or statements which have to do with matters surrounding Calvary (*cf.* Gen. 3, 4; John 1:29ff).

And the reason John's gospel begins in this manner is *evident*:

> To call attention and reveal, at the very outset, particularly to the Jewish people — the ones to whom the signs about to be set forth were directed — *the eternality of the Son, along with the treatment extended to the Son by the Jewish people.*
>
> To call attention and reveal, at the beginning of the gospel, before introducing the eight signs, that *it was God Himself, in the person of the Son, Whom the Jewish people had crucified.*

Reference is made to this beginning point in the opening verses (vv. 1-28, 30); and then following a reference to Jewish rejection in the midst of the verses dealing with the true identity and eternality of the Son (vv. 11-13), the crucifixion is brought into full view (vv. 29ff).

This is how John begins his gospel, something not seen at all in the three synoptic gospels. John begins His gospel by paralleling the manner in which Scripture as a whole begins in Genesis. And the reason John begins his gospel in this manner, as previously shown, is evident.

> (For a comparison of Genesis and John, showing a God-designed parallel between the two, refer to the introduction in this book.)

Also, note that the manner in which books begin in Scripture is all-important. The foundation for that which follows is invariably set forth, after some fashion, at the beginning of each book.

During the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel, particularly up through the time covered by the first seven chapters of Acts, that which Israel had done to the One Whom God had sent to deliver

them (crucified Him) forms the central point to which messages proclaimed to the religious leaders of Israel are built. Messages during this time built into and called attention to the apex toward which all past disobedience had led — Israel's crucifixion of Messiah Himself, Who was God manifested in the flesh. And a call for national repentance (either directly stated or inferred) followed in each instance.

Note how Peter brought the crucifixion to the forefront in his message on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:23, 36), prior to answering the question asked by the Jewish religious leaders (v. 37), telling them exactly what they must do to rectify the wrong which had been done (vv. 38-40; *cf.* v. 41).

Then the same thing can be seen in a subsequent address by Peter on Solomon's porch, outside the Temple (3:12ff). Then note the same thing in Peter's address before the Sanhedrin (4:8ff). The same sequence is again followed by Peter and others in another address before the Sanhedrin (5:28ff).

And exactly the same thing is again seen through the manner in which Stephen concludes his message before the Sanhedrin, resulting in his death at the hands of the religious leaders whom he addressed (7:51-60).

And this fact, so evident during the opening years of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel, would have had to be a major reason for the Spirit of God moving John to begin a gospel directed to the Jewish people in the manner seen. It was *simply another way of saying EXACTLY the same thing seen in the opening chapters of the Book of Acts.*

It was *the blood of God shed at Calvary* (Acts 20:28). It was the blood of "God, and ['God, Who is'] the Lord Jesus Christ" (II Tim. 4:1). "God, Who is," in brackets in the preceding verse, denotes the manner in which this verse, because of the way in which it is structured in the Greek text, must be understood when translating into English — "God, Who is the Lord Jesus Christ."

Note also Titus 2:13 and II Peter 1:1 where the structure in the Greek text is the same in both verses and it should be understood the same way as in II Tim. 4:1, "God, and ['God, Who is'] our Saviour Jesus Christ."

(Refer to the following material for an exegesis from the Greek text of parts of John 1:1 and an explanation of that part of Greek syntax governing the correct understanding of how verses such as II Tim. 4:1, Titus 2:13, and II Peter 1:1 must be understood when translating into English.)

1) John 1:1

John opens his gospel with one of the most profound and succinct statements concerning the Deity of Christ to be found anywhere in Scripture; and it is little wonder that certain cults, seeking to deny the Deity of Christ, have centered their attack upon this verse, for this verse deals with Christ's Deity in more than one manner.

(The Jehovah's Witnesses, for example, seek to use John 1:1 as a mainstay in their erroneous teaching along the lines of Christ's Deity, which would be in line with an interlinear Greek-English translation which their publishing house controls the rights to and prints—Benjamin Wilson's *Emphatic Diaglott* [registered by the U.S. Congress in 1864 and in print long before the Jehovah's Witnesses came into existence (thus, this translation is really not one of their books per se)].

In *The Emphatic Diaglott*, there is both an interlinear translation [the English directly under the Greek] and another English translation in a side-column by itself. In the interlinear translation, Benjamin Wilson translated John 1:1:

"In a beginning was the Word, and the Word was with the God, and a god [small 'g' for God in the English text] was the Word."

The part of the interlinear translation in question was not carried over into the side-column translation though. Here Benjamin Wilson translated:

"In the Beginning was the Logos [Gk., transliteration for 'Word'], and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God [capital 'G' for God in the side-column translation]."

Though Benjamin Wilson may have sought to clarify matters in his side-column translation, the Jehovah's Witnesses ignore this and use his interlinear translation in their futile efforts to do away with that which cannot be done away with — something which they, in reality, cannot touch.

The Greek text does not contain indefinite articles [a, an] as in English, only definite. And definite articles appear or do not appear in the text for reasons.

The definite article has to do with *identity.* It is used to point out or draw attention to something or someone. And the absence of the article, on the other hand, is used to call attention to *quality* or *character.*

For example, the word for "God" appears twice in John 1:1. The first time there is a definite article before the word, calling particular attention to *identity*; but the second time there is no article before the word, calling particular attention to *quality* or *character.*

A question surrounding Christ's Divinity is not an issue in this verse. Christ's Divinity is an established fact, established in this verse and elsewhere in Scripture. Rather, the word for "God," preceded by the article, has to do with *Divine personality* [*identity*]; and the same word not preceded by the article, has to do with *Divine essence* [*quality* or *character*].

Placing an indefinite article before the second use of the word for "God" in the English translation does more than reflect negatively on Christ's Deity. In reality, it does away with the reason for the omission of the article. Thus, leave the verse exactly as the Spirit of God moved John to pen the verse as he began his gospel, understanding the verse in accord with established rules of Greek grammar.)

John 1:1 deals with the Deity of Christ two ways:

1) The Word, which became flesh (v. 14), is seen as God Himself becoming flesh.

2) The Word, seen as both God and His Son, was with God in the beginning.

The first has already been dealt with in the preceding indented material, and the second has to do with the Greek word *eimi,* translated "was." This Greek word appears three times in verse one and once in verse two. The word is used in *a timeless sense* in these verses — a verb of "being" — *a sense with respect to an existence without a beginning or an ending* (*e.g.,* note "I am" in John 8:58, a translation of *eimi*; or the word is used in a double respect in the Septuagint version of Ex. 3:14, with God identifying Himself to Moses through this usage — "I am that I am"; or, "I

am Who I am"; or, "I am the Being [the One existing throughout all time, past, present, future]").

To contrast, note verse three where a different word is used three times in the Greek text — *ginomai* — though translated twice the same way *eimi* was translated in verses one and two (translated "were" once and "was" twice, KJV ["came" twice and "has come" once in the NASB]). This Greek word *ginomai* is used where definite beginnings and possible endings are in view.

Then, to further contrast, in verse four, the word "was" appears twice in the English translation again, though this time the word *eimi* is used in the Greek text, as previously seen in verses one and two.

That conveyed by these two Greek words is something which can be seen only *contextually* in an English translation. And the same would apply concerning things about to be shown in II Timothy, Titus, and II Peter.

2) II Timothy 4:1; Titus 2:13; II Peter 1:1

In Greek syntax, there is a grammatical rule which states that when the Greek copulative *kai* (and) connects two nouns in the same case form, and the first noun is preceded by an article but the second is not preceded by an article (the first articular, the second anarthrous), the second noun must always relate to the first noun, providing a further description of the first noun.

This is easy to see, even in English, in verses such as I Cor. 15:24 and II Cor. 11:31, where the structure is in line with the preceding and the verses read "the God and Father." "Father" (the second noun) relates to and is a further description of "God" (the first noun).

This is the structure seen in relation to the Father and the Son in II Tim. 4:1; Titus 2:13; and II Peter 1:1. In each instance, the Greek copulative *kai* (and) connects two nouns in the same case form. The first noun with its adjective is preceded by the article ("the great God"), and the second noun is not preceded by the article ("Lord" in II Tim. 4:1 [some Greek texts have "Jesus" or "Christ" as the second noun] and "Saviour" in both Titus 2:13 and II Peter 1:1, referring to Jesus Christ).

Thus, following this particular rule of Greek syntax, "Lord Jesus Christ" or "Saviour Jesus Christ" in these verses must be looked upon as a further description of "God" in His person and work. *The same individual is in view throughout.*

An application of this grammatical rule to another part of Titus 2:13 will also clarify what is meant by "that [or, 'the'] blessed hope." In this case, "blessed hope" (a noun with its adjective) is preceded by the article, the copulative *kai* follows, and "appearing [anarthrous, and the same case form as "blessed hope"] of the glory..." then follows.

Thus, following this rule of Greek grammar, "the blessed hope" is clearly stated to be *the appearing of Christ in all His glory* (which is not the appearing of Christ for the Church preceding the Tribulation but the appearing of Christ, with His angels, following the Tribulation [*cf.* Matt. 24:29-31; II Thess. 1:7; Jude 14; Rev. 19:14]).

In this respect, "the blessed hope" for Christians is not, in any way, connected with what is commonly called the rapture, preceding the Tribulation. Rather, "the blessed hope" has to do with events at least seven years after the rapture, when Christ is revealed in all His glory, following the Tribulation. It has to do with *the hope set before Christians of having a part with Christ in His kingdom in that coming day.*

A proper English translation of Titus 2:13 should reflect this rule of Greek grammar in both instances:

> "Awaiting that blessed hope, even the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ" (*ref.* Wuest, Weymouth, NIV, NASB).

As *salvation* in that coming day is referred to as "so great salvation" (Heb. 2:3), *the hope* set before Christians, to be realized in that coming day in connection with "so great salvation," is referred to as "the blessed hope" (Titus 2:13).

And this hope is to be realized *with the Word Who became flesh, with God, Who is the Lord Jesus Christ.*

3

Signs, Wonders, Miracles

As Seen throughout the Gospels and Acts

"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30, 31).

Signs, often referred to in Scripture in connection with *wonders,* and/or *miracles* (*e.g.,* Acts 2:22, 43; 5:12; 6:8; 7:36; 8:13; Rom. 15:19; II Cor. 12:12; II Thess. 2:9; Heb. 2:4), *ALWAYS have two things in view*:

1) *They are directed to Israel.*
2) *They pertain to the kingdom.*

And BOTH Israel and the kingdom MUST be in view at the SAME time for signs, wonders and miracles to exist. IF there is an absence of either one (either *Israel,* or *the kingdom*), signs, wonders, and miracles, as seen throughout the gospel accounts and the Book of Acts, *CANNOT exist.*

(The "sign" is *centrally* in view; and the words "wonder" and "miracle" *describe* the "sign."

That is, the "sign" [Gk., *semeion*] is both a "wonder" [Gk., *teras,* something out of the ordinary] and a "miracle" [Gk., *dunamis,* meaning "power," referring to the supernatural power necessary to bring the sign to pass].)

The word *semeion ("sign") appears seventeen times in John's gospel* and is erroneously translated "miracle" thirteen of these seventeen times (KJV [correctly translated "sign" the remaining four times]).

Dunamis, the word translated "miracle" in connection with *signs* elsewhere in Scripture, though appearing numerous times in each of the three synoptic gospels, does not appear in John's gospel.

In order to properly understand the manifestation of signs, wonders, and miracles in the New Testament, a person *MUST have a correct foundation upon which to build — a foundation beginning in the Old Testament and tracing the history of this supernatural work into the New Testament.*

ONLY when viewing signs in this respect is a person in a position to understand various, necessary things about this supernatural phenomenon.

Signs, Wonders, and Miracles in the Old Testament

Signs, wonders, and miracles, performed *through individuals, were manifested ONLY during two periods in ALL of the Old Testament.*

The FIRST manifestation occurred through Moses and Aaron performing *signs,* pertaining to Israel's deliverance from Egypt, with a view to the theocracy and the land of Canaan; and, in a continuing respect, they were manifested by Moses' successor, Joshua, pertaining to Israel's subsequent entrance into the land (Ex. 4:29-31; 7:10ff; Deut. 6:22, 23; Joshua 3:7ff; 10:12-14).

Then, *the SECOND manifestation* occurred some five hundred years later through Elijah and his successor Elisha performing *signs,* with the Jewish people in the land (I Kings 17:1ff; II Kings 2:13ff).

Outside of these two periods *there is NOT a single reference to an individual being empowered to perform signs, wonders, and miracles throughout all of the Old Testament Scriptures.*

Numerous supernatural works are recorded (*e.g.,* the burning bush which was not consumed [Ex. 3:2], the sun being moved back ten degrees on the dial [Isa. 38:7, 8], the three Israelites being protected in the fiery furnace [Dan. 3:19-25], or Jonah being raised from the dead [Jonah 1:17-2:10 — *a type* referred to as a "sign" by Christ in Matt. 12:38-41]), but these were miraculous works performed *directly by God,* not by individuals whom God had empowered to perform them.

Note that the manifestation of signs, wonders, and miracles during the days of Moses, Aaron, and Joshua was in relation to *Israel* and *the kingdom.* Supernatural manifestations of power occurred *relative to Israel being removed from Egypt and established in the land of Canaan, within a theocracy.*

Thus, *a first-mention principle* was set forth at this point in Scripture, establishing an unchangeable pattern (individuals subsequently being empowered to perform signs, in complete accord with the way in which "signs" had previously been introduced in Scripture). In this respect, any subsequent manifestation of signs, wonders, and miracles of the nature seen at the time of the Exodus *MUST be brought to pass with both Israel and the kingdom in view.*

During the days of Elijah and Elisha the people of Israel had been established in the land, within a theocracy, for about five hundred years. But, because of continued disobedience on the part of the people, the theocracy never reached the heights which God had intended.

The theocracy reached its greatest heights during the days of David and his son Solomon (though far from the heights which God had intended); but after that, following the division of the kingdom, things began to go even further awry. And it was during these days that Elijah was called forth (with Elisha finishing his ministry) to call the nation to repentance (*e.g.,* I Kings 18:17-21; II Kings 2:12-15).

The manifestation of signs, wonders, and miracles accompanying their ministry pertained to *Israel* and *the kingdom.* It had to, for a first-mention principle had previously been established; and any future manifestation had to be *EXACTLY in accord* with the way matters had been set forth in the beginning.

These signs, wonders, and miracles were simply *the credentials* of those manifesting them in Israel's presence. Through a manifestation of supernatural powers accompanying the message, the Jewish people were to recognize that:

1) The messenger had been sent from God (Ex. 3:12a; "token" [KJV] should be translated "sign," ref. NASB, NIV).

2) The message had to do with the theocracy (Ex. 3:12b; 19:3-6).

3) And the people were to heed the message accordingly (Ex. 4:1-9, 29-31).

The people of Israel though failed to heed the message announced through *signs* manifested by Elijah and Elisha; the nation didn't repent. And the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities eventually followed (about 722 B.C. and 605 B.C. respectively).

"The times of the Gentiles" began with the Babylonian captivity, it has lasted to the present day, and it will last until the end of the Tribulation. This is simply a prolonged, uninterrupted period of time — lasting about 2,600 years — *during which Israel MUST dwell apart from a theocracy and remain scattered among the Gentile nations.* And the Gentiles, among whom Israel dwells, will hold *the sceptre* throughout this time.

Signs, Wonders, and Miracles in the New Testament

After moving through 1,500 years of Jewish history and seeing signs, wonders, and miracles manifested through individuals during only two different periods within that history, things suddenly changed. Israel's Messiah (following the ministry of His forerunner, John the Baptist) appeared with a message pertaining to *the kingdom of the heavens;* and, after some nine hundred years of silence (dating all the way back to the days of Elijah and Elisha), the message to Israel concerning the kingdom was once again accompanied by *signs, wonders, and miracles,* though this time *in unprecedented numbers* (Matt. 4:17-25; 8:1ff).

Then, in conjunction with and very early in His ministry, Christ called *twelve disciples* to help carry this message; and they were empowered to perform signs, wonders, and miracles in connection with their ministry as well (Matt. 10:5-8).

Also, Jesus later "appointed" *seventy others* to go "before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come" — though very little is said about them in the gospel accounts — and He empowered them, as well, to perform signs, wonders, and miracles (Luke 10:1-19).

Christ had been sent *only* to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24), and Christ sent the disciples whom He called *to Israel ALONE* (Matt. 10:6; Luke 10:1). Both Christ and His disciples went to Israel with *the SAME message* and *the SAME*

accompanying manifestation of supernatural powers.

This was *a message pertaining to the offer of the kingdom of the heavens to the nation,* attended by *an unprecedented manifestation of signs, wonders, and miracles.* Thus, at this time, there was a manifestation of supernatural signs in the camp of Israel *unlike anything heretofore seen in the history of the nation.*

Whether it was Jesus or His disciples proclaiming the proffered kingdom, *signs, wonders, and miracles accompanied their ministry* and formed not only the credentials of the messenger but anticipated and bore testimony to the subject matter of the message. These manifestations of power were *supernatural events which authenticated their message as being true, from God, and having to do with Israel and the kingdom* (John 3:1, 2; Acts 2:22; *cf.* Ex. 4:1-9).

These supernatural manifestations of power depicted *Israel's present spiritual condition — the head* "sick" and *the heart* "faint," "From the sole of the foot even unto the head…no soundness in it…"; and they depicted another side to the matter as well — *the Jewish people's land, desolated and devoured by strangers* (Isa. 1:5-8).

But these supernatural manifestations of power also went on to show how this condition could change, if… That is, this same supernatural power could and would, *contingent on Israel's repentance*, bring to pass that of which the signs spoke — *i.e., Israel's future supernatural healing, both the people and the land, accompanied by God's supernatural provision for the nation in all areas of life, which are dealt with in all the other various signs).*

Most of the manifestations of supernatural power during the ministry of Christ and the apostles (during the periods covered by both the gospel accounts and the Book of Acts) centered around *bodily healings.* This was the manner in which they were introduced during Christ's ministry (Matt. 4:23-25), and this was the manner in which they were brought to a close about three and one-half decades later during Paul's ministry (Acts 28:7-9).

(And, along with bodily healings, *death* was no longer irreversible [Mark 5:35-43; John 11:1-47; Acts 9:36-42; 20:7-12], *material needs* were miraculously supplied [food, drink, etc. (John 2:1-11; 6:1-14; Acts 5:19-23; 16:26)], there was *deliverance* from demonic spirits [Matt. 12:22;

Acts 5:16], and *angelic ministry* was abundantly available [Matt. 4:11; Acts 12:7, 8, 23].)

Thus the signs, centering around bodily healings (though including other related things), reflected on and had to do with a dual aspect of one thing: *the spiritual condition of the nation of Israel*.

The signs showed *an existing condition* (*sickness, seen prior to the healings*) and *a condition which could exist* (*restoration, seen following the healings*). And *deliverance for the nation* after the fashion set forth by the signs was contingent on *national repentance, followed by baptism* (*cf.* Matt. 3:1-11; 4:17, 23-25; 10:5-8; Acts 2:37, 38; 3:19-21).

The religious leaders in Israel were to see these miraculous signs and know, from these, *the authenticity and subject matter of the message.* Then, believing and understanding the message which they had heard, they were responsible for carrying this message to the people of Israel (*cf.* Ex. 4:29-31; Num. 13:1-26).

However, exactly the opposite occurred. The religious leaders *rejected the signs and the accompanying message;* and, in their unbelief, they then sought *to subvert the message and discredit the Messenger* in the presence of the Jewish people (Matt. 12:14-32; 23:13).

(This is why Christ, near the end of His earthly ministry, condemned, in no uncertain terms, the actions of the Scribes and Pharisees [the fundamental religious leaders of that day (Matt. 23:1ff)]. Seeing the manifested signs and hearing the accompanying message, they had rejected both. And they had sought to do away with that set forth by the supernatural signs through attacking the Messenger.

The Scribes and Pharisees had sought *to discredit the Messenger* in the eyes of the people, bringing about *reproach on the Messenger and casting doubt on His message* [*e.g.*, Matt. 9:27-34; 12:22-24; *cf.* John 12:10, 11]. And, whether by word or deed, this resulted in their bearing *a false witness to the people of Israel* [Matt. 23:13].)

And all of this had its end result in Israel's *rejection* of not only the message but the Messenger as well, *the removal* of the kingdom of the heavens from Israel, *the crucifixion* of Israel's Messiah, and *the bringing into existence* of a separate and distinct entity to be the recipient of that which had been offered to and rejected by Israel.

Israel had failed to bring forth fruit in relation to the kingdom

of the heavens; and *the one new man* "in Christ," the Church, was called into existence to be accorded the opportunity of bringing forth fruit in this realm (Matt. 21:33-43; *cf.* Eph. 2:11-15; I Peter 2:5-10).

But, though the kingdom was taken from Israel and the Church was called into existence to be the recipient of this offer, there was a re-offer of the kingdom to Israel following the inception of the Church, lasting for almost three decades (from 33 A.D. to about 62 A.D.). And, if for no other reason, this is evident because of *the continuance of signs, wonders, and miracles during this time* (at least thirty specific *signs* can be found in the Book of Acts, covering this period).

That would be to say, if God had terminated His dealings with Israel at or before the time that the Church was called into existence, *signs, wonders, and miracles would have CEASED to exist.*

These supernatural manifestations of power had *NOTHING* to do with *the one new man* "in Christ" (who is "neither Jew nor Greek" [Gal. 3:28]). They had to do with *Israel ALONE* (I Cor. 1:22), and they had to do with *Israel in relation to the kingdom.*

These were *supernatural works, manifested through empowered individuals as they carried the message to Israel* (Acts 2:4; 3:1ff; 4:29-33; 5:12ff; 6:8ff); and, during this time, when Gentiles began to be added to the body of Christ, these signs were manifested even within Churches comprised of saved Gentiles, such as the Church in Corinth (chs. 12-14).

The latter though had *NOTHING* to do with Christians. Rather, it had to do with *provoking Israel* "to jealousy" (Rom. 10:19; 11:11, 14). That is, God was using those whom Israel considered *Gentile dogs* to manifest supernatural powers which naturally belonged to Israel *in order to provoke the nation to jealousy.*

And, between a segment of *the one new man* "in Christ" carrying the message to Israel and another segment seeking to provoke the nation to jealousy — all being done through *a manifestation of signs, wonders, and miracles* — the Jewish people were dealt with in what could only be considered *a maximum manner, in a continuing effort to effect Israel's repentance.*

In one respect, *God pulled out all the stops* (*cf.* Luke 10:13-24; 11:29-32). But the religious leaders in Israel would still have noth-

ing to do with *the manifested supernatural signs* and *the message being proclaimed;* and the Jewish people, following their religious leaders, *continued in unbelief.*

Accordingly, *the re-offer of the kingdom was eventually removed from the nation, with a corresponding cessation of miraculous signs.*

Israel's Present Spiritual Condition

Israel's present spiritual condition, resulting in the condition of their land — unchanged over centuries of continued disobedience — is revealed numerous places in Scripture. But note again Isaiah's description of the nation and the land in this respect:

> "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.
>
> Why should ye be stricken anymore? Ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.
>
> From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.
>
> Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers" (1:4-7).

This was the way Isaiah introduced the Jewish people and their land at the very beginning of his prophecy (establishing a beginning point for the subject matter in his book).

But he didn't remain at this point, *depicting Israel's spiritual condition during his day (a condition which has continued to the present day).* Isaiah, at the beginning of his prophecy, went on to relate the end of the matter.

Israel was sick, and the land lay desolate; but Israel could and one day would be cured of this sickness, with the land then restored. And the latter is what Isaiah went on to relate.

Israel's condition was not permanent; the condition of the land was not permanent; healing was in the offing.

But healing would occur *ONLY after God's conditions had been met*:

"Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;

Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land…

And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away thy tin [having to do with removing that which is impure]:

And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, the city of righteousness, the faithful city" (Isa. 1:16-19, 25, 26).

ONLY then would the Lord turn His hand, purge the nation, and restore her rulers. ONLY then would healing occur, and ONLY then would the kingdom with all its glory be restored to Israel:

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house [the Lord's kingdom (the theocracy restored to Israel)] shall be established in the top of the mountains [above all the kingdoms of the world], and shall be exalted above the hills [above all the world kingdoms]; and all nations shall flow unto it.

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore" (Isa. 2:2-4).

Israel's Future Supernatural Restoration

But when will Israel repent, allowing *healing* to occur?

The answer is provided numerous places in Scripture, but note Hosea's prophecy, where the matter is dealt with in so many words.

In Hosea 5:13-6:2 Israel is pictured as *sick,* having *a wound* (near the end of Israel's time of sickness, during the coming Tribulation), with the Assyrian (Antichrist) being unable to provide a cure (5:13). *Help though is available, but it MUST come from the same source which Isaiah or any of the other prophets foretold. It MUST come from the Lord* (5:14-6:1).

Israel's sickness was brought about by the Lord *because of the nation's refusal to obey that which the Lord had commanded.* And the same One Who brought about Israel's sickness is also the only One Who can effect a change in Israel's condition. Consequently, *a reversal of the nation's condition* after this fashion is dependent on *a reversal of the nation's attitude and action* regarding that which the Lord has commanded (*cf.* Ex. 2:23-25; 3:7-12; 4:19, 20; Lev. 26:3, 14).

Israel being positioned in the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the head of the nations, within a theocracy, is *conditional.* It was *conditional* in history and *remains so* today. It was/is *conditioned on Israel obeying the Lord's commandments.*

The Lord made this very clear to the Israelites through Moses immediately prior to the giving of the Law:

> "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, *then* ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:
>
> And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel" (Ex. 19:5, 6; *cf.* Lev. 26:1-13; Deut. 28:1-14).

And it was also made very clear *EXACTLY* what would occur if Israel refused to obey the Lord's commandments (Lev. 26:14ff; Deut. 28:15ff). The nation would be punished "seven times [a number signifying *the completeness* of that which was in view, *i.e., a complete punishment at the Lord's hands*]."

The Jewish people would be removed from their land and scattered among the Gentile nations; and, among these nations, not only would they find themselves in subjection to the Gentiles but all types of different curses would befall them.

They would find themselves *at the tail of the nations rather than at the head,* and their lot in this position would be that of *curses*

rather than blessings. And, though remnants of those scattered would, at times, leave the Gentile nations and return to their own land (a remnant was present 2,000 years ago, and another is present today), the nation — *the whole nation, including any remnant in the land* (Isa. 1:5-7) — would remain in *the same spiritually sick condition, with the land desolate. ONLY the Lord could bring about healing — for both the people and the land — but in His time.*

And that's what Hosea 5:13-6:2 is about — Israel's present condition and that future time when the nation will repent, resulting in the nation being healed, along with the land. Note Hosea 6:1, 2 relative to Israel's repentance and healing:

> "Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.
>
> After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight."

Then, note the two things revealed in Hosea 5:15 which introduce Israel's future repentance:

> 1) The two days (6:2) *cover the entire 2,000-year Jewish dispensation — beginning with Abraham and ending with the Tribulation, concluding Daniel's Seventy-Week prophecy* (Dan. 9:24-27) — with Israeli disobedience seen throughout the dispensation, climaxed by Israel's crucifixion of the nation's Messiah at the end of the sixty-ninth week and Israel's harlotry brought to an apex in the kingdom of Antichrist during the seventieth and last week.
>
> 2) The two days (the 2,000 years) come to a close with the Jewish people brought into such dire straits during Daniel's seventieth week (the coming Tribulation) that they will be left without a choice other than to seek the Lord's face toward the end of these final seven years of the Jewish dispensation, receiving the Lord when He returns and reveals Himself to them.

Both the time of the Tribulation and the time when Israel will seek the Lord's face will be two days (2,000 years) beyond the birth of Abraham (counting time during *the Jewish dispensation alone*, for it is the Jewish people being dealt with in the prophecy, *with the dispensation*

in which God deals with Christians unseen in the prophecy (*i.e., with Israel set aside, the present two days, 2,000 years, are unseen in the prophecy*).

As God worked six days to restore a ruined creation in the beginning and then rested the seventh day (Gen. 1:1-2:3), so is He presently working six more days to restore a subsequent ruined creation (6,000 years), with a view to resting the seventh day (the seventh 1,000-year period). And all subsequent sections of Scripture, such as Hosea 6:1, 2, merely rest upon and provide additional light for the foundational framework — showing the septenary structure of Scripture — set forth at the very beginning.

Then, with all of the preceding in mind, note Isaiah chapter fifty-three. This chapter outlines Israel's confession in that coming seventh day, *following God's healing of the nation:*

> "Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?…
>
> Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.
>
> But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes *we are healed*…" (vv. 1, 4, 5).

It was this future condition of Israel which Isaiah (along with the other prophets) dealt with so extensively. And it was this future condition of Israel to which the miraculous signs throughout Scripture pointed, whether during Moses and Joshua's day, during Elijah and Elisha's day, or during the days of Christ and the apostles (both preceding and following the events of Calvary, during both the offer and re-offer of the kingdom).

The central thought when the Spirit of God closed the Old Testament Canon pertained *to Israel being healed* [Mal. 4:2, 3], and this was likewise *the central thought* when the heavens were once again opened over four centuries later [Matt. 3:1, 2; 4:17, 23-25].

The New is simply *a continuation and unveiling of that which has lain in the Old from the beginning.*

Do you want to understand the New? *Then study the Old.* Do you want to see Israel or the Christ of the New? *Then view Israel or the nation's Messiah in the eyes of the Old.*

4

The Word Made Flesh

God, in the Person of His Son

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made [*lit.,'* All things came into existence through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into existence which came into existence'].

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us…" (John 1:1-3, 14a).

John was moved by the Spirit to begin his gospel *EXACTLY the same way which the Spirit had moved Moses to begin the opening book of Scripture over fourteen centuries earlier.*

The Spirit had moved Moses to write, "In the beginning God…"; and the Spirit now moved John to write, "In the beginning was the Word [with 'the Word' declared, at the end of the same sentence, to be *God*]" (Gen. 1:1a; John 1:1a; *ref.* John 1:1b).

Thus, Moses' and John's statements — though worded in slightly different manners — *are IDENTICAL,* with the latter statement adding to that which the Spirit through Moses had already made known about God, supplying additional information and commentary.

Moses had introduced God after one fashion at the beginning of the Old Testament, using a plural noun in the Hebrew text — *Elohim.*

But now, after Messiah had come, John introduces God after a slightly different fashion at the opening of one of the four gospels beginning the New Testament. "God" is now seen as *the Word,* and the verb used in the Greek text to identify God as the Word — "…the Word *was* God" (v. 1b) — is a translation of the Greek word *eimi* (a verb of being), which is used in a timeless sense, a sense with respect to no beginning or ending.

The Word always has been, and the Word always will be, "God."

It is impossible, from a Scriptural standpoint, to separate the eternal Word from the eternal God or the eternal God from the eternal Word.

God, in a respect, is seen from two perspectives in the Old Testament Scriptures — God's revelation of Himself through *His Person* (Gen. 1:1) and God's revelation of Himself through *His Word* (John 1:1 reflecting back on Gen. 1:1).

But the former (God's Person) *is opened up and made known to man only through the latter (God's Word), and the two are inseparable.*

Then, John, beginning at the same point as Moses in Genesis, calls attention to a different form yet of the revelation of the person of God — *"the Word was made flesh"* (1:14).

Is the Word being made flesh — the incarnation — a reference to God becoming flesh in the person of His Son? Or, is this a reference to the Word becoming flesh in the person of the One Whom the Word, in its entirety, is about?

In reality, that's asking the same question two different ways, for, in Scripture, *"God" and "the Word" are viewed in an inseparable respect.* "The Word [which was made flesh] was [Gk., *eimi*, a timeless verb of being — always has been, always will be] God."

The Word is simply God revealing Himself, His plans, and His purposes to man.

The Word becoming flesh is simply God making this revelation of Himself known after another fashion, *through His Son* (Heb. 1:1, 2). It is the Old Testament, which in its entirety reveals the Father and His Son, *becoming flesh.*

The Word CANNOT be separated from the Father, the Word CANNOT be separated from the Son, and the Father and the Son CANNOT be separated from one another.

This is the manner in which John begins His gospel, inseparably identifying the Son not only with the Father from Gen. 1:1 but with the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures.

(Refer to the introduction to this book for more information on that revealed through Moses and that revealed through John some 1,500 years later in the preceding respect.)

The Written Word

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself…

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me" (Luke 24:25-27, 44).

Jesus, shortly after His resurrection, on the same day that He was raised from the dead, walked and communed with two disciples enroute to Emmaus. And, though the events surrounding the crucifixion of the One Whom they had believed to be the Christ was still uppermost in their minds, something was preventing them from recognizing Him at this time (vv. 17-24). Though their thoughts were centered upon the very One in their midst, they didn't know Him (vv. 16, 17).

Why had they failed to recognize Christ at this time?

The answer is very simple, and it is given in the text. These two disciples had failed to recognize the One standing in their midst because, in the words of the very One speaking to them, they did *NOT* "believe all that the prophets" had recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures (Luke 24:25b).

They did *NOT* know their own Scriptures (vv. 26, 27). They had *NOT* adequately availed themselves of the word picture which God had previously provided of Himself, of His Son.

In this respect, the religious leaders in Israel — more particularly the Scribes and Pharisees, and the Sadducees — had apparently paid more attention to God's revelation than these two disciples. Israel's religious leaders had recognized *the Heir of the vineyard* when He appeared, and this is *WHY* they "caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him" (Matt. 21:33-45).

Israel's religious leaders brought about the rejection and crucifixion of Israel's Messiah because *they KNEW His identity.* And there is really *only ONE way* that they could have known:

They knew enough about the word picture which God had provided to properly recognize and identify the Messiah when He appeared.

False messiahs had come and gone at different times throughout Israeli history, and the religious leaders had paid little attention to them. They knew that these messiahs were false, for their failure to manifest the means of identification which God had provided showed that they were false.

But when the Heir of the vineyard appeared, when the true Messiah appeared, things were entirely different. A manifestation of the provided means of identification revealed, beyond question, His identity. And *Israel's religious leaders acted accordingly, though negatively.*

Thus, in order to reveal Himself to these two disciples following His resurrection, *Jesus, in conjunction with a rebuke, called their attention to the Old Testament Scriptures, to the word picture of Himself.*

Jesus called attention to that which, in its entirety, revealed the One Who spoke to them. And He then began to open up and develop this word picture to their understanding.

Jesus, the living Word (which was/is/always will be God), called attention to the written Word to reveal Himself as the Word made flesh, i.e., the Old Testament Scriptures made flesh.

After the groundwork had been laid, after the word picture had been opened up and developed to a sufficient extent, Jesus, dining with them at their destination late in the day, "took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them" (v. 30). And once He had broken the bread (which had been preceded by a revelation of Himself from the Old Testament Scriptures), things immediately came together for them.

The breaking of bread by the Bread of Life reflected back on events surrounding His broken body at Calvary, allowing these two disciples to properly understand the word picture which had previously been set before them. They now had the means to identify the One in their midst, given to them by Christ Himself.

They had been given the written Word, which allowed them to identify the living Word, the Word which had been made flesh. And, *once this had occurred, followed by the breaking of bread,* "their eyes were opened, and they knew him" (v. 31a).

The Living Word

> "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,
>
> Hath in these last days spoken unto us by ['by means of'] his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by ['through'] whom also he made the worlds ['made the ages' (*i.e.,* 'placed the ages in an orderly arrangement')]" (Heb. 1:1, 2; *cf.* Heb. 11:3).

In time past, throughout the first 4,000 years of human history, God revealed Himself, His plans, and His purposes to man through various means — *e.g.,* theophanies or related direct communication (Gen. 3:8-19; 4:6-16; 6:13-7:5; 18:1ff), or dreams and visions (Gen. 37:5-10; 41:1ff; Dan. 2-12; Zech. 1-6). But these different means of communication are not seen as *separate from the Word,* for they form *part of the Word.*

God simply *does NOT* reveal Himself apart from His Word. *He NEVER has, and He NEVER will.* Revealing Himself apart from the Word would be tantamount *to revealing Himself apart from Himself,* for "the Word [*the Word ALONE*] was [*eimi,* ALWAYS has been, ALWAYS will be] God." Thus, *this Word ALONE — living or written* — reveals "God."

Moving through the complete panorama of the Word being made flesh is the manner in which the Spirit of God moved the writer of Hebrews to open his epistle. The same One Who had spoken to man through various means in time past has now, "in these last days," spoken to man *by means of His Son,* the One

Whom He "hath appointed heir of all things." And the Father can speak to man by means of the Son, while still remaining *completely within the confines of the Word,* for the simple reason that *the Son is the Word made flesh.*

The Canon of Scripture had not yet been completed when the Son appeared. Only the Old Testament had been completed — Genesis through Malachi.

Following the completion of the Old Testament, about four hundred years elapsed before God again spoke to man (forming part of the Word). And that silence was broken through events surrounding the incarnation, *the Word being made flesh* (a star in the East, angelic ministry, etc.).

God, at this time, once again stepped into the affairs of man. But this time the manner was so unique that only an infinite, omniscient mind could conceive of this type manner of breaking the silence, and only an omnipotent God could bring the matter to pass.

God, this time, acted in the person of His Son. God took upon Himself flesh. *The Word, which ALWAYS has been and ALWAYS will be God, was made flesh.*

The completion of the Canon of Scripture following the appearance of the Son, in this respect, *served the purpose of completing the written Word after a manner which could ONLY take from that which was already complete* (the Old Testament Scriptures, made flesh in the person of the Son) and open these Old Testament Scriptures up through additional commentary, explanation.

There can be NOTHING in the New that is NOT seen after some fashion in the Old. The new is simply the Old opened up and further revealed.

Note that the Word was made flesh before a single word of the New Testament was penned. And, if the Old is not complete in and of itself, neither can the Son be complete in and of Himself, for the Son is the Word (the Old Testament Scriptures) made flesh.

Is it any wonder that numerous religious groups today (cults, et al.) seek to cast reproach upon the entirety of the matter through their seemingly endless attempts to deny Christ's Deity, or their seemingly endless attempts to validate extra-Biblical revelation

through supposed dreams, visions, theophanies, tongues, near-death experiences, etc.?

God always has and always will speak to man through *one means alone* — "His Word." And, whether this is looked upon as *the living or the written Word is immaterial, for the two CANNOT be separated.*

The dreams, visions, theophanies, or any other form which revelation took prior to the completion of the Canon of Scripture, ultimately formed part of the Canon. And once the Canon had been completed, any type extra-Biblical revelation could only be *completely out of place.*

In the final analysis, such supposed revelation could only be *outside the realm of Christ Himself — God manifested in the flesh — for it would be outside the Word.* And One (the Word, or Christ) must line up *perfectly* with the Other (Christ, or the Word), for the incarnation is simply — no more than, no less than — *the Word being made flesh.*

In that respect, supposed extra-Biblical revelation could only be *extra-Christ revelation, or extra-God revelation.* That is to say, such revelation, outside the realm of the completed Canon which the Spirit moved men to pen, would be *outside the realm of both the Father and the Son.*

The revelation of Christ is seen in the Word, or the revelation of the Word is seen in Christ. And if a person moves outside of this realm in supposed revelation (*e.g.,* the Book of Mormon, numerous things seen in the Charismatic movement today), he, as previously stated, could only find himself *outside the realm of Christ.* The whole of the matter can be summed up in a manner that simple.

Then and Now

"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine ['teaching'].

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine ['teaching']…" (II Tim. 4:1-3a).

The New Testament epistles — both the Pauline and the General, including the seven letters (epistles) to the seven Churches in Asia in Revelation chapters two and three — provide different facets of information. And these epistles, written for and directed to Christians, contain not only information for the present time but information more specifically having to do with and related to the coming kingdom.

The epistles, in this respect, are much like the Old Testament prophetic books. No one book, standing alone, contained all of the information which God desired that the prophets convey to the nation relative to the people of Israel and the theocracy. Each book presented a different facet of the message, and all the books together presented a complete message, a complete picture.

The epistles, written for and directed to *the one new man* "in Christ," to Christians, are similar. Each has been written with the coming kingdom of Christ in view. Each presents a different facet of the message, with all the epistles together presenting a complete message, a complete picture.

Paul's second letter to Timothy comprises not only his closing words to Timothy but his closing words within all which he wrote, which make up slightly more than one-fourth of the New Testament. And the fourth chapter, beginning with a charge and an exhortation, comprises the closing part of the epistle.

Closing words, last words, are often words which people remember. But, has that been the case with Paul's closing words throughout almost 2,000 years of Church history? And, more particularly, is that the case in the Church today?

In the Greek text of II Tim. 4:1, the word translated "charge" has a preposition prefixed to the word, which serves, in this case, to intensify the word. The word should be translated into English more in line with that seen in the NASB — "I solemnly charge…" And then, the continuing structure of the Greek text would show that the words "God" and "the Lord Jesus Christ" must be understood as referring to the same person — *i.e.,* "I solemnly charge you before [*lit.,* 'in the presence of'] God, Who is the Lord Jesus Christ…" (*ref.* Chapter II in this book, pp. 22, 23, for an explanation of Greek syntax in the preceding respect).

Then, the next statement in the text has to do with judgment at the time of Christ's appearing and His kingdom, followed by a three-word command: "Preach the Word…"

Paul, in his closing words, solemnly charges and commands Timothy, *in the presence of God, Who is the Lord Jesus Christ, the One Who will judge the living and the dead at the time of His appearing and His kingdom*, "Preach the Word…"

In this closing charge and command to Timothy, Paul did exactly the same thing John had done in the opening part of his gospel. He brought "God," "the Lord Jesus Christ," and "the Word" together in the same sense, though using a slightly different approach.

In the light of John's opening statement in his gospel, the opening statement in the Epistle of Hebrews, or other parallel and corresponding Scripture, Paul — charging Timothy *in the presence of God, with a view to judgment and the kingdom* — exhorts Timothy *to proclaim the Word, the Word made flesh, Who is God.*

But, what has been the result after almost 2,000 years of Church history in this respect, immediately preceding Christ's return? One need only look around to answer the question. The Church of today finds itself in a very similar condition to that seen in Israel at the time of Christ's first coming.

No one though should be surprised. The end was foretold at a time both during and immediately following Christ's earthly ministry.

Christ, during His earthly ministry, stated that at the time of His return He would *not* find "the faith [articular in the Greek text, forming an expression peculiarly related to the Word of the Kingdom] on the earth" (Luke 18:8).

In the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens, given in parabolic form in Matthew chapter thirteen, Christ, relative to "the word of the kingdom" (vv. 19-23), stated that *the whole would become leavened* (v. 33), exactly in line with His statement in Luke 18:8.

And in Revelation chapters two and three, which, among other things, foreshadows a history of the Church throughout the dispensation, matters move from a Church which *had left* its "first love" (Ephesus; 2:4b) to a Church which *had become* "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Laodicea; 3:17b).

In short, Scripture foretold that Christendom at the time of Christ's return, relative to the Word of the Kingdom, would exist in the condition described in these three portions of Scripture. And this is the one place where the numerous segments of Christendom (*e.g.,* fundamental and liberal segments) can find common ground.

This was the way matters existed in Israel 2,000 years ago, when Christ came the first time; and this is the way matters will exist in Christendom at the time of Christ's return, which, for all practical purposes, is *EXACTLY* the way conditions exist in Christendom today.

1) Religious Leaders, the People, Then

The Pharisees and the Sadducees were the most prominent of the Jewish sects in Israel 2,000 years ago.

The Pharisees, by far the larger of the two, were what might be called the fundamental legalists of that day; and, because of their numbers, they held sway over the religious life of Israel.

The Sadducees, also quite numerous and influential, were generally more liberal in their outlook (*cf.* Acts 23:8). But both found common ground in their opposition to the message being proclaimed, introduced by John the Baptist and continued by Christ and His disciples (*cf.* Matt. 3:7; 16:1, 6, 11, 12).

The central message proclaimed at Christ's first coming had to do with an offer of the kingdom of the heavens to Israel. And there was a re-offer of the kingdom to Israel following Christ's resurrection and ascension.

Both the offer and the re-offer were attended by supernatural signs. Supernatural bodily healings and provisions showed that which the nation could have if the nation would repent (*cf.* Isa. 1:1-2:5).

What though did the religious leaders do, leading the people of Israel to do exactly the same thing?

During the original offer, the religious leaders followed Christ about the country and sought opportunity, time after time, to counter the message being proclaimed. This resulted in *a national rejection of the proffered kingdom and the ultimate crucifixion of their King*.

Then, in the re-offer, this rejection by the religious leaders, misleading the people, continued.

And, as in the original offer, after several years, the time came when death followed in the wake of rejection (Acts 7:51ff).

This then opened the door for an unprecedented onslaught of persecution and death at the hands of Israel's religious leaders (*cf.* Acts 8:1-3; 22:4, 5, 19, 20; 26:9-12).

2) Religious Leaders, the People, Now

The central message to be proclaimed to Christians today is quite simple to understand if one remains solely within the confines of Scripture. It has to do with that taken from Israel in Matt. 21:43; it has to do with the new nation — "an holy nation," comprising "a royal ['a regal'] priesthood" (I Peter 2:9, 10) — called into existence to be the recipient of that which Israel had relinquished; it has to do with *the Word of the Kingdom.*

A person has been saved for *a purpose,* and that purpose has to do with *the kingdom.*

An entire dispensation has been set aside, during which time God has sent His Spirit into the world to call out *a bride for His Son.* And this, as man's salvation, has to do with *the kingdom* (*ref.* the author's book, *Search for the Bride*).

The whole of Scripture, Old Testament and New Testament, moves in one direction alone. It moves toward *the coming kingdom of Christ.*

It moves toward that day when God will bring to pass *a complete change in the earth's government,* to effect order out of disorder in the one part of God's kingdom where sin entered.

But what is happening in Christendom relative to the proclamation of this message? What are the religious leaders doing?

Again, one need only look around. *EXACTLY* the same thing which occurred in Israel relative to this message is being repeated, and the ultimate outcome will be the same.

The people were misled by their religious leaders then, and it was relative to a kingdom.

And the people are being misled by their religious leaders today, and it is relative to the SAME kingdom.

Death (physical), because of the actions of Jewish religious leaders, was the ultimate outcome for numerous faithful Christians in that day (Christian martyrs [*cf.* Acts 7:54-8:3]).

And *death* (soulical [*cf.* Rom. 8:13; James 1:21; 5:19, 20]), because of the actions of Christian religious leaders, will be the ultimate outcome for numerous unfaithful Christians today.

The command in II Tim. 4:2 is clear, plain, and simple: "Preach the Word…" *Proclaim the written Word, which reveals the inseparable living Word.*

The crying need in the Church today is singular: *The proclamation of the pure, unadulterated Word of God.*

5

Genesis, John

The Relationship between the Two Books

"In the beginning God created the heaven [*lit.,* 'the heavens'] and the earth (Gen. 1:1).

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made [*lit.,* 'All things came into existence through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into existence which came into existence']" (John 1:1-3).

John began his gospel in *the SAME manner* in which Moses had begun the Book of Genesis over fourteen centuries earlier, though from a different perspective. Both began with *creation,* and both continued with *a septenary arrangement of events* which carries the reader through six days, into a seventh day.

In Genesis, this sets the stage for that seen throughout the remainder of and beyond Genesis — *a book (the Old Testament as a whole) built upon this septenary structure.*

This septenary structure is seen in the numerous types forming Genesis. And this can only be the case, for *the unchangeable pattern for all which would follow* was introduced and established in this manner in the opening thirty-four verses.

And, viewing this same structure in the opening two chapters of John's gospel, *EXACTLY as it had previously been set forth in the opening two chapters of Genesis* (Gen. 1, 2a; John 1, 2a), the stage is *AGAIN* set for that which follows — *a book (the New Testament as a whole) built upon this SAME septenary structure.*

Beginning in this manner in John's gospel, this septenary structure is then seen *in each of the eight signs*, whether referencing days leading into the Sabbath, referencing the Sabbath itself, or relating a sequence of events which lead into the Sabbath.

Seven of the eight signs are structured in the former manner (referencing particular days, in connection with events); and the remaining sign, the fifth sign, is structured in the latter manner (referencing events, in connection with particular days).

In this respect, the gospel of John is built around *eight signs;* and the whole of the book rests upon *a septenary structure,* established at the beginning of the book, with this septenary arrangement of events leading into the first sign.

(In the preceding respect, as Genesis begins the O.T. through a sequence of events dealt with in a septenary structure, relating the subject matter of the O.T., the Gospel of John is seen beginning the N.T. *EXACTLY the same way.* John's gospel is the only one of the four gospels containing this feature — a septenary structure, set at the beginning, exactly as seen at the beginning of Genesis, relating the subject matter of the N.T. [*which is EXACTLY the same as the subject matter of the O.T.*].

Thus, John's gospel should occupy a different place among the four gospels — *FIRST, instead of last — for John's gospel opens the N.T., EXACTLY as Genesis opens the O.T.*

And it should go without saying, had man seen and understood this God-designed parallel, placing John's gospel in its proper place in printed editions of the N.T., it may have gone a long way in preventing that which can be seen throughout the Churches of the land today — almost total ignorance about the subject under discussion.

For additional information on this subject, refer to the introduction in this book.)

The Book of Genesis

The Book of Genesis begins with *the creation of the heavens and the earth* (1:1). Then the book immediately relates *the ruin* of the creation (1:2a). And this, in turn, is immediately followed by revelation surrounding *the restoration of the ruined creation over six days time.*

This restoration is then followed by the creation of man, for the creation had been restored for man (1:2b-31; *cf.* Isa. 45:18b). And *a seventh-day rest* followed (2:1-3).

This forms the introduction to not only Genesis but to Scripture as a whole. The complete story of Scripture is told in the opening thirty-four verses of Genesis. And the remainder of Scripture is simply *commentary, providing all the sinews, flesh, and skin to fully clothe the skeletal framework set forth at the beginning* (*cf.* Ezek. 37:1-10).

To illustrate, note the complete sequence following creation: *A ruined* creation existed, God *restored* this ruined creation over six days time, and He then *rested* the seventh day. And any subsequent ruined creation — if restoration were to occur through Divine intervention — would, *of necessity,* have to be restored in exact accordance with the pattern which God Himself had previously established, at the beginning of His Word.

(Note that God *does NOT, He CANNOT,* change His revealed works in previously established patterns. God is *immutable*; God is *unchangeable.* Once He has established a pattern, as seen in the opening thirty-four verses of Scripture, *PERFECTION exists within that pattern, and it can NEVER change.*

"For I am the Lord, I change not…" [Mal. 3:6a].

There is *ONLY ONE revealed way* in which God restores a ruined creation — *the ONE way* which He Himself established and revealed at the beginning of His Word — which leaves *ONLY ONE way* in which He can [remaining true to His Word] restore ruined man, a subsequent ruined creation.

In this respect, *the basics concerning man's restoration following his ruin* [*i.e., the basics concerning his salvation following his fall*] have been set forth in the opening chapter of Genesis, forming Biblical truths relative to soteriology [the doctrine of salvation], *which can NEVER change.*

The restoration of ruined man *MUST* be understood from the standpoint of how God had previously set matters forth in the prior restoration of a ruined creation.

The matter *MUST* be carried back to this point.

Thus, in order to have a correct foundation upon which to build, teachings surrounding soteriology *MUST* be carried back to and un-

derstood correctly *at their beginning point, the point where God began this restorative work.*

There is NO alternate way, NO alternate foundational beginning point.)

Man was *created* on the sixth day, immediately following God's restoration of the ruined material creation (1:26-28; 2:7, 21-23).

Then, through Satanic intervention, man was reduced to *a ruin* (3:1-7). Satan, through seeking to exalt his throne, had previously brought about the ruin of the material creation (Isa. 14:12-17); and Satan, through deceiving the woman, causing her to eat of the forbidden fruit, now brought about *man's ruin.*

Once *man's ruin* had occurred — once Adam as the federal head had, as well, eaten of the forbidden fruit — if man was to be *restored,* it had already been revealed how God would accomplish this task and that which He would do after man had been *restored.*

In complete accord with that revealed in the opening thirty-four verses of Scripture, *God would work six days to perform and complete man's restoration; and He would then rest the seventh day.*

And that is *EXACTLY* what began to occur in Gen. 3:21, in complete keeping with God's preceding promise in verse fifteen:

> "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head ['He shall crush thy head'], and thou shalt bruise His heel…
>
> Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them" (vv. 15, 21).

Shortly after man's fall, God began a work of restoring the ruined creation. This would continue for six days, six thousand years; and God would then rest the seventh day, the seventh one-thousand-year period.

This septenary structure in God's work of restoration and rest is something which can be seen pervading all subsequent Scripture. For example, God later gave *the Sabbath* to His people, Israel, for a "sign" that He was performing a present six-day work and would rest the seventh day, following the completion of His work (Ex. 31:13-17). And though the Sabbath was given to Israel alone, God relates in the Book of Hebrews that a Sabbath rest awaits the

people of God, which sets the whole of that which the Sabbath foreshadows before Christians as well (Heb. 4:9).

Then note something about the references to the Sabbath in both Exodus and Hebrews. In each instance, reference is made back to God's work of restoration in Gen. 1:2b-25, with God then resting on the seventh day (Gen. 2:1-3; *cf.* Ex. 31:15-17; Heb. 4:3, 4). Attention is called in each instance to the established pattern, providing a parallel between God's past work of restoration and His present work of restoration *which no one should miss.*

Some call attention to the Apostle Peter's statement in his second epistle (3:8), drawing from the ruin and restoration in Genesis, along with the events on the Mount of Transfiguration (1:15-18; 3:3-7), in an effort to show that each day in the latter restoration and rest is 1,000 years in length. However, this is like referring to the mention of 1,000 years six times in Rev. 20:2-7 to show the length of the coming Sabbath rest.

Both Peter in his second epistle and John in the Book of Revelation provide climactic material, material forming *apexes* on the subject, material which had previously been dealt with *extensively* throughout portions of the Old and New Testaments, beginning with the opening chapters of Genesis.

1) Comparing Scripture with Scripture

God's work during the six days in the opening chapter of Genesis is usually understood and taught as *creation* alone (*i.e.,* verses describing God's creation of the heavens and the earth, from verse one, over a six-day period of time). Then, what could only be part and parcel with this type thought, individuals invariably see little to no significance in the septenary structure of these six days when combined with the following seventh day of rest (*cf.* II Peter 1:15-18; 3:2-8).

However, if Scripture is compared with Scripture, and the whole of subsequent Scripture is viewed in the light of that seen beginning in Gen. 1:2, the preceding *couldn't possibly* be understood as the correct way to view this opening section.

For example, the Hebrew words translated "without form and void" (*tohu wavohu*) in Gen. 1:2a are used together *only two*

other places throughout all of the Old Testament — in Isa. 34:11 and Jer. 4:23. And both of these passages present a ruin of that previously seen existing in an orderly state.

In Isa. 34:11, Edom [v. 6], used as representative of all the Gentile nations in the chapter, was destined to become *tohu wavohu* (translated "confusion" and "emptiness" [KJV], "desolation" and "emptiness" [NASB]).

And in Jer. 4:23-28, there is a comparison of that which had previously occurred *relative to the earth* in Gen. 1:2a to that which was about to occur *relative to the land of Israel.*

The land of Israel was about to become *tohu wavohu.* That is, as seen in Jer. 4:23-28, God was about to do the same thing to the land of Israel (*cf.* vv. 14-22) that He had previously done to the earth in Gen. 1:2a. And the reason for God's actions, in both that which He had done and that which He was about to do, was the same — the entrance of *sin* (sin on the part of Satan in the former, and sin on the part of the Jewish people in the latter).

And, in complete keeping with this type understanding of the use of *tohu wavohu* in Isa. 34:11 and Jer. 4:23, Isa. 45:18 (where the Hebrew word *tohu* is used) *clearly states* that God did not create the earth (in Gen. 1:1) in the manner described in Gen. 1:2a. Isaiah 45:18 *clearly states* that God "created it [the earth] not in vain [not *tohu*]."

Thus, if Gen. 1:2a is to be understood in the light of related Scripture bearing on the subject, there can be *only one possible interpretation — the ruin of a prior existing creation (from v. 1), because of sin.* And the *ruin* seen in Gen. 1:2a, Isa. 34:11, and Jer. 4:23 — ruined for a purpose — is with a view to eventual *restoration.*

A restoration of the ruin seen in Gen. 1:2a is depicted in the continuing text in the chapter, and a restoration of the ruin seen in both Isa. 34:11 and Jer. 4:23 is depicted in revelation numerous places throughout the Old Testament (Israel restored, with the nations both restored and placed in subjection to Israel [*e.g.*, note Isa. 35:1ff; 60:1ff; Jer. 4:27]).

Then, the whole of subsequent Scripture is perfectly in line with this type understanding of the opening section of Scripture. The whole of subsequent Scripture is built on a septenary structure, with the foundation established and set in an unchangeable

fashion at the beginning, in Gen. 1:1-2:3.

That is to say:

> *The heavens and the earth were created*, there was *a ruin* of the material creation (because of sin), God took six days *to restore* the ruined creation, and He then *rested* the seventh day.
>
> *Man was created* on the sixth day, man fell into a state of *ruin* (because of sin), God is presently taking six days (6,000 years) *to restore* man, and God will then *rest* the seventh day (the seventh 1,000-year period [*cf.* II Peter 1:15-18; 3:3-8]).

And the latter, patterned after the former, is what the whole of Scripture is about. The whole of Scripture is about the same thing initially introduced and established *in an unchangeable fashion* in the opening thirty-four verses of Genesis (1:1-2:3). The whole of Scripture is about the creation of man (for a purpose), his ruin, his restoration over a six-day period (over a 6,000-year period), followed by a seventh day of rest (a seventh 1,000-year period — the Sabbath rest awaiting the people of God [Heb. 4:9; *cf.* vv. 3, 4], the Messianic Era, wherein man will realize the reason for his creation in the beginning).

Man would have been expected to understand this opening section of Scripture, at least in a general respect, after the preceding fashion at the time it was written; and subsequent Scripture simply verifies the correctness of the way man would have been expected to understand these verses (apart from other revelation at the time Genesis was written).

2) Only One Possible Conclusion

Through comparing Scripture with Scripture, and in the light of Scripture as a whole — *i.e.,* in the light of the soteriological nature of the whole of Scripture following man's fall, which is set in a septenary structure — *there is ONLY one possible way to interpret and understand Gen. 1:1-2:3*. These verses, solely from the standpoint of an interpretation and understanding from Scripture, *can be understood ONLY as a ruin following creation, a restoration of the ruined creation over a six-day period, and a day of rest following.*

Seeking to understand these opening verses after any other

fashion is *out of line* with the way Scripture itself handles the matter — *something which could only form a beginning basis for unsound Biblical study.* The latter is true simply because any person beginning Genesis after a fashion other than the manner in which God clearly reveals that He began His revelation to man would be laying *an incorrect foundation upon which to build as the person moves on into and seeks to understand subsequent Scripture.*

The Gospel of John

And, as previously stated, this septenary, soteriological structure of Scripture is true not only relative to the manner in which the Book of Genesis begins but relative to the manner in which the Gospel of John begins as well. The manner in which the Gospel of John begins (in chs. 1, 2a) forms *an EXACT parallel* to the manner in which the Book of Genesis begins (in chs. 1, 2a).

In John's gospel, as in Genesis, there is *a creation, a ruin* of the creation, *a restoration* of the ruined creation over six days time, and *a day of rest* following the restoration. And this opening part of John's gospel, drawing from and calling attention to the opening verses of Genesis, again clearly shows *the only way in which Gen. 1:1-2:3, from a Biblical standpoint, can possibly be understood.*

Creation is seen in John 1:1-3; *the ruin* of the creation is dealt with in connection with *a restoration of the ruined creation* in John 1:4, 5; *restoration is seen occurring over six days time* (*cf.* 1:29, 35, 43; 2:1), and events on *the day of rest, the Sabbath, are seen occurring immediately following the restoration* (John 2:1-11).

1) Creation

Creation in the opening chapter of Genesis begins with the material creation. This is what was both ruined and restored in Genesis, with man created on the sixth day, preceding the day of rest.

John, in his gospel, presents matters surrounding God's creative activity from a different perspective. John brings everything together (the material creation, angels, animals, man) in one all-encompassing statement:

> "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made [*lit.*, 'All things came into existence through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into existence which came into existence']."

In this respect, the first three verses of John's gospel form commentary for Scripture dealing with any part of God's creative activity, whether past, present, or future (*cf.* Gen. 1:1, 21, 27; 2:3, 4; Isa. 43:1; 65:17; Ezek. 28:14, 15; II Cor. 5:17). *NOTHING* within God's creative activity has ever occurred or will ever occur apart from the Son.

> "For by him ['For in connection with Him'] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him ['created through Him, and with respect to Him']:
>
> And he is before all things, and by him all things consist ['and in connection with Him all things have been brought together']" (Col. 1:16, 17).

In verse seventeen, the word "is" is a translation of the Greek word *eimi* (a verb of being). This word, as in John 1:1, 2, 4, is used in *a timeless sense* — a sense with respect to an existence without a beginning or an end (*ref.* Chapter II in this book). And, in keeping with the use of *eimi* in this respect, the verb translated "consist" in the same verse (or, perhaps better translated as shown in the preceding translation of Col. 1:17: "have been brought together") is in the perfect tense in the Greek text, pointing to a work occurring during past time which exists during present time in a finished state.

Thus, viewing Col. 1:16, 17 and John 1:3 together, *all things were created in connection with, through, and with respect to Christ.* And, in connection with Him (in connection with the One existing apart from a beginning or an end), these things have been brought together in past time and continue that way during present time.

2) Ruin of the Creation

The ruin in Genesis chapter one had to do with *the material*

creation. In John chapter one, though an allusion is made back to the ruin of the material creation in Genesis (v. 5; *cf.* Gen. 1:3-5; II Cor. 4:6), the ruin has to do with *man* (seen throughout the chapter in man's need of a Saviour). In this respect, Genesis sets forth the type and John the antitype. Genesis foreshadows that seen in John.

Man, created on the sixth day immediately following the restoration of the material creation (Gen. 1:26-28), fell. Through Satanic intervention, man was reduced to a ruin (Gen. 3:1ff).

John, in his gospel, picks up *at the point of the ruin having occurred and calls attention to light shining out of darkness, connecting this light with God's Son, the Word made flesh, the Lamb of God* (1:4-14, 29-36).

In the preceding respect, *man's ruin* is seen indirectly at the beginning of John's gospel two different ways:

a) It is seen through light shining out of darkness (an allusion back to Gen. 1:2-5, drawing from light shining out of a ruin in God's original restoration of a ruined creation, forming an unchangeable pattern concerning how God restores a ruined creation).

b) It is seen in the appearance and introduction of a Deliverer, a Saviour (Whose appearance and introduction would be unnecessary if man's ruin had not previously occurred).

Thus, John, beginning at and drawing from the restoration in Gen. 1:2b, connects the light shining out of darkness with the Deliverer, the Saviour, the Lamb of God (John 1:14, 29, 35). And from how the Spirit of God handles the matter in the opening chapter of John (when He moved John to pen his gospel), *one can know exactly what the Spirit of God was foreshadowing* through His order of events during the six days of Genesis chapter one (which He, almost fifteen hundred years earlier, had moved Moses to pen).

3) Restoration over Six Days

Again, numerically, John deals with the antitype of that seen in Genesis. He moves through six days, into the seventh; and, from that seen occurring on the seventh day, the six days could

only be thought of as connected with *restoration* (in keeping with light shining out of darkness, the appearance and introduction of a Saviour inseparably associated with this light, and in keeping with the fact that the original pattern in Genesis is structured in this manner [*i.e.,* six days of restorative work preceding a day of rest]).

John 1:29 moves events from the first to the second day ("The next day…"); verse thirty-five moves events into the third day ("Again the next day…"); verse forty-three moves events into the fourth day ("The day following…"); and John 2:1 moves events into the seventh day ("And the third day…").

In this respect, the numerical structure of John 1, 2a would not only be in complete keeping with the numerical structure of Gen. 1, 2a but with the whole of Scripture as well.

Within this septenary framework, Scripture begins at *two numerical points* to move into the seventh day — one beginning at the time of man's creation, the other beginning at the time of Christ's first coming, more specifically at the time of events surrounding His crucifixion:

a) *The complete six days, followed by a seventh day,* as seen in Genesis chapters one and two (*cf.* Matt. 17:1ff).

b) *The last two days, followed by a third day,* as seen in sections of Scripture such as Hosea 5:15-6:2 and John 11:6, 7.

Then, both would be seen together in a section of Scripture such as Num. 19:11-22.

And the latter is exactly what John does at the beginning of his gospel. He moves through all six days, into the seventh; but he specifically singles out the last two (taking one into the third, which is the seventh [depending on where the count begins]), showing exactly what is seen in other parallel Scriptures (*cf.* Hosea 6:2; Matt. 17:1; Luke 24:7, 21, 46; I Cor. 15:4).

4) Rest on the Seventh Day

On the third day, the seventh day, all of God's firstborn Sons will be raised up to live in His sight:

Jesus (God's only begotten firstborn Son).
Israel (God's adopted firstborn son).
The Church (following the adoption into a firstborn status).

Jesus was raised from the dead on the third day, pointing to His elevation and exaltation in that coming day — to the third one-thousand-year period dating from the crucifixion.

Israel will be raised from the place of death on the third day, the third one-thousand-year period dating from the nation's death, the nation being set aside.

Note Jonah and Lazarus as types of Israel in this respect.

The Church, "in Christ" and in one respect presently occupying the same position occupied by Christ during His two days in the tomb — with *future life* emanating out of *present death* (*cf.* Phil. 3:10, 11; Col. 2:12; 3:1-4) — will, following the adoption, be raised up with Christ on the third one-thousand-year period dating from the inception of the Church.

And on the third day, or on the seventh day, the events foreshadowed by the first sign in John's gospel will occur.

These signs have to do with *Israel,* necessitating that *Israel be seen occupying the central place in that to which the signs point.*

And that is exactly what is seen in the first sign, pointing to events which will occur *on the third or the seventh day when the nation has been raised up to live in God's sight.*

(Note that in the restoration occurring over six days, seen in both Genesis and John, one book *does NOT* concern itself any more with events foreshadowed by those occurring on the first day [events relating to salvation by grace through faith] than does the other book. *Both begin at this point and have to do with a COMPLETE restoration seen through continuing events occurring during the remaining five days as well, with a view to the seventh day, the Sabbath.*

And this is EXACTLY what one finds in either book — the types in Genesis, the signs in John [among other related things in both books].

As well, this is perfectly in line with *the stated purpose for John's gospel* [20:30, 31], which, *through the signs* [paralleling *the types in Genesis*], moves beyond events foreshadowed by those on day one into events foreshadowed by those on days two through six, with a view to events foreshadowed by those on the seventh day, the earth's coming Sabbath.)

6

The Wedding Festivities

First Sign

Marriage on the Third, Seventh Day

"And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine…

And there were set there six waterpots of stone…

Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.

When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine…

…thou hast kept the good wine until now.

This beginning of miracles ['signs'] did Jesus in Cana of Galilee…" (John 2:1-3, 6a, 7-9a, 10b, 11a).

Christ's performance of a miraculous work at a wedding festival in Cana of Galilee forms the first of eight signs recorded in John's gospel. These signs, both at the time they were performed (during Christ's earthly ministry) and at the time they were later recorded by John (during the subsequent Acts period), had to do with *a SINGULAR purpose.*

These signs were originally performed and later recorded in order *to bring about BELIEF among those requiring a sign — the Jewish people* (John 20:30, 31; I Cor. 1:22). And these signs, as any of the other signs, were performed in connection with *a MESSAGE* — introduced by the forerunner of the Messiah, John the Baptist, having to do with *a call for national repentance, with a view to the kingdom.*

Then, after John had been imprisoned, Jesus continued the same message, later calling out twelve, then seventy, disciples to help carry this message to Israel.

The message was quite simple, forthright, and clearly stated:

> "Repent [*lit.*, 'Repent ye,' pl., *the entire nation*]: for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand" (*cf.* Matt. 3:1-3; 4:17, 23-25; 10:5-8; 15:24; Luke 10:1ff).

The kingdom of the heavens was "at hand [or, had 'drawn near']" at this time because the Messianic King was present, extending *an offer of the kingdom to the Jewish people*, with the establishment of *the kingdom* contingent upon *the nation's repentance.*

Thus, at the time these eight signs were performed they were directed to *a particular people, the Jewish people;* and they had to do with *a proffered kingdom.* And, as previously noted, the King Himself was present in Israel's midst, *calling for repentance and extending the offer of the kingdom.*

And, when these same signs were recorded in John's gospel at a later time, they were directed to *the SAME people* and had to do with *EXACTLY the same thing,* though the King was no longer present.

These eight signs had been performed during the original offer of the kingdom, during a time when numerous other signs were being manifested; and these signs were recorded during the re-offer of the kingdom, during a time when numerous signs continued to be manifested (through the apostles, et al.).

This continuance of signs, of necessity, had to occur between 33 A.D. and about 62 A.D. (time covering the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel). And *the recording* of the eight previously manifested signs in John's gospel would, of necessity as well, have had to occur before the latter date, before about 62 A.D. (*ref.* Chapter I in this book).

But, with Messiah no longer present, the people to whom the message continued to be proclaimed found themselves in the position seen in Acts 3:12-21 — having to await the return of their Messiah before the kingdom could be established. And the call for national repentance — with the kingdom no longer proclaimed as being "at hand," for Messiah was no longer present — is seen in keeping with Peter's statements in Acts 2:38; 3:19, 20:

> "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."
>
> "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;
>
> And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you."

Thus, *these signs — BOTH at the time they were performed and at the time they were later recorded — had to do with and were directed to the Jewish people for EXACTLY the same purpose, a purpose seen in John's gospel at the conclusion of all eight signs*:

> "…that ye [the Jewish people, those requiring a sign] might *believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31).

And "life," resulting from *belief,* must be understood within context. These signs had to do with *the Jewish people in relation to the kingdom.* And "life" would have to be understood accordingly — *life for the Jewish people in the Messianic Kingdom,* whether in the original offer seen in the gospel accounts or in the re-offer seen in the Book of Acts.

> (For additional information relative to the preceding, see the author's book, *From Acts to the Epistles*. Much of the material throughout the thirteen chapters of this book deals with this overall subject.)

On the Seventh Day

The first recorded sign in John's gospel, stated to have been *the beginning of signs* in Christ's previous earthly ministry (v. 11), occurred *after six days on the seventh day* (*cf.* 1:29, 35, 43; 2:1). And the seventh day, the seventh 1,000-year period, is *EXACTLY* when the events which this sign foreshadows will occur (*ref.* Chapter V in this book).

This first sign is not about events occurring during a marriage per se but about events occurring during *festivities following the marriage.* This sign foreshadows both the nation's restoration

(a nation which, at this time, will already be God's wife) and the wedding festivities which follow.

That to which the sign points will occur *AFTER* Man's Day has run its course, a day which will last 6,000 years; it will occur *AFTER* God has completed His dealings with Israel during Man's Day; it will occur not only *AFTER* the present dispensation has run its course but also *AFTER* the last seven years of the previous dispensation (Daniel's unfulfilled Seventieth Week) have run their course, completing Man's Day; and it will occur *AFTER* Gentile world power has been put down and destroyed, in accord with Dan. 2:44, 45; 7:23-28; 8:23-25; 9:27; 11:36-45; Rev. 19:11-21.

The things which these marriage festivities foreshadow will occur *AFTER* Israel has been brought to the place of repentance; they will occur *DURING* the Lord's Day, at the very beginning of the Messianic Era; and they will mark the beginning point of Israel coming into a complete realization of the reason God called the nation into existence three and one-half millenniums ago.

1) Two Wedding Festivals

Two separate wedding festivals will occur at the end of Man's Day.

One will occur in heaven, having to do with *Christ and His bride* (Rev. 19:7-9); and the other will occur on earth, having to do with *God and Israel* (John 2:1ff). The former is *the first thing* seen occurring in the Book of Revelation at the end of six days, on the seventh day; and the latter is *the first thing* seen occurring in John's gospel at the end of six days, on the seventh day.

The wedding festivities seen in Rev. 19:7-9 will occur *in heaven* immediately preceding Christ's return, and the wedding festivities foreshadowed by John 2:1ff will occur *on earth* shortly after Christ has returned. And the Tribulation will serve *a dual purpose* in the preceding respect.

2) Judgments During the Tribulation

The judgments seen within the seven-sealed scroll (Rev. 5ff) — judgments occurring during and immediately following the Tribulation — have to do with the redemption of the inheritance, in the antitype of Boaz redeeming the inheritance at the gate of

the city in Ruth chapter four. And, as in the type in the Book of Ruth, the bride, previously singled out through events at the judgment seat (Ruth 3:6ff; Rev. 1-3), will become Christ's wife through His subsequent redemption of the inheritance.

Then, with the marriage occurring in this manner, *the festivities surrounding the marriage* are seen occurring in heaven immediately before Christ returns to the earth to complete the redemption of the inheritance, *resulting in the previously revealed bride becoming His wife.*

And these same judgments effecting the redemption of the inheritance and the marriage of Christ and His bride, will also serve two purposes relative to Israel. These judgments will not only result in Israel being brought to the place of repentance but they will , as well (as with Christ and His bride), result in the remarriage of God and Israel.

The nation will be brought through such dire straits during this time that the Jewish people will be left without a place to turn other than to the God of their fathers.

This is the place to which God brought the Israelites in Egypt during Moses' day, under the persecution of a past Assyrian (Ex. 3:1ff; *cf.* Isa. 52:4).

And, in complete keeping with later promises (Lev. 26:40-42; II Chron. 7:14 [God's actions toward His people *NEVER change,* in complete accord with *His unchangeable, eternal Word*]), God then sent a deliverer to His people.

EXACTLY as during the persecution under a past Assyrian in the type in Exodus, when the Israelites have been brought to the end of themselves and do that stated in the first part of Lev. 26:40-42 or II Chron. 7:14 (*repent, confess their iniquity*), God will then do exactly what He has stated in the latter part of these verses (*forgive their sin, and heal their land*). And, as in the type in Exodus, God will, at that time, send the Deliverer — the One greater than Moses — to bring that which He has promised to pass.

Through the judgments of the Tribulation, Israel will be brought to the place of repentance, allowing for cleansing of the nation's harlotry and allowing for that foreshadowed by the first sign in John's gospel — an event to occur following Israel's cleansing, on the seventh day, during the seventh millennium, during the

earth's coming Sabbath.

And, as wedding festivities will occur in heaven in association with *the bride about to become Christ's wife*, wedding festivities will also subsequently occur on earth in association with *Israel being restored as the wife of Jehovah.*

(For additional information concerning type-antitype teachings pertaining to the seven-sealed scroll in Rev. 5, as it would relate *to the earth, Israel, and the Church* — as these judgments have to do with *the redemption of the inheritance* [redemption of the earth, with the government changing hands] *and marriage* [Christ and His bride, God and Israel] — refer to the author's books, *Ruth*, Ch. IX, and *The Time of the End*, Chs. VIII, IX.

Also, for additional information concerning the judgments within the seven-sealed scroll resulting in Israel's repentance and subsequent restoration, refer to the author's book, *The Time of the End*, Chs. X-XIX.)

In Cana of Galilee

"Cana" is a name found in John's gospel alone (2:1, 11; 4:46; 21:2), except for the probable reference to this village through the statement, "Simon the Canaanite" (Matt. 10:4; Mark 3:18).

(The use of "Canaanite" could refer to either a village in the land of Canaan or to the land itself ["Canaan" is an ancient name which covers all the land west of the Jordan, later called "Palestine" by the Romans (*cf.* Num. 34:1-12; Joel 3:4)]. But, since Simon is singled out as a "Canaanite" in both gospels, *among others from the land of Canaan*, it would be far more likely that the reference would be to *the village of Cana* rather than to the land of Canaan.

Also, the only two places in the New Testament where *the land of Canaan* is specifically referenced [Acts 7:11; 13:19], a slightly different spelling of "Canaan" appears in the Greek text — *Chanaan*, as opposed to *Kanaan*, the root form from which the Greek word *Kananites* ["Canaanite"] is derived in Matt. 10:4 and Mark 3:18.)

The site of Cana of Galilee, however, is unknown today. Galilee formed the northern part of the land of Canaan, and two sites north of Nazareth have, at times, been regarded by archaeologists

as the place where Cana existed 2,000 years ago. But all that can be known for sure about the location of Cana of Galilee at the time of Christ's first coming is that this village would have been located in the proximity of Capernaum (John 2:12), which was on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

The meaning of the word "Cana" in the Hebrew text (*kana* [*or qana*]) has to do centrally with the thought of *jealousy.* And, since the wedding festivities in John chapter two foreshadow wedding festivities surrounding the restoration of Israel, such a meaning would be *very fitting* for the location of the festivities forming this first sign.

"Jealousy" has to do with *exacting exclusive devotion,* and in the case of "God and Israel," it would have to do with *God expecting/ requiring devotion of this nature from His wife.* Actions emanating from jealousy, in this respect, have to do with *being watchful, being careful to guard one's rights, with a rival's influence in view.*

The relationship existing between God and Israel in this respect, where the Hebrew word *kana* is used, can be seen in verses such as:

> "Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth:
>
> Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for *I the Lord thy God am a jealous God…*" (Deut. 5:8, 9a).
>
> "Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you;
>
> For *the Lord thy God is a jealous God* among you…" (Deut. 6:14, 15a).
>
> "Thus saith the Lord God of hosts; *I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy.*
>
> And I am sore displeased with the heathen [the Gentiles] that are at ease; for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction" (Zech. 1:14b, 15).
>
> "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; *I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury.*
>
> Thus saith the Lord; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain" (Zech. 8:2, 3; *cf.* Isa. 2:1-5).

God's jealousy surrounding Israel has to do with any departure the nation might take from the proper Husband-wife relationship which the Husband Himself had established and set forth.

And Israel, in her dispersion among the nations (having committed all types of departures — *e.g.,* going after other gods, committing harlotry with the nations), has taken *God's jealousy,* resulting in *His fury,* to a point where *His wrath will be poured out without measure* in order to effect *repentance* on the part of His adulterous wife, resulting in *restoration.*

This is the central thought behind the exhibition of *God's wrath* during Daniel's unfulfilled Seventieth Week. This wrath will fall *centrally upon Israel,* though the nations will feel this wrath as well. The nations will feel God's wrath during this time, not only for reasons given in verses such as Gen. 12:3 and Zech. 1:15 but because the Jewish people will be scattered among the nations, occupying the position seen in Rev. 17:1, 15 (existing as a people part and parcel with the nations of the earth).

God's manifested wrath during this time will have to do with *a jealous God being brought to a particular place, through His adulterous wife's disobedience.* And God will *manifest His wrath* as seen in Revelation chapters six through the opening verses of chapter nineteen — *a wrath* previously revealed by prophet after prophet throughout the Old Testament.

And, through God's sovereign control of all things, *His wrath* toward His adulterous wife is seen *resulting in that for which this wrath will have been manifested.*

Israel's harlotry is seen reaching an apex during Daniel's Seventieth Week. And at that time — *resulting from God's wrath, bringing the Jewish people to the END of themselves and to the place of repentance* — the nation's harlotry will be brought to an end.

ONLY AFTER Israel has repented can the events foreshadowed in John 2:1ff occur.

In this respect, it is *very fitting* that the first sign in John's gospel occurs in "Cana of Galilee." This sign, through the location of the event, depicts *the jealous nature of God toward Israel; and, as an ultimate outcome of God's jealousy toward Israel, matters will be brought to pass EXACTLY after the manner seen in the sign.*

Water to Wine

The miraculous work surrounding the first sign in John's gospel had to do not only with changing water to wine but with producing *a particular type wine* — undoubtedly the type wine seen in connection with God in Ps. 104:15, a "wine that maketh glad the heart of man."

The steward of the feast referred to the wine which Christ had brought forth as "the good wine," kept "until now" (a reference to this being *the best wine at the feast, kept until last* [v. 10]).

And the imagery used — *six waterpots of stone, filled to the brim, at a wedding festival in Cana of Galilee, on the seventh day* — forms a complete and perfect picture of events about to occur pertaining to God, His Son, and Israel.

First, the six waterpots of stone and their being filled to the brim point to things pertaining to *Israel's coming restoration*, with a view to that which follows.

"Six" is *man's number,* and "stone" points to *the condition of the people's hearts prior to the work of restoration, shown by the six waterpots being filled with water which was changed to wine.* And being filled to the brim shows *the completeness, the totality, of this work.*

Note how Ezekiel stated the matter six centuries before events in John chapter two and over two and one-half millenniums before that which the sign foreshadows is brought to pass:

> "For I will take you from among the heathen [the Gentiles], and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.
>
> Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.
>
> A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.
>
> And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.
>
> And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God" (Ezek. 36:24-28; *cf.* Jer. 31:31-33; Ezek. 16:8ff).

Then, carrying matters on into the wedding festivities, note a sequence of events alluded to at Christ's first coming.

While partaking of the Passover meal with His disciples only hours before His crucifixion, Christ took the cup (containing wine), gave thanks, and then gave it to His disciples, saying:

> "Drink ye all of it [*lit.*, 'All of you drink out of it' (*ref.* NASB)];
>
> For this is my blood of the new testament ['new covenant'], which is shed for many for the remission of sins.
>
> But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matt. 26:27b-29).

The miraculous work in John chapter two had to do with changing water to wine. Aside from showing Israel's coming restoration, why was this done?

One central answer is obvious. This was done to foreshadow the beginning of the fulfillment of Christ's later statement in Matt. 26:29.

Exactly as Christ and His disciples had been called to a wedding festival *on the seventh day* in the sign, they will be called to a wedding festival *on the seventh day* yet future. And Christ, along with His disciples, *will again drink* of the fruit of the vine together.

But *this time* it will be in the Father's kingdom — *EXACTLY as the Son promised* — at the future marriage festivities surrounding the Father's restored wife.

And a depiction of the fulfillment of Matt. 26:29 in this respect was given by Moses in Genesis chapter fourteen almost one and one-half millenniums preceding this time and almost three and one-half millenniums before it is fulfilled by Christ at the beginning of the Messianic Era (foreshadowed by the first sign in John's gospel).

That seen in Genesis chapter fourteen has to do with the account of Melchizedek, a king-priest in Jerusalem, coming forth following the battle of the kings, with bread and wine, to bless Abraham (vv. 17-20).

And that foreshadowed by this type has to do with Christ coming forth in that future day as the great King-Priest "after the

order of Melchizedek," following the battle of the kings (following the treading of the winepress), with bread and wine, to bless Abraham and his descendants through Isaac and Jacob (*cf.* Ps. 110:1-4; Heb. 4:6, 10; 7:1ff).

And, exactly as seen in John chapter two, the wine which Christ and His disciples *will AGAIN drink TOGETHER in THAT day will not be just any wine.* As described by the steward of the feast in Cana, *it will be "the good wine," which will have been kept "until now"* (*cf.* Isa. 25:6; Joel 2:22; 3:17, 18).

The wine which Christ made at the wedding festival in Cana was a type wine which man could *NOT* have produced at this time; nor could man produce this type wine today.

A wine of this nature though, in all likelihood, existed in the antediluvian world. That is the clear implication from Noah, following the Flood, planting a vineyard, making wine, and becoming drunk (Gen. 9:20, 21).

Atmospheric conditions preceding the Flood were entirely different than they were following the Flood. At the time of the Flood, the waters which God had placed above the atmosphere when he restored the earth (Gen. 1:6-8) were released and fell through "the windows [contextually, 'flood gates'] of heaven" upon the earth, forming part of the waters which flooded the earth (Gen. 7:11ff).

This allowed the sun's rays to shine directly through the atmosphere, resulting in accompanying changes, particularly different meteorological changes.

And these changes apparently resulted in something new and unknown to Noah when he made wine following the Flood — a wine which, rather than making "glad the heart of man," instead, resulted in *drunkenness.*

(For information particularly on meteorological changes at this time, refer to the author's book, *Prophecy on Mount Olivet,* Chapter IX.)

The only type wine which Christ would have produced in John 2:7ff — described in Ps. 104:15 — was evidently a type wine which Noah thought that he was making following the Flood but could no longer produce. And drunkenness, associated with wine fol-

lowing the Flood, would, of necessity, have had to be something alien to the type wine which Christ made at the marriage festivities in Cana.

And this foreshadows a condition which will exist during the Messianic Era when pre-Flood atmospheric conditions have been restored (*cf.* Acts 3:21).

Not only will Christ bring forth this type wine to drink with His disciples, but man, in that day, will evidently be able to plant a vineyard and produce a wine of this nature as well (*cf.* Isa. 5:1ff; 65:21: Jer. 31:12; Joel 2:19; Zech. 9:17).

7

Except a Man… (I)

Brought Forth from Above, NOT from Below

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles ['signs'] that thou doest except God be with him.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again ['born from above'], he cannot see the kingdom of God.

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

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

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

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again ['born from above,' 'brought forth from above']" (John 3:1-7).

(This is the first of three chapters dealing with *the birth from above, being brought forth out of God*, in John's gospel, James, I Peter, and John's first epistle.)

The birth from above is introduced in John's gospel in the first chapter (vv. 11-13) and is expanded upon and dealt with more fully in the third chapter (vv. 3ff).

In the first chapter, this birth is seen having to do with individuals *being brought forth completely apart from anything connected with man, through a work associated solely and completely with God:*

> "…not of ['out of'] blood, nor of ['out of'] the will of the flesh, nor of ['out of'] the will of man, but of ['out of'] God" (v. 13).

And this Divine work, textually, has to do with those to whom Christ came 2,000 years ago — *the Jewish people. Through receiving the Christ, believing,* the Jewish people were given the "power ['right'] to become the sons of God [Gk., 'children of God']" (v. 12).

Then in the third chapter, the words, "from above," are used relative to this birth, with the subject matter being *signs,* and *the proffered kingdom* (vv. 1-3). *And, AGAIN, the Jewish people are in view.*

Nicodemus, a Pharisee, a teacher among the Jewish people, had come to Jesus "by night." Nicodemus referenced *the signs* being performed, acknowledging that he and others (apparently other religious leaders) knew that the One performing these signs in the presence of the people could only be "a teacher come from God."

In His response, Jesus remained *completely* within the scope of the subject at hand, though He moved beyond the thought of *signs* and dealt with the heart of the matter. Jesus immediately dealt with the necessity of *the birth from above* (previously introduced in John's gospel as *a birth out of God* [1:13]) — *an absolute necessity* if an individual were to "see" that to which the signs pointed, *the kingdom of God.*

During Moses and Joshua's day, and during Elijah and Elisha's day, *signs* had been manifested in the presence of *the Jewish people* in connection with *the Old Testament theocracy.*

In this respect, drawing from the Old Testament Scriptures, a manifestation of signs surrounding Christ's first coming, of necessity, *could ONLY have had to do with the Jewish people in relation to the proffered kingdom* (*ref.* Chapter III of this book).

Nicodemus' query and Jesus' response emanated from a background and setting of this nature. Though Nicodemus may have understood the reason for signs and that which they portended, he didn't understand what Jesus meant when He called attention to the birth from above as a necessity for *seeing* the kingdom. His thoughts shifted *from* that of "signs" *to* Jesus' statement concerning *the birth from*

above (vv. 3, 4), and Jesus then went on to explain the matter (vv. 5ff).

("Seeing" the kingdom in v. 3 should not be understood as something different than "entering" the kingdom in v. 5. Though two different Greek words are used, the same word translated "see" in v. 3 [*horao*] is used farther down in the same chapter [v. 36] in a synonymous sense to "enter" — *i.e., not seeing life* in v. 36 can only, textually, be viewed as synonymous with *not entering into life* [*cf.* Matt. 5:20; 7:21; 19:17].

In this respect, John 3:5ff simply forms commentary for that which had previously been stated in v. 3.)

Thus, this birth, this bringing forth, in John's gospel is seen as a birth *out of God* (1:13) and/or a birth *from above* (3:3, 7). And this is in perfect keeping with the manner in which this birth is seen in all of the other New Testament passages where it is referenced — James 1:18, I Peter 1:3, 23, and I John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18.

In John 3:3, 7, the wording in the Greek text relating to this birth is different than it is in I Peter 1:3, 23 (two words are used in John, and a compound word is used in I Peter), but the English translation in both instances should be the same — *born from above.*

Then, in I John, the translation throughout (ten usages) is seen to be the same as in John 1:13 — *a birth, a bringing forth, out of God.* And, in James 1:18, a different Greek word is used.

(*Gennao,* the Greek word for "begotten" or "bringing forth," is used throughout the references in John, I Peter, and I John.

In John 3:3, 7, the word *gennao* appears with another Greek word, *anothen*, which means "from above." Though *anothen* could be understood and translated "again," this translation would not really follow the manner in which this birth had previously been introduced in John 1:13 [a birth *out of God*]. Thus, understanding *anothen* in its primary sense — "from above" [*cf.* John 3:31; 19:11] — forms a more natural flow of thought from that previously seen in the first chapter.

Then, in I Peter 1:3, 23, *gennao* appears in a compound form, *anagennao.* The preposition *ana,* which has the primary meaning of "up," has been prefixed to the word. And though the preposition prefixed to the word in both verses is usually translated "again" in English translations [an acceptable and correct understanding and translation of the word in many instances], this would not really be in keeping with either the

primary meaning of the preposition or the manner in which this birth [a bringing forth] is expressed in both John's gospel ["out of God" and "from above"] and his first epistle ["out of God"].

The correct understanding and translation of *anagennao* in I Peter 1:3, 23 should be the same as that seen through the use of *gennao* and *anothen* together in John 3:3, 7 — *born from above,* a birth or a bringing forth which is introduced in John's gospel and continued in his first epistle as being *out of God.*

Then in James 1:18, the Greek word *apokueo* is used. This is a medical term which refers to *that which occurs at the end of a pregnancy* — "a bringing forth," "a giving birth.")

Out of God, from Above

The birth "out of God" (John 1:13) or "from above" (John 3:3, 7) is almost universally taught in Christendom as having to do with *a birth experienced by unsaved people*, occurring at the moment they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and pass "from death unto life."

That is, the Spirit breathing life into an unsaved individual, based on Christ's finished work at Calvary, is looked upon as the birth "out of God," "from above," seen in these verses.

The problem is that *this is NOT the manner in which the matter is introduced in John 1:13; NOR is this the manner in which the matter is continued in John 3:3, 7; NOR is this the manner in which the matter is seen in James, I Peter, and I John.*

This is NOT to say that the Divine work surrounding an unsaved individual believing on the Lord Jesus Christ and being saved is not to be viewed in the same manner, *i.e.,* as being brought forth "out of God," "from above." Rather, *it is to say* that the verses being used (John 1:13; 3:3, 7; James 1:18; I Peter 1:3, 23; I John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18) *DON'T* refer to this initial work of God through the Spirit. Instead, they refer to subsequent works of God through the Spirit — subsequent works (pl.) because that connected with *the bringing forth "out of God" is NOT the same in each instance.*

The work pertaining to an unsaved individual, "dead in trespasses and sins," passing "from death unto life," *can ONLY be a Divine bringing forth "out of God," "from above." It has to be, for this is the way that the matter is presented throughout Scripture*, begin-

ning in the opening verses of Genesis chapter one. Ruined man is *completely incapable* of bringing himself out of his ruined state.

A Divine work MUST occur.

However, Scripture *NEVER* uses the type terminology seen in the referenced verses from John's gospel, James, I Peter, and I John relative to this Divine work, unless possibly a verse such as Isa. 66:8 would be referring to this facet of Israel's future acceptance of Christ.

There can be *NO* Divine work performed among man (either saved or unsaved man) *apart from* this work occurring "out of God," "from above." *Such would be IMPOSSIBLE.*

And, in this respect, the verses from John's gospel, James, I Peter, and I John *DO describe the source of the work of salvation by grace* (for it is the same, it has to be — *i.e., out of God, from above*), though these verses *DO NOT pertain to this work per se.*

The problem, as previously noted, is that Christians have been quick to remove these verses from their respective contexts and misapply them, making these verses deal with something which *the verses DON'T deal with at all.*

And, through so doing, that work of God which the Spirit intended, as He moved men to pen these verses, *is done away with.*

The remainder of this chapter will show, in all places where the birth from above is referenced (the Gospel of John, James, I Peter, I John), *WHY the verses dealing with this subject MUST be looked upon as pertaining to different facets of God's work among the saved, NOT to one facet of His work among the unsaved.*

The Gospel of John

When Christ came to Israel the first time, He came to a people capable of spiritual perception and discernment, else He could not have appeared on the scene calling for the nation's repentance and proclaiming the kingdom as being "at hand."

Christ came to a disobedient nation, though to a saved generation of Jews, to a nation which had been sacrificing and availing itself of the blood of the paschal lambs year by year. And Christ was born *King* in the nation's midst, presenting Himself as *the God-sent Deliverer in this respect* — deliverance from the consequences

of centuries of disobedience, which had resulted in a complete reversal of conditions pertaining to the nation's calling (Lev. 26:14-39; Deut. 28:15-67).

Israel's spiritual condition and position at this time was that of *a son being chastened because of disobedience* (*cf.* Zech. 1:14, 15).

Or, to place the matter within another frame of reference, it was that of *God dealing with an adulterous wife who had been caught up in harlotry among the nations* (*cf.* Jer. 3:1-3).

And, viewing the matter from either vantage point, *it is evident that the whole of Christ's message to Israel had to do with things beyond the thought of eternal salvation, particularly since "signs" and "the kingdom" were in view.*

His message had to do with *deliverance relative to the nation's condition, within the proclaimed kingdom.* And deliverance effected through receiving the Christ, believing, for the Jews at this time (*whether in the offer of the kingdom preceding the events of Calvary or the re-offer following*) *MUST be understood accordingly.*

(For more detailed information along these lines, refer to the author's book, *From Acts to the Epistles,* particularly the first four chapters.)

Those Jews receiving the Christ at His first coming in John 1:12, 13, through believing on His name, were said to be "born…of God ['brought forth out of God']" and given the right to become "the children of God." And, as previously noted, such an act centered around *deliverance, with the kingdom in view, NOT eternal salvation.*

These were Jews, part of a nation which comprised God's firstborn son (Ex. 4:22, 23), though a disobedient son, being given the right to become "children of God" through *receiving the Christ and being brought forth out of God.* And acceptance, belief on the part of the people, could only have had to do with *the MANNER in which Christ presented Himself to the Jewish people* (*a REGAL manner*), along with the message being proclaimed (*the KINGDOM being "at hand"*).

It may at first sound strange to take one who is already a son and view him as a child, *but NOT so. This is EXACTLY the manner in which it HAD TO occur in Israel then or MUST occur in Christendom today.*

Israel had been called out of Egypt under Moses as *God's firstborn son to rule at the head of the nations, with the nations being blessed*

through Israel. And this entire thought must be carried over into the deliverance which Christ was offering Israel as the One greater than Moses.

God's firstborn son was again being called forth for *EXACTLY the same purpose.* But at this time, unlike during Moses' day, *a disobedient son* was being dealt with.

The matter can be clarified through referencing two passages of Scripture — John 8:31-44 and Heb. 12:5-8.

In the former passage (John 8:31-44), Jews rejecting Christ were looked upon as *children of the Devil* (vv. 37-44). And Jews receiving Christ, according to John 1:12, 13, had been removed from this position and given the right to become *the children of God.*

In the latter passage (Heb. 12:5-8), *sons are seen being trained from the vantage point of a child.* The Greek word translated "chastening," "chasteneth," and "chastisement" in this section has to do with *child-training.* The passage deals with *sons presently being child-trained,* with a view to Christ one day bringing "many sons unto glory" with Him (Heb. 2:10), or, as stated in Rom. 8:19, a "manifestation of the sons of God."

(For additional information on the child-training of sons, refer to the author's book, *God's Firstborn Sons,* Ch. III, pp. 27-33.)

John 1:12, 13 had to do with God taking His disobedient sons (individuals within the nation forming His firstborn son), performing an act similar to that seen in Col. 1:13 (causing them to change sides with respect to two kingdoms), and then child-training His sons with a view to that which sonship implies — *rulership.*

And Jesus' discourse to Nicodemus involved exactly the same thing. It was simply a continuation and expansion of another facet of that which began to be developed earlier in the gospel account.

Being brought forth *from above* in chapter three, previously described as *out of God* in chapter one, had to do with being brought forth "out of water and Spirit" (literal rendering from the Greek text).

In the type having to do with the Israelites under Moses, this could only have drawn from the experiences of the Israelites during the Red Sea passage and beyond. It could only have pointed to that seen on the eastern banks and beyond — resurrection life (removed from the place of death [from the waters of the Sea]),

with God, through His Spirit, then leading them away from Egypt and the Sea toward another land.

(For additional information on John 3:5 and the typology of the Red Sea passage, refer to Ch. VIII, pp. 93-96, in this book. Also refer to the author's book, *Redeemed for a Purpose,* Ch. IX, pp. 126-129.)

John 1:11-13 deals with *the child-training of disobedient sons*, and John 3:3-8 deals with *particulars surrounding this child-training.*

A deliverance of SAVED individuals, a deliverance with REGALITY in view, is seen throughout.

James

James 1:15-18 shows *a begetting, a bringing forth from both below and above.* Verse fifteen shows the former (*from below*), and verse eighteen the latter (*from above*).

In verse fifteen, the Greek words *tikto* ("to beget," "to bring forth") and *apokueo* ("to bring forth," "to give birth [as seen in a medical respect]") are used in a somewhat synonymous sense, with *apokueo* showing "results." *Tikto* is used in the first part of the verse ("bringeth forth sin"); and *apokueo* is used in the latter part of the verse showing *the results*, in the sense of "sin" having given birth to ("bringeth forth death").

Then in verse eighteen, *apokueo* is used relative to *life instead of death*, as seen in verse fifteen. And this word is used relative to *the power of the Word in a Christian's life, effecting, giving birth to, the metamorphosis — the results of the power of the Word* (*ref.* the author's book, *Salvation of the Soul*, Ch. IV):

"Of his own will begat he us with the Word of truth…"

Thus, these two words are used in James relative to Christians either being brought forth from below (through that associated with sin, *resulting in death*) or being brought forth from above (through the Word, *resulting in life* [*cf.* Rom. 8:11-14]).

I Peter

God bringing individuals forth in I Peter 1:3, 23 has to do with

additional commentary on that seen in John 3:3-8. But, rather than the message being drawn from events surrounding the offer of the kingdom to Israel and having to do with a re-offer of the kingdom to Israel (as in John's gospel), the message in I Peter is directed to the one to whom the kingdom of the heavens was offered after it had been taken from Israel (*cf.* Matt. 21:33-45; I Peter 2:9, 10).

The message in I Peter is seen directed to *the one new man* "in Christ," to Christians. And it is a simple matter to see in both verses in I Peter chapter one (vv. 3, 23) that the birth from above — being brought forth *from above, out of God* — has to do with saved individuals, not with the unsaved.

I Peter 1:3 should literally read:

> "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us from above with respect to a living hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ out of the dead."

Being brought forth *from above* in this verse is with respect to *a living hope,* made possible through *the resurrection of Jesus Christ from among the dead.* Christians have been saved for a purpose, and that purpose is seen in the entirety of this verse, along with the verses which follow (vv. 4ff).

That is to say, Christians have been saved (*a PAST bringing forth from above*) *with a view to their being brought forth from above* (*PRESENT aspect of salvation*), which has to do with *a living hope,* a hope made possible through Christ's resurrection. And this hope has to do with *a FUTURE inheritance inseparably connected with the saving of the soul* (vv. 4-10).

The salvation presently possessed by every Christian has to do with *Christ's death.* It has to do with *death and shed blood.* This is the unchangeable manner in which matters were set forth in Genesis, beginning with chapter three.

This is why Paul, when first going to Corinth and dealing centrally with unsaved individuals, proclaimed one message alone — "Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (I Cor. 2:1, 2).

The gospel of grace involves *death* and *shed blood.* Then, *burial* and *resurrection* form continuing parts of the overall gospel message and have to do with present and future aspects of salvation.

Seen within the type beginning in Exodus chapter twelve, *death* and *shed blood* would have to do with that involved in the slaying of the paschal lambs and the proper application of the blood.

The death of the firstborn, with God being satisfied, occurred at this point. But *burial* and *resurrection* are seen at points beyond — at the Red Sea passage, and on the eastern banks of the Sea.

Being brought forth from above in I Peter 1:3 has to do with *resurrection, NOT with death and shed blood.* It has to do with realizing *a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from among the dead.* Thus, *it can ONLY have to do with present and future aspects of salvation, NOT with the past aspect* (which is the "why" of the explanation in John 3:5ff to Christ's statement in v. 3).

A different facet of the same thing is seen in I Peter 1:23. The begetting from above is accomplished "through the living and abiding word of God" (NASB). And it is plain from continuing verses (vv. 24, 25) that verse twenty-three is referring to the written word, which is "quick ['alive'], and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword…" (Heb. 4:12a).

The picture in I Peter 1:23 is that of *the metamorphosis* (*cf.* Rom. 12:1, 2; Col. 3:10) — the indwelling Spirit taking the implanted Word and effecting spiritual growth from immaturity to maturity (James 1:18, 21). This work of the Spirit is spoken of in I Peter 1:23 as something *brought forth from above* (*out of God*); and this can be experienced *ONLY by the saved,* for:

1) The person must first possess spiritual life in order for spiritual growth to occur.

2) The saving of the soul rather than a Christian's presently possessed salvation is in view (James 1:21; I Peter 1:3-9).

(For additional information on *the implanted Word* and *the metamorphosis,* refer to the author's book, *Salvation of the Soul,* Chapters III, IV.)

I John

Individuals being brought forth out of God in I John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18 has to do with additional commentary on that seen

in both John 1:11-13 and John 3:3-8, along with being perfectly in line with that seen in I Peter 1:3, 23.

I John though is slightly different than I Peter. Though it is evident that I John was written to Christians (as I Peter), the book was *ALSO* evidently written for the same purpose as John's gospel.

The structure of I John runs *parallel* with parts of John's gospel, particularly the opening three chapters of the gospel, along with the stated purpose in chapter twenty (vv. 30, 31).

Note that John began his epistle as he had begun his gospel — taking the reader all the way back to the beginning (*cf.* John 1:1; I John 1:1). Then, after dealing with matters in this respect, along with singling out Christ and pointing to His true identity (*EXACTLY* as seen in the gospel account), John immediately places matters within the confines of the typology of the tabernacle. He calls attention to sin, confession of sin, and forgiveness of sin.

Though it is not dealt with in so many words, there appears to be an allusion and call to Israel in this respect (paralleling the call for "repentance" in the gospel accounts). The Jewish people had sinned, but forgiveness could be forthcoming, if… And this allusion and call to Israel continues at places throughout the epistle in matters related to being brought forth *out of God.*

Note, for example, that being brought forth *out of God* in I John 5:1-5 is identical to that seen in John 1:11-13; 20:30, 31. In both places, being brought forth *out of God* has to do with believing that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God."

This is exactly what the Jewish people *were called upon to believe in both the offer and re-offer of the kingdom.* Both the words "Christ" and "Son," textually, have *regal* implications — *the Christ* (*the Messiah,* the One Who was to rule and reign); and *the Son* ("Sonship," implying *rulership,* for only *Sons* can rule in God's kingdom). This was the One to Whom God would one day give the sceptre and place on His "holy hill of Zion" (Ps. 2:6, 7; Dan. 7:13, 14; Rev. 11:15).

The signs in John's gospel were given to effect *belief among the Jewish people that Jesus was the Christ, God's Son, Who would one day take the sceptre and reign.* This is seen connected with being brought forth *out of God* in John 1:11-13, and this is seen *EXACTLY the same way* in I John 5:1-5.

In the preceding respect, I John, undoubtedly written during the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel (as John's gospel), would have to be viewed much like Rom. 1:16 (*cf.* Rom. 2:5-16) — "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

(For information concerning the time of the offer and subsequent re-offer of the kingdom to Israel, refer to pp. 11, 12 in Chapter I of this book.)

Being brought forth *out of God* in I John (mentioned ten times in six verses [2:29; 3:9 (twice); 4:7; 5:1 (three times); 5:4; 5:18 (twice)]) has to do with exactly the same thing as seen in John's gospel (chs. 1, 3), in James (1:18), or in Peter's first epistle (1:3, 23). It has to do with *works of the Spirit among the saved (which are not necessarily identical in each instance), connected with a child-training of sons.*

For example, note that being brought forth in this manner has to do with believing the truth about Jesus being the Christ, God's Son, in John 1:11-13 and I John 5:1, 5; and in John 3:5, James 1:18, I Peter 1:3, 23, and most of the references in I John, the thought of being brought forth in this manner has to do with maturity in the faith.

Within the scope of being brought forth *out of God* in I John, *only that which is of God will manifest itself.*

This will explain why mainly perfect tenses are used in the Greek text throughout I John, pointing to a past, completed action, existing during present time in a finished state (eight of the ten usages in I John are in the perfect tense, as well as John 3:6, 8 and I Peter 1:23) — a tense structure showing *present action among believers surrounding that which is out of God, based on a past Divine work.*

Also, this will explain why sin cannot exist within the scope of that brought forth *out of God* in I John 3:6, 9; 5:18. Anything connected with the world, the flesh, and the Devil *MUST exist outside the scope of that brought forth out of God.* And, conversely, things such as abiding in Him, keeping His commandments, and love *MUST exist within the scope of that brought forth out of God.*

The whole of the matter is really that simple and easy to understand. A person is either active in one sphere or the other. There is no middle ground (*cf.* Matt. 12:30; Luke 11:23).

8

Except a Man… (II)

Brought Forth from Above, NOT from Below

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles ['signs'] that thou doest except God be with him.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again ['born from above'], he cannot see the kingdom of God.

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

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

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

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again ['born from above,' 'brought forth from above']" (John 3:1-7).

John introduces *a bringing forth out of God* (1:13), *a birth [a bringing forth] from above* (3:3-7), in the opening part of his gospel. And the context surrounding John's introduction is in relation *to the Jewish people, signs, and the proffered kingdom* (1:11, 12; 3:2, 3).

John then calls attention to the same thing — *a bringing forth out of God* — ten times in his first epistle (2:29; 3:9 [twice]; 4:7; 5:1 [three times]; 5:4; 5:18 [twice]).

And from the subject matter of I John and the context surrounding these ten usages of the expression, it appears quite evident that the message pertaining to the matter is simply *a continuation of that introduced in his gospel* (*to the Jew ONLY during the original offer of the kingdom* [when the recorded events occurred (Matt. 10:5, 6; 15:24)], and "*to the Jew FIRST" during the re-offer* [when both the gospel and first epistle, because of their subject matter, were undoubtedly written (Rom. 1:16; 2:9, 10)]). *BUT*, during the re-offer, as seen in the referenced verses from Romans, *the message*, though not the re-offer of the kingdom itself, was *"ALSO to the Greek ['Gentile']."*

(The "re-offer" of the kingdom itself was *SOLELY Jewish.* Even though *the message* was to both Jew and Gentile during this time [saved Jews as distinguished from saved Gentiles], the "re-offer" of the kingdom was "to the Jew" *ALONE*, as in the original offer.

This re-offer of the kingdom *had NOTHING to do with the one new man* "in Christ." Rather, it was this *new man* who carried the message to Israel. The original offer and the subsequent re-offer of the kingdom had to do with *the entire nation of Israel, not with individual Jews and, particularly, not with saved Gentiles.*

Both the offer and the re-offer had to do with *the SAME thing, attended by the SAME signs,* for it is *the Jew* who requires *a sign* [I Cor. 1:22]. It had to do with *repentance on the part of the entire nation. The matter was either ALL [the entire nation repenting] or NOTHING in this respect.*

For additional information on this subject, refer to Ch. I in this book, pp. 11, 12, along with material beginning on p. 87 in this chapter. Also, note the way James began his epistle, written during this time.)

Then, the matter of being *brought forth from above* in I Peter (1:3, 23), contextually, has to do with Christians, with those taken from both the Jews and the Gentiles. It has to do with *the one new man, a new creation* "in Christ," where the distinction between Jew and Gentile does not, it cannot, exist (Eph. 2:11-15; 3:1-6; *cf.* Gal. 3:26-29).

From a contextual standpoint, whether dealing with *being brought forth from above, out of God,* from John's gospel, his first epistle, James, or I Peter, *it would be quite FORCED and UNNATURAL to view any of these texts as referring to an unsaved person believing*

on the Lord Jesus Christ and passing "from death unto life."

Though this is what Bible students and teachers invariably do, *such should NEVER be the case. The various contexts simply will NOT allow this type interpretation of any one of these passages.*

And though *a bringing forth from above, out of God,* is what occurs when an individual is saved (it has to occur, else salvation could not be effected, for salvation is brought to pass entirely through Divine intervention — a bringing forth from above), the texts in these three books *should NOT* be used in this manner. Salvation by grace is simply *NOT the subject at hand.*

Though using these verses relative to salvation by grace may result in positive end results (*i.e.,* result in individuals being saved), there is *a negative consequence which CANNOT be ignored.* Using these verses in this erroneous manner will *DO AWAY with the exact teaching which the Spirit intended when He moved John, James, and Peter to pen the various things which they recorded.*

This type usage of these verses will *DO AWAY with the thought of saved individuals being brought forth out of God relative to a REVEALED GOAL — in the overall message of the kingdom* (to *the Jew ONLY during the time of the offer of the kingdom, to the Jew FIRST and ALSO the Gentile during the time of the re-offer of the kingdom [Christians referenced by "Gentile"], and to Christians ALONE since that time*).

Offer, Re-offer of the Kingdom

In verses such as Rom. 1:16; 2:9, 10; 10:12 (*cf.* Gal. 2:2; Eph. 3:6; Col. 1:27) — referring to both *the Jews* and *the Gentiles* — a distinction was made between *two groups of saved individuals* during the time when the kingdom of the heavens was being *re-offered to Israel* (from 33 A.D. to about 62 A.D.).

A distinction, using terminology of this nature relative to the saved — Jew and Gentile — was necessary at that time, for the generation of saved Jews both preceding and following Calvary was still alive and being reckoned with on the basis of *repentance and the kingdom* (the same generation of Jews which had rejected and crucified their *King* [*cf.* Matt. 2:2; John 19:14-19]).

However, a distinction of this nature would be unnecessary

following the time when the kingdom was being re-offered to Israel.

Actually, following the close of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel, *referring to saved Jews and Gentiles in this manner would have been out of place.*

And the reason is evident. During the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel, as previously stated, God dealt with *a generation of Jews whose origin preceded Calvary — a saved generation of Jews,* else *there could have been NO offer or subsequent re-offer of the kingdom.*

However, the re-offer of the kingdom *could continue ONLY as long as this generation of Jews remained alive and on the scene.*

But once this generation began to be replaced by a new generation, whose origin followed Calvary, *the re-offer of the kingdom could NOT be continued.*

A saved generation of Jews, to whom the offer could be extended, no longer existed, necessitating a CLOSE to the re-offer of the kingdom.

Those comprising the previous generation would have availed themselves of the blood of the slain paschal lambs preceding Calvary, and their rejection of the Christ as the nation's King *could NOT have done away with that which had previously occurred.*

It could NOT have done away with a previous vicarious death of the firstborn, which God could ONLY have clearly recognized, as He had previously done during and since Moses' day (Ex. 12:1-13).

To think otherwise and say or infer that the events of Calvary could have done away with *the previous vicarious death for those comprising that generation* would be to open the door for *the same thing to have occurred with ALL previous generations, taking the matter ALL the way back to Moses, with Moses himself being included.*

However, any generation of Jews born following Calvary (from the first century until today) could fulfill God's requirement pertaining to the necessity of the death of the firstborn through death and shed blood, as seen in Exodus chapter twelve, *ONLY ONE REVEALED WAY.*

The Paschal Lamb had been slain, the One foreshadowed by all the paschal lambs slain from Moses to Christ. This part of the Passover had been fulfilled.

Thus, following the time of Christ's death, *God no longer rec-*

ognized a continued slaying of paschal lambs.

And, following this time, for anyone (Jew or Gentile, no distinction existed) to realize a vicarious death of the firstborn, to be saved, *that person HAD TO avail himself/herself of the blood of the Paschal Lamb Who had died in their place. That person HAD TO believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Accordingly, following the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel, the expressions "Christians" or "the Church of God" would be the proper terminology used relative to the saved. Following this time, "Jew" and/or "Gentile" would refer to the unsaved rather than, as in certain previous times, to two groups of saved individuals.

(Note though that the same distinction and terminology used following the close of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel — "Christians," "the church of God" — was also used during the time of the re-offer [Acts 11:26; I Cor. 10:32].

But, during this time, because those to whom this re-offer was being extended were not part of the Church of God, though saved [*Jews, comprising the nation at large but refusing to believe that Jesus was the Christ, their Messiah, the One Who would rule and reign*], the distinction and terminology as seen in Rom. 1:16 ["Jew" and "Greek (referring to saved Gentiles)"] had to exist as well.)

John's Gospel

John's gospel is where the matter of being *brought forth from above, out of God,* is introduced, in so many words, in the New Testament. John though doesn't introduce something new in Scripture. He simply uses different terminology to describe something which should have been well-known by the Jewish people, for *a bringing forth from above, a bringing forth out of God,* is seen over and over throughout not only Israel's history but Scripture as a whole.

And an expected understanding of this truth from Scripture would have been particularly true for Israel's religious leaders.

This is why Nicodemus in John 3:1ff *would have been expected to immediately recognize that to which Christ referred* (*cf.* John 7:45-52), *which accounts for Christ's sharp rebuke when he failed to do so.*

The truth of the matter concerning exactly what is involved becomes increasingly evident as one studies and understands the Old Testament Scriptures to which Jesus alluded in His conversation with Nicodemus. And, in line with Jesus' rebuke of Nicodemus, *a person could ONLY expect to find matters set forth in this manner — a bringing forth from above, out of God — not only at the outset of Scripture but continuing throughout, which is EXACTLY what is found in the Old Testament.*

This is the way *Scripture begins, establishing an unchangeable pattern for the manner in which Scripture MUST continue.*

Note how this is seen in the opening thirty-four verses of Genesis:

1) Genesis 1:1-2:3

This opening section of Scripture forms a skeletal framework which sets forth, at the beginning, *a pattern which ALL subsequent Scripture MUST follow, a foundational framework upon which the WHOLE of subsequent Scripture rests.* God set forth, at the beginning of His Word, in skeletal form, that which He was about to open up and reveal concerning His plans and purposes for man and the earth.

The remainder of Scripture is simply commentary, providing all the sinews, flesh, and skin to cover the skeletal, foundational framework set forth at the beginning.

The opening thirty-four verses of Genesis reveal:

a) A Creation (1:1)

b) A Ruin of the Creation (1:2a).

c) A Restoration of the Ruined Creation, occurring over six days time (with the creation of man occurring on the sixth day, following the completion of God's restorative work [1:2b-31]).

d) A Seventh Day of Rest (2:1-3).

Chapter two deals with details, commentary, pertaining to man from chapter one; and the first part of chapter three deals with the ruin of the new creation (man's fall, his ruin). Then, the remainder of Scripture covers God's restorative work as it pertains to man — restoring the ruined creation over six days, 6,000 years,

with a view to the seventh day, a seventh 1,000-year period.

The pattern concerning how God restores a ruined creation *has forever been SET at the beginning*, in the opening thirty-four verses of Scripture.

God worked six days to restore a ruined creation, and He then rested the seventh day. *And this SET pattern — SET perfectly at the beginning — of necessity, MUST be followed in any subsequent restoration of a ruined creation, whether pertaining to the earth or to man.*

And, as Scripture reveals, a subsequent ruin occurred almost 6,000 years ago. And, as Scripture also reveals, God began a restorative work at that time, a work following the established pattern, covering six days, 6,000 years (*cf.* II Peter 1:15-18; 3:3-8).

Then, once this latter restorative work has been completed, exactly the same thing will occur as seen in Gen. 2:1-3. There will be a seventh day of rest, a concluding 1,000-year day — the prophesied, long-awaited Messianic Era.

During the six days in the restoration of the ruined material creation in Genesis chapter one, the first thing seen is the movement of the Spirit (v. 2b). Then, beyond that, each day of God's restorative work, from the first day, continuing through the sixth day, *begins EXACTLY the same way* — "And God said…" (vv. 3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24).

The movement of the Spirit, seen at the beginning of God's restorative work on the first day, *can ONLY be understood as continuing throughout the six days — seen moving when God began His work on the first day and continuing to move throughout God's work during the six days, with matters in this respect brought to a climax at the time God breathed into man "the breath of life"* (2:7).

Though this movement of the Spirit is not referred to beyond the initial statement in verse two (describing activity on the first day), a continued movement during all six days is evident. God does not act in the manner seen throughout His complete restorative work apart from His Spirit (evident, for example, from Christ's ministry while on earth almost two millenniums ago — performing miraculous signs through the power of the Spirit [Matt. 12:24-32]).

And a continued movement of the Spirit is evident through the statement concerning God breathing into man "the breath

of life" in Gen. 2:7 (providing detail concerning God's creation of man in ch. 1, vv. 26-28), for God performs a work of this nature through His Spirit alone (*e.g.,* note Ezek. 37:1-14 ["Spirit" and "breath" in this passage are translations of the same word in the Hebrew text — *Ruach* — which, depending on the context, can be understood as either "Spirit" or "breath"]).

Now, with the preceding in mind and understanding that Gen. 1:1-2:3 is foundational to all subsequent Scripture, note something as it would pertain to the statements in John's gospel, his first epistle, James, or I Peter relative to *being brought forth from above, out of God.* God's work in this respect *DOESN'T occur just at the beginning* (Gen. 1:2b-5). *Rather, it occurs throughout the WHOLE of the restorative process* (vv. 6-25).

That would be to say, in that which this complete restorative work foreshadows, God's work *DOESN'T* stop with the salvation which we presently possess (*an initial Divine work* having to do with the salvation of the spirit, a past and completed work, foreshadowed by Divine activity occurring on day one).

Rather, God's work *continues* throughout that seen during the other five days (*a continued Divine work* having to do with the saving of the soul, a present and yet to be completed work, foreshadowed by Divine activity occurring on days two through six).

That is, viewing *a bringing forth from above, out of God,* in the original foundational type, such a Divine work is seen throughout the restoration, from beginning to end, else there could have been no complete restoration.

And such *MUST* be equally true in that which these opening verses of Scripture foreshadow, the ruin and restoration of a subsequent creation — *that of man.*

Then, EXACTLY as seen in the first chapter of Genesis, there MUST be a bringing forth from above, out of God, throughout man's restoration — throughout not only the salvation of the spirit but the salvation of the soul and body as well — else, exactly as in Genesis chapter one, *there can be NO complete restoration, something vitally necessary if man is to have a part in activities on the seventh day.*

Thus, in man's restoration, it *should NOT* be thought strange to see this continued restoration stated after the manner seen in

John's gospel, in his first epistle, in James, or in Peter's first epistle.

In fact, in the light of the way Scripture begins (a manner in which it can only continue), it should actually be thought strange if this continued restoration, foreshadowed by events on days two through six, was seen *after any OTHER manner in these sections of Scripture*. In the light of the way Scripture begins and, of necessity, continues, seeing an allusion to the matter in John's gospel, his first epistle, James, and Peter's first epistle *could ONLY be very natural.*

> (For a more exhaustive treatment of Gen. 1:1-2:3, refer to the author's book, *The Study of Scripture,* Chapters I-IV.)

2) Exodus 12ff

Old Testament commentary on the opening thirty-four verses of Scripture, as it would pertain more particularly to that seen in John 3:3, 5, can possibly best be seen by beginning in Exodus chapter twelve and continuing through the book of Joshua. And this large section of Israeli history is something Nicodemus should have been quite familiar with, allowing him to understand Christ's statement in the light of the Old Testament Scriptures. But Nicodemus failed to make the proper association, accounting for Christ's sharp rebuke.

In this respect, note Jesus' explanatory statement in John 3:5 (explaining that which he had stated in verse three) in the light of Israeli history, beginning with the institution of the Passover in Exodus chapter twelve.

> "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit [Gk., 'Except a man be born (brought forth) out of water and Spirit'], he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Note how the type, beginning in Exodus chapter twelve, will open the whole of Christ's statement to one's understanding. The type will shed light upon and help explain the antitype, which is exactly what the type is supposed to do. This is the way God designed the type in relation to its antitype.

A) Out of Water

It is evident that Nicodemus *would NOT* have associated Christ's statements in John 3:3, 5 with the events in Exodus chapter twelve

— the Passover. The Passover, the first of seven Jewish festivals given to the Israelites under Moses (*cf.* Lev. 23:1ff), had to do with *events which Nicodemus would have known that the nation had kept*, which Israel had been observing year after year for centuries of time.

And, being among Israel's religious leaders, he *could ONLY have been among those participating in these events.*

The conversation between Christ and Nicodemus in John 3:1ff *could ONLY have been a conversation between Christ and a person who had already experienced the death of the firstborn, as seen in Ex. 12:1ff.* And, beyond this, according to that clearly seen and stated in both the text and context, the subject matter had to do with *the Jewish people* and *the kingdom* (a people who could only be viewed as saved, having availed themselves of the blood of slain paschal lambs, with the firstborn having died vicariously).

This conversation *could have had NOTHING to do with eternal salvation*, which, of necessity, would have related to the events of Exodus chapter twelve.

That to which Jesus referred *could ONLY be seen in the type as having to do with events beyond the Passover* in Ex. 12:1ff. *It could ONLY have been understood as having to do with a continued Divine work* beyond that foreshadowed by the events of day one in Genesis chapter one. *It could ONLY have been understood as having to do with a continued Divine work* seen in that foreshadowed by the events occurring throughout days two through six of this chapter — *a CONTINUED bringing forth from above, with a GOAL in view.*

In the original type in Gen. 1:1-2:3, this *GOAL* is seen as *man exercising regality during a seventh day of rest.* In the type beginning in Exodus chapter twelve, this *GOAL* is seen as *the Jewish people realizing an inheritance in another land, within a theocracy.*

And both types point to different facets of *EXACTLY the same thing occurring during EXACTLY the same time — events during the 1,000-year Messianic Era, which will be the seventh millennium following six millenniums of Divine restorative work.*

Born out of water from John 3:5, in the type beginning in Exodus chapter twelve, can only have to do with the Red Sea passage following the Passover. The Israelites (who had experienced the death of the firstborn) were then taken down into the Sea, symbol-

izing *burial following death* (taken down into the place of death) and raised up out of the Sea, symbolizing *resurrection* (raised up out of the place of death) and placed on the eastern banks of the Sea (Ex. 12-15).

They stood on the eastern banks of the Sea through *supernatural means, wherein resurrection power was exhibited.* And they stood in this position with a view to *an inheritance in another land, within a theocracy.*

The Israelites, passing through the Sea, had gone down into *the place of death.* Only the dead are to be buried, and *the death of the firstborn* had just occurred.

Thus, *a burial MUST also occur.* But beyond burial, with a vicarious death of the firstborn, *there MUST also be a resurrection.*

The Israelites, following the death of the firstborn, possessed spiritual life. Thus, they *had to be raised* from the place of death *to walk* "in newness of life" — something having to do with *the spiritual man alone,* for this resurrection had nothing to do with the man of flesh. He was to be left in the place of death.

This is pictured during the present dispensation through the act of baptism. A person (a Christian), having experienced the death of the firstborn vicariously (through the blood of the Paschal Lamb, Who died in his stead), is placed down in the waters. He then, within the symbolism involved, finds himself in *the place of death,* beneath the waters.

But, because the One providing the vicarious death conquered death, the Christian can be removed from the waters and find himself in the position of *having been raised with Christ* (Col. 2:12; 3:1ff).

And in this position — wrought through *supernatural, resurrection power* — the Christian is *to walk* "in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4), with a view to *an inheritance in another land, within a theocracy.*

It is going down into the place of death because of the death of the firstborn, and it is rising from this place, as Christ was raised, because the person possesses spiritual life.

And this rising has to do with *the spiritual man ALONE,* for, again, this resurrection has nothing to do with the man of flesh. He is to be left in the place of death.

(The Israelites under Moses in the type could walk out on the eastern banks of the Sea, in resurrection power, because of the totality of that seen in the previous death of the paschal lambs — *resurrection following a vicarious death.*

BUT, the pursuing Egyptian pharaoh and his army were left beneath the waters of the Sea, for there had been NO previous vicarious death of the firstborn.

THEN, the antitype of either today — those who HAVE and those who HAVE NOT experienced a vicarious death of the firstborn — is clear, allowing the complete matter to be quite readily seen and understood.)

B) Out of Spirit

In John 3:5, Christ not only referred to *a birth (a bringing forth) out of water* in the preceding respect, but He also referred to *a birth (a bringing forth) out of Spirit* as well.

In the type, this is seen through the Israelites, on the eastern banks of the Sea, being led by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, as they moved toward *an inheritance in another land, within a theocracy.*

And the antitype is evident. A Christian, *raised from the waters* to walk "in newness of life," has the indwelling Spirit to lead him into all truth, as he moves toward *an inheritance in another land, within a theocracy.*

There must be a resurrection in view. Then, the one raised from the place of death *must follow the man of spirit,* allowing the Spirit to fill and lead him throughout his pilgrim journey (*cf.* Eph. 5:18, 19; Col. 3:16).

And the entire matter rests upon that initially seen and set forth in an unchangeable fashion in Gen. 1:2b-25 — the ruined creation removed from its watery grave and completely restored over six days time by means of a work of the Spirit throughout.

This is why both "water" and "Spirit" are set forth side-by-side in John 3:5; and this is why the epistles, drawing from the types, go to such great lengths to call all the various facets of this matter to a Christian's attention.

ONLY through this dual means can a Christian be successfully led to the goal of his calling. Only through this dual means can a Christian enter into the kingdom of God.

9

Except a Man… (III)

Brought Forth from Above, NOT from Below

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles ['signs'] that thou doest except God be with him.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again ['born from above'], he cannot see the kingdom of God.

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

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

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

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again ['born from above,' 'brought forth from above']" (John 3:1-7).

John, in his gospel, introduces the thought of being "born…of God ['brought forth out of God']" in the first chapter (vv. 11-13).

Then, in the third chapter, John records the account of Jesus referring to the same experience, using slightly different wording, in His conversation with Nicodemus: "Except a man be born again ['born from above,' 'brought forth from above']…" (v. 3).

Nicodemus, a leading teacher among the Pharisees in Israel, had come to Jesus "by night," acknowledging that no one could perform *the signs being manifested* apart from Divine power.

And Jesus responded after the same fashion previously seen in chapter one, calling attention to the necessity of an individual being *brought forth out of God, brought forth from above* (vv. 1-7).

In chapter one, Christ had come unto "his own ['His Own things']" (v. 11a ["own" in this part of the verse is neuter in the Greek text]), which, in the light of His having been born "King of the Jews" (Matt. 2:2), would, of necessity, have referred centrally to *things REGAL in nature* (*e.g.,* note "the sure mercies of David [*lit.,* 'the holy things of David']" in Acts 13:33, 34).

Then, with respect to His Own things and His offer of the kingdom of the heavens to the nation of Israel, "his own ['His Own people'] received him not" (v. 11b ["own" in this part of the verse is masculine in the Greek text, referring to *the Jewish people to whom Christ came*]).

Then in chapter three, after Nicodemus had acknowledged that no one could perform *the signs being manifested* apart from God's power, Jesus' response had to do with one single, overall subject: *the Jewish people in relation to these signs and the kingdom.*

The signs being manifested in Israel's midst reflected upon *the nation's condition, showing that which the Jewish people could have, IF…*

Israel was sick, as depicted, for example, in Isaiah chapter one — "from the sole of the foot even unto the head" (v. 6a) — and all of the signs which centered around supernatural healing showed *that which the nation could experience IF the Jewish people would repent.*

That's why the command, to "repent," preceded the announcement concerning "the kingdom":

> "Repent ye [a plural imperative (a command) in the Greek text, referring to *the nation at large*]: for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand" (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:5-8).

And, in the light of the signs to which Nicodemus called attention — which dealt with Israel's condition, showing that which the nation could have, *IF…* — Jesus called attention to *the necessity of being brought forth from above.* That is to say, in Jesus' response to

Nicodemus, in the light of both the signs being manifested and the message being proclaimed, He could have had *ONLY one thing centrally in mind through His statement concerning the birth from above, the bringing forth from above.*

The entire matter, whether looking at the immediate context or the larger context of Christ's statement, *would have to be understood as an allusion to the necessity of Divine healing for those in Israel (that to which the signs pointed), which could come from only one place, from above* (Hosea 5:13-6:2).

This healing would be *INDIVIDUAL* ("except a man…" [vv. 3, 5]), though it *MUST, as well, encompass the nation at large* ("Repent ye" [Matt. 3:2]). *The entire nation MUST repent.*

Thus, the whole of that seen in the first and third chapters of John's gospel relative to being *brought forth out of God, from above,* has to do with *the Jewish people, signs, and the kingdom.*

There is NOTHING here about eternal salvation, as is invariably, though erroneously, proclaimed using these verses.

Rather, the texts (in both chs. 1, 3) deal with *a saved people, in need of healing;* and the signs referenced in chapter three have to do with *the same people in relation to being healed, entering into the kingdom, and realizing an inheritance therein.*

And the continued use of the expression *brought forth out of God, from above,* relative to Christians in the New Testament, of necessity, *could ONLY be understood along the SAME lines.* Though signs would no longer be manifested (I Cor. 1:22; *cf.* Acts 2:4-12; I Cor. 13:8-10; 14:22), *spiritual healing could ONLY have to do with the SAME END — realizing an inheritance in the kingdom.*

As in Israel, it would be necessary for saved individuals (Christians) to be *brought forth out of God, from above* (no matter what their condition); and this would *ALWAYS, EXACTLY as previously seen in the camp of Israel, occur in relation to the proffered kingdom.*

The kingdom of the heavens was being offered to Israel at the time referenced by the events in John's gospel. And, because of Israel's refusal to repent, climaxed by the nation's rejection and crucifixion of the One Who had made the offer and performed the miraculous signs, this part of the kingdom (the heavenly sphere) was taken from Israel (Matt. 21:33-45).

Then a new nation, *the one new man* "in Christ," was called into existence to be the recipient of that which Israel had rejected, which had been taken from the nation (Eph. 2:11-15; 3:1-6; I Peter 2:9, 10).

In this respect, *EXACTLY* the same overall teaching set forth in John 1:12, 13; 3:3-8 — *pointing to the necessity of a Divine work within a person's life — would hold just as true among Christians today as it did among the Israelites 2,000 years ago.*

And the reason for and goal of this Divine work would be *EXACTLY the same* as seen among the Israelites in time past — *entrance into and realizing an inheritance in the proffered kingdom.*

With these things in mind, the remainder of this chapter will center around that seen in James, I Peter, and I John when reference is made to being *brought forth from above, out of God.*

(Relative to the type sickness in which the Jewish people found themselves 2,000 years ago [which continues with Israel today] and the type sickness in which Christians can find themselves during the present dispensation, note several distinctions.

"Israel" was both *God's firstborn son and God's former wife* [though *a disobedient son* who was being chastened and *an adulterous wife whom God had divorced, set aside* (Isa. 50:1; Jer. 3:8-14; Zech. 1:12-15)].

This dual position which Israel occupied had to do with *REGALITY* [only firstborn sons can rule in the human realm; and also within the human realm, within a theocracy, as established in the opening chapters of Genesis, the King in the theocracy (God) *MUST possess a consort queen* (Israel, in this case) to rule with Him]. *This dual position occupied by Israel was/remains at the heart of all Israeli disobedience, placing it central within Israel's sickness.*

"The Church," on the other hand, *is NOT presently God's firstborn son*; *NOR* has there ever been *a marriage* between Christians and Christ. Both *adoption* and *marriage*, involving exactly the same thing as seen in the camp of Israel —*regality* — is *future* for Christians.

Christians are presently undergoing *child-training as sons* [Heb. 12:5-8], with a view to *a future adoption* [Rom. 8:14-23]. And, in the antitype of Boaz redeeming the inheritance and taking Ruth as his wife (Ruth 4:1ff), Christ will one day redeem the inheritance and take those Christians for His wife who had previously allowed child-training as sons [Rev. 5-19a].

Thus, *BOTH the adoption* and *marriage* for Christians are future. But still, as in Israel's case, this dual position which will one day be occupied by Christians [firstborn sons and Christ's wife], can only be *at the heart*

of all Christian disobedience — something which would place that held out before Christians and being spurned by numerous Christians *at the CENTER of all spiritual sickness seen within Christendom today.*

For more detailed information on *firstborn Sons* [Christ, Israel, and the Church], along with information on *the redemption of the inheritance* [through which those Christians shown worthy at the judgment seat will become Christ's wife], refer to the author's books, *God's Firstborn Sons* and *Ruth*.)

James

The epistle of James was written to deal with *faithfulness*, from several vantage points.

In the first chapter faithfulness has to do with *enduring temptation* (vv. 2-12) and, correspondingly, with *having been brought forth from above* (v. 18). And enduring temptation in this manner is seen having to do with *crowns in relation to the saving of the soul* (vv. 12, 21).

Then chapter two, having to do with another facet of *the SAME thing*, centers around works emanating out of faith, bringing faith to its proper goal (vv. 14-26).

And this goal is *the SAME as that seen in chapter one, having to do with crowns and the saving of the soul, with a view to an inheritance in the kingdom* (*cf.* James 2:5; I Peter 1:9; Heb. 11:1ff).

And the remaining three chapters have to do with *different facets of the SAME subject, ending again with the saving of the soul* (5:19, 20).

The manner in which James presents a bringing forth from above in the first chapter can be of immense help in understanding this overall subject, for James presents not only *a bringing forth from above* but he precedes this by presenting *a bringing forth from below* (vv. 15-18).

And it is Christians who are seen in both instances, *EITHER exercising faith and being brought forth from above or not exercising faith and being brought forth from below. NO middle ground exists. It is EITHER one or the other* (Matt. 12:30; Luke 11:23).

Verse fifteen shows *a bringing forth from below*; then verse eighteen shows *a bringing forth from above*. In verse fifteen, the Greek words *tikto* ("to beget," "to bring forth") and *apokueo* ("to bring

forth," "to give birth" [as seen in a medical respect]) are used in a somewhat synonymous sense, with *apokueo* showing "results." *Apokueo* is a medical term which refers to that occurring at the end of a pregnancy — "a bringing forth," "a giving birth."

Tikto is used in the first part of the verse ("bringeth forth sin"); and *apokueo* is used in the latter part of the verse showing *the results*, in the sense of "sin" having given birth to ("bringeth forth death").

Then in verse eighteen, *apokueo* is used relative to *life instead of death*, as seen in verse fifteen. And, again, the word is used in *a medical respect*. *Apokueo* is used in this verse relative to *the power of the Word in a Christian's life, effecting, giving birth to, the metamorphosis — the results of the power of the Word* (*ref.* the author's book, *Salvation of the Soul*, Ch. IV):

> "Of his own will begat he us with the Word of truth…"

Thus, these two words are used in James relative to Christians either being brought forth from below (through that associated with sin, *resulting in death*) or being brought forth from above (through the Word, *resulting in life*).

I Peter

The Epistles of I, II Peter were written to encourage Christians who were being tried and tested by holding up before them prizes, rewards, compensations, which are described in the epistles as *the salvation to be revealed, the salvation of the soul.*

And, in connection with the reason why these epistles were written, Peter opens his first epistle in the same manner that John opened his gospel — by referencing *the birth from above, the bringing forth from above,* in two different places.

1) A Living Hope, an Inheritance, a Salvation (1:3-9)

According to I Peter 1:3-9, those to whom Peter was writing (vv. 1, 2) had been *brought forth from above* "unto ['with respect to'] a living hope by ['through'] the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." And they had been brought forth in this manner with

respect to *an awaiting inheritance* associated with *a future salvation, the salvation of their souls.*

An individual is saved *with a purpose in view.* And the whole of that purpose is seen in I Peter 1:3-9.

The initial, Divine work pertaining to salvation (having to do with the salvation of the spirit) is with a view to a continued Divine work pertaining to salvation (the salvation of the soul), EXACTLY as seen in and foreshadowed by God's initial restorative work occurring on the first day in Genesis chapter one.

And His continued restorative work, occurring during time foreshadowed by Divine activity on the subsequent five days, is with a view to EXACTLY the same thing seen in the foundational type — a seventh day of rest.

It is evident from both the text and context that *the bringing forth from above* in I Peter 1:3 would parallel the Divine work seen in days two through six in Genesis chapter one, not the Divine work seen on the first day. *The bringing forth from above* has to do with things beyond the Spirit's initial work of salvation, through breathing life into the one having no life. In the type in Ex. 12ff it would move to the point of *resurrection* (note text in I Peter), which would be typified by the Israelites on the eastern banks of the Red Sea in chapters fourteen and fifteen, with *a hope, inheritance, and salvation* set before them (*ref.* Chapter VIII in this book).

The natural reading and understanding of the text, in the light of the context and Old Testament typology, would have to do with *a Divine work among Christians (a work among the saved, NOT the unsaved) relative to a present hope, which has to do with a future inheritance and salvation.*

This is "that blessed hope" in Titus 2:13, which, according to the manner in which the Greek text is worded (*ref.* Chapter II in this book), must be understood as "the appearing of the glory of the great God, Who is our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The purpose for a Divine work continuing in Christians, whether foreshadowed by the Old Testament types or seen in verses such as I Peter 1:3-9, has to do with events of the seventh day, with the land (a heavenly land) set before them. This is what the epistles are about, *which MUST be recognized if a proper and correct interpretation and understanding of the epistles is to be achieved.*

2) Through the Word of God (1:23)

In Rom. 12:2 Christians are commanded:

> "And be not conformed to this world ['age']: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove ['that you may learn by experience,' Weymouth] what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

The Greek word translated "conformed" is *sunschematizo.* This is a compound word with the preposition *sun* ("with") prefixed to the verb form of the word *schema* ("outline," "diagram"). The English word "scheme" is an Anglicized form of the Greek word *schema.* The word has to do with a schematic outline, and the thought inherent in this compound Greek word (*sunschematizo*) and the negative command is *NOT to outline or diagram your life in accordance with the present age.*

This negative command is then followed by a positive command. Immediately following, the Christian is commanded to, instead, be "transformed by the renewing of your mind."

The Greek word translated "transformed" is *metamorphoo.* This is the word from which our English word "metamorphosis" is derived. This word refers to *an inward change* brought about completely apart from the power of the individual himself. Unlike the thought of "conformed" in the preceding part of the verse, the Christian is powerless to bring about the *metamorphosis.*

Then, the word "renewing" is a translation of the Greek word *anakainosis*; and the action of the preceding verb ("transformed," referring to the inward change) directs attention *to a continuous renewing process, one which is to keep on taking place.*

In II Cor. 4:16 we are told that "the inward man is renewed [*lit.,* 'is being renewed'] day by day." This renewing process is *to keep on taking place day in and day out for the entire duration of the pilgrim walk here on earth.*

Then, Col. 3:10 reveals how this renewing process, the renewing of the mind, is accomplished:

> "And have put on the new man, which is renewed [*lit.,* 'is being renewed'] in knowledge after the image of him that created him."

Note the word "knowledge" in this verse. The regular Greek word for "knowledge" is *gnosis,* but the word used in Col. 3:10 is an intensified form of this word — *epignosis.* This is the word *gnosis* (knowledge) with the prefix *epi* (upon). *Epignosis,* thus, means "knowledge upon knowledge," *i.e.,* "a mature knowledge."

The word translated "renewed" is a past participle of *anakainoo* (the same word used in Rom. 12:2 and II Cor. 4:16) and could be better translated, "being renewed." The only way a Christian can acquire this mature knowledge, which allows the Spirit of God to progressively work *the metamorphosis* in his life, is through receiving the living Word of God into his saved human spirit, "day by day."

Christians *MUST* allow God to continue "breathing in" life. The living, God-breathed Word *MUST* be allowed to flow into man's saved human spirit or there can be *NO metamorphosis.*

The renewing of the inward man, "day by day," through receiving "the implanted word," producing the metamorphosis in one's life, is the manner in which the salvation of the soul is presently being effected.

And this *metamorphosis* is that referenced in I Peter 1:23. It has to do with *a continued Divine work in the life of the believer relative to those things seen leading into this verse — hope, inheritance, salvation.*

I John

John's first epistle, as the Book of Hebrews, is not addressed to anyone, though that is not the case with his second and third epistles. This could only be by Divine design, for the internal evidence appears to almost certainly place the writing of the book during the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel, which would be before about 62 A.D. And this internal evidence would also appear to clearly indicate that the identity of those for whom the epistle had been written would be understood through the book's contents and the times in which it was written.

The structure of I John, as seen in Chapter VII of this book, runs parallel with parts of John's gospel. From the subject matter of John's gospel, it is evident that John wrote his gospel during the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel. And from the parallels between John's gospel and his first epistle, it appears

evident that John wrote his first epistle during this time as well.

John's first epistle, in this respect, would have been written first and foremost for *the SAME purpose seen in his gospel* (*e.g.*, note the declared, parallel purpose seen in the writings of both books — *cf.* John 20:30, 31; I John 5:1-5, 11-13).

This epistle would have been written to reach John's brethren, the Jewish people, with a message which began on the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter two (vv. 1ff) and was terminated about thirty years later in Rome, as seen in Acts chapter twenty-eight (vv. 17-28).

But this epistle would also have been written to the saved being taken from among the Gentiles, though in the order seen in Rom. 1:16; 2:9, 10 — "…to the Jew first, and also to the Greek ['Gentile']."

And, beyond about 62 A.D., for the remainder of the present dispensation, there would be *ONLY one group* which could possibly be understood as those to whom the epistle would be addressed — *the one new man* "in Christ," Christians, where no distinction between saved Jews and saved Gentiles exists (Gal. 3:26-29).

1) Contrasts in I John

The whole of I John would, in a sense, be a commentary on that stated in Luke 11:23:

> "He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth."

There is *no middle ground* in Luke 11:23 (*cf.* Matt. 12:30). A person who is not for Christ is seen to be against Christ; and a person who does not gather with Christ (leads or brings together), instead, scatters (the opposite, he disperses).

Though this is the manner in which all things in the whole of Scripture have been set, this is a major, marked feature of I John. Contrasts of this nature, apart from any middle ground, are seen *over and over* in I John. And if sharp contrasts between numerous things in the epistle are recognized, with proper Scriptural divisions made between the two, many of the problems which people have with I John will cease to exist.

Note a few things, for example, in the first chapter:

"Life" exists in connection with the Son, Who is God, the Word made flesh; and, apart from the Son, *life does NOT exist* (vv. 1, 2; *cf.* John 1:1-4a, 14; I John 5:12). A person *EITHER* has "fellowship" with the Father and with His Son or he *DOESN'T*. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." (v. 5b; *cf.* John 1:4b, 5). And a person *EITHER* walks in the light and experiences fellowship with the Father and with His Son or he walks in darkness and does *NOT* experience this fellowship (vv. 3-7).

Middle grounds do NOT exist at any point in the preceding, or elsewhere in I John, or elsewhere in Scripture in contrasts of this nature.

And understanding that contrasts of this nature are seen over and over in I John will help one to not only better understand why the Spirit moved John to use the expression "brought forth out of God" ten times in this short epistle but also why *sharp contrasts* are seen every time this expression is used.

2) "Brought Forth out of God"

John's first use of this expression in his first epistle is in 2:29. In the context leading into this verse, reference is made to "little children" (v. 28), which, in the light of the overall text and verses such as Matt. 18:3 and Rom. 8:14-23, *can ONLY be an allusion to individuals undergoing the child-training as sons seen in Heb. 12:5-8.*

And this training, which is with a view to *NOT being* "ashamed before him at his coming," will allow individuals to be among those one day adopted as firstborn sons, who will subsequently occupy *regal positions in the kingdom with God's Son.*

It is individuals being child-trained in this manner who are seen in connection with "righteousness." And this is something which is said to emanate from God — …"every one that doeth righteousness is born of him ['is brought forth out of God']" (v. 29b).

"Righteousness" of the nature seen here — *a righteousness connected with child-training as sons* — can come from *ONE place alone.* Such a righteousness can come *ONLY from above, out of God.*

The second use of the expression, "brought forth out of God," in John's first epistle is in 3:9 (*cf.* v. 6), where it is used twice. The expression is used in connection with *NOT being able to sin.* Note

also the last use of the expression in this epistle, in 5:18, where it is used twice *EXACTLY the same way — again, in connection with NOT being able to sin.* In both verses the expression appears immediately before and after the statement pertaining to *an inability to sin.*

This would appear to run counter to that seen in the opening chapter where sin is seen in the lives of believers, with a person said to make God a liar if he states that he doesn't and can't sin (vv. 8-10). But I John 3:9 and 5:18 *do NOT* run counter to I John 1:8-10 at all. Different parts of different contrasts are in view in each instance.

In the first chapter, matters have to do with an individual walking in darkness rather than light (vv. 5-7). In the third and fifth chapters, matters have to do with that which emanates from God, which would be in connection with the light from chapter one. *Sin simply CANNOT exist within the latter.*

To say that it could would be to say that sin can exist with God or within that which emanates from God.

The next use of the expression, "brought forth out of God," in John's first epistle is in 4:7. Here the expression is used in connection with "love" — "…every one that loveth is born of God ['is brought forth out of God'], and knoweth God [Gk., *gnosis,* referring to *an experiential knowledge* of God (*cf.* I John 2:3, 4)]." And the preceding should be easy enough to understand, for the next verse goes on to state that "God is love," with verse seven dealing with the type love emanating from God, where sin, darkness, etc. *cannot exist.*

The next use of the expression, "brought forth out of God," is in 5:1, 4, where it is used four times in connection *with believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; with loving, keeping His commandments, and overcoming.* And any exposition, in the way of an explanation, at this point should be unnecessary. Comments have been made on how the expression is used in all of the other six places where it appears in I John, and it is used exactly the same way in these verses.

A person understanding how the expression is used in the other six places, or in John's gospel, or in James, or in I Peter, should be able to simply read I John 5:1-5 and understand exactly what is meant — *believing* "that Jesus is the Christ…the son of God," *which can come ONLY from above* (*cf.* John 1:12, 13; 3:3-7; 20:30, 31).

10

A Nobleman's Son Healed

Second Sign

Healing on the Third, Seventh Day

"He [Jesus] left Judaea, and departed again unto Galilee.

And he must needs go through Samaria…

Come see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

…and he abode there two days.

And many more believed because of his own word…

Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee…

So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum.

When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death…

Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed…

And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth…

This is again the second miracle [sign] that Jesus did when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee" (John 4:3, 4, 29, 39, 40b, 41, 43, 46, 47, 50a, 51, 54).

The second of eight signs recorded in John's gospel has to do with Jesus healing a nobleman's son while in Cana of Galilee, at a particular time. Jesus had left Judaea enroute to Galilee and had spent time ministering in Samaria, the region lying between Judaea and Galilee (John 4:4-42).

Jesus remained in Samaria and dealt with the Samaritans for two days. He then left Samaria and continued His journey into Galilee, where He was received by the Galileans, who had previously witnessed His performance of miraculous signs at the feast of the Passover in Jerusalem (vv. 43-45; *cf.* John 2:13, 23).

Once in Galilee, He returned to Cana, the site of His first sign. And it was in this village, in Cana, that Jesus also performed the second sign recorded in John's gospel (vv. 46-54).

A nobleman, whose son lay sick at Capernaum, heard that Jesus had returned into Galilee. He sought Jesus out, found Him in Cana, and requested that He come down to Capernaum to heal his son, who was at the point of death. Jesus, rather than going to Capernaum — after emphasizing a point pertaining to "signs and wonders" and hearing the nobleman again request that He come down to Capernaum to heal his son — simply told the man, "Go thy way; thy son liveth" (vv. 46-50a).

The nobleman, *believing* that which Christ had said, began his return journey to Capernaum. Then, before reaching Capernaum, he was met by his servants who told him, "Thy son liveth."

The father then inquired about the time of day that his son had begun to improve, and he was told that the fever had left his son the preceding day, "at the seventh hour." He then knew that healing had occurred *at the EXACT time* Jesus had told him, "Go thy way; thy son liveth."

And this resulted in belief on the part of not only the nobleman (who had previously expressed belief) but his family as well (vv. 50b-53).

(The Greek word translated "nobleman," *basiliskos,* is a diminutive of the Greek word for "king" [*basileus*], denoting a "royal official" [*ref.* NIV].)

To provide a proper setting for this second sign in John's gospel, the entire sequence of events leading into the sign must be

viewed. This sequence of events has to do with *a TWO-DAY period,* and it has to do with *BOTH that which had occurred* preceding the two days and *that which was about to occur* following the two days.

Preceding the two days, Christ had spent time with the Jewish people in Judaea.

Then, coming out of Judaea, Christ spent two days with the Samaritans (a mixed race, Jew and Gentile), who were generally despised by the Jewish people throughout the remainder of the land.

And, following this two-day period, Christ left Samaria and went into Galilee, where He was received by the Jewish people, where the nobleman's son was healed, and where belief was expressed because of this man's son being healed.

The events depicted by the two-day period spent with the Samaritans foreshadow *God's dealings with the Gentiles during the present dispensation.* The present dispensation is a two-day period, a 2,000-year period, lying between God's past and future dealings with Israel (*dealings foreshadowed by time spent in Judaea BEFORE the two days and time spent in Galilee FOLLOWING the two days*).

And, accordingly, Christ's actions at the end of the two days spent in Samaria — *returning* to the place where He had performed His first *sign, RETURNING* to Cana in Galilee, being *RECEIVED* by the Jewish people, *HEALING* a nobleman's son, and those in the family *BELIEVING* on Him — *depict that which will occur FOLLOWING the present dispensation.*

Christ, after spending two days, 2,000 years, with those foreshadowed by the Samaritans (the Gentiles), will return to the place where He performed *signs* 2,000 years ago. He will *RETURN* to the land of Israel, *be RECEIVED* by the Jewish people, *provide HEALING* for the Jewish people (Divine healing for God's son, typified by Divine healing for the nobleman's son [*cf.* Hosea 5:13-6:2]), and the Jewish people in that day *will BELIEVE on the One Who will have provided this healing* (*cf.* Isa. 1:5, 6; 53:1-5).

(It is evident from Christ's words to the nobleman in John 4:48 that this man was *a Jew,* not a Gentile:

Christ told the nobleman, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe."

> It is the Jew who requires a sign [I Cor. 1:22], not the Gentile. Words of the preceding nature, *pertaining to the type signs being performed*, would not only have held no meaning for a Gentile but, with respect to the true nature of signs, they would also have been completely out of place being performed among Gentiles [*cf.* Matt. 10:5-8].)

Thus, the whole of the account pertaining to the second sign in John's gospel has to do with *the Jewish people,* as do all of the signs in this gospel. *They were performed for and among the Jewish people, for a Divine purpose; and they were then later recorded by John for the SAME Jewish people and the SAME Divine purpose, which is something clearly stated near the end of John's gospel*:

> "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:
>
> But these are written, that ye [the Jewish people, those requiring a sign] might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name ['life' in relation to *the kingdom being proclaimed*]" (John 20:30, 31).

Signs were manifested during the time of the offer of the kingdom to Israel (during the time of Christ's earthly ministry, covered by the gospel accounts), and they continued to be manifested during the subsequent re-offer of the kingdom to Israel (following Christ's ascension, during time covered by the Book of Acts [a time during which part of the epistles were written]). *And these signs were manifested for the Jewish people in relation to the proffered kingdom.*

These *signs* showed that which Israel *COULD have* within the kingdom which would be established, *CONTINGENT* upon the nation's repentance. *There would be supernatural healing and provision for the nation, along with supernatural blessings flowing out to the Gentile nations through Israel.*

These signs had NOTHING to do with a message pertaining to eternal life, or with what is often termed today, the gospel of grace. These *signs* were manifested in the presence of a people who were already saved, both in the original offer and in the subsequent re-offer. *They were manifested in the presence of a people capable of spiritual perception, a people to whom the kingdom could be offered, and then re-offered.*

(The kingdom which was taken from Israel [Matt. 21:43], the heavenly sphere of the kingdom [not the earthly, which *can NEVER be taken from Israel*] is presently being offered to Christians. And, with this in mind, note a parallel between the offer of the kingdom to Israel two millenniums ago and the offer of the kingdom to Christians today.

Unsaved individuals today, whether Jew or Gentile, *are ESTRANGED from this offer.* The offer of the kingdom can come into view *ONLY AFTER a person has been saved.*

And EXACTLY the same situation existed in Israel 2,000 years ago. Christ came *to a saved people, manifesting signs.* And these signs were being manifested for two inseparable reasons: *ISRAEL was being dealt with, and THE KINGDOM was in view.*

ISRAEL was dealt with in relation to the KINGDOM during BOTH the offer and the re-offer of the kingdom, during time covered by the gospel accounts [the offer] and the Book of Acts [the re-offer].

Then, beyond the re-offer [ending about 62 A.D.], God, relative to the proffered kingdom, dealt *SOLELY* with a new nation separate from Israel, comprised of *the one new man* "in Christ."

And *the one new man* "in Christ" *DID NOT/DOES NOT require signs.* In fact, signs, after the manner in which they are introduced in the Old Testament and continued in the New Testament, *would be COMPLETELY out of place with this new man, who is neither Jew nor Gentile.*

In the preceding respect, signs of a nature seen throughout the gospel accounts and the Book of Acts existed as long as God dealt with *Israel* in relation to *the kingdom.* But beyond this time, throughout the remainder of the dispensation, from a Biblical standpoint, *signs could NO longer exist.*

For more information on the preceding, refer to Ch. III in this book, along with the author's books, *From Acts to the Epistles* and *Message in the Gospels, Acts, Epistles.*)

Two Days in Samaria

In the account at hand — events surrounding *the second sign* in John's gospel — *signs WERE in evidence ONLY during time covering PART of the overall account seen in the text and context.*

Signs WERE in evidence before Christ went to Samaria (John 2:11, 23; 3:2; 4:45), *they were NOT in evidence during the time Christ was in Samaria* (John 4:4-42), but *they were ONCE AGAIN seen as part of*

Christ's ministry after He had left Samaria and returned to the Jewish people in Galilee (John 4:45, 54).

Within the dispensational scheme of the matter, note that foreshadowed by events surrounding the second sign in John's gospel:

> *Signs WERE in evidence* when Israel was being dealt with in relation to the kingdom at the time of Christ's first coming.
>
> *Signs CONTINUED to be manifested* for about the first thirty years following His ascension, because God continued to deal with Israel in relation to the kingdom.
>
> *Signs THEN occupy NO place* in God's work throughout the remainder of the dispensation, while Israel is set aside and God removes from the Gentiles "a people for his name" (Acts 15:14; Rom. 11:25).
>
> *BUT, signs will ONCE AGAIN be in evidence* after God completes His purpose for the present dispensation and resumes His national dealings with Israel (Acts 15:15-17; Rom. 11:26).
>
> (Note the exact wording of the text in John 4:43-54 in relation to "signs." It is "…out of Judaea into Galilee" [vv. 45, 47, 54].
>
> There is *NO* mention of Samaria simply because Christ's activities in Samaria, unlike His activities in both Judaea and Galilee, had *NO connection* with "signs.")

In that future day, when God once again resumes His national dealings with Israel and *signs come back into view*, both Israel's reappearance in this respect and the emergence of the final form of Gentile world power under Satan are seen as *signs* (Rev. 12:1, 3).

Then, in that day, *signs will be in evidence* within both camps (Jew and Gentile). And these *signs will be manifested after the SAME fashion and for the SAME purpose as that previously seen during Moses' day when Moses appeared before Pharaoh, at the time when signs in relation to Israel and the kingdom were introduced in Scripture.*

> (During Moses' day, God allowed *signs to be performed by and in the presence of Gentiles* during a time when He was dealing with *Israel in relation to the kingdom;* during the days of the Apostles, God allowed *signs to be performed by and in the presence of Christians* in the Church in

Corinth, [to provoke Israel to jealousy], during a time when He was dealing with *Israel in relation to the kingdom*; and yet future, God will allow *signs to be performed by and in the presence of Gentiles* once again during a time when He is again dealing with *Israel in relation to the kingdom.*

But, since about 62 A.D. until today, God has *NOT* been dealing with Israel in relation to the kingdom or in any other manner. Israel has been set aside for a dispensation, and *any manifestation of signs, exactly as any continuance of the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy as seen in Acts chapter two [which had to do first and foremost with Israel], would have to be set aside as well.*

"Signs" would be completely out of place in the Church or elsewhere today.

In the preceding respect, that which is often referred to as "signs, wonders, and miracles" in Christendom today, permeating the entire Charismatic Movement [a large, growing segment of Christendom, crossing all denominational lines], *can ONLY be another facet of the outworking of the leaven which the woman placed in the three measures of meal in Matt. 13:33.*

And Scripture being dealt with after this fashion, with actions emanating from this error, *can only serve to further confuse Christians concerning correct distinctions between Israel and the Church*, along with *the correct place which signs occupy in relation to Israel and the kingdom.*

The whole of the matter is *a concerted attack upon Israel, particularly in relation to the coming kingdom and the place which Israel will occupy in this kingdom*. And this attack is, unknowingly, *coming from those in Christendom, from individuals who SHOULD know better, but DON'T*.

In this respect, the present manifestation of "miraculous signs" within what appears to be a fundamental branch of Christendom, attracting people from all denominations who are tired of the liberalism, *is NOT at all what it claims to be.* In fact, from the standpoint of those in the movement seeking a manifestation of supernatural signs, the Charismatic Movement is *FAR WORSE* than the liberal element of Christendom.

Where supernaturalism is involved in the Charismatic Movement, seeking to bring "signs, wonders, and miracles" over into the Church [and supernaturalism often is involved], demonic powers, of necessity, would have to be involved. And the preceding deduction would be simple to understand, for the supernatural power *could NOT* emanate from the power of the Holy Spirit, which leaves only *ONE other sphere of activity.*

If the power emanated from the Holy Spirit, God would be acting *contrary to His Word, something which would be impossible.*

For additional information on this subject, refer to the author's book, *Jude,* Chapter III.)

Moses performed miraculous *signs before Pharaoh.* And these *signs were performed relative to the deliverance of God's firstborn son, Israel, with a view to a theocracy in another land* (Ex. 4:22, 23).

Then Pharaoh's magicians performed miraculous *signs* as well. These magicians, through their miraculous works, sought *to counter that which God had decreed concerning His firstborn son and the theocracy* (*cf.* Ex. 7:9-13, 20-22; 8:6, 7, 16-19).

Then, during the coming Tribulation, the two witnesses in Revelation chapter eleven — who will prophesy for the first three and one-half years of the Tribulation, apparently in and around Jerusalem — will manifest *signs* (vv. 3-6).

And drawing from the type in Exodus, *these signs can ONLY have to do with the same thing seen during Moses' day. They can ONLY have to do with that which God has decreed concerning His firstborn son and the theocracy.*

And, as in the type in Exodus, there will also be a counterpart to Pharaoh's magicians in the latter days. Antichrist's false prophet will perform miraculous *signs* (Rev. 13:13-15; 19:20); and so will demonic spirits, who will appear after this fashion, performing *signs* before "the kings of the earth and of the whole world" (Rev. 16:14).

And the purpose behind a manifestation of *signs* by both the false prophet and the demonic spirits will be the same — *the utter destruction of Israel, particularly with Israel's relationship to the kingdom in view. They will seek, through any means possible, at all costs, to counter God's purpose concerning His firstborn son and the theocracy* (Ps. 83:2-8).

Then note how the whole of the matter will end. *It will end in EXACTLY the same manner as seen in the type.*

It will end on the one hand by *the One greater than Moses leading His people out from a worldwide dispersion, with the theocracy in view.*

And it will end on the other hand *by the destruction of Gentile world power (as Pharaoh and his armed forces were destroyed in the Sea), by the destruction of the very power which had sought to prevent that which God had decreed concerning His people, Israel.*

(*The signs* performed by Moses and the magicians in the type and those which will be performed by the two witnesses, the false prophet, and the demonic spirits in the antitype are of a different nature than those seen in the gospel accounts and the Book of Acts. Nonetheless, *ALL of the signs have to do with the SAME thing — a manifestation of supernatural power, with both Israel and the theocracy in view.*

The signs seen in the gospel accounts and the Book of Acts had to do with Divine healing and provision for the Jewish people, with the theocracy in view; *the signs* which had previously been manifested during Moses' day [by both Moses and the magicians] and *those* to be manifested yet future [by the two witnesses, the false prophet, and the demonic spirits] present the other side of the matter.

The signs manifested during Moses' day had to do with God-allowed supernatural powers. And yet future, as in the type from Exodus, these signs will be *a precursor* for the Divine destruction of Gentile world power, allowing the Jewish people to then occupy the position for which they had originally been called [a position which healing portends] — *Israel placed at the head of the nations within a theocracy, with all of the Gentile nations occupying a subservient position.*)

But prior to that future time, God has temporarily suspended His national dealings with Israel. God, so to speak, has stopped the chronometer marking off time in Daniel's Seventy-Week prophecy; and during this time when Israel has been set aside, God is taking out of the Gentiles "a people for his name."

God has set aside an entire dispensation to accomplish His purposes pertaining to the Gentiles in this respect, which, as the other two dispensations during Man's Day, will last exactly 2,000 years. And, according to the clear teaching of the type in Genesis chapter twenty-four, along with related Scripture, God's central purpose pertaining to the Gentiles during the present dispensation has to do with *the Spirit's search for and acquisition of a bride for His Son.*

At the beginning of this time, on the day of Pentecost in 33 A.D., God sent His Spirit into the world to accomplish this purpose. And today, very near the end of the 2,000 years, the search is almost over. Christians will shortly be removed from the earth; and the bride, for whom the Spirit has searched throughout the dispensation, will be revealed at the judgment seat.

(As in God's dealings with Israel, the Spirit's search for a bride for God's Son has to do with the theocracy as well. In keeping with the Divinely established order at the time of man's creation, *the man could NOT rule alone. The woman had to rule with him, he as king, and she as consort queen.*

The woman was removed from the man. She was part of his very being, *bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh* [Gen. 2:21-23]. And she was presented back to the man *not only as a helpmate for the man but also to complete the man.*

The man apart from the woman was *incomplete*; and an incomplete individual *could NOT* occupy the throne. "Dominion" [Rulership (Gen. 1:26-28)] had to be exercised by both the man and the woman *together* [a Divinely established order, seen in the opening chapters of Genesis], which was *the ONLY way one complete person could hold the sceptre and rule.*

In this respect, Christ *MUST* have a wife to reign with Him when He takes the sceptre, something which *He does NOT presently possess.*

Not possessing a wife though will no longer be the case following the present dispensation, the removal of the Church, the revelation of the bride at the judgment seat, and the redemption of the inheritance through the judgments of the Tribulation [in the antitype of Boaz's actions at the gate of the city in Ruth chapter four].

THEN, in that day, following the acquisition of the bride, the revelation of the bride, and the redemption of the inheritance [through which the bride will automatically become the Son's wife, exactly as Ruth became Boaz's wife in this manner in the type], the Son can occupy the throne and reign.

[For more information on the preceding, refer to the author's books, *Search for the bride* and *Ruth*].

The Son, *in that day*, with the bride removed from His body and then presented back to Him, will ascend the throne. And because of the Spirit's preceding work [during the present dispensation], the Son, *in that day*, will be able to ascend the throne as *ONE complete person* [Heb. 2:10].

He will be able to ascend the throne in the antitype of Adam, with the one typified by Eve [Gen. 1:26-28; Rom. 5:14], as *the second Man, the last Adam* [I Cor. 15:45-47].)

In events surrounding the second sign in John's gospel, *it was NECESSARY* for Christ to go through Samaria and remain there for two days, *APART FROM manifesting signs* (4:4, 40). And seeing that which these events foreshadowed, the reason is obvious.

Then note that Christ, after two days, left Samaria and returned not only to Galilee but to Cana in Galilee (4:43-46). And *signs were AGAIN seen within His ministry.*

In short, Christ's ministry in Samaria *came to an END,* and *He THEN returned to the Jewish people.*

And, in like manner, God's present work among the Gentiles is going to *come to an END.*

THEN, God will *turn back to and complete His national dealings with Israel during Man's Day, with the Lord's Day in view,* which is depicted in the remainder of the account from John's gospel.

Then, in Cana of Galilee

It is only fitting that Christ is seen returning to the site of His first sign in order to heal the nobleman's son. It is here, through the meaning of the word "Cana" (the thought of "jealousy" [see Chapter VI in this book, pp. 66-68]), that *the jealous nature of God toward Israel* is seen through both *the location* and *the signs performed at this location.*

A jealous nature exhibited toward an individual would portend *expected exclusive devotion on the part of that individual,* which is the picture Scripture presents of *the Husband-wife* (or, on the other hand, *the God-son*) relationship existing between God and Israel. God expects *exclusive devotion on the part of His wife (or firstborn son),* something which does not presently exist.

But, because of the nature of God, seen in the name of the village where the first two signs in John's gospel were manifested, He has decreed in His unchangeable Word that matters will not continue indefinitely as they presently exist.

The present dispensation *WILL come to a CLOSE.* Christ's time spent in Samaria (two days) *CAME to an END,* exactly as the 2,000 years comprising the present dispensation *WILL come to an END.*

THEN that foreshadowed by these first two signs in John's gospel will occur.

Both signs provide time-lines concerning that which will occur in the camp of Israel through the outworking of God's jealous nature toward the Jewish people.

The first sign showed *the restoration of God's adulterous wife, after six days, on the seventh day,* through a wedding in Cana of Galilee (*cf.* Rev. 19:1-3).

The second sign shows *the healing of God's firstborn son, after two days, on the third day* (which would be the last three days seen in the complete time-line in the first sign, *i.e.,* after six days, on the seventh day), through the healing of a nobleman's son (*cf.* Isa. 1 :4-27).

And events surrounding the Jewish people's *reception* of Christ and *belief* on Him are seen inseparably connected with His return to Galilee and the exhibited sign.

That revealed in these two signs *CANNOT change.* That seen in and surrounding these two signs *WILL come to pass.*

That is to say, God's jealous nature relative to Israel *CANNOT change; NOR can it ever fail.*

And that would be to say, the things revealed in God's Word *CANNOT change; NOR can they ever fail.*

11

Two Days in Samaria, Then…

After Two Days with the Gentiles, Then…

"The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: For the Father seeketh such to worship him" (John 4:19-23).

As seen in the previous chapter of this book, the second sign in John's gospel is recorded in the closing nine verses of chapter four (vv. 46-54).

This chapter begins with a reference to Christ leaving Judaea, where He had been ministering (vv. 1-3). Then the chapter continues with Christ traveling to Galilee by going through Samaria and spending two days ministering to the Samaritans (vv. 4-42) prior to continuing His journey on into Galilee (vv. 43-54).

Thus, the chapter begins with a brief mention of Christ's ministry in Judaea, *where signs HAD BEEN performed* (John 2:23; 3:2; 4:45).

Then, most of the remainder of the chapter is taken up with Christ ministering in Samaria (*APART FROM any reference to signs*) prior to His continuing on into Galilee and *performing the second sign dealt with in John's gospel, in the village of Cana.*

The Samaritans were generally hated and despised by the Jews. In fact, this hatred was of such a nature that the Samaritans were, at times, cursed in Jewish synagogues; and they were not even allowed to become Jewish proselytes, generally being thought of as eternally damned.

Many Jews traveling between Judaea (south of Samaria) and Galilee (north of Samaria) refused to even go through Samaria. They would cross the Jordan River before reaching Samaria and travel along the eastern side of the river, avoiding both the people and the land (*cf.* John 4:9, 27).

But, according to the account in John chapter four, Jesus, traveling from Judaea to Galilee, "must needs go through Samaria."

WHY? After all, He would later command His twelve disciples at the time they were commissioned:

> "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:
>
> But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.
>
> And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of the heavens is at hand.
>
> Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons…" (Matt. 10:5b-8a).

In a respect, it would appear that *it was necessary* for Christ to do something which He would later command the Twelve *NOT* to do. But this could *NOT* have been the case at all. Had this been the case, Christ would have been acting contrary to that which He was about to command His disciples. In a larger context, this would be to say that the One Who was God manifested in the flesh would have been *acting contrary to His revealed Word* — an impossibility.

Christ's command concerning not going to *the Gentiles* or *the Samaritans* had to do with *the message being proclaimed.* This message, accompanied by *signs*, was to be proclaimed *ONLY* "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

This was *NOT* a message for the Samaritans in the land or the Gentiles either in or out of the land. This was a message *SOLELY* for those specified in Christ's command to His disciples (Matt. 10:6), those to whom Christ had been sent (Matt. 15:24; *cf.* John 1:11),

a people whom God had previously made the repository for both *heavenly* and *earthly* promises and blessings in the theocracy (*cf.* Gen. 9:26, 27; 12:1-3; 14:18-22; 22:17, 18).

Christ's ministry in Judaea, prior to traveling through Samaria enroute to Galilee, had to do with *the SAME message* which He would later commission the Twelve to carry to Israel. And Christ's ministry after He had traveled through Samaria and arrived in Galilee had to do with *a continuance of this SAME message.*

Christ's ministry in both Judaea and Galilee had to do with:

> *A call for national repentance on the part of the Jewish people.*
> *A message pertaining to the kingdom being at hand.*
> *An exhibition of supernatural signs of an unprecedented nature.*

But, during the two days spent in Samaria, *the matter, of necessity, was COMPLETELY different*:

> *There was NO call for national repentance.*
> *The kingdom could NOT be proclaimed as being at hand.*
> *There was NO exhibition of signs.*

Christ's two-day ministry in Samaria *did NOT, it could NOT,* have anything to do with the message being proclaimed to Israel or with the signs being manifested in connection with this message.

In this respect, Jesus, during the two days spent ministering to the Samaritans, *did NOT, in any manner,* act contrary to that which He was about to command His disciples.

That which Jesus would later command His disciples, recorded in Matt. 10:5-8, had to do with *the proclamation of the kingdom to Israel, attended by supernatural signs.* This message and these signs had to do with that which was being proclaimed to *the Jewish people alone.* The Samaritans and/or the Gentiles *were NOT included;* and any ministry among the Samaritans or the Gentiles (*cf.* Matt. 15:21-28), *of necessity, would have had to be of a different nature.*

The Samaritans

The origin of the Samaritans, as they existed at the time of

Christ's first coming, would date back mainly to events which followed the Assyrian captivity of the northern part of the kingdom, the northern ten tribes, about 722 B.C. Because of *a continued disobedience* of the Israelites forming the northern ten tribes, occurring over centuries of time, God had allowed the Assyrians to come down and take His people captive, removing a large segment of them from the land, and transporting them into Gentile lands controlled by the Assyrians (II Kings 17:4-23).

Then, following this time, the king of Assyria moved Gentiles from the Assyrian kingdom into the conquered land to occupy the land and control the people that had been left in the land (II Kings 17:24). And intermarriages between these Gentile immigrants and the Hebrews, over time, eventually resulted in *a mixed racial state of the Samaritans,* something that continued to exist throughout the ensuing centuries, extending into the first century A.D. at the time of Christ's first coming.

And, as could only have been expected, the spiritual state of the Samaritans during the same time evolved along corresponding lines — *an already corrupted Hebrew faith became mixed with paganism introduced by the Assyrians.*

Then, beyond the preceding, problems of a different nature surfaced when the immigrants first entered the land. And, from what is stated, this resulted from Gentiles, who neither recognized nor understood the one true God, entering into and settling down among God's people, in God's land (*cf.* Joel 3:2).

Note how the Lord handled these immigrants entering the land in this manner in II Kings 17:25:

> "And so it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the Lord: therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which slew some of them."

In an attempt to rectify the situation, the king of Assyria took a priest from among those whom he had taken captive and sent him back into the land to teach the pagan immigrants about the one true God (II Kings 17:26-28).

But this proved to be of no avail. The immigrants simply added

Jehovah to their list of gods. They "made gods of their own," and placed these gods "in the houses of the high places" — the places previously used by the Israelites in their spiritual degeneracy.

They even appointed priests and sought to worship *both the true God and their false gods* at the same time.

And this type syncretistic worship on the part of those in the land continued throughout succeeding generations (II Kings 17:29-41).

The descendants of the mixed race with their corrupted form of worship, introduced during the years following the Assyrian captivity, were in the land when exiles from the following Babylonian captivity of the southern two tribes were allowed to return under Zerubbabel, and later under Ezra (beginning about 538 B.C.).

These exiles returned following a decree by Cyrus, in order to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem (II Chron. 36:20-23; Ezra 1:1, 2; *cf.* Isa. 44:28). And those already in the land, the Samaritans, as they existed almost two hundred years following the Assyrian captivity, offered to help these returning exiles build the temple (Ezra 4:1, 2).

But those offering to help were repulsed and turned away (v. 3), which resulted in a long-lasting antagonism between the Jews who had returned from the Babylonian captivity and the Samaritans already in the land (vv. 4ff).

About two hundred years later, the descendants of those who had been repulsed and turned away by the returning exiles built a rival temple in Mt. Gerizim (about 330 B.C.), which was destroyed about two hundred years later by John Hyrcanus (a Maccabean ruler of Judaea). And in this rival temple, the people, as their ancestors in the high places, had sought to worship *both the true God and the false gods,* producing an unholy and forbidden mixture of truth and error (*cf.* Ex. 20:3-5).

All of this set the stage for the existing conditions in Samaria, along with the attitude of the Jews in Judaea and Galilee toward the Samaritans, at the time of Christ's first coming.

(Questions have been raised by some individuals [others leave the matter open] concerning whether or not a co-mingling of the races actually occurred in Samaria following the Assyrian captivity. Scripture though does not leave the matter open to question.

The New Testament makes a distinction between both the Samaritans and the Jews and the Samaritans and the Gentiles.

The Samaritans, for purposes evidently reflecting back on their origin, were looked upon and spoken of separate from either Jew or Gentile, though, in actuality, they had to be one or the other [*cf.* Matt. 10:5, 6; Acts 1:8]. And since *race* is the matter being dealt with, this distinction which the Samaritans held could undoubtedly be traced back to only one thing — *a mixed racial condition of the people.*

The Samaritans would actually be seen as "Gentiles," not Jews. Note that this is the manner in which they are seen in the dispensational framework of the text. Then, as well, the Samaritans being looked upon as neither Jew nor Gentile would fit perfectly within this framework, for *the one new man* "in Christ," foreshadowed by Samaritan converts in John chapter four, is neither Jew nor Gentile.)

Christ's Ministry Following Judaea, in Samaria

The entire account of Christ's ministry in Samaria surrounds an encounter with a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well and that which resulted from this encounter (vv. 6-42). This woman, with five previous husbands, who was living with a sixth in an unmarried state (vv. 16-18), was the person Christ singled out at Jacob's well to work through in order to reach the Samaritans (vv. 28-30, 39-42).

(The woman, following her encounter with Christ [vv. 7-26] expressed a type belief which was more negative than positive. Note her question in verse twenty-nine after she had left her waterpot at the well, went into the city, and found certain men: "…is not this the Christ?"

The manner in which the question is asked in the Greek text shows that the woman's belief relative to Jesus being the Christ was more negative than positive. The particle *meti* is used, same as in Matt. 12:23 where the question is also more negative than positive.

The negative *me,* forming the opening two letters of the particle, expects a "No" response when used in a question in the Greek text [as opposed to the negative *ou*, which would expect a "Yes" response]. However, the negative nature of the question is softened through the use of the particle rather than the use of *me* alone, which is seen in both Matt. 12:23 and John 4:29.

This particle places the question in a somewhat middle-of-the-road

status, but leaning more toward *the negative* ["No"] *than the positive* ["Yes"].

The question in Matt. 12:23, "Is not this the Son of David?," in the light of the Greek particle *meti* used in the question, should more literally be translated, "Possibly this is the Son of David, but we really don't think so"; and, in like manner, the question of the woman in John 4:29, "…is not this the Christ?," where the particle *meti* is again used, should be translated in a similar respect, "Possibly this is the Christ, but I really don't think so.")

Though the woman may have expressed *more unbelief than belief*, the same is *NOT* stated concerning the men of the city who had heard her. Many of these men "believed on him"; and, after finding Jesus, they asked Him to "tarry with them" (vv. 39, 40). Nor is this stated concerning other Samaritans who subsequently "believed" (moving beyond the woman's testimony to Jesus' Own words [v. 41]).

In fact the latter group, after hearing Jesus for themselves, stated:

"Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world [*lit.*, '…this is truly the Saviour of the world']" (v. 42).

(The word "Christ" [Gk., *Christos*] is not found in the better Greek manuscripts of John 4:42; and it appears evident, from the subject matter at hand, that the word should *NOT* be included in the text of this verse, as in the KJV English translation.

The Jews, identifying Christ in a similar manner, would have been expected to do so in line with Peter's confession in Matt. 16:16 — "Thou art the Christ [the One Who is to rule and reign], the Son of the living God [with 'sonship' implying *rulership* — only 'Sons' rule in God's kingdom]." And this would be perfectly in line with John 20:30, 31, showing the purpose for the eight signs in John's gospel, *which are Jewish ALONE.*

With the Samaritans though, showing *the Gentile side of the matter*, only "the Saviour of the world" could be involved, as when dealing with an unsaved person today. An individual must *FIRST* be saved, pass "from death unto life," before Christ's Messianic credentials can come into view. And, even then, "signs" *would have been then and would be today COMPLETELY out of place.*)

Thus, Jesus used a loose-living woman, who expressed more unbelief than belief, in order to reach individuals in Samaria. Though this may not necessarily be the manner in which one might think of conducting ministry today in order to reach people, note that stated in Isa. 55:8, 9 about the way God does things:

> "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.
>
> For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Of course, matters were being conducted by the One Who could see the outcome from the beginning, something which Christians cannot do. But the lesson from John chapter four, in the light of Isa. 55:8, 9, must not be overlooked (evident elsewhere in Scripture as well [*e.g.,* Matt. 21:28-32; Mark 14:3-9; Luke 7:36-50; 19:1-10; John 8:1-11]).

Attention in ministry *MUST* be given to the leadership of the Spirit, which at times, in man's eyes, may not be understood at all (note, for example, the attitude of the disciples in Samaria after they had returned from the city and had seen what Jesus was doing [John 4:27; *cf.* v. 9]).

And while following the leadership of the Spirit in ministry, *ONE thing above all else MUST be kept in mind.* The servant does *NOT* have to answer to other servants in the house. That which other servants may think about a particular servant's ministry and the manner in which it is being conducted is really of *LITTLE to NO moment*. The final accounting is to one day be rendered to *the Master of the house, NOT to other servants in the house* (*cf.* John 21:21, 22).

1) Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal

The woman in Samaria, during the course of her conversation with Jesus, knowing that He was a Jew but realizing that He was no ordinary Jew, referred to a mount where the Samaritan fathers had worshipped. This could only have been a reference to Mount Gerizim, the site of their destroyed temple. And even though long since destroyed, the Samaritan priests at this time

were still offering Paschal sacrifices among the temple ruins, in keeping with that stated in Exodus chapter twelve (something which continued down through the succeeding centuries and still exists during modern times [*i.e.,* Samaritan priests today, over two millenniums after the destruction of their temple, still offer sacrifices among the temple ruins on Mount Gerizim]).

The Samaritans built their temple on Mount Gerizim because they believed that this was the place which God had chosen (Deut. 12:5-14), rather than Jerusalem. And this could only have been based on a history of the Israelites as it pertained to two mountains — Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal.

These two mountains were located next to one another, with a valley lying between (about 35 miles north of Jerusalem). Mount Gerizim lay to the south and Mount Ebal to the north, with both rising to an approximate 3,000-foot elevation. And Jesus' discourse with the Samaritan woman occurred near these two mountains.

These were mountains which God had singled out over fourteen centuries earlier, during Moses and Joshua's day, when the Israelites were preparing to cross the Jordan River and enter the land. One mount (Gerizim) was to be associated with *blessings,* and the other mount (Ebal) was to be associated with *curses.*

And that which the Israelites were commanded to perform on both Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal once they had entered the land (Deut. 27:1-26; *cf.* Joshua 8:30-35), contextually (Deut. 28), could only have been an object lesson for the Jewish people in the theocracy.

Blessings would be realized if the people obeyed all that the Lord had commanded; *curses,* on the other hand, would befall the people if they did not obey all that the Lord had commanded.

Note *the twelve curses* (a number signifying *governmental perfection*) which the Levites were to speak before all the people in Mount Ebal (Deut. 27:14-26), indicating that which would befall a disobedient people within the theocracy (that which would befall those from *the twelve tribes,* again pointing to *governmental perfection*).

Then, the following chapter, chapter twenty-eight, relates both sides of the issue — *blessings,* associated with Mount Gerizim (vv. 1-14); and *curses,* associated with Mount Ebal (vv. 15-68).

The Samaritans could only have gone back to this point in history to determine the location where their temple was to be built, believing that Mount Gerizim rather than the Temple Mount in Jerusalem was the correct place for the temple's location.

> (The Samaritans possessed a Pentateuch-based form of worship, rejecting all of the Old Testament except the Pentateuch [the five books of Moses] and claiming to possess an older copy of the Pentateuch than existed in Jerusalem.
>
> And to further strengthen their claim concerning the correct site for the temple, the Samaritan Pentateuch reads "Mount Gerizim" rather than "Mount Ebal" in Deut. 27:4, which was the place where *an altar* "unto the Lord" was to be built after the Israelites had crossed the Jordan River and entered the land [v. 5].
>
> The Samaritans also believed that Mount Gerizim was the place where Abraham had not only met Melchizedek [Gen. 14] but where he had later offered his son [Gen. 22].)

2) But the Hour Cometh, and Now Is, When…

Since the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman occurred at Jacob's well and the woman had recognized Jesus as a Jew, she sought to carry matters in the conversation all the way back to Jacob, almost eighteen centuries prior to that time, where there would be common ground. Then she moved to a point where there could only have been uncommon ground between the Jews and the Samaritans, calling attention to a disputed issue relative to the correct place of worship — Mount Gerizim, or the Temple Mount in Jerusalem (vv. 5-20).

Jesus though, in His response to the woman, *ignored ALL dispute between the Jews and the Samaritans.* And the reason is quite simple and obvious. It is the same reason why *signs* or the associated message, "Repent: for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand," *had NO connection with Christ's ministry in Samaria.*

That which Christ's two-day ministry in Samaria foreshadowed had *NO connection* with Mount Gerizim or the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. It had *NO connection* with any part of the Jewish form of worship. Rather, it had to do with *the one new man* "in Christ," who is neither Jew nor Gentile (note that those in Samaria, fore-

shadowing this *new man* about to be brought into existence, were looked upon, racially, along similar lines — *neither Jew nor Gentile*).

This *one new man,* a completely new creation, separate from the creation emanating from Jacob (Isa. 43:1), *can have NO possible connection with the Mosaic economy.* Things associated with the Mosaic economy have to do with *the nation of Israel ALONE.* And to bring *anything* from the Mosaic economy over into Christianity today would be *COMPLETELY out of place.*

Christ *DIDN'T* do it during His two-day ministry in Samaria; *and NEITHER* should man attempt to do it today.

In fact, rather than bringing something from the Mosaic economy over into the matter in John chapter four, Christ, instead, announced *a sharp distinction and separation between that seen under the Mosaic economy and that which His ministry in Samaria foreshadowed.*

> (There is absolutely *NO place in Christendom for the new creation in Christ to go back to the old creation in Jacob* [*cf.* Isa. 43:1, 7; II Cor. 5:17] and *attempt to bring things from this old creation over into the new* [*cf.* Matt. 9:16, 17]. God has set Israel aside for a dispensation; and He is, today, dealing with *the one new man* "in Christ," *NOT* with Israel.
>
> And for this new man to go back to Israel [a prior and separate creation, a nation set aside] and attempt to bring things having to do with this nation over into things having to do with the one new man [the Law, forms, ceremonies, matters pertaining to "signs,"etc.] is *NOT only completely out of place BUT it serves to break down distinctions which God has established between the two creations, adding to an already existing confusion.*)

No earthly place or form for worship exists for *the one new man* "in Christ." Worship is to occur wherever two or three are gathered together in Christ's name (Matt. 18:20); and God, Who is "spirit," is to be worshipped "in spirit and in truth" (vv. 21-24).

This worship is to be in keeping with God's nature, of *a spiritual nature;* and it is *to center around the Truth* (whether the living Word or the written Word, for the two are inseparable [*ref.* Chapter IV in this book, "The Word Made Flesh"]).

> (It should be noted that the KJV rendering of John 4:24a — "God is a Spirit…" — is not correct. The Greek language does not use indefinite

articles, only definite. And the inclusion or omission of the definite article in the Greek text is for particular reasons, often ignored in English translations [*ref.* NKJV, NASB, NIV].

The omission of the article, as in John 4:24, calls attention to *quality* and/or *character*, the same as seen in the statement, "God is love" [I John 4:8]. And the inclusion of an indefinite article in the KJV text of John 4:24 does away with that to which attention is called by the omission of the article in the Greek text [refer to comments regarding this matter as it pertains to John 1:1 in Chapter II of this book, pp. 20, 21].

God is not "a Spirit." Rather, "God is spirit," as "God is love," with both verses showing *quality* and/or *character,* as one or both relate to God. John 4:24 has nothing to do with God's form, His physical makeup, as the inclusion of an indefinite article before "spirit" often leads people to believe.)

Christ's Ministry Following Samaria, in Galilee

Christ's ministry in Galilee — following a two-day ministry in Samaria (foreshadowing the present two-day, 2,000-year, dispensation) — points to that time when God will complete His dealings with Israel, with the Messianic Era in view.

Seven years yet remain to complete the past dispensation, which will be fulfilled during Daniel's Seventieth Week, during the coming Tribulation.

During this time, *signs* will once again come back into the picture, with a view to *healing* for the Jewish people, *EXACTLY as foreshadowed by the healing of the nobleman's son immediately following Christ's ministry in Samaria* (John 4:43-54; *ref.* Chapter X in this book).

And this is what *the eight signs in John's gospel* have to do with — *each showing a different facet of the same thing, each showing a different facet of that which the future holds for Israel.*

12

A Certain Man Healed

Third Sign

Healing on the Third, Seventh Day

"After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

For an angel came down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water; whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatever disease he had.

And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

When Jesus saw him lie, and knew now that he had been a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the Sabbath" (John 5:1-9).

The third sign in John's gospel has to do with the healing of a man who had been sick for "a long time," for "thirty and eight years."

And this healing occurred through *a manifestation of supernatural power, at the pool of Bethesda, on the Sabbath day.*

This pool was located near the sheep gate, which some have associated with the gate through which the paschal lambs were brought to the temple for sacrifice.

The pool had five porches, and these porches were filled with sick or incapacitated individuals, described four different ways — *"impotent" (sick, with the Greek word denoting weakness wrought by the sickness), "blind," "halt" (lame),* and *"withered" (referring to those with shrunken parts of the body, resulting from disease).*

The entire scene speaks volumes about *Israel's spiritual condition at that time* (a condition in which the nation remains today, almost 2,000 years later). And that which occurred when Jesus appeared on the scene revealed how long Israel would continue in this condition, and that which would occur once this time had run its course.

The preceding sign in John's gospel — Jesus healing the nobleman's son in Cana of Galilee after spending two days in Samaria (the second sign) — *deals with one aspect of the matter.*

Then, the healing of the man who had been afflicted with an infirmity for thirty-eight years, on the Sabbath day (the third sign), *deals with another aspect of the matter.*

BOTH deal with EXACTLY the same thing. BOTH deal with *Israel's present condition and future healing,* a healing which will occur *after two days, on the third day* (second sign), which is also that future time foreshadowed by *the Sabbath day, the seventh day* (third sign).

BOTH of these signs were preceded by a miraculous sign performed at a wedding feast in Cana, which occurred *on the third day in one respect* (John 2:1) and *on the seventh day in another* (John 1:29, 35, 43; 2:1).

And the other five signs in John's gospel, as well, deal with *different aspects of the SAME thing.* All eight signs form *different parts of the SAME word picture.*

> (Note how Scripture is structured in this respect, something seen throughout the Word. One event, or a sequence of events, is dealt with *different ways at different times* [via the use of types, parables, signs, metaphors, numbers, etc.]. God presents the matter *from one vantage point, then another, then another…* And sufficient information is given, through a means of this nature, to allow man to come into a clear and correct understanding of the subject under discussion.)

The Pool, the Five Porches, the Occupants

"Bethesda," the name of the pool near the sheep gate, is a Hebrew name meaning *house of mercy;* and "five [five porches]" is the number associated with *grace.*

On these five porches, at this pool, lay "a great multitude" of sick and physically incapacitated individuals, *waiting for a time when the water in the pool would be stirred up, agitated* (v. 7; *cf.* vv. 3b, 4).

> (The latter part of v. 3 ["waiting for the moving of the water," KJV] and all of v. 4 are not found in most of the older Greek manuscripts. Thus, they appear only in the footnotes of later English versions such as the NASB, NIV, and Weymouth's N.T. translation. Wuest would be an exception, retaining this section in the text of his translation.
>
> The words, "when the water is troubled," in v. 7 [which appear in the older manuscripts and, thus, are not questioned] would seem to rest on at least the latter part of v. 3 being part of the text. And some view the matter after this fashion, omitting only v. 4.
>
> Regardless of whether the disputed text is authentic or not, an angelic ministry such as that which can be seen in v. 4 would be in keeping with God using angels throughout His activities, which in this third sign would also be in keeping with Christ's ministry at this time — *a manifestation of signs pertaining to Israel's future healing.*
>
> The length of this angelic ministry, if actually part of the inspired text, is unrevealed. It could have been something of recent date, occurring only during the time surrounding Christ's ministry. We're simply not told.
>
> Good Bible teachers over about the past one hundred years have dealt with the authenticity or non-authenticity of John 5:3b, 4 both ways. The matter will simply be left open in this chapter. It is not necessary to either accept or reject this section as authentic in order to see and properly understand the third sign in John's gospel.)

The scene in John 5:2, 3 — sick and incapacitated individuals lying on five porches at the pool of Bethesda, in need of healing — depicts *the Jewish people in a condition which would prevent them from functioning in the position for which God had originally called the nation.*

With respect to the reason God called Israel into existence, *the nation is depicted as being unable to do anything other than lie around on that associated with grace, at the house of mercy, in need of healing.*

And, while lying on the five porches in this condition, at the house of mercy, *the nation is depicted as being blind to their true condition.*

The Spirit of God moved Isaiah to begin his prophecy pertaining to Israel by presenting *EXACTLY the same picture* concerning the nation, along with *the REASON* for this existing condition:

> "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.
>
> Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.
>
> From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment" (Isa. 1:4-6).

This was the picture of Israel in Isaiah's day (eighth century B.C.); this remained the picture of Israel's condition when Christ was upon the earth during the first part of the first century A.D.; and this remains the picture of Israel's condition today, during the opening years of the twenty-first century.

This would apply *to the Jews in the land* (forming the present nation of Israel) *or the Jews scattered throughout the Gentile nations.*

There is *absolutely NO difference* between those in the land or out of the land in this respect; *BOTH form separate parts of the SAME group of people — the Jewish people throughout the whole world, who are sick because of past unbelief and disobedience, from which there has been no repentance.*

And this state of the Jewish people is simply an outworking of that which God stated would happen as a result of the nation's refusal to "hearken unto the voice of the Lord…to observe to do all his commandments" (Lev. 26:14ff; Deut. 28:15ff).

The present state of the Jewish people in the world stands as *a testimony that God has HONORED that which He had revealed in His Word and has DONE EXACTLY as He had said that He would do.*

And God will *ALSO* remain just as faithful to His Word and *heal the nation once repentance occurs.*

BUT, remaining faithful to His Word, *God CANNOT heal the nation BEFORE repentance DOES occur* (*cf.* Lev. 26:40ff; II Chron. 7:14).

Note Ps. 138:2b in this respect:

> "…for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name [*lit.*,'…you have exalted above all things your Name and your Word' (*ref.* NIV)]."

There has been *NO change in Israel's condition down through the centuries,* and there can be *NO* change *UNTIL* the One Who has "torn" the nation *binds the nation's wound,* which will occur *ONLY FOLLOWING repentance*, which will take place "after two days…in the third day [which will be the *seventh day, the Sabbath,* counting from the beginning of Man's Day]" (Hosea 5:13-6:2).

And this is in perfectly keeping with the signs in John's gospel, the signs in the other three gospels, the signs in the Book of Acts, or any other place in Scripture bearing on the subject.

> (Note the present remnant in the land today, forming the nation of Israel [over 6,000,000 strong], along with that which is usually taught concerning this remnant — that the Jews in the land today are there in a beginning fulfillment of God's numerous promises in the O.T. concerning the nation's restoration to the land.
>
> But that which is usually taught concerning this remnant in the preceding respect *CANNOT possibly be correct.* Israel's restoration *CANNOT occur UNTIL the nation repents*; *nor can it occur UNTIL the third day.*
>
> The Jews in the land today are there *PRIOR to repentance, near the END of the second day, NOT during the third day.*
>
> For additional information on this subject, refer to the author's books, *Never Again! or Yes, Again!* and *O Sleeper! Arise, Call!*)

A very similar picture to that of Israel's sickness is presented in Rev. 3:17 of the Church as it will exist at the end of the present dispensation, depicted by the seventh Church in Revelation chapters two and three, the Church in Laodicea:

> "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and

have need of nothing; and *knowest not* that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

And the reason for this condition is revealed to be *EXACTLY the SAME* as the reason for Israel's present condition — *unfaithfulness, disobedience, on the part of the people* (Rev. 3:14-16; *cf.* Rev. 2:4, 14, 15, 20; 3:2). God simply will *NOT* countenance actions of this nature among His people, whether Israelites or Christians.

And the Church, very near the end of the present dispensation, is not only like Israel in the sense of being *sick* because of *unfaithfulness* and *disobedience* but the Church is also like Israel in the sense of being *blind* to their condition.

That is to say, neither Israel nor the Church recognizes their true condition. Both, relative to this condition, are *blind.*

One segment of the Church, as it exists today in its sick and blind condition, is so involved and intermixed with the world that it has become almost completely estranged from spiritual things.

Another segment has come up with what usually amounts to a pseudo-fundamentalism, attempting to separate itself from a condition which, in the Church's present blinded condition, is not even being correctly recognized; and part of this same segment of Christianity often involves itself with *signs,* seeing within the signs a supernaturalism and closer adherence to the Scriptures, not understanding that signs relate to Israel's condition and have nothing to do with Christians.

And any or all of the preceding can only foster an already decadent condition in Christendom (*cf.* Matt. 13:33; Rev. 3:14-21).

That which emanates from the flesh (that which is out of line with the Word, man-derived means, man-made programs) is *NEVER* acceptable to God. Ishmael is to be cast out; he has no inheritance with Isaac. *Everything MUST emanate "from above," NEVER from below* (John 3:31; *cf.* John 1:12, 13; 3:3, 5; James 1:18; I Peter 1:3, 23; I John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18).

And Christians involving themselves in error of a preceding or similar nature will find *NO favor* with God. In fact, they will find just the opposite (*cf.* Matt. 7:21-23; 23:1ff).

The things seen and foreshadowed in Christ's ministry in Ju-

daea and Galilee are *NOT* to be brought over into that seen and foreshadowed by His two-day ministry in Samaria.

One has to do with *Israel, in connection with "signs"*; the other has to do with *Christians, apart from "signs"* (*ref.* Chapter XI in this book).

In this respect, Christians associating themselves with a pseudo-fundamentalism of this nature, contending for signs in the Church today, have not only involved themselves in error but are doing something which is quite detrimental to correctly understanding God's dealings surrounding Israel.

They have taken that which, for a God-ordained purpose, belongs to Israel; and they have brought it over into the Church, producing confusion in this whole realm.

The Church (comprised of all Christians) will be removed in its present condition at the end of the dispensation, to be dealt with by Christ at His judgment seat, with a view to the Messianic Era. Then God will turn back to Israel and deal with the nation during Daniel's unfulfilled Seventieth Week.

Israel will pass through the fires of the Great Tribulation, with one end in view — *the nation's repentance.*

And, accordingly, this period — a final seven years — will be of such *a severe nature that repentance WILL ultimately be effected, resulting in God then healing the nation.*

The Sign Itself

Isaiah 35:5, 6, a Messianic passage (vv. 1ff), states:

> "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.
>
> Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert."

Isaiah had dealt with that which sin had wrought for both the people of Israel (sickness) and the land of Israel (desolation) as he opened his prophecy in the first chapter (vv. 2-7). But in the thirty-fifth chapter he writes about a time when healing would occur for both (as he had done in the latter part of the first chapter, leading into the second [1:16-19, 25-2:5]).

When Christ was on earth manifesting signs, the time of healing, spoken of centuries before by Isaiah, was "at hand [or, 'had drawn near']," *conditioned on Israel's national repentance* (Matt. 3:2; 4:17).

ALL of the healings performed by Christ and His disciples (*e.g.,* Matt. 4:23-25; 10:5-8; Luke 10:1, 8, 9, 17; Acts 3:1-8) formed *signs,* reflecting back on sections of Scripture such as Isa. 35:5, 6 and foreshadowed that which the nation *could have had* (*conditioned on national repentance, which didn't occur*) and which the nation *one day WILL have* (*following national repentance, when it does occur*).

1) Agitated Waters or Christ

The scene in John chapter five is that of sick and disabled Jews lying on five porches before a pool, *waiting for a movement of the waters, with the hope that healing would be effected by the agitated waters.*

At the same time, *the One Who could heal them stood in their midst, offering healing, but was being ignored.*

Of all those present, *Christ singled out one man in order to perform a supernatural sign for all to see, pointing to healing available for ALL, IF…*

But even when this one man had been singled out and Christ asked, "Wilt though be made whole?" (v. 6b), this man's response remained within the same mind-set as all the others awaiting the movement of the waters:

> "The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me" (v. 7).

But regardless of the circumstances, Jesus then healed the man as *a sign for ALL to behold and consider.*

And John, years later, was moved to record this account in his gospel as *a sign for the Jewish people to continue to behold and consider.*

2) Attitude of the Jews Toward Christ

The attitude of the Jews in the day Jesus healed the man who had been sick for thirty-eight years and the attitude of the Jews years later when John penned his gospel was *EXACTLY the same.*

The Jewish people, at the time when this sign was performed,

along with Christ telling the man to take up his bed and walk, *ignored the miraculous sign and sought to slay Christ because "he had done these things on the Sabbath day."* They ignored that to which *the Sabbath* pointed (*the coming seventh day, when healing would occur for the nation*), and they rejected Christ's statement concerning His true identity, which made "himself equal with God" (vv. 9ff).

The Lord of the Sabbath (Matt. 12:8; Mark 2:28) had used *the very day (the Sabbath) when healing would occur for the nation* to show the Jewish people that which they could have, *IF…*

And they sought to kill Him for so doing.

And the years which followed, during which time John wrote his gospel, *were NO different*. Beginning with the first recorded healing during this period (Acts 3:1-11), though numerous Jews did believe (Acts 4:4), the nation as a whole, led by the religious leaders, followed the same path as previously seen in the gospel accounts (Acts 4:1-3, 5-22).

One rejection followed another, with *bloodshed and death* eventually being the outgrowth of unbelief and disobedience once again (Acts 6:8; 7:51-60; *cf.* Matt. 12:10-14; 15:1ff; 16:1ff).

After Thirty-Eight Years, on the Sabbath

The man Christ singled out and healed had been in his sick and weakened condition *for thirty-eight years.* "Thirty-eight," in this account, signifies *completeness* by pointing to the number *forty.*

Comparing Scripture with Scripture, it can only relate back to the time of the experiences of the Israelites at Kadesh-Barnea under Moses (about one and one-half years following the Exodus from Egypt) to that time when they were preparing to enter the land under Joshua (some thirty-eight years later [Deut. 2:14]).

There is *a full forty years* between the Exodus from Egypt under Moses to that time when an entire generation had been overthrown (because of unbelief and disobedience) and *a new generation was ready to enter the land under Joshua, portending healing* (Acts 7:36).

1) Thirty-Eight, Forty Years

"Forty" is one of several numbers used in Scripture to signify

completeness (*three, seven, ten, and twelve* are the others, with each pointing to *a particular type completeness*).

Forty days and nights were required for the Flood waters to completely cover the earth (Gen. 7:12-20); Moses' life is divided into three periods of forty years each (Acts 7:23, 30, 36; *cf.* Deut. 34:7); Moses spent forty days and nights with the Lord on Sinai (Ex. 24:18; 34:28); the twelve spies spent forty days searching the land (Num. 13:25).

Then, because of unbelief, the time spent searching the land formed the basis for the time that the Israelites would be caused to wander in the wilderness before being allowed to enter the land — a year for a day (Num. 14:34).

Christ was tempted by Satan for forty days (Luke 4:2); and Christ's post-resurrection ministry lasted forty days (Acts 1:3).

As previously seen, the thirty-eight years that the man at the pool of Bethesda had lain in his sick condition in the third sign in John's gospel reflects back on the experiences of the Israelites under Moses at Kadesh-Barnea. And the experiences of the Israelites in history had to do with a time of *unbelief and disobedience, which resulted in the Jewish people remaining in a particular condition for a full forty years.*

There was *a complete period of time* in which God dealt with the Israelites in history; and the third sign in John's gospel, drawing from Jewish history, foreshadows *a subsequent complete period of time* in which God would deal with His people, *for EXACTLY the same reason — unbelief and disobedience.*

That which occurred following the experiences of the Israelites under Moses at Kadesh-Barnea had to do with the Jewish people being unable to enter into the land until *a full forty years* had run its course. *At the end of forty years* they were allowed to enter the land under Joshua, with the theocracy previously established at Sinai then being established in the land (a theocracy existed in the camp of Israel from the time that the Glory filled the Holy of Holies of the tabernacle at Sinai to that time when the Glory departed from the Holy of Holies of the temple almost two decades after the beginning of the Babylonian captivity — about eight and one-half centuries [*cf.* Ex. 40:34; Joshua 3:13, 17; 4:18; Ezek.

10:4, 18; 11:22, 23; 43:2-5]).

And Christ healing the man at the pool of Bethesda in John 5:1-9 (representing all in need of healing on the five porches at the pool) foreshadowed that which the Israelites under Joshua, over fourteen centuries earlier, had also foreshadowed.

Both foreshadowed *the Israelites ultimately being healed and being able to enter the land under Jesus* ("Joshua" and "Jesus" are the same name, Hebrew and Greek), with the theocracy to be restored to Israel at that future time when the Jewish people have been reestablished in the land.

And this will not *ONLY* occur after the complete period of time set forth by the full forty years but it will *ALSO* occur during that time, as seen in the sign, on the Sabbath day, the seventh day, the seventh 1,000-year period introduced in the septenary arrangement of time in Gen. 1:1-2:3.

> (Note also that the first man healed in the Book of Acts, as *a continuing sign for the nation of Israel,* had been "lame from his mother's womb" and he was "*above forty years old*" at the time this miraculous healing occurred [Acts 3:2; 4:22].)

2) The Sabbath

The Sabbath, introduced in Scripture in Gen. 2:1-3, forms the closing day of the septenary structure of days with which God chose to open His Word. The Sabbath later formed the fifth and longest of the ten commandments given to Israel under Moses (Ex. 20:8-11). The Sabbath was then later stated to be "*a sign* between me [God] and the children of Israel forever" (Ex. 31:13-17).

The Israelites were to work for six days and then rest the seventh, EXACTLY as God was doing and would yet do at a future time, based on the PATTERN set forth in the opening section of Genesis.

God, since Adam's day, extending into present time, has been/is working six days (6,000 years) in a subsequent restoration of a ruined creation to that seen in the first chapter of Genesis (that of restoring ruined man).

And God, in exact accord with the established pattern will rest a day (1,000 years) at the conclusion of His work.

And the Sabbath given to Israel, following six days of work, reflects back on that seen in the opening two chapters of Genesis.

Reference is made back to this section of Genesis in both *the fourth commandment* in Exodus chapter twenty and *the sign of the Sabbath* in Exodus chapter thirty-one.

Then note in Hebrews 4:9 that "a rest [Gk., *Sabbatismos,* 'Sabbath rest']" awaits the people of God, and reference is once again made back to the opening two chapters of Genesis (vv. 3, 4).

Thus, the third sign in John's gospel was performed on a day which itself formed *a sign.* The Sabbath was given to Israel as *a sign,* to keep the thought ever before the nation, *that God was going to work six more days (6,000 years) in man's restoration, which would include healing for the nation, and then rest a seventh day (a subsequent seventh 1,000-year period).*

And this would occur in complete accordance with *the previously established pattern in Gen. 1:1-2:3* (referring to the restoration of the ruined material creation — ruined because of sin).

And, as well, of necessity, this would occur in complete accordance with *the same pattern seen in the opening two chapters of John's gospel* (referring more particularly to the restoration of ruined man in John's gospel — also ruined because of sin).

(The manner in which God is seen restoring ruined man in John's gospel *MUST follow the pattern, in EXACT detail, previously set forth in the opening thirty-four verses of Genesis* [1:1-2:3]. *God established the pattern concerning how He restores a ruined creation perfect at the beginning, along with the purpose for this restoration, and NO change can ever occur.*

Thus, if a person wants *to properly understand the complete, overall salvation message [the restoration of a subsequent ruined creation, ruined man], along with why God has provided salvation for fallen man* — beginning with the salvation which we presently possess and continuing with present and future aspects of salvation — there is no getting around one thing:

He MUST begin where God began [Gen. 1], *view matters after the manner in which God has set them forth in His Word [highly typical, a numerical structure, etc.], and proceed from there.*

The preceding is *the ONLY possible way* that a person can lay a proper Biblical foundation to build upon as he deals with subsequent Scripture on the subject.)

13

Feeding the Multitude

Fourth Sign

Provision on the Third, Seventh Day

"After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias.

And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles ['signs'] which he did on them that were diseased.

And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

And the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?

And he said this to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.

…Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes…

And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

When they were filled, he saith unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

Then those men, when they had seen the miracle ['sign'] that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world" (John 6:1-6, 8b, 9a, 11-14).

The first three signs in John's gospel are peculiar to his gospel. The fourth and fifth signs though are not. Events surrounding the fourth sign (6:1-14) are found in all of the other three gospels (Matt. 14:13-21; Mark 6:32-44; Luke 9:10-17), and events surrounding the fifth sign are found in both Matthew and Mark (Matt. 14:22-36; Mark 6:45-56).

Then the sixth and seventh signs are peculiar to John's gospel; and the eighth sign, the resurrection of Christ, as the fourth sign, is found in all four gospels.

The fourth sign in John's gospel has to do with *supernatural provision* rather than supernatural healing, as seen in the second and third signs. The fourth sign *foreshadows that which Israel will experience at God's hand once supernatural healing has occurred.*

A healed nation will be restored to a healed land; and, once in the land, the same God Who will have previously both healed the nation and the land *will then provide for the nation in the land.*

All will occur through supernatural intervention, at the time which God has determined and revealed in His Word.

Because of the signs being performed in Israel's presence — pointing to different facets of that which could have occurred relative to the nation at that time (and one day will occur) — *a multitude of people began to follow Christ as He traveled about the country* (John 6:2; *cf.* Matt. 4:23-25).

And the multitude following Christ in this manner resulted in Israel's religious leaders doing the same, *but for a different reason entirely.* Israel's religious leaders (centrally the Pharisees and Sadducees), as they followed Christ with the multitude, *directed their efforts toward discrediting the Messenger and His message in the eyes of the people.*

Those forming the multitude were Jews who looked to their r*eligious leaders* regarding spiritual matters. They looked to *the Scribes* and *Pharisees* as the keepers and teachers of the Law; and they looked to *the Sadducees* concerning things pertaining to the temple worship (for the priests were mainly followers of this sect).

In this respect, it would have only been natural for these religious leaders to appear among those forming the multitude, observe what was happening, and, if necessary, provide instruction for the people concerning the matter at hand.

But this was not at all the course of action followed by these religious leaders as they appeared among the multitude.

Rather, they acted in *a completely opposite manner.* They, instead, sought *to counter everything Christ was doing and saying;* they sought *to bring reproach upon both the Messenger and His message;* and, through this means, they sought *to bring about rejection and unbelief rather than acceptance and belief on the part of the people.*

Note Jesus' statement and sharp rebuke when the Pharisees approached His disciples early in His ministry, questioning His actions after a manner in keeping with the preceding:

> "But when Jesus heard that [the Pharisees questioning His disciples about His actions], he said unto them [the Pharisees], They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.
>
> But go ye and learn what that meaneth…" (Matt. 9:12, 13a).

The allusion was to *Israel's sickness*, the message being proclaimed, the signs being performed, and the fact that the One Who could bring about Israel's healing — actually, *the ONLY One Who could do so* (*cf.* Hosea 5:13-6:2) — was present, in Israel's midst.

This was Christ's way of *capsulating the whole of the matter, along with telling the Pharisees EXACTLY what they needed to do rather than continuing with that which they had been doing.*

The Pharisees, rather than following Christ about the country in a disbelieving manner, were told to do something completely different. In essence, they were told *to take their own Scriptures, go aside, study the matter out, and come to an understanding of the truth pertaining to that which was occurring in their midst.*

THEN, they would be in a position to follow Christ about the country with the multitude and fulfill their calling in a proper manner.

But, Christ's admonition went *unheeded.* The Pharisees, throughout the course of Christ's ministry, continued to follow Him about the country in *the same unchanging manner.* And those forming the multitude following Christ, over time, began to be swayed in a negative manner by their religious leaders.

Note the work of the Pharisees in this respect and the resulting attitude of the people toward Christ in Matthew chapter twelve.

The Pharisees had raised questions concerning that which Christ and His disciples were doing on the Sabbath, and when Christ performed a sign on the Sabbath (healed a man on the Sabbath, pointing to Israel's future healing on the Sabbath, at the beginning of the seventh millennium), the Pharisees held "a council against him, how they might destroy him" (vv. 1-14).

Then, when Jesus performed other signs (other healings), climaxed by healing a man possessed with a demon who was both blind and deaf (vv. 15-22), the record reads:

> "And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David [*lit.*, 'Possibly this is the Son of David, but we really don't think so' (*ref.*, Chapter XI of this book, pp. 126, 127)]?"

This question by "all the people," leaning more toward the negative than the positive (shown through the use of the Greek particle *meti*), undoubtedly resulted *from the previous actions of Israel's religious leaders, particularly the Pharisees.* And the end result can be seen in:

> *A fruitless nation* (Matt. 21:18, 19).
> *Rejection rather than acceptance* (Matt. 21:42).
> *The kingdom taken from Israel* (Matt. 21:43).
> *Christ's stinging rebuke of the Scribes and Pharisees because of that resulting from their actions* (Matt. 23:1ff).
> *The crucifixion of Israel's King* (Matt. 27:35ff).

This negative work of Israel's religious leaders is seen in John's gospel in connection with the third sign (5:10-18), the sixth sign (9:14-34), the seventh sign (11:47-53, and the eighth sign (19:5-15; *cf.* Matt. 27:62-66). And, though this may have been the case in connection with the other signs as well, the record is silent concerning the matter. Rather, revelation centers on the signs themselves, providing the reaction of the different people involved, apart from any record of opposition from the Scribes and Pharisees.

> (Actually, the actions of the religious leaders, misleading the people, is not something which occurred just at this particular time in

Israel's history. Rather, this is something which had been occurring over centuries of time. And, with the people to whom Christ came not having previously been properly taught by their religious leaders, they were left in *a very vulnerable position.* The people were left in a position where they could easily be misled by the very ones who should have, but hadn't, properly taught them, *which is EXACTLY what occurred.*

And *an EXACT parallel* can be seen in Christendom today. The leaven permeating the three measures of meal [Matt. 13:33], over centuries of time, *has resulted in EXACTLY the same present condition in Christendom as that seen in Israel 2,000 years ago.*

When someone comes along proclaiming the truth concerning the Word of the Kingdom today, Christians generally have little to no understanding of that being proclaimed. And the reason is *the same* as that previously seen in Israel. The people, over decades, extending into centuries, *have NOT received proper instruction from their religious leaders,* with the end result being *the SAME* as that seen in Israel.

The people have been left in *a very vulnerable position.* And in this position *they can easily be misled by the very same religious leaders responsible for teaching them — those who have forsaken their high calling, failing to properly teach the people.*

Thus, that seen in Christendom today is nothing new. It happened in Israel preceding and at the time of Christ's first coming, and it has happened and continues to happen in Christendom during past time and the time immediately preceding Christ's return [*cf.* Acts 20:28-32; Eph. 4:11-14; II Tim. 4:1-8; I Peter 5:1-4].)

A Mountain, The Passover

One part of the backdrop for events surrounding the fourth sign in John's gospel has to do with *Jesus taking His disciples aside and going up into a mountain.* The other part of the backdrop has to do with *the subsequent mention of the Passover being at hand.*

1) A Mountain

"A mountain" in Scripture signifies *a kingdom* (*cf.* Ps. 2:6; Isa. 2:2-5; Ezek. 28:16; Dan. 2:35, 44, 45; Matt. 16:28-17:5). And this is something seen and established very early in Scripture, in the opening chapters of Genesis (note the symbolic use of "mountain"

[Heb., *har*] the first four times that the word is used in Scripture during the Noachian Flood [Gen. 7:19, 20; 8:4, 5]).

The typological teaching surrounding Noah and his family going through the Flood has to do with Israel going through the Tribulation yet future:

> Enoch was removed preceding the Flood, as the Church will be removed preceding the Tribulation.
>
> Noah and his family passed safely through the Flood, as Israel will pass safely through the Tribulation.
>
> Worldwide destruction occurred then, as worldwide destruction will occur during the Tribulation.
>
> There was a new beginning following the Flood, as there will be a new beginning following the Tribulation.

This entire sequence, as it relates to the government of the earth, is seen through the manner in which the Hebrew word *har* ("mountain") appears the first four times in Genesis.

The first appearance, in Gen. 7:19, shows the Flood waters covering "all the high hills [Hebrew pl. form of *har,* 'mountains,' *ref.* NASB], that were under the whole heaven."

The next use of the word shows the same thing — "...and the mountains were covered" (vv. 19, 20). These two verses depict the scene at the end of forty days, showing the depth of the Flood waters in relation to *the mountains* (the highest points on earth).

Then, a scene one hundred ten days later is depicted in Gen. 8:4, where the word is used a third time.

Throughout the first one hundred fifty days of the Flood, water came up from below the earth's surface and fell from above the earth's surface.

> (The Hebrew word used for "rain" during both the first forty days [7:12] and the additional one hundred ten days [8:2] is *geshem,* meaning "torrential rain," contrasted with the more general word for "rain," *matar,* previously used in 7:4 [*cf.* I Kings 18:45, where *geshem* is used].)

At the end of forty days, all the mountains on earth were covered. Then the accumulation of water on the earth's surface

from these two sources continued for another one hundred ten days (without apparent change).

At the end of the entire one hundred fifty days, God *stopped* both the subterranean waters from coming up and the torrential rain from falling. Then, on the same day, God began the process of *restoration;* and, at this time, *the ark, with Noah and his family inside, is seen resting at a place ABOVE the Ararat mountain range* (Gen. 7:24-8:4).

> (The Hebrew word translated "upon" in Gen. 8:4 — "…upon [Heb., *al*] the mountains of Ararat" — can also be understood and translated "above" or "over." For example, this is the same word translated "over" back in v. 1.
>
> The textual or contextual use of the word would determine how it is to be understood. And the context of v. 4 would necessitate that the word be understood and translated "above," not "upon."
>
> For further information concerning the preceding — having to do with *meteorology* and *hydrology*, as both pertain to the Flood — refer to the author's book, *Prophecy on Mount Olivet*, [Revised Edition], Chapter IX, "The Days of Noah.")

The whole scenario, from a typical standpoint, has to do with the destruction of Gentile world power during the Tribulation (a destruction to be completed at Christ's return), with Israel then seen in the same position as Noah and his family at the end of one hundred fifty days — *ABOVE the mountains, ABOVE the destroyed kingdoms.*

Then, just as the mountains were later seen emerging from the Flood waters as the waters subsided (where the Hebrew word *har* is used a fourth time [8:5]), the nations will emerge from the judgments of the Tribulation.

But Israel will RETAIN the position seen in the typology of Gen. 8:4, resting ABOVE the mountains, ABOVE all the kingdoms of the world.

Note Isa. 2:2 in this respect:

> "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it."

2) The Passover

The Passover, also mentioned in connection with the fourth

sign in John's gospel, is the first of seven festivals which God gave to the Israelites during Moses' day (Lev. 23:4ff). These festivals, kept year after year by the Israelites, foreshadowed future events pertaining to Israel which will occur following the Tribulation, beginning with Christ's return and extending into the establishment of the millennial kingdom. In this respect, these seven festivals could be referred to as *the prophetic calendar of Israel.*

The thought of "the kingdom" is first brought to the forefront by the mention of Christ taking His disciples aside and going up into *a mountain.* Then, before anything about the sign is dealt with (having to do with Israel and the kingdom), the nearness of "the Passover" is mentioned.

"The Passover" had to do with *death and shed blood.* It had to do with *the Israelites slaying lambs, with the blood of these lambs being shed, and with the Israelites applying that blood to the door posts and lintel of the houses in which they dwelled, according to God's instructions* (Ex. 12:1ff).

"The Passover" had to do with *substitutionary atonement,* something which first began to be opened up and revealed in Genesis chapter three (v. 21). *Death* had been decreed upon the firstborn in every household; but God provided *a substitute, a lamb from the flock which could die in the stead of the firstborn.*

And the proper application of *the BLOOD of this lamb* on the doorposts and lintel of the house in which the firstborn lived showed that *the firstborn residing in that house had already died. A substitute had died in his stead, something which God recognized* (*cf.* Gen. 22:8-13).

God, through Moses, had told the Israelites:

> "…the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it [the paschal lamb] in the evening.
>
> And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses…
>
> For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt…
>
> And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you…" (Ex. 12:6b, 7a, 12a 13a).

When the Lord passed through the land of Egypt at midnight, He looked for *ONE THING ALONE.* He looked for *the BLOOD of slain lambs on the doorposts and lintel of the houses.*

If the Lord saw *the BLOOD,* He knew that the firstborn had already died in that house. And *the Lord passed over that house,* for He was satisfied.

If there was *NO BLOOD,* there was no indication that the firstborn had died. And *the Lord then slew the firstborn Himself,* for *death* had been decreed upon all the firstborn.

The firstborn MUST die, either via a substitute or apart from a substitute.

"Christ" is *the Passover Lamb,* and Israel has slain this Lamb. But the nation, God's firstborn son, has yet to apply *the BLOOD.*

The Passover, the first of the festivals, points to that future day when Christ returns, the nation looks upon the One Whom they slew, they recognize that which has been done, and they then, *through faith, appropriate the BLOOD* (*cf.* Ex. 11:4, 5; 12:3ff; Isa. 53:4-6; Zech. 12:10-14; 13:6).

The Passover foreshadows Israel's national conversion at the time of Christ's return. *ONLY* after a nation has been born in a day (Isa. 66:8) can those things foreshadowed by the remaining six festivals occur. *ONLY* after the Passover has been fulfilled (and, in reality, the subsequent six festivals as well) can that foreshadowed by the fourth sign in John's gospel occur.

The Loaves and Fish

The fourth sign in John's gospel has to do with a miraculous multiplication of five barley loaves and two small fish which a lad had in his possession. And the multiplication of this small quantity of food was enough to feed both the disciples and the multitude, with *twelve baskets of food* left over after the remaining fragments had been gathered.

Key information necessary for properly understanding the sign, within its contextual setting (as it is introduced through referring to *a mountain* and to *the nearness of the Passover* [vv. 3, 4]), is given later in the chapter when inquiry pertaining to the sign is made

by some comprising the multitude.

Note verses twenty-six and twenty-seven in this respect:

> "Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles ['the signs'], but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.
>
> Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life [contextually, 'age-lasting life'], which the Son of man shall give unto you…"

Then in verses thirty and thirty-one, the people requested another sign, calling attention to the manna provided in a supernatural manner during Moses' day. But Jesus, remaining within the framework of the sign already given and their mention of the manna, drew a parallel between *that bread* (the manna) and *the Bread which had been provided from heaven* (He Himself [vv. 32, 33]).

The former foreshadowed the latter. A partaking of bread to nourish and sustain the physical body foreshadowed a partaking of Bread to nourish and sustain the spiritual man.

The people then said unto Christ, "Lord, evermore give us this bread" (v. 34). Then Jesus said unto them:

> "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst…
>
> For I came down from heaven…
>
> I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever ['for an age']: and the bread that I will give is my flesh…
>
> …Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.
>
> Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life ['age-lasting life']; and I will raise him up at the last day" (vv. 35b, 38a, 51a, 53b, 54).

The previous multiplication of the loaves and fish foreshadowed partaking of Christ Himself, as the provided bread during Moses' day had foreshadowed as well — eating of the Bread of life, eating His flesh, drinking His blood.

But how can this be the case? How can one partake of Christ

Himself in such a manner? The answer is simple, and it was given in the introductory verses of John's gospel:

> "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us…" (John 1:14a; *cf.* vv. 1, 2).

The Old Testament Scriptures — which, in their entirety, are about the person and work of Christ, revealing the Son — became flesh (*cf.* Luke 24:25-27, 39-44).

The written Word, which is *alive* (Heb. 4:12), became flesh, in the person of the Son, *the living Word.* And the Two are *so inseparably related — two manifestations of the same thing — that partaking of One is synonymous with partaking of the Other.*

Thus, one eats of the Bread of life, partakes of Christ's flesh and blood, *by partaking of the written Word.* And Christians *MUST* partake of Christ today, in this manner, if they are to have a part with Him in His kingdom (*ref.* Chapter IV in this book, "The Word Made Flesh").

Again:

> "…Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man [a Messianic title], and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53b).

But *the sign* itself has to do with *Israel. The sign* has to do with *the nation through whom the written Word was given and to whom the living Word came, the nation which will be in possession of Both during the Messianic Era.*

There will be *an abundant supply for the nation in that day, above and beyond their every need.* The twelve baskets of food remaining in the sign ("twelve," the number of *governmental perfection*) *not only foreshadows this abundant supply, but these twelve full baskets also foreshadow Israel placed at the head of the nations, in the position of the one through whom an abundant supply will flow out to the Gentile nations.*

The One upon Whose shoulders the government will rest (Isa. 9:6, 7) will be *in Israel's midst, on David's throne* (Joel 2:27; Luke 1:31-33); and *the government of the earth, with this abundant supply, will flow from David's throne through the twelve tribes of Israel out to the nations of the earth.*

14

Deliverance During a Storm

Fifth Sign

Deliverance on the Third, Seventh Day

"When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

And when even was now come, his disciples went down into the sea.

And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.

And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew.

So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.

But he saith unto them, it is I; be not afraid.

Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went" (John 6:15-21).

The fifth sign in John's gospel, in John 6:15-21, has to do with:

Christ's departure into a mountain (v. 15).

The disciples, in a boat out on the sea (vv. 16, 17a).

Nighttime, when a great storm arose on the sea (vv. 17b, 18).

Christ walking toward the disciples on the sea (vv. 19, 20).

The disciples receiving Him into the boat with them (v. 21a).

The disciples then immediately finding themselves "at the land whether they went" (v. 21b).

These events foreshadow:

Christ's departure from Israel into the heavens two thousand years ago (v. 15).

Israel scattered among the nations, supernaturally protected (vv. 16, 17a).

The coming Tribulation at the end of the dispensation (vv. 17b, 18).

Christ's return (vv. 19, 20).

The nation receiving Him (v. 21a).

The nation's subsequent restoration to the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (v. 21b).

This is the only sign not providing a specific reference to particular days, but the chronology in this sign must be understood in the light of the other seven signs and the remainder of Scripture.

In the Mountain, Alone

This sign, as the previous sign, has to do with Christ departing into "a mountain," which signifies *a kingdom* (*cf.* Ps. 2:6; Isa. 2:2-5; Ezek. 28:16; Dan. 2:35, 44, 45; Matt. 16:28-17:5).

Christ departed into a mountain on this occasion because He perceived that the crowd following Him was about to, through force, attempt to make Him a King.

The signs being exhibited had to do with *Israel and the kingdom,* they were being performed by *the King of the kingdom Himself,* and they showed *that which Israel COULD have IF the nation would repent.*

The people apparently understood the nature of the signs and the identity of the One in their midst performing the signs. But, *WITHOUT repentance on the part of the people, matters relative to the King, Israel, and the kingdom could NOT progress beyond the signs.*

Thus, when the people were about to bypass repentance and attempt to forcefully make Christ a King — seeking to, themselves, bring in the kingdom through a means other than that ordained by God — Christ is seen moving aside into *a mountain, alone.*

The kingdom was still in view. *The kingdom* could be seen through the signs being performed, God's dealings with the Jewish people,

and the mountain into which Christ had moved. Nothing really changed in this respect, but Christ's actions at this point spoke volumes about something which occurred in Israel almost 2,000 years ago as well as something quite similar which is also occurring throughout a large segment of Christendom today.

Many Israelites at Christ's first coming sought to bypass God's ordained and revealed way in which the kingdom was to be established, and many Christians today are doing something very similar, immediately preceding Christ's return.

And, relative to the whole of the matter, Christ can be seen in *EXACTLY the same position* both times.

In time past, Christ separated Himself from that which was occurring among the people; and, during the present time, with something very similar having made its appearance in Christendom, Christ's position relative to the matter *could only be EXACTLY the same — separation from that which is occurring.*

Whether past or present, Christ's position relative to anything contrary to the revealed Word *would, of necessity, have to be THE SAME. God simply will NOT countenance that which is contrary to His revealed Word.*

(That seen as something quite similar in Christendom today is often referred to as "Dominion Theology." This name though is a misnomer. "Dominion Theology," as it is called, is not a theology at all. Rather, it is *a false ideology*, appearing in a number of forms, which basically, in any of its forms, teaches that the Church is to exercise dominion [in some form or fashion] relative to the kingdom during the present day and time [thus, the name, "Dominion Theology"]. And the Church is to accomplish this ideology through gradually bringing the world kingdoms under the dominion of Christ and His kingdom, making conditions ready for Christ to one day return and take the kingdom.

In this respect, the whole of this type ideology occurring in Christendom today is little more than another form of that which occurred in Israel during the first century. It is seeking, through certain actions of man, to bring Christ's kingship to pass by having a part in gradually effecting the manifestation of God's kingdom on earth.

This though is not the way matters are set forth in Scripture at all. In fact, Scripture presents the matter in *exactly an opposite respect.* Politi-

cal activity for Christians is always set forth in Scripture as being in the heavens and future [after the kingdom of Christ has been established], not here on earth during the present time [when the present ruler, Satan, still exercises power in the kingdom].

And, beyond that, it would be *impossible* for Christians to gradually usher in the kingdom of Christ during the present day and time, for *the kingdom of Christ, in ANY form or fashion, does NOT presently exist on the earth. Rather, the kingdom of Christ, relative to ANY manifestation on earth, is FUTURE in its entirety.*

And this kingdom is to be ushered in through one means at one time alone — *suddenly and swiftly by Christ Himself at the time of His return*, when the Stone strikes that represented by the great image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, at its feet [*the utter destruction of the final form of Gentile world power* (Dan. 2:31-45)].

Christians may seek to exercise dominion today, and they may seek to bring segments of the existing world kingdom of Satan under the dominion which they vainly attempt to exercise, but, if so, they are acting *completely contrary* to that which God has revealed in His Word.

And no matter how seemingly good, benevolent, or righteous something of this nature may outwardly appear to be, *God can have NOTHING to do with it.* Seeking to do something of this nature is acting contrary to God's revealed Word, and *God will NOT act in a reciprocal manner [blessing the work, etc.] in a realm contrary to that which He has revealed* [*cf.* Matt. 7:21-23].

Because of existing problems in Christendom of the preceding nature, the importance of *knowing the Word of God* cannot be overemphasized. The very reason that people can be so easily misled in matters of this nature is because of the widespread ignorance among Christians concerning that which the Word teaches.

The Word ALONE is the vehicle through which God has made known His plans and purposes to man. And man can only act in *two realms* in this respect:

> *1) He can act in accordance with the revealed Word, allowing the Spirit to direct his paths.*
>
> *2) He can act apart from the revealed Word, which can only separate him from any possible action of the Spirit directing his paths.*

And there, of course, is *NO middle ground. It is either one or the other* [Matt. 12:30; Luke 11:23].)

In the Evening, Darkness, on the Sea

While Christ was *in the mountain, alone, the disciples entered into a boat and ultimately found themselves out on a tumultuous sea.*

The disciples, in a boat, on the sea, found themselves *in the evening part of the day; then, when it had become dark, the sea became tumultous, with Christ still absent.*

Within the symbolism seen in the sign, the darkened evening part of the day places the timing of events about to transpire *near the end of the dispensation,* with the Israelites separated from the One Who said, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12).

And the dispensation in view is not the present dispensation but the preceding dispensation, which has seven years yet to transpire — the dispensation in which God has dealt and will yet deal with Israel. Events surrounding this sign have to do with *Israel during and immediately following these final seven years, during and immediately following the Tribulation.*

> (The present dispensation will end with the removal of the Church, comprised of all Christians, both the dead and the living [I Thess. 4:13-18].
>
> Then God will turn back to Israel and complete His dispensational dealings with the Jewish people during Man's Day, which will occur through the fulfillment of seven remaining years in Daniel's Seventy-Week prophecy [Dan. 9:24-27].)

"The sea" in Scripture is used in a dual metaphorical sense, signifying:

a) The place of the dead (Ex. 14:13-31).
b) The Gentile nations (Dan. 7:3ff; Rev. 13:1).

And, with respect to Israel, *BOTH* would apply during *the time* surrounding events in the sign — *the time* foreshadowing events occurring at the end of the dispensation, which would be *the time* foreshadowing events during Daniel's unfulfilled Seventieth Week.

During this time, *the Jewish people are seen not only scattered among the Gentile nations but are viewed as in the place of death while out among the nations.* But, as the disciples in the ship or as Noah

in the ark, the Jewish people in that day will find themselves in a place of safety from the surrounding storm, during a time of darkness (not a place of safety extending to individual Jews, for millions of Jews will be slain during this time, but a place of safety having to do with *the nation as a whole* [Zech. 13:8, 9]).

(Note that Jonah, cast out of the ship into the sea, presents another facet of the same picture concerning God's supernatural protection of and care for Israel. Jonah is seen actually cast into the sea itself, and the giant fish which the Lord had prepared to swallow Jonah then became the means through which Jonah was protected from that depicted by the sea.

And though Jonah died in the belly of the fish [Jonah 2:2], after two days, on the third day [*cf.* Matt. 12:38-40; Luke 24:7, 21, 46], the Lord supernaturally intervened. After Jonah had *remembered and cried out to the Lord,* he was not only raised from the dead but the Lord caused the fish to vomit Jonah out upon dry ground. Jonah then heeded the Lord's previous command and carried God's message to the Gentiles [Jonah 2:2-3:3].

In that future day, the entire nation of Israel will find itself in *EXACTLY* the same position as the disciples in the ship out on the sea. They will find themselves in *EXACTLY* the same place Jonah found himself once he had been cast into the sea and swallowed by the great fish — in the place of death, scattered among the Gentiles, awaiting resurrection and removal from the nations on the third day.

God has decreed that He will deal with His people in this respect *OUT among the nations, NOT in their land* [Lev. 26:32-46; Deut. 4:27-31; 28:63-68; Ezek. 37:1-14]. He removed His people from their land because of disobedience, placing them out among the nations to effect repentance through Gentile persecution.

And the Jews presently in the land, forming the present Nation of Israel, *CANNOT remain there indefinitely*. They have returned under a Zionistic movement [resulting from man's efforts, not God's] *in unbelief, before repentance. They have returned BEFORE it is time for them to return.*

Thus, they will have to be uprooted and driven back out among the nations, which is *EXACTLY* what will occur in the middle of the Tribulation when Antichrist is allowed to bring this to pass.

Repentance will occur ONLY with the Jewish people [the entire nation] scattered among the Gentiles. The matter is NEVER seen to occur any other way in Scripture.

God will deal with Israel relative to repentance in *the SAME place* that He dealt with Jonah in the type — *IN the sea, NOT in the land* [*IN the sea, NOT on board the ship*]. And resurrection and removal from the sea [from the place of death, from the nations], as in Jonah's case, will *ONLY be when the Jewish people remember the Lord and turn back to Him* [*cf.* II Chron. 7:14; Jonah 2:2-3:3]. *It will ONLY be when repentance occurs, NOT BEFORE* [*cf.* Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Acts 2:37-39; 3:13-21].

The Lord *will HEAR, He will REMEMBER His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and He will SEND the Deliverer* [*cf.* Ex. 2:23-25; 3:2-10].

The nation, at that time, will be removed from the sea [from the place of death, from the nations] and *be raised up to live in God's sight* [Hosea 6:1, 2]. And, as Jonah, *the Jewish people will then HEED God's previous command and CARRY His message to the Gentiles* [*cf.* Isa. 53:1ff; Zech. 8:23].)

1) A Time of Darkness, A Great Wind, A Tumultuous Sea

The coming Tribulation, covering time which fulfills the last seven years of Daniel's Seventy-Week prophecy, is seen in Scripture as *a time of trouble without parallel in human history* — a period "such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." And this period will be of such a nature that "except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved" (Matt. 24:21, 23).

This is how approximately 2,600 years of Gentile world dominance and rule will end on the one hand; and this is also how the continued stubbornness and rebellion on the part of the Jewish people, over an even longer period of time, will end on the other hand.

God will allow the Gentile nations under the final world ruler during Man's Day, under Antichrist, to bring about conditions of this nature. And history during Man's Day will end with this type climax in order to bring the Jewish people to the end of themselves, resulting in repentance, so that God can, in turn, place Israel in the position where the Gentile nations can be blessed through God's restored wife, through His firstborn son.

The whole of the matter surrounding Gentile world dominance and rule, with *the sea* in view, is set forth in the imagery and metaphorical language used in Daniel chapter seven, which depicts conditions from the beginning to the end of the Times of

the Gentiles. In this section of Scripture, "the four winds of the heaven" are seen striving upon "the great sea," with "four great beasts," different from one another, coming "up from the sea."

The picture of "four great beasts" arising from "the great sea," with the winds striving upon the sea throughout (*i.e.,* pointing *to unrest, a tumultuous state, occurring throughout the whole of the Times of the Gentiles*) is another depiction of that which had previously been introduced by means of "a great image" seen standing in Babylon in Daniel chapter two (vv. 31-45). The four parts of the great image in chapter two correspond to the four great beasts in chapter seven.

In chapter two, the final form of the "great image" is seen to incorporate all of the previous three forms. And, because of this nature of the final form of the image — having not only a form of its own but incorporating the previous three forms as well — with *the destruction of the final form, there is a destruction of the complete image* (vv. 44, 45).

This type destruction is also repeated in chapter seven, where the "four great beasts" are seen rising up out of *a tumultuous great sea.* After the complete sequence is given concerning the four great beasts, exactly as previously seen in chapter two after the complete sequence concerning the four parts of the great image had been given, *the destruction of the whole is seen in the destruction of the final form.*

After dealing with the fourth great beast, verse twelve references "the rest of the beasts [the previous three]," stating that though their dominion had been taken away (*i.e.,* though God had removed them from their respective regal positions of power and authority, establishing others in their places [*cf.* Dan. 4:17, 25, 32; 5:18-21]), "their lives were prolonged for a season and time."

The first three succeeding empires, represented by that seen in the first three parts of the great image (ch. 2) or the first three great beasts (ch. 7), though destroyed millenniums ago during the first several hundred years of the Times of the Gentiles, did not pass out of existence. Rather, they remained in existence, awaiting *a final and complete destruction* when the fourth part of the great image or the fourth great beast — one synonymous with the other — arises

to power. Then, *the WHOLE of Gentile world power, as it has existed for slightly over 2,600 years, will be completely destroyed, NEVER to rise again* (Dan. 2:35; 7:26; 8:25; 11:45; Rev. 19:11ff).

Revelation chapter thirteen presents the same sequence pertaining to the fourth part of the great image or the fourth great beast, forming commentary on the Book of Daniel. "A beast" is seen rising "up out of the sea" in Rev. 13:1. Then, as seen in the next verse, this final form of Gentile world power will possess an inseparable relationship with the whole of Gentile world power, extending all the way back to the days of Nebuchadnezzar. The Beast in Rev. 13:1, synonymous with the "fourth beast" in Dan. 7:3-7, is seen to possess descriptive qualities of all the preceding three "beasts" — *a leopard, a bear, and a lion* (*cf.* Dan. 2:31-45; 7:1-14; Rev. 13:2).

And, as seen in both Daniel chapters two and seven, and in this chapter in the Book of Revelation, this final appearance of Gentile world power — incorporating the whole of that seen in all four parts of the image in Daniel chapter two and/or the four great beasts in Daniel chapter seven — *will occur yet future during EXACTLY the same time depicted by events in the fifth sign in John's gospel.*

The darkness of the evening, a great wind blowing upon the sea, and the disciples in immediate danger because of that which was occurring are all seen in the sign, with the latter also seen in the Books of Daniel and Revelation as well (*cf.* Dan. 3:19ff; Rev. 13:11-18; 17:16, 17).

All these things together are necessary as one begins to form a word picture, as depicted different places in both Testaments. God gave the complete picture through different individuals, using different means, at different times. And Christians reading and studying the matter today can be certain of two things in the preceding respect:

a) God has given everything necessary to see and understand the complete picture.

b) There is nothing superfluous in that which God has revealed.

EVERYTHING which God wants man to know regarding His plans and purposes is in His revealed Word. And EVERYTHING in this Word exists for a divinely designed and revealed purpose.

2) Then, Deliverance

Deliverance in the sign occurred when the disciples were alone, in a boat, out on a tumultuous sea. It was then that they saw Jesus "walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship." The disciples, seeing Jesus, "were afraid." Then, making the disciples aware of His identity, Jesus said, "…be not afraid." And following this, the disciples "willingly received him into the ship" (*cf.* Gen. 45:1ff).

This fifth sign in John's gospel foreshadows conditions and events *EXACTLY as they will exist and occur yet future.*

Israel will be alone, OUT ON the tumultuous sea.

That is, the nation will be separated from their Deliverer and scattered among the Gentile nations at a time when the tumultuous state among the Gentile nations reaches an apex. And this, as seen elsewhere in Scripture, will occur immediately before Gentile world power is utterly and completely destroyed.

It will be at such a time, *AFTER Israel has cried out to the Lord for deliverance*, that Jesus will appear the second time to the nation. God will have used Gentile dominance and rule, extending over 2,600 years of time, with matters being brought to an apex at the end of this period, *for one central purpose:*

> *To bring about repentance on the part of the Jewish people, in order that God's plans and purposes for His people, which include the Gentile nations, can be realized.*

It will be at such a time that *deliverance* will occur, for reasons which God has clearly revealed in His Word.

Note the sequence of this deliverance as seen in the type in the Book of Exodus:

> a) The Israelites were residing in a Gentile land under Gentile persecution at the time Moses was born. And Moses, growing to manhood, was rejected the first time he appeared to Israel as their deliverer.

Moses is then seen leaving Egypt, dwelling in another land, and taking a Gentile bride during the time of his rejection.

b) The day came though when the Israelites found themselves in such dire straits that they were left without a choice other than to call upon the God of their fathers for deliverance.

When the Israelites did this, God heard, remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and sent Moses back to deliver them (Ex. 2:23-3:12).

c) Moses returned, and this time he was received rather than rejected by the people.

Deliverance of the Israelites and the destruction of Gentile world power then followed (Ex. 5-14).

Note the same sequence of events which are about to occur in the antitype:

a) When Israel's Deliverer appeared the first time to the nation, He was rejected.

He then departed into another country. And while in this other country, during the present dispensation, He is taking a Gentile bride, as in the type.

b) The day is coming though, also as in the type, when the Israelites will find themselves in such dire straits that they will be left without a choice other than to call upon the God of their fathers for deliverance.

And when the Israelites do this, as in the type, God will hear, remember His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and send Jesus back to deliver them.

c) Jesus will return, and He will be received, not rejected, by the Israelites (as Moses was received, not rejected, the second time).

Deliverance of the Israelites and the destruction of Gentile power will then follow, as in the type.

(The type has been set, and the antitype *MUST* follow the type in exact detail. God established both the type and the antitype, and *perfection MUST be seen throughout all correspondence between the two.*)

Then, Immediately at the Land

And all the preceding will be with a view to that which can be seen occurring in the sign *AFTER* the disciples had received Jesus into the boat (*cf.* Ex. 15:1-19; Num. 13, 14; Joshua 1ff).

The text reads:

> "…and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went" (v. 21b).

AFTER the disciples had received Christ into the boat, they not only found themselves delivered and removed from the tumultuous sea but they also found themselves in the land of their calling, the land of Israel.

And their Messiah, Who had brought these conditions to pass, was present in their midst.

Exactly as seen in the sign, *AFTER* the Israelites have received Christ, they will be removed from the Gentile nations (be removed from the sea) and be placed in the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, within a theocracy, as the restored wife of Jehovah and as God's firstborn son.

And their Messiah, Who will have brought these conditions to pass, will be present in the nation's midst (Deut. 30:1-3; Joel 2:27-32; Matt. 24:29-31).

In that day the Jewish people will realize their calling as God's witnesses to the Gentile nations (Isa. 43:1-10). They will, in that day, go forth with the message of Isaiah chapter fifty-three:

> "Who hath believed our report?…"

And occupying the position of God's firstborn son among the nations, Israel will possess the rights of primogeniture, with the nations ruled by and blessed through Israel.

In that day, completely different from today:

> "…ten men shall take hold out of all the languages of the nations ['ten,' *the number of ordinal completion,* textually pointing to *all among the nations*], even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you" (Zech. 8:23; *cf.* v. 13).

15

A Blind Man Healed

Sixth Sign

Sight Restored on the Third, Seventh Day

"And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.

And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

And he said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

The neighbors therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.

Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

> Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.
>
> They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.
>
> And it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.
>
> Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see" (John 9:1-15).

The last three signs in John's gospel — the healing of the man born blind (ch. 9), the resurrection of Lazarus (ch. 11), and the resurrection of Christ (ch. 20) — include quite a bit of detail in both the text and the context concerning different things pertaining to the signs.

In each instance, entire chapters are given over to the matter, though the actual signs are seen in smaller segments of the chapters.

In each chapter (chs. 9, 11, 20), *the negative, antagonistic attitude of the Jewish religious leaders toward the message being proclaimed through the miraculous, supernatural signs is seen.*

And this type attitude of Israel's religious leaders *can be seen at the BEGINNING, with John the Baptist's ministry* (proclaiming the message apart from signs), preceding Christ's ministry. And it can be seen *CONTINUING with the subsequent manifestation of signs accompanying the message* (Matt. 3:7ff; 4:17ff).

The nation's religious leaders had positioned themselves among those forming the crowds following John.

Then, when Jesus took up the message, *EXACTLY the same thing was seen* (Matt. 4:17, 25; 8:1; 9:11-13; 12:14, 24ff).

And by the time in Christ's ministry when He had performed the sixth sign recorded in John's gospel (a sign appearing only in John's gospel, performed during the mid to latter part of His ministry), *this negative, antagonistic attitude of Israel's religious leaders could be seen on every hand* (John 7:30-32, 45-53; 8:13-19, 39-59).

Matters had become so BAD by this time that:

> "*…the Jews [which would be those forming the Sanhedrin] had agreed already,* that if any man did confess that he [Jesus] was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue" (John 9:22b).

And such an individual, put out of the Synagogue, would no longer have a right to the worship and privileges associated with the commonwealth of Israel.

Then, the following sign, the seventh sign, the resurrection of Lazarus (also recorded only in John's gospel), was manifested very near the end of Christ's earthly ministry.

And events forming this sign occurred at a time when *the cup of iniquity* surrounding *the negative, antagonistic attitude* of Israel's religious leaders — gradually having adversely affected the entire nation — *was ALMOST full* (*cf.* Gen. 15:16). At this point, not only did Israel's religious leaders seek to kill Jesus for raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11:49-53) but they even sought to slay the very one who had been raised from the dead. They sought to see that Lazarus was again removed from the land of the living (John 12:9-11).

(These religious leaders, mainly the Scribes and the Pharisees, the keepers and legalistic teachers of the Law [the written Word], *believed and sought to follow this Word to the letter. But this Word becoming flesh in the person of God's Son was an entirely different matter.*

The Scribes and Pharisees' attitude toward the Word manifested in flesh was *EXACTLY the opposite of their attitude toward the Word in written form.* And because of the influence of the Scribes and Pharisees — forming the largest of the religious sects in Israel — their negative attitude toward the Word manifested in flesh was passed on to the nation at large.

In the preceding respect, *it would be IMPOSSIBLE for finite man to manifest greater contradictory actions than those seen exhibited by the Scribes and Pharisees 2,000 years ago when Christ was on earth in Israel's midst.*

The Scribes and Pharisees were the keepers and teachers of the Word on the one hand, and they were chief among those seeking to do away with, to destroy, the Word on the other hand.

And this same attitude toward the Word in both forms has continued prevalent among both Israel's religious leaders and the Jewish people in general down through the years, extending into modern times.

It is very common today for orthodox Jews to read the written Word from their Hebrew Scriptures, then KISS the Word with their lips when finished.

BUT, it is also very common for them to look upon the Word made flesh in an ENTIRELY different manner. Many would still SPIT in the face of the Word manifested in this form if they could [Matt. 26:67].

BUT, all of this is about to change.

When Israel's Messiah returns and the Jewish people look upon the One Whom they pierced, *a great mourning* will be heard throughout the land [Zech. 12:10-14]. The Jewish people, as Joseph's brethren when Joseph revealed himself to them, *will be quite troubled when they find themselves confronted by the Word which became flesh, not knowing what to expect.*

BUT, EXACTLY as in the signs in John's gospel, or anyplace else in Scripture when dealing with events of that future day, a long-awaited healing will THEN occur for the nation.)

Then the eighth sign, Christ's resurrection, occurred following His earthly ministry to the nation after both the religious leaders and the leaven-infected nation as a whole *had FILLED their cup of iniquity to the brim* (*cf.* Matt. 16:6-12).

At this time *the Jewish people went BEYOND anything heretofore seen.* They not only called for Jesus death, rejecting their true King — God manifested in the flesh — but they pledged their allegiance to a pagan Gentile ruler.

THIS is where the actions of mainly the Scribes and Pharisees ultimately led the people:

"And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he [Pilate] saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, *We have no king but Caesar*" (John 19:14, 15; *cf.* Matt. 23:1ff).

Israel, at this point, reached *an APEX in rebellion and disobedience, one without precedent in the history of the nation and one which would not be equalled or surpassed until events of the coming Tribulation*, until events of Daniel's unfulfilled Seventieth Week.

At that future time, "many" in Israel will make *a covenant* with the Gentile world ruler of that day, which Scripture calls a "covenant with death" and an "agreement with hell [Heb., *Sheol,* the place of the dead]" (*cf.* Isa. 28:15, 18; Dan. 9:27; Rev. 17, 18).

Though the sixth sign itself centers around the future of Israel (as the other seven signs), the entire history of Israel — past, present, and future — is given in this sign.

As the man was born blind, so it was with Israel. And this is some-

thing quite evident in Israel's history and present condition. And the future for Israel is seen in the man being healed, with attendant results.

Central thoughts in the sign in the preceding respect have to do with:

1) Blindness from birth.

2) Sight ultimately given by Christ through the person washing clay from his eyes in the pool of Siloam.

3) A witness concerning Messiah and that which had been done following the blind person receiving sight.

4) The healing and subsequent testimony occurring on the Sabbath.

Blind from Birth

At the time God formed *a separate creation from Adam, through Jacob, the central reason was given for the creation of this new entity (Israel). And a main purpose within this central reason was also given.*

Note Isa. 43:1, 7, 10:

> "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine…
>
> Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him…
>
> Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me."

"Israel," *a special creation in Jacob, created for God's glory* (vv. 1, 7), *has NEVER gone forth to the Gentile nations in fulfillment of verse ten.*

Israel, in this respect, has been as *Jonah* — not only refusing to fulfill the nation's commission but going in an opposite direction.

In line with that seen in the sixth sign in John's gospel — with respect to that which this sign foreshadows, having to do with that seen in Isa. 43:10 — *Israel had been blind from birth.*

Israel had been *blind* during the two days from Jacob to Christ (or, from Abraham to Christ, carrying matters back two more gen-

erations); and Israel has also been blind during the two days of the present dispensation when God has temporarily suspended His national dealings with Israel and is dealing with *the new creation in Christ* rather than *the old creation in Jacob.*

And this is *EXACTLY in line with the seventh sign*, the resurrection of Lazarus after he had lain in the grave for *four days* (John 11:17) — foreshadowing Israel in the place of death from birth until that future time when the Spirit breathes life into the one who has never really possessed life with respect to that seen in the overall text. *ONLY in that future day*, when Israel receives life and sight, will the nation go forth in fulfillment of Isa. 43:10.

Sight Received

The meaning of the name of *the pool* where the man born blind was told to wash the clay from his eyes, *the pool of Siloam,* is "Sent." The man born blind was told to go to *a pool* which meant "Sent." He was to wash clay from his eyes in this pool, and he was then *to see for the first time in his life relative to that connected with the name of the pool* (vv. 6, 7); and, as a result, the man would go forth with a true message concerning Jesus the Christ (vv. 9-11, 15, 17, 25-27, 30-33).

The same thing is seen from another perspective in Luke chapter twenty-four. Two disciples were walking to Emmaus on *the third day* following the crucifixion, on the day Christ had been raised from the dead (or, on *the seventh day,* counting back to Adam [v. 21]).

And as they walked and "talked together of all the things which had happened," Jesus drew near to them and walked and spoke with them (vv. 13-15).

But they didn't know Him. Their eyes "were holden [their vision was withheld, preventing them from recognizing the One in their midst]" (v. 16). The two disciples were *blind* relative to the identity of the One walking and talking with them.

(Note that their blindness, with respect to that which is in view, didn't begin two days earlier at the time Christ was crucified. Rather,

these two disciples must be viewed as the man in the sixth sign in John's gospel — representing the whole nation, blind from birth in this respect.)

And Jesus revealed Himself to them, providing them with sight, *in EXACTLY the same manner* seen in John chapter nine.

This would have had to be the case, for there is only *ONE means* through which God provides life or anything connected with life in Scripture. Whether it is man passing from death unto life or sustenance for that life once it has been brought into existence (producing sight, growth, etc.), *God always uses ONE means alone.*

Everything is accomplished SOLELY through the living Word and the written Word, which are inseparable, for They are simply two manifestations of the SAME thing.

The written Word, which was God, became flesh in the person of the living Word (John 1:1, 14). *EVERYTHING* in the Old Testament has to do with some facet of the person and work of the Son. And *the WHOLE of this revelation is seen manifested in the living Word.*

(*There is NOTHING in the N.T. that is not in the O.T. The New is simply the Old opened up and further revealed, explained.*

And in that respect, the manifestation of the living Word — the Word becoming flesh in the person of Jesus the Christ — encompasses *the WHOLE of both Testaments. Jesus is a manifestation, in the flesh, of the complete Word, as seen in the whole of Scripture, both the O.T. and the N.T., even though, at the time of the incarnation, the N.T. had yet to be penned* [*ref.* Chapter IV in this book].)

"Water," as seen in the pool of Siloam in John chapter nine, is often used in Scripture in a metaphorical sense, referring to *the Word.* Note Eph. 5:26 in this respect:

"That he might sanctify and cleanse it [*lit.*, 'cleanse her,' the Church (Gk., feminine; *cf.* v. 25)] with the washing of water by the word" (*cf.* John 4:7-14; 7:37, 38).

In the preceding respect, the eyes of the person born blind in John chapter nine were opened *by the living Word through using the written Word.* And that is *EXACTLY* what is found in Luke chapter twenty-four.

The eyes of the two disciples were opened *by the living Word*

through using the written Word. The living Word revealed Himself to them through opening the written Word to their understanding (vv. 25-31).

Then, comparing the two accounts further, after their eyes had been opened, *EXACTLY the same thing* is seen in the account of the two disciples as seen in the account of the man born blind. The two disciples, as the man born blind, then went forth with a true message concerning Jesus (vv. 33-35; *cf.* vv. 46-53).

God's Witness

The accounts in the Book of Jonah, Luke chapter twenty-four, and John chapter nine, depict that which the entire nation will do once Israel's blindness has been lifted. The entire nation will go forth with a true message concerning Jesus the Christ.

And that message, in possibly its most capsulated form in Scripture, is seen in the message which Joseph's brothers went forth proclaiming once their eyes had been opened to Joseph's true identity (Gen. 45:1-4, 21ff]):

> "Ye shall tell…of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen…
>
> …Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt" (Gen. 45:13a, 26a).

The preceding is the type; and with "Joseph" *a type of Christ* and "Egypt" *a type of the world* in Scripture, note how the antitype would read in the message which the descendants of Joseph's brethren are going to proclaim in that coming day:

> "Ye shall tell…of all My [Jesus'] glory throughout the earth, and of all that ye have seen…
>
> …Jesus is yet alive, and He is Governor over the entire earth."

Note Israel's condition and confession in that coming day, after the nation's blindness has been lifted, as recorded in Isaiah chapters fifty-two through fifty-four. All three chapters are Messianic in their scope of fulfillment, which is something often overlooked when chapter fifty-three is viewed apart from its contextual setting.

In chapters fifty-two and fifty-four, a restored nation is seen back in the land — one which will know the Lord, one which will possess a right relationship to God as the wife of Jehovah, and one which will go forth with joy and singing, publishing glad tidings (52:6-9; 54:1-5).

And right in the midst of this entire picture, in chapter fifty-three, the Spirit of God, through Isaiah, saw fit to place Israel's confession and message which will be carried to the Gentile nations of the earth *in that coming day, after Israel's blindness has been lifted.*

Note the repeated pronouns throughout Isaiah chapter fifty-three — "we," "our," "us" — which, contextually (chs. 52, 54), can only be a reference to the Jewish people ("my people" [v. 8]) proclaiming the message of this chapter as they go forth to the nations of the earth, fulfilling Isa. 43:10:

> "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?
>
> For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.
>
> He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.
>
> Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did not esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.
>
> But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.
>
> All we like sheep have gone astray: we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.
>
> He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.
>
> He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.
>
> And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he hath done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many: for he shall bear their iniquities.

Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

On the Sabbath, in That Day

The healing of the man born blind in John chapter nine occurred on the Sabbath day, the seventh day. And five of the other eight signs in John's gospel occurred either on the Sabbath or at the conclusion of a series of days which referenced the seventh day, the Sabbath.

This sign being performed on the Sabbath — which had to do with a man's blindness being lifted, pointing to the nation's blindness being lifted — was the central issue in the Pharisees' opposition to that which had occurred (vv. 14-16).

This was also something seen time after time in Christ's ministry. Signs were performed on the Sabbath, and Israel's religious leaders brought accusations against Christ which had to do with a supposed violation of the Sabbath (*cf.* Matt. 12:10-14; Mark 3:1-6; Luke 13:10-14; John 5:5-18).

And this, in itself, spoke volumes concerning the understanding which Israel's religious leaders possessed pertaining to their own Old Testament Scriptures.

They apparently knew the letter of Scripture, but the exact opposite was true when going beyond the letter into the spiritual nature of Scripture. They were ill-equipped to handle Scripture in this manner.

God had sent prophet after prophet, throughout centuries of time, to His people in order that they might know and understand His plans and purposes for not only Israel but the Gentile nations of the earth as well. But what had Israel done during this time,

when prophet after prophet had appeared? According to Christ's words to the chief priests, elders, and Pharisees, they had:

> "…beat one, and killed another, and stoned another" (Matt. 21:35b; *cf.* v. 36).

Then, the same thing is seen in Christ's subsequent words to the Scribes and Pharisees:

> "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee…" (Matt. 23:37a).

The Jewish people killing and stoning the prophets though was far from the end of the matter:

> "But last of all he [God] sent unto them his Son, saying, They will reverence my Son" (Matt. 21:37).

And things in the camp of Israel were no different when the Son appeared. The Jewish religious leaders *said among themselves:*

> "This is the Heir: come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.
>
> And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him" (Matt. 21:38, 39; *cf.* v. 45).

Israel's religious leaders, over centuries of time, had rejected, mistreated, and slain the prophets sent to them.

Then, when God sent His Son, He was dealt with in an even worse manner, for *they KNEW that He was the Heir of the vineyard. They KNEW that He was the One about Whom the rejected prophets had spoken.*

BUT, though Israel's religious leaders *KNEW* that Christ was the Heir of the vineyard, they, in reality, did *NOT* know their own Scriptures when He appeared (an end result of the prophets having been rejected throughout the nation's history).

Had they known their Scriptures, *they would have understood the signs being manifested — foreshadowing supernatural, Divine healing and provision for the nation — and they would particularly have understood why the signs were being performed on the Sabbath day, or on a seventh day, referencing the Sabbath* (*cf.* I Cor. 2:6-8).

They would have seen and understood the septenary arrangement of Scripture, which dealt with a septenary arrangement of time; they would have seen and understood that Scripture opens in this manner, dealing with the earth's restoration (*establishing an unchangeable pattern concerning how God restores a ruined creation*) which foreshadows man's restoration (Gen. 1:1-2:3).

And they would have seen and understood that the Sabbath was given to Israel, reflecting back on the opening verses of Scripture, in order to keep the thought ever before the nation that God was going to work six days (6,000 years) in man's restoration and rest the seventh day (the seventh and last 1,000-year period within this established septenary structure).

And had they understood these things, when the Heir of the vineyard appeared on the scene performing miraculous healings, on or referencing the Sabbath, they would have understood the significance of the events taking place.

They would have understood that the healing of an individual in this respect pointed to the healing of the entire nation on the Sabbath, the seventh 1,000-year period; they would have understood that this healing of the nation would follow God's work of redemption, occurring throughout six preceding days, occurring throughout six preceding 1,000-year periods; and, when Christ performed healings on the Sabbath day itself, rather than accusing Him of violating the Sabbath, they would have understood that *this was the correct day for Him to perform signs of this nature.*

They would have known that Jesus was dealing with *that which would occur "in that day," on the Sabbath:*

> "And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see…"
>
> "Then [in that day] the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped" (Isa. 29:18a; 35:5).

(For additional, corresponding information on the preceding, refer to "Genesis, John," Chapter V, and "The Sabbath" on pp. 143, 144 of Chapter XII in this book.)

16

The Resurrection of Lazarus

Seventh Sign

As Lazarus, So Israel, on the Third, Seventh Day

"Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

(It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

When Jesus heard that, he saith, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

When he heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

Then after that he saith to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again…

Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already…

Jesus saith unto her [unto Martha], I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die…

Jesus wept…

Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

> Jesus said, Take ye away the stone…
>
> Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.
>
> And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.
>
> And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.
>
> And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:1-7, 17, 25, 26a, 35, 38, 39a, 41-44).

The sixth sign in John's gospel (ch. 9) shows Israel as having been *blind* from birth (vv. 1, 20), *blind* from the time of the inception of the nation. And this *blindness,* contextually, was relative to the message which Israel was called to carry and proclaim to the Gentile nations.

Israel, throughout the nation's 4,000-year history, *has never* gone forth to the Gentiles in this manner. Rather they have always been as Jonah, *disobediently going in an opposite direction relative to the Lord's clear command.*

The seventh sign in John's gospel (ch. 11) shows Israel relative to *the same thing* from another perspective. This sign shows the nation as having been in *the place of death for four days* (vv. 17, 39), pointing to the status of the Jewish people throughout their 4,000-year history relative to God's clear command concerning the message which they were to carry and proclaim to the Gentiles.

As previously seen in the sixth sign in chapter nine, once the blind man had received sight, he then carried a message which spoke volumes. *NOT ONLY did he immediately bear a true message concerning the One Who had healed him, BUT his healing foreshadowed that which the entire nation could experience, IF…*

The entire nation could experience that which this man experienced, in accordance with the message being proclaimed,

IF the nation would repent. And repentance, followed by healing, would then be followed by the entire nation proclaiming *the SAME message* to the Gentile world which this man had proclaimed to the religious leaders in Israel (vv. 17, 25, 27, 30; *cf.* Isa. 53:1ff).

And the seventh sign, the resurrection of Lazarus in chapter eleven, shows *EXACTLY the same thing.* Though there is nothing recorded concerning anything Lazarus may have said following his resurrection, *the sign itself, as the previous sign, spoke volumes concerning the matter at hand.*

This sign foreshadowed *LIFE being given to the entire nation relative to the SAME thing seen in a foreshadowing of SIGHT being given to the nation in the previous sign.* Lazarus being in the place of death for four days foreshadowed Israel being in the place of death for 4,000 years. And Lazarus being raised following four days foreshadowed Israel being raised following 4,000 years.

In John chapter nine, the religious leaders in Israel *cast out* the man whose sight had been restored.

In the Greek text there is a double use of "without," or "on the outside." The thought brought over into English would be, "They cast him out [out from the place where they resided], into a place on the outside [separate from the place where they resided]," with the text placing an emphasis on the latter — *the place OUTSIDE.*

> (In a respect, this would be similar to the expression, "the outer darkness" in Matt. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30. The structure of the Greek text, in all three instances in Matthew's gospel, literally reads, "the darkness, the outer," with the emphasis placed on the thought of "outer." Then, with the repetition of the article before "outer," the reference is *NOT* to just any darkness but to *a particular darkness OUTSIDE of a realm of light.*
>
> And the thought is somewhat the same with the double use of "without," or "on the outside" in John 9:34. It was *NOT* just any place into which the man was cast, but *a place OUTSIDE of where the religious leaders resided* [*OUTSIDE of any affiliation with the religious life of Israel — OUTSIDE of the synagogue, etc.*].)

And, following Lazarus' resurrection, the religious leaders in Israel sought not only to slay the One Who had raised Lazarus (11:53) but they even sought to slay Lazarus himself (12:10).

And the reason is given:

> "Because that by reason of him [*Lazarus, raised from the dead, as a sign,* with *the results of this sign* being witnessed by many in Israel] many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus" (12:11).

This sign, as the previous sign, was *a testimony in itself.* And *many Jews believed because of that manifested through the sign,* with the religious leaders in Israel wanting to put a stop to and do away with the whole of the matter.

The introduction to the sign though, unlike the previous sign, doesn't begin with the time of Israel's birth four days, 4,000 years ago. Rather, that seen in the introductory verses to the sign (vv. 1-7) begins at a time foreshadowed by the sign itself — a time, which today, would be both past and future, having to do with the present 2,000-year dispensation.

Thus, the introduction to the sign begins with *a two-day period,* which has to do with *the latter two days of the full four days.* It begins with a period foreshadowing *the present two days*, which, again, is the present 2,000-year period, the present dispensation.

This 2,000-year period was still in the future at the time that the sign was performed, and it was in the early stages of being fulfilled at the time John later wrote his gospel and recorded this sign.

The sign itself though has to do with events pertaining to Israel following this 2,000-year period, at the time of Christ's return at the end of Man's Day. But the material introducing the sign has to do with time seen from the vantage point of the 2,000-year period, the present dispensation, immediately preceding that foreshadowed by the sign.

The "why" of the two days introducing this material and the four days seen later in the material is easy to understand if these things are kept in mind.

"Two Days…in the Same Place"

As previously noted, *The two days* introducing the sign in the text foreshadow the two days, the 2,000-year period, comprising the present dispensation. This dispensation began on the day of

Pentecost, fifty days following Christ's resurrection (Acts 1:4, 5; 2:1-4); and it will end with the removal of the Church into the heavens, "to meet the Lord in the air" (I Cor. 15:51-58; I Thess. 4:13-18).

The present dispensation comprises a time when God has temporarily suspended His dealings with Israel and has sent the Spirit into the world for a specific, revealed purpose — *to call out a bride for His Son.*

And the Spirit is presently taking 2,000 years to acquire the bride.

At the END of this time, AFTER the bride has been procured, the bride will be removed from the earth, and God will THEN complete His dealings with Israel during seven unfulfilled years of the past dispensation, with Israel being brought to the place of repentance and the Messianic Era subsequently and resultingly being ushered in.

The present work of the Spirit is occurring in the antitype of that seen in Genesis chapter twenty-four. Abraham (typifying God the Father) sent his servant (typifying the Holy Spirit) into the far country (typifying this earth) for a singular purpose — to acquire a bride for his son, Isaac (typifying Christ).

And this occurred in the type following the death of Sarah in chapter twenty-three (Abraham's wife, typifying the Father's divorced wife, Israel, being set aside) but before Abraham's marriage to Keturah in chapter twenty-five (typifying God restoring Israel in that coming day, following the Spirit's procurement of a bride for the Son).

(For a more detailed exposition of the preceding, refer to the author's book, *Search for the Bride.*)

In John 11:5, when Jesus heard that Lazarus was *sick,* "he abode two days still in the same place where he was" (v. 6). *Sickness* is a depiction of Israel seen throughout Man's Day in Scripture.

The previous sign where the blind man was healed would afford one illustration, numerous signs which Jesus performed would afford others (*e.g.,* Matt. 4:17, 23, 24; 10:5-8), and Isaiah's classic description of Israel in the opening verses of his prophecy would afford another (1:4-6). The Old and New Testaments are filled with this type information about Israel.

Then, another facet of the same word picture is seen in John chapter eleven — *death.* And this, as well, is something seen throughout different parts of the Old and New Testaments.

Ezekiel chapter thirty-seven would perhaps be the classic depiction in the Old Testament. In this chapter *the dry bones in an open valley* are revealed to represent "the whole house of Israel," in a lifeless state. And after "sinews," "flesh," and "skin" had come upon and covered the bones, *breath, producing life,* entered into that which had been restored (vv. 1-14), which would be another picture of that seen through the resurrection of Lazarus in the New Testament.

Then, the resurrection of Israel had previously been depicted through Moses carrying the bones of Joseph out of Egypt at the time of the Exodus (Ex. 13:19), foreshadowing that prophesied in Daniel 12:2, 3, which will occur following the Tribulation (v. 1).

This will occur at that future time when the One greater than Moses leads the Israelites out from that which the Exodus from Egypt typifies, out from a worldwide dispersion (*cf.* Isa. 52:2; also note the preceding discussion on Gen. 23-25).

In John chapter eleven, both *sickness* and *death* are used of Lazarus in a somewhat synonymous sense, showing, as in the previous passages cited, two different facets of the same word picture. In verse three Lazarus is said to have been *sick* at this time. But later in the chapter Lazarus is also revealed to have been *dead* during this same time (*cf.* vv. 6, 7, 14, 17).

And Jesus was about to do something concerning the existing situation. But He had to remain "in the same place where he was" for *two days* before acting.

Time foreshadowing the dispensation in which the Spirit would procure a bride for God's Son MUST be allowed to run its course. Then, at the end of this time, at the end of two days, foreshadowing 2,000 years, Christ will return to the land of Judaea for the purpose seen in the sign.

"Let Us Go into Judaea Again"

Within the scope of that foreshadowed by the sign, matters now move from the present to the future, to that time when Christ

will return back to the earth at the end of the Tribulation. The Tribulation per se is not dealt with in the text. One would have to go to other Scripture, comparing Scripture with Scripture, to see how the Tribulation fits into this sequence of events.

The fifth sign in John's gospel, for example, covers the same time-period, deals with the Tribulation, and ends at the same place as seen in the seventh sign (John 6:15-21; *ref.* Chapter XIV in this book).

Both of these signs, as well as the other six signs in John's gospel, simply present *different parts or facets of the SAME word picture.*

Jesus is presently in the heavens, at His Father's right hand, both *waiting* and *working.*

In the words of Ps. 110:1, Jesus is *waiting* until the Father brings His "enemies" *down from their present lofty positions to the position described as His footstool,* pointing to the impending transfer of regal power, pointing to that day when the Son will hold the sceptre and all things will be under His control and sway (*cf.* I Cor. 15:25).

And, during this same time Jesus is also seen *working.* He, during the present dispensation, is performing a work in the heavenly sanctuary. He is ministering in the sanctuary, *as High Priest, on behalf of the saved, on the basis of His Own blood on the mercy seat* (Heb. 4:14-16; 9:11, 12; 10:19, 20).

But the day is coming and cannot be far hence when Jesus will come forth from the sanctuary and hold the sceptre.

The dispensation is *ALMOST* over, the Spirit's work of procuring a bride for God's Son is *ALMOST* at an end, and the completion of the last seven years of the previous dispensation is *ALMOST* at hand.

VAST changes are about to occur, something foretold millenniums ago in Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets.

The two days, the 2,000 years, are *ABOUT to end.* Every second of every minute, every minute of every hour, and every hour of every day brings everyone that has ever lived or ever will live during Man's 6,000-year day that much closer to that multi-prophesied and long-awaited day.

That day when the Son will say, "Let us go into Judaea again," *is NOT ONLY rapidly approaching but it MUST and WILL come to pass.*

What time is it on God's prophetic calendar relative to the

inevitable fulfillment of these events? There is only one answer to the question: It is *MUCH later* than most in today's Christendom, or those in the world (which, in reality, is really where most Christians reside today) care to admit, or even consider.

But, then there is the other side of the matter. A segment of Christendom *longs for that coming day.* A segment is *eagerly watching and waiting for the Son's return.*

A segment can be likened to those who joined themselves to David during Saul's reign, *dissatisfied with existing conditions in the camp of Israel, eagerly awaiting a change, eagerly awaiting that day when David would hold the sceptre in the stead of Saul.*

In that foreshadowed by this type from the Books of I, II Samuel, a number of Christians, though *by far a minority,* find themselves *dissatisfied with existing conditions in Christendom, or in the world at large.* And they have joined themselves to the One outside the camp, *eagerly awaiting a change, eagerly awaiting that day when Christ holds the sceptre in the stead of Satan.*

And for those Christians, the answer concerning *time* on God's prophetic calendar would be *entirely different.* Rather than thinking along the lines that it is much later than one would care to admit or consider, they would think more along the lines of the manner in which John was led to close the Canon of Scripture in the Book of Revelation:

> "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. *Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*
>
> The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (Rev. 22:20, 21).

"I Am the Resurrection and the Life"

At the end of two days, at the end of 2,000 years, Christ will return to the earth to raise Israel from the dead. He will return to raise a nation which, relative to her national calling, will have been dead for 4,000 years, dating back to the time of the nation's inception.

That's what the sign deals with. And *the complete scope of*

resurrection would have to be seen in the sign — *both individual Israelites and national Israel — for there can be NO nation, seen in its completeness ("the whole house of Israel" [Ezek. 37:11]), APART FROM a bodily resurrection of Old Testament saints to comprise and complete that nation.*

The resurrection of Lazarus foreshadows the nation being raised up to "live in his sight" two days (2,000 years) following Abraham and two additional days (an additional 2,000 years) following Christ's appearance to Israel the first time (*cf.* Hosea 5:15-6:2; John 11:6ff); and the resurrection of Lazarus, as well, foreshadows individual Jews who died in the faith during Old Testament days being raised from the dead.

Whether *individual* or *national,* the type body in which Lazarus was raised will be the type body which Israelites comprising the nation will possess during not only the Messianic Era but also throughout the following eternal ages — *a natural body of flesh, blood, and bones.*

Relative to *individual Israelites,* this is evident from that seen surrounding Lazarus' resurrection when contrasted with Christ's resurrection.

The stone was rolled away to let Lazarus out of the tomb, and he came forth *bound hand and foot with graveclothes,* with *a napkin* still covering his face.

The stone covering the entrance to Christ's tomb though was rolled away to let others in to see that He was already outside the tomb; and *the empty, undisturbed graveclothes* were still in the tomb, lying exactly where Christ's body had previously been (maintaining the shape and contour of the body, apart from the body being on the inside), with *the napkin* previously covering His head having simply collapsed where His head had been (Luke 24:12; John 20:4-8).

Lazarus was raised in "a natural body" of flesh, blood, and bones, capable only of that which natural man is capable of today. But Christ was raised in a different type body, one which Scripture calls "a spiritual body" (I Cor. 15:44), a body of flesh and bone, with the Spirit rather than the blood being the life-giving, animating principle of the body. And this type body is capable of

things outside the realm of the natural (*e.g., cf.* Luke 24:15, 31, 36).

Then, Luke 1:33 reveals that *national Israel,* the nation at large, will exist in connection with *the natural* in this respect — *in bodies of flesh, blood, and bones* — throughout not only the Messianic Era but the eternal ages which will follow.

> "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

"Jacob," meaning supplanter, was *the natural man;* "Israel," meaning *a prince who has power with God and with men,* was *the spiritual man.* Christ, according to the text, is going to reign over *the house of Jacob,* not over the house of Israel. And it is evident from the wording of the text that this type reign will extend beyond the millennium into the eternal ages.

The word "forever" in the text is a translation of the Greek words *eis tous aionas.* The word *aionas* (a plural case form of *aion*) refers to "ages" in the text. The word is preceded by a preposition and a definite article, in that order. And the complete expression, *eis tous aionas,* should be understood and possibly more properly translated, "with respect to the ages," referring to all the ages out ahead, not only the Messianic Era but the unending array of ages which will follow.

> (For information on the preceding, refer to Appendix I, "Aion, Aionios," in the author's book, *Message in the Gospels, Acts, Epistles*.)

"Lazarus, Come Forth"

Christ, Who is "the resurrection and the life," *must be present* at the time Israel is raised, as He was present at the time Lazarus was raised. And, as well, *He must be present* when Christians are raised from the dead at the end of the present dispensation. Aside from coming forth to meet His bride, this will be *the central reason for Christ's presence at this time.*

Relative to *the resurrection of Christians,* which will occur preceding the Tribulation, Christ will "descend from heaven with a shout" (I Thess. 4:16). And just as Lazarus came forth when "the

resurrection, and the life" issued the command, so will Christians come forth when Christ descends from heaven into the air above and issues this command (though in bodies like unto Christ's resurrection body).

Relative to *the resurrection of Israel,* which will occur following the Tribulation, Christ will return to the earth and issue a command, foreshadowed by the command in John chapter eleven. And following Christ's command in that day, Israel will come forth — both individual Jews and the nation at large.

Just as Lazarus was raised from the dead, *individual Jews* will be raised from the dead; and, as well, just as Lazarus was raised from the dead, *the entire nation* will be raised up to live in God's sight. And even though, as in the sign, they come forth wearing graveclothes, the command will then be the same as it was at the time Lazarus was raised, "Loose him, and let him go" (v. 44b).

In another type, or sign (*cf.* Matt. 12:39-41), Jonah was raised from the dead after two days, on the third day. And in that foreshadowed by the type or sign, Israel will be raised from the dead after two days, on the third day (*cf.* Hosea 5:15-6:2).

After Jonah was raised from the dead, he carried God's message to the Gentiles. And Israel, in that coming day, after the nation has been raised up to live in God's sight, will carry God's message to the Gentiles.

And just as the Gentiles heard and responded to Jonah in his day, the Gentiles will hear and respond to Israel's message yet future.

This will all occur in that coming day after God has raised all His firstborn Sons — Christ, Israel, and the Church — to live in His sight.

God raised *His only begotten firstborn Son, Jesus,* on the third day, foreshadowing a coming third day for *the regal purpose seen in the second Psalm.*

God will raise *His created and adopted firstborn son, Israel,* on the third day for *the SAME regal purpose.*

And God will raise *His created son (who will be His firstborn son following the adoption), the Church,* on the third day for *the SAME regal purpose.*

(For additional information on the preceding, refer to the author's book, *God's Firstborn Sons*.

For additional information on differences and distinctions between resurrection bodies — Christ's, Christians,' Jews' — refer to the next chapter in this book. Also refer to Chapter XV, "The Resurrection of Israel," in the author's book, *By Faith*.

The Jewish people (O.T. saints) will be raised in *natural bodies of flesh, blood, and bones*.

Christ, on the other hand, was raised in *a spiritual body of flesh and bones*, with the Spirit rather than the blood [which was/is on the mercy seat in heaven] being the life-giving, animating principle of the body.

Also, common to almost universal misunderstanding, note that Christ was *NOT* raised in what many call "a glorified body." Rather, He was rased in *the SAME bod*y that had been placed in the tomb; and there was *NO Glory* connected with His body *UNTIL* He was "received up into glory" [I Cor. 15:38-49; I Tim. 3:16].

And *EXACTLY* the same will one day be true of Christians. They will be raised in bodies like unto Christ's body at the time of His resurrection [the same bodies placed in the graves, but raised spiritual bodies of flesh and bones].

Being enswathed in Glory will be a subsequent experience, as it was with Christ.

Note that *the Glory has NOTHING to do with the body itself per se*. Rather "a glorified body," or "body of glory" [Phil. 3:21] is either a natural or spiritual body enswathed in Glory.

This covering of Glory, for example, is what Adam and Eve lost at the time of the fall — *something which wrought NO change in their natural bodies per se* — which they tried to replace with fig leaves.

Numerous things in the preceding are being thrown around in a very loose manner in Christian circles today, *often with LITTLE to NO basis in fact relative to that being taught*. And the reason for this is the same reason that so much error is being taught in other areas as well.

A proper foundation, beginning with Moses, *has NOT been laid*. Understanding *the whole of the existing problem* is really that simple.

And to rectify the problem, *the reverse of the preceding MUST occur*. Understanding *the whole of the ONLY solution to the existing problem*, on the other hand, is really that simple as well.)

17

The Resurrection of Christ

Eighth Sign

As Jonah, So Christ, on the Third, Seventh Day

"The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

Then cometh Simon Peter following him and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie.

And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead" (John 20:1-9).

The resurrection of Christ forms the last of eight signs around which John's gospel is structured. Jesus had called attention to His resurrection being *a sign* earlier in His ministry, at the Passover in

Jerusalem following the "beginning of miracles ['signs']" in Cana of Galilee, in John chapter two:

> "Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?
>
> Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.
>
> Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days ?
>
> But he spake of the temple of his body" (vv. 18-21).

Then attention is called to the fact that His disciples, following His resurrection, remembered that which had been said at this point in His ministry, resulting in belief among the disciples:

> "When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scriptures, and the word which Jesus had said" (v. 22).

Then, following Christ's resurrection, the experiences of Thomas are recorded, both on the day of Christ's resurrection and eight days later.

When Christ had appeared in the midst of His disciples while they were in a closed room late the same day of His resurrection, Thomas was not present. Thomas, unlike the other disciples, had not seen the resurrected Christ. And, when hearing the report by the others of that which had occurred while he was absent, he, in an unbelieving and skeptical manner, stated:

> "Except I shall see in his hands the print [Gk., *tupos*, 'type'] of the nails, and put my finger into the print [Gk., *tupos*] of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe" (John 20:25b).

Then eight days later, Jesus appeared and stood in the midst of His disciples again, but this time Thomas was present. Jesus then singled out Thomas, and said:

> "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: *and be not faithless, but believing*" (v. 27b).

And Thomas, responding to the resurrected Christ, could only say, "My Lord and my God" (v. 28b).

This account then leads into the statement in John 20:30, 31, a statement revealing the purpose for John's gospel, which could only be looked upon as *the KEY to a proper understanding of this fourth gospel*:

> "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:
>
> But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

This statement, following Christ dealing with Thomas eight days after His resurrection, points in the near context back to things surrounding Christ's resurrection; and in the far context this statement could only point back to the other seven signs, taking the reader all the way back to the beginning sign in chapter two.

Then, approaching the matter from another standpoint, from a typical standpoint, Christ, in Matt. 12:38-40, referred to the account of Jonah as *a sign* of His coming death, burial, and resurrection.

> "Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.
>
> But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah:
>
> For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

As Jonah was cast into the sea, died in the sea, and was raised from the dead on the third day, so would the Son of Man be delivered by the Jews into the hands of the Gentiles, suffer death, and be raised from the dead on the third day.

In the preceding respect, the account of Jonah forms "a type," but this account is also referred to as *a sign.* The account of Jonah, "a type," forms *a sign for the Jewish people,* for it is *the Jews who require a sign* (I Cor. 1:22).

And as the type is inseparably linked with the antitype after one fashion, *so MUST it be with the thought of signs. Not ONLY is the type a sign BUT so is the antitype as well*, something stated in so many words in John 2:18-21; 20:30, 31.

Peter at the Tomb

The timing of Christ's resurrection is often associated with the early morning hours of the first day of the week. This though is derived from events at the time Mary Magdalene and other women came to the tomb before daybreak on the first day of the week and not only found the stone covering the tomb rolled away but also found that Christ's body was no longer in the tomb (Luke 24:1-10).

Christ was raised sometime prior to these events; and He was possibly raised hours earlier, for He could have been raised at any time following the end of the previous day, the end of the Sabbath (which ended at sunset [ten or so hours earlier], with the first day of the week beginning at that time).

Christ had to remain in the place of death until at least the beginning of the third day to fulfill Biblical prophecy. He was to be in the place of death for three days and three nights; but then He was to be raised on the third day, as all of God's firstborn Sons (Christ, Israel, and the Church, following the adoption) are to be raised up on the third day (the third millennium) to live in God's sight.

(The preceding — Christ being in the tomb for *three days and three nights*, being raised *after three days*, and being raised *on the third day* — must be understood in the light of the way in which this is handled in the O.T., not in the light of humanistic reasoning or our Western way of thinking [*ref.* Chapter V, "Three Days and Three Nights," in the author's book, *O Sleeper! Arise, Call!*].)

The expression "the third day" relative to Christ's resurrection is used twelve times in the N.T., [KJV]. In three of the references there is some manuscript support for the rendering, "after three days" [Mark 9:31; 10:34; Acts 10:40]. Minor manuscript support exists for another three on the alternate rendering [Matt. 16:21; 17:23; Luke 9:22]. However, for the remaining six, no manuscript support exists for a rendering other than "the third day" [Matt. 20:19; Luke 18:33; 24:7, 21, 46; I Cor. 15:4].

The expression "after three days," relative to Christ's resurrection, is found only two places in the N.T. [Matt. 27:63; Mark 8:31]; and, as previously seen, Matt. 12:40 reveals the same period of time to also be "three days and three nights."

Also note the expression "in [or, 'within'] three days," pertaining to Christ's resurrection [Mark. 14:58; 15:29; John 2:19, 20].

The Jewish Talmud reads, "A day and night together make up *an onah* [word referring to a complete period of twenty-four hours], and any part of such a period is counted as the whole." The Jewish Talmud though, at this point, is simply a reflection of that taught in the O.T., which is the only possible source to derive information which will allow one to properly understand and reconcile the expressions in the N.T. relative to the time Christ spent in the place of death — *three days and three nights in the tomb, raised on the third day, raised after three days.*

One *MUST* allow Scripture to interpret itself at this point — or any other place in Scripture — rather than bringing man's ideologies or his Western way of thinking over into the matter [*cf.* Gen. 40:13, 20; 42:17, 18; I Sam. 30:1, 12, 13; II Chron. 10:5, 12; Esther 4:16-5:1].)

Thus, having completed the time necessary to remain in the place of death at the beginning of the third day, *there would have been no need for Christ to remain in this place longer than time immediately following the Sabbath*, time immediately following sunset.

But, again, the exact timing of His resurrection in this respect is not given. We can only know that His resurrection had already occurred prior to the time Mary Magdalene and other women came to the tomb, found the stone covering the tomb rolled away, and the tomb empty except for the graveclothes.

And the stone *had NOT* been rolled away to let Christ out of the tomb, as was the case with the resurrection of Lazarus in the previous sign. Rather, the stone had been rolled away *to let others in to see that He was ALREADY out.*

Christ's resurrection was unlike anything which had ever occurred in the annals of man's recorded history. A Man had not only been raised from the dead by the triune Godhead, but He, as part of the triune Godhead, had raised Himself — something which He had to have a part in, for He was "the resurrection, and the life" (*cf.* John 2:18-21; 11:25; Acts 3:15; Rom. 8:11).

And His resurrection body was unlike any type body which had heretofore existed in the human realm. Christ, at the time of and following His resurrection, possessed a body capable of movement from one point to another at will. He could *appear* in the midst of His disciples and then *disappear* at will (*cf.* Luke 24:15, 31, 36; John 20:26).

And knowing these things — comparing Scripture with Scripture— it is a simple matter to understand the only thing which could have occurred both inside and outside the tomb at the time Christ was raised from the dead.

When Peter stooped down and walked into that empty tomb he saw the empty linen graveclothes which had been wrapped around the body of Christ "lying by themselves," with the napkin which had covered His face "wrapped together ['folded']" in a separate place by itself (John 20:5-7 ['lie' in v. 6 should be translated 'lying,' same as in v. 5]). Peter saw the empty graveclothes either maintaining the shape and contour of the body (through a possible hardening of the mixture of myrrh [an aromatic gum resin] and aloes [an aromatic powdered wood, also containing resin]) or simply lying in an undisturbed and somewhat collapsed manner (with the layers of linen cloth still wrapped together), with the napkin which had covered His face in a collapsed place by itself (collapsed in folds).

What had happened?

The answer, textually, is quite plain and simple.

At the instant Christ was raised from the dead, at the instant He raised Himself, He *DIDN'T* sit up or stand up inside that tomb and then walk out of the tomb as Lazarus had done. Rather, life was restored to the body; and, in undoubtedly an instantaneous manner, at the same time, *Christ found Himself completely removed from the graveclothes and in a place outside the tomb.*

He raised Himself from the dead (through the Spirit breathing life into His body) and removed Himself from the graveclothes and the tomb to a location outside the tomb; and all of this probably occurred in the same length of time seen surrounding the future resurrection and rapture of Christians in I Cor. 15:52 — *an atomos* of time (the most minute particle of time which can be conveyed by the Greek language [less than a microsecond, less than one-

millionth of a second]).

And, with His body no longer being on the inside of the graveclothes, the linen wrappings either maintained the shape and contour of the body or they simply collapsed (depending on the hardening effect of the mixture of myrrh and aloes), apart from the body being on the inside; and the napkin which had been placed over His face fell in folds where His head had been.

This is what Peter saw, and what John who was with him subsequently saw as well — the graveclothes "lying by themselves," apart from the body being on the inside.

This resulted in immediate "belief" on John's part (John 20:8; *cf.* John 2:22); and it resulted in "wondering" on Peter's part (Luke 24:12), something which, combined with subsequently spending forty days with the resurrected Christ, resulted in the unwavering faith/belief seen at Pentecost and beyond as Peter became the central figure in the proclamation of the message during about the first five years of the existence of the Church (Acts 2ff).

Christ's Post-Resurrection Ministry

Christ's ministry to Israel prior to His death, burial, and resurrection lasted for about three and one-half years. This was a ministry which had begun while John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, was still proclaiming to Israel:

> "Repent ye [a plural pronoun, referring to *all Israel*]: for the kingdom of the heavens [the rule of the heavens over the earth] is at hand" (Matt. 3:2, 13ff; John 3:22-24).

John's ministry was carried out in Judaea. And after John had been imprisoned, Jesus traveled to Galilee, which was north of Judaea and Samaria; and in Galilee He began to proclaim the message which had begun under John. And multitudes began to follow Him, both from Galilee where He was ministering and from the southern region of Judaea (Matt. 4:12-25).

To help in the proclamation of this message, Jesus, early in His ministry, commissioned twelve disciples. Then, at a later time, He commissioned seventy others as well (Matt. 10:1-8; Luke 10:1-9).

And it was eleven of the original twelve (Judas no longer present) that Jesus took aside after His resurrection and taught for forty days (Acts 2:2, 3).

Jesus taught them "things pertaining to the kingdom of God," which *could ONLY have been continued teachings pertaining to the same kingdom which had previously been proclaimed to Israel, beginning with John. And this could ONLY have been with a view to the SAME message once again being proclaimed to Israel by the disciples — a re-offer of the kingdom of the heavens.*

But something new was now seen. Prior to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, the message was proclaimed *to Israel ALONE* (Matt. 10:5, 6; 15:24; Luke 4:43, 44). However, after the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, the message was to be carried *NOT ONLY to those "in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea [referring to the Jews, with the Jews in Galilee or scattered throughout the Gentile world understood as included]" BUT ALSO to those "in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth [referring to the Gentiles]"* (Acts 1:8).

And ten days following Christ's forty-day ministry to His disciples, a new entity — *the one new man* "in Christ" — was called into existence, allowing those in "Samaria" and in "the uttermost part of the earth" to become part of the complete, overall picture (Acts 1:4, 5; 2:1ff).

That is to say, once this new entity had been called into existence, *the complete scope of the proclamation of the message as seen in Acts 1:8, involving God's complete scope of His redemptive plans and purposes as it related to man, would then be in effect.*

BUT, as long as the re-offer of the kingdom was open to Israel — for about the next thirty years — Israel held the priority in relation to the proclamation of this message. The message was to be proclaimed in accordance *with the order seen in Rom. 1:16*, "…to the Jew first, and also to the Greek [the Gentile]" (*cf.* Rom. 2:5-10, 16; 3:9; 10:12).

(Though the message was proclaimed "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek," *the re-offer of the kingdom per se was solely Jewish.* There was an "offer," not a "re-offer," of the kingdom to *the one new man* "in Christ."

This was the beginning of that seen in Matt. 21:43 concerning the kingdom being taken from Israel and offered to a nation other than

> Israel [the proffered kingdom of the heavens (the heavenly sphere of the kingdom), not the kingdom covenanted to David (the earthly sphere of the kingdom)].
>
> And following the re-offer and rejection of the kingdom once again [from 33 A.D. to about 62 A.D.] the offer continued beyond this time solely to the new nation in Matt. 21:43, *the one new man* "in Christ.")

The preceding is why the order of the proclamation of this message throughout the Book of Acts was *ALWAYS to the Jew first.* This was an order apparently understood by those proclaiming the message.

It was only *AFTER* the Jews, in each instance, had heard the message that the apostles and others carrying the message were free to go outside the bounds of that designated by "Jerusalem, and in all Judaea" to that designated by "Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Prior to the events surrounding Calvary, the message couldn't be proclaimed to the latter (Samaria and beyond); but now, following these events and those in Acts chapter two, the disciples not only could but were commanded to carry the message beyond Jerusalem and Judaea.

Of course, in Acts chapter two there was no new entity beyond "Jerusalem, and in all Judaea" to which the message could then be carried.

Rather, at this point in time, the message was carried to Israel immediately after the new entity was brought into existence by those forming the nucleus of this new entity. But once Churches began to be established in the Gentile world, then the proclamation of the message, in accordance with Acts 1:8, could be carried out in its fullness.

This whole panorama of events surrounding the proclamation of the message concerning the kingdom undoubtedly formed a major part of that dealt with by Christ during the forty days of Acts 1:3, for note Christ's concluding instructions prior to His ascension in the verses immediately following (vv. 4-9). These verses form a recap of the complete picture of that which was about to occur, undoubtedly reflecting back on that which Christ had evidently taught the disciples during the previous forty days.

The faith of the apostles is seen after one fashion immediately following the resurrection of Christ (*cf.* John 20:25; 21:3ff), but it is seen after an entirely different fashion after they had spent forty days with the resurrected Christ, being taught by Him personally.

Ten days after Christ's ascension, on the day of Pentecost, "about an hundred and twenty" disciples, which would have included the apostles, were gathered "with one accord in one place" (Acts 1:15; 2:1).

And *AFTER they had been immersed in and filled with the Spirit*, they, through the supernatural means of the indwelling Spirit, proclaimed "the wonderful works of God" to those present in Jerusalem — who had traveled to Jerusalem from "every nation under heaven" — in their own native languages (Acts 2:2-12).

Then Peter, with the multitude of Jews *astonished* and *perplexed* (vv. 12, 13), stood up and spoke to the entire group in a bold manner, moving beyond Christ's death and centering his thoughts on *Christ's resurrection and all which His resurrection now made possible* (Acts 2:14-40).

And this same boldness is subsequently seen not only in Peter's ministry but in that of the other disciples as well (Acts 3-7).

What made the difference?

This type *belief* was *NOT* something that had generally been manifested after spending some three and one-half years with Christ prior to His death. In fact, at the end of this period, rather than exhibiting faith, "all the disciples forsook him [Christ], and fled."

And though Peter still followed Christ "afar off," *he subsequently denied Christ three times* (Matt. 26:56-58, 69-75).

But now, *AFTER spending forty days with the resurrected Christ, things were ENTIRELY different.*

Only *ONE thing* could possible have made the difference. And that *ONE thing* was very much on not only Peter's mind but that of the other disciples as well during events seen in the opening chapters of Acts.

Everything in the message now centered around something which heretofore it could not have centered around — *the fact that the One Whom Israel crucified had been raised from the dead* (*cf.* Acts 2:23-36; 3:12-26; 4:1, 2, 10-12; 5:28-42; 7:51-60).

Paul's Ministry

Paul, a zealous Pharisee among the Jews — one who had sat "at the feet of Gamaliel" and had been "taught according to the perfect manner of the law" — was one of the great persecutors of believing Jews during the opening couple of years of the re-offer of the kingdom in Acts, possibly during the offer of the kingdom in the gospels as well (Acts 8:1; 9:13, 14; 22:4, 5, 20; 26:9-11).

But Paul, a few years following Christ's resurrection and the events of Acts chapter two, en route to Damascus in order to bind and bring to Jerusalem any that he found of "the way," was confronted by *NOT ONLY the resurrected but NOW the glorified Christ* (Acts 9:1-5; *cf.* I Tim. 3:16).

His body, unlike the time of and during the forty days following His resurrection, *was NOW enswathed in a covering of Glory* (*ref.* comments on p. 192 in the previous chapter of this book).

And Paul's life, *AFTER* being confronted by the One Whom he had been persecuting — particularly after seeing the resurrected Christ enswathed in a covering of Glory — was *immediately* changed.

After "three days" without sight (blinded by having gazed upon the resurrected, glorified Christ [*cf.* Acts 22:11; 26:13]), his sight was *restored, restored on the third day;* and Paul, in the same zealous manner that he had exhibited in persecuting believing Jews now began to proclaim "Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God."

And Paul knew enough about the Old Testament Scriptures that he could not only *proclaim* this message but *prove* "that this is very Christ" (Acts 9:20-22).

And Paul was so zealous and effective in the proclamation of this message that, after a time, "the Jews took counsel to kill him" (Acts 9:23, 24; *cf.* John 12:10, 11).

What made the difference? Why did Paul suddenly change from one of the greatest persecutors of believing Jews to the greatest minister of this same message?

The answer is simple.

It was the power of the eighth sign in John's gospel being realized in his life.

And Paul, in his experiences enroute to Damascus and his subsequent experiences after his encounter with the resurrected, glorified Christ, forms a type of that which the entire nation of Israel will one day experience.

The pierced One, in all His glory, will appear to Israel in that coming day, following the completion of that seen in Daniel's Seventy-Week prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27; *cf.* Zech. 12:10-14; 13:6; 14:4-9).

And Israel, exactly as Paul in Acts chapter nine, or exactly as Joseph's brothers in Genesis chapter forty-five, will be *troubled, terrified, in Christ's presence.*

Then Israel, exactly as Joseph's brethren, or exactly as Paul, wil*l go forth with a message concerning the resurrected Christ* (Gen. 45:9, 13, 26; Acts 9:20ff; *cf.* Isa. 53:1ff).

This eighth sign in John's gospel formed the last of the signs set forth in this gospel to effect *belief* among those in Israel during the years of the re-offer of the kingdom (from 33 AD to about 62 AD).

AND, though this didn't happen, *Israel WILL believe in that future day when Christ personally reappears to the nation.*

In that day, according to Zech. 12:10, the Jewish people will "look upon me, whom they have pierced" (the resurrected, glorified Christ, *EXACTLY as Paul saw Him*).

And in that day, *EXACTLY as in Paul's experiences*, the power and reality of Christ's resurrection will do something which it didn't do in the re-offer of the kingdom — *effect belief throughout ALL Israel, with Israel's blindness being lifted after two days, on the third day.*

18

These Are Written, That…

Save Time! BELIEVE John 20:30, 31!

"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30, 31).

ALL four gospels — Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John — present the SAME message to the SAME recipients.

ALL four present a record of the offer of the kingdom of the heavens to the Jewish people, with EACH presenting the matter from a different perspective.

EACH gospel presents different facets of a complete word picture, with the four gospels together forming the complete picture.

The Gospel of John though should be looked upon and considered *unique* among the other gospels in a particular respect. It is *the ONLY one of the four gospels which provides a specifically stated purpose for particular events which the Spirit of God moved John to record several decades after these events occurred.*

The Gospel of John is built around eight signs depicting events which occurred during Christ's ministry to the Jewish people. These signs were *Divinely designed to effect BELIEF among the Jewish people.*

And, though many Jews believed, the nation at large remained *in unbelief, climaxing this unbelief by rejecting the proffered kingdom, crucifying their Messiah, and pledging their allegiance to a pagan Gentile king.*

Then several decades later — during the period covered by the Book of Acts, during the re-offer of the kingdom of the heavens to the Jewish people (which lasted from 33 A.D. to about 62 A.D.) — the Spirit of God singled out eight signs (from among all the signs which Jesus had performed) and moved John to record them in his gospel. And the purpose for the Spirit moving John to record these eight particular signs is given near the conclusion of his gospel, in John 20:30, 31.

These eight signs, forming a framework around which John's gospel is built, were recorded for *EXACTLY the same purpose that they were originally performed*:

> These signs were originally performed *to effect BELIEF among the Jewish people during the offer of the kingdom of the heavens,* during Christ's earthly ministry, as recorded in the gospel accounts.
>
> They were then recorded in John's gospel *to effect BELIEF among the Jewish people during the re-offer of the kingdom of the heavens,* during the ministry of the apostles and others, as recorded in the Book of Acts.

This is the reason why, in the Book of Acts — in line with Rom. 1:16; 2:9, 10 — the apostles and others *ALWAYS, without exception*, went "to the Jew first" in every locality where the message was proclaimed. It was only after the message had been proclaimed to the Jews in a particular locality (invariably followed by rejection) that those proclaiming the message were free to go to the Gentiles in that same locality with the same message concerning the kingdom, though "an offer" of the kingdom, not "a re-offer" (which, of necessity, because of the message, could only have been "an offer" of the kingdom to *saved Gentiles*).

This is also the reason why one can know that the Gospel of John — recorded *to effect BELIEF among the Jewish people relative to Christ and the proffered kingdom* — was written at a time *before* the close of the re-offer of the kingdom of the heavens to Israel, sometime before about 62 A.D.

More often than not a late date is assigned to the writing of John's gospel (usually between about 85-95 A.D.). However, no valid reason exists for this late date. And, not surprisingly, many

scholars who study these things recognize and contend for a much earlier date for the gospel (some as early as 40-45 A.D.).

All of this though is neither here nor there, for the internal evidence provided by the gospel itself reveals that John's gospel *HAD TO BE written during the time of the re-offer of the kingdom of the heavens to the Jewish people.* The Jewish people *could NOT* have been singled out in the specific manner seen in John 20:30, 31 — concerning "signs" in relation to *the Messianic King and His Kingdom* — had the gospel been recorded following the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to the Jewish people.

As previously seen, these verses in John chapter twenty refer back to eight signs, among numerous other signs, performed for *a particular, revealed purpose during the original offer of the kingdom;* and, as also previously seen, *they could ONLY have been singled out and recorded for EXACTLY the same purpose during the re-offer of the kingdom.*

"That Ye Might Believe That Jesus Is the Christ, the Son of God"

The key words in the first part of verse thirty-one are "believe," "Christ," and "Son." And the manner in which all three words are used *MUST* be understood in the light of the introductory reference to "signs" in the previous verse, which reflects back on all the signs which Jesus performed ("And many other signs…" [v. 30a]), whether recorded or not recorded in the other three gospels.

Then, remaining within the context, the manner in which all three words are used *can ONLY have to do with the Son's previous ministry to the Jewish people in relation to His kingship and the proffered kingdom.*

1) "That Ye Might Believe"

BELIEF among the Jewish people during both the original offer of the kingdom (recorded in the gospel accounts) and the re-offer of the kingdom (recorded in the Book of Acts) had to do with *EXACTLY the same thing.* It had to do with *the One born King,* Jesus the Christ, God's Son; and it had to do with *the message be-*

ing proclaimed, the proffered kingdom of the heavens (Matt. 2:1, 2; 3:1, 2; 4:17).

BELIEF during the original offer of the kingdom had *NOTHING to do with eternal salvation*, for Christ came to *a people who were ALREADY saved.*

They, as their ancestors, going all the way back to Moses (throughout thirty-five generations, covering over fourteen centuries), *had sacrificed paschal lambs year after year* (though breaks in the offering of sacrifices would have occurred at times during Gentile dominance [during the time of the Judges] or during Gentile captivity [the subsequent Assyrian and Babylonian captivities]). And, as during Moses' day (as before or after that time) there was *death and shed blood, that which God has required since Adam sinned in Eden.*

And, when Christ came to Israel four millenniums following man's creation and subsequent fall, God could *ONLY* have looked upon the matter *in EXACTLY the same manner* as He had previously looked upon it during Adam's day, or later during Moses' day. The statement from Ex. 12:13, "…when I see the blood, I will pass over you…," *must remain true throughout all time.*

During Moses' day, the blood properly applied (on the doorposts and lintel) showed that *death had ALREADY occurred in that house.* The firstborn in the family, under the sentence of death, had died via a substitute. There was *a vicarious death,* and *God was satisfied.*

And *EXACTLY the same thing,* of necessity, would have had to be true over fourteen centuries later when Christ came to the Jewish people. The Jewish people were still sacrificing paschal lambs year after year. And with the death of these lambs and the shed blood properly applied, the result of that which God had instructed the people to do during Moses' day *could ONLY be the same.*

When God saw the properly applied blood, He, remaining true to His Word, *could ONLY have been satisfied that the firstborn had already experienced that which had been decreed — death.*

(According to Heb. 10:4, 11, the blood of animals during O.T. times could not "take away sins," though this blood could cover sins. But, the blood of Christ, to which all of the O.T. sacrifices pointed, could do more than cover sins. The blood of Christ could *take away sins* [*cf.* Lev. 16:21, 22; Ps. 103:12; II Cor. 5:18-21; Heb. 10:12-18 ("reconciled" or "reconciliation"

in II Cor. 5:18-20 — Gk., *katallasso* — has to do with bringing back into harmony, not through covering sin but by *doing away with sin*)].

In Scripture, the enacting of God's plans and purposes as they pertain to man are looked upon as occurring at two different times preceding man's creation — "*before* the foundation of the world," and "*from* the foundation of the world" [*cf.* Matt. 13:35; 25:34; Luke 11:50; John 17:24; Eph. 1:4; Heb. 4:3; I Peter 1:20; Rev. 13:8; 17:8].

"Foundation" is the translation of the Greek word, *katabole*, a compound word which literally means "to cast down" or "to throw down" [*kata* means "down," and *bole* means "to cast" or "to throw"]. The manner in which this word is used in a general sense in the expression, "foundation of the world," could describe God's past act of casting/throwing down the world [*i.e.*, creating the world] out in space.

However, since man and redemption are involved, *katabole* appears to be used in a more specific sense in Scripture, referring to God's subsequent act of restoring the ruined creation in Gen. 1:2b ff rather than His initial act of creating the earth in Gen. 1:1. In this respect, matters mentioned in the verses where this expression is used would refer to God's actions regarding His Son and man at two different times in history, following the creation of the heavens and the earth:

> a) "Before [Gk., *pro*] the foundation of the world" [before the restoration of the ruined creation, in eternity past, which could be any time between the creation (Gen. 1:1) and the restoration of the ruined creation (Gen. 1:2b ff).
>
> b) "From [Gk., *apo*] the foundation of the world" [the time of the restoration of the ruined creation (Gen. 1:2b ff), when God began counting 7,000 years of time in relation to His Son and man as it pertained to regality and this earth].

All of the O.T. sacrifices formed types which pointed forward to some facet of the person and work of Christ, in the antitype, as they had to do with and were based upon Christ's finished work at Calvary. And these same O.T. sacrifices could also only reflect back upon and be intimately associated with *the Lamb* "slain from the foundation of the world."

The latter [the Lamb slain at a time anticipating Gen. 1:2b ff and man's subsequent creation and fall] allowed for the former [the subsequent O.T. animal sacrifices]. Thus, that seen in Rev. 13:8 allowed for God's satisfaction through animal sacrifices during 4,000 years of O.T.

history. Then, the whole of the matter is inseparably tied to that which subsequently occurred at Calvary.)

Then, the regenerate state of the Jewish people at Christ's first coming allowed that seen in the gospel accounts to occur — an offer of the kingdom of the heavens to the Jewish people.

Otherwise, there could NOT have been an offer. The kingdom could NOT then and it CANNOT today be offered to unregenerate individuals. A person MUST first possess spiritual life before spiritual values of this nature can enter into the picture.

And, as well, this is *the ONLY reason* that there could have been a re-offer of the kingdom to Israel, which, of necessity, had to be limited to about thirty years. *The SAME saved generation* living before Calvary remained on the scene following Calvary.

BUT, when that generation began to pass off the scene via death some three decades later (replaced by Jews refusing to avail themselves of the blood of the Paschal Lamb slain in 33 A.D., which fulfilled the O.T. type introduced in Exodus chapter twelve, rendering any future slaying of paschal lambs on the Passover by the Jewish people non-efficacious), the re-offer of the kingdom, of necessity, could no longer continue. *A saved generation of Jews, to whom an offer of the kingdom could be extended, no longer existed beyond about 62 A.D. when the re-offer of the kingdom, of necessity, came to a close.*

Thus, contextually in John 20:31, *BELIEF involves the Jewish Messiah in relation to the kingdom, NOT eternal life.* And this is evident from not only that which precedes (signs) but that which the verse goes on to state ("that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God").

2) "That Jesus Is the Christ"

The name "Jesus" means *salvation* (Matt. 1:21). The Greek word translated "Jesus," *Iesous,* is the equivalent of the Hebrew words *Yeshuah* (meaning "salvation") or *Jehoshua* ("Joshua," a cognate form of *Yeshuah*, meaning exactly the same — "salvation").

The word *Yeshuah* is used about eighty times in the Old Testament, it is always used in the sense of "deliverance," and it is usually translated "salvation" (*e.g.,* Gen. 49:18; II Chron. 20:17; Isa. 12:2).

Then the name "Joshua," appearing numerous times in the

Old Testament, appears in the New Testament twice, in Acts 7:45 and Heb. 4:8. "Joshua" in the Greek text, as previously noted, is *Iesous,* distinguished from the name "Jesus" only through the context. And a failure to take the context into consideration apparently caused the KJV translators to erroneously translate the word as "Jesus" in both Acts 7:45 and Heb. 4:8.

"Deliverance" or "salvation" in Scripture though (both Old and New Testaments), as the use of the name *Iesous* in the New Testament (meaning "salvation"), must be viewed contextually to determine which type *deliverance* or *salvation* is in view:

> Sometimes it is used relative *to one's physical life* (Matt. 14:30; 24:13; Luke 23:35, 37, 39).
>
> Other times it is used in the sense of *bodily healing* (Luke 8:36, 48, 50; 17:19; Acts 4:9; 14:9; James 5:15).
>
> Other times it is used in the sense of *a present saving or losing of one's life (soul),* relating to spiritual values rather than physical life (Matt. 16:25; Luke 9:24).
>
> Other times it is used with respect *to salvation in relation to the Messianic Era* (Matt. 1:21; Luke 19:10; Acts 2:21; 4:12; James 5:20).
>
> Other times it is used with respect *to one's eternal salvation* (John 3:17; Acts 16:31).

Several of the preceding, such as bodily healing or the saving of one's life, would relate to the Messianic Era. The healing of an individual formed a sign showing that which the entire nation (the Jewish people) could experience if the nation would repent. Deliverance in relation to the Messianic Era would occur.

Note again the message being proclaimed:

> "Repent ye [a plural pronoun, the entire nation]: for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand" [Matt. 3:2; *cf.* Matt. 4:17-25; 10:5-8]).

In the preceding respect, most of the references to "salvation" in the New Testament relate either directly or indirectly *to the Messianic Era, NOT to eternal life.* And the thought of *salvation* through the use of the name "Jesus" in John 20:31, both textually

and contextually, is used *in EXACTLY this same sense.*

Then, note that which the Jewish people would be expected *to believe through a manifestation of signs:* "that Jesus [*Salvation*] is the Christ…"

The word "Christ" is a translation of the Greek word *Christos,* referring to *Israel's Messiah.* The word "Christ" as it is used in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament is *Mashiah*, from which we derive our English word "Messiah."

Then, to come full circle back to the word in the Greek text of the New Testament, the Septuagint (Greek translation of the O.T.) translates the Hebrew word *Mashiah* as *Christos*

The word *Mashiah* means "anointed." *Mashiah* is used thirty-eight times in the Old Testament, and the word is always translated "anointed" except in two instances where it has been translated "Messiah" (Dan. 9:25, 26, KJV).

The verb form of *Mashiah* is used about sixty-five times in the Old Testament and is also translated "anoint" or "anointed," with only a couple of exceptions (KJV).

Thus, the reference to "Jesus the Christ" is a reference to *Jesus the Anointed One.*

Prophets, priests, and kings were anointed (*cf.* Num. 35:25; I Sam. 15:17; 16:13; I Kings 19:16; Isa. 45:1). Also the tabernacle and all of the things in the tabernacle were anointed (Ex. 40:9, 10; Lev. 8:10, 11).

Jesus, during His earthly ministry, occupied the office of *Prophet;* He is presently occupying the office of *High Priest;* and He will one day occupy the office of *King.* There would be an anointing in connection with all three, fulfilling the triad of Old Testament types.

But John 20:31 does not refer to all three. Rather, textually and contextually, the reference is to the last, that of *King.*

Satan is God's *anointed*, who presently occupies the office of *king* in relation to the earth, though in a rebel capacity. Ezekiel 28:14, referring to Satan, states:

> "Thou art *the anointed cherub* that covereth ['protects,' 'guards']; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God ['a mountain' signifying *a kingdom*]…"

The word "anointed" in this verse is a translation of the Hebrew word *mimshah,* a cognate form of *mashiah,* meaning exactly the same.

Today there are *two anointed Kings* in relation to the rulership of the earth (the "holy mountain of God" in Ezek. 28:14), typified by two anointed kings in Israel during Saul and David's day (following Saul's sin and David subsequently being anointed king in Saul's stead [though not immediately taking the sceptre and ascending the throne]).

Satan, as Saul, was anointed and placed over a kingdom; and Jesus, as David, was anointed King while the first ruler (Satan) still held the sceptre. And, *EXACTLY* as in the type, the one whom God originally placed in power, the one who sinned, is to one day be removed (Saul in the type *WAS removed* [I Sam. 31:1-6]; Satan in the antitype *WILL BE removed* [Ezek. 28:15-19]); *THEN*, as David ascended the throne during his day (II Sam. 1:1-16; 2:4; 5:3-5), Jesus will ascend the throne during His coming day (Dan. 7:13, 14; Rev. 11:15; 19:11-20:6).

The type *has been SET*, and its inseparable, Divinely designed connection with the antitype *CANNOT change.*

The antitype MUST follow the type in exact detail.

That which has come to pass in the type WILL, it MUST, come to pass in the antitype:

> *Saul put down; Satan to be put down.*
>
> *Saul's crown taken and given to David; Satan's crown to be taken and given to Christ.*
>
> *David (and his faithful followers) then reigned over Israel; Christ (and his faithful followers) to then reign over the earth).*

This is what is in view in John 20:31. The reference back to the signs is with a view to *the Jewish people believing that Jesus is the Anointed One, the One Who will one day take the kingdom and rule the earth for 1,000 years* (the central message dealt with throughout Scripture).

And the thought of *salvation* in connection with the name "Jesus," contextually, would, of necessity, have reference *to deliverance during the Messianic Era, NOT to eternal salvation.*

(John 20:30, 31, more often than not, is made to say and teach something which the two verses don't say or teach at all. These two verses are made to relate to the message of eternal salvation, with the thought then promoted that John's gospel is the one gospel among the four written to tell an unsaved person how to be saved.

The central problem with the preceding is evident: *This is simply NOT what the verses clearly state; NOR, in line with the subject matter in the three synoptic gospels, eternal salvation could NOT possibly be the central message of the book anyway.* And when Scripture is made to say that which it doesn't state, the door is opened for *ALL types of Scriptural corruption.*

In this case, *Scriptural corruption* has to do with the clearly stated purpose for the existence of the eight signs in John's gospel, which, if not understood correctly, will negatively affect one's outlook on the gospel as a whole. And since salvation by grace is the subject John 20:30, 31 is made to reference, the simple message of the gospel of grace could easily be adversely affected through this means as well.)

3) "The Son of God"

"Sonship" in Scripture implies *rulership,* for sonship is centrally *for regal purposes* in the governmental structure of God's kingdom.

"Sons of God" (angels) presently rule throughout God's kingdom, whether on this earth, other provinces throughout the galaxy, or provinces throughout all the galaxies forming the universal kingdom of God. All angels, whether fallen (as Satan and his angels) or unfallen (all the other angels) are *sons of God,* else angels (fallen or unfallen) could not rule.

Angels are *sons* because of *creation.* Unlike that which occurs in the human realm, there is no procreation in the angelic world. Each angel is a special, individual creation, providing the status of *sonship.*

Adam was *a son of God* because of *creation* (Luke 3:38), which was completely in line with the reason for his creation, given in the opening chapter of Genesis:

> "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion… [Heb., *radah,* 'rule'; *i.e.,* '…and let them rule…']" (Gen. 1:26a; *cf.* vv. 27, 28).

Man was created *to rule.* Thus, the reason for man's *sonship*

at the time of his creation is evident. Man was created *to rule the earth in the stead of Satan and his angels.*

Satan and his angels, through sin, had disqualified themselves. But Satan, with angels ruling under him, *MUST* continue to hold the sceptre until his successor is not only on the scene but ready to ascend the throne.

Knowing the reason for man's creation, Satan, the incumbent ruler, began a work designed to bring about man's fall and disqualification (Gen. 3:1-7). But, following man's fall, something occurred which had not occurred at the time Satan fell. Following man's fall, God provided *a means of redemption for fallen man, with a view to man ultimately occupying the position for which he had been created — holding the earth's sceptre.*

And, as previously noted, redemption didn't await the appearance of the Redeemer 4,000 years later (Gen. 3:15, 21), *Who was slain at a time before man's creation and fall.*

Redemption is seen throughout Scripture, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. *There is absolutely NO difference in either Testament concerning God's satisfaction pertaining to the sin problem, which is dependent on death and shed blood throughout.*

Then, when the Redeemer did appear, He appeared as *God's Son, the second Man, the last Adam* (Matt. 2:15; 3:17; I Cor. 15:45-47). He, like the first Adam, was tested. But, rather than being overcome by Satan, He overcame Satan, showing that He was fully qualified to take the sceptre (Matt. 4:1-11).

Thus, through the second Man, the last Adam, the purpose for man's creation and redemption (following his fall) will be realized.

(For additional information on this overall subject, refer to the author's books, *The Most High Ruleth* and *God's Firstborn Sons.*)

"And That by Believing Ye Might Have Life through [Gk., *en*, 'in'] His Name"

The key words in the second part of verse thirty-one are "believing" and "life." And, as in the first part of the verse, both words *MUST* be understood in the light of the introductory reference

to "signs" in the previous verse, which reflects back not only on the previous eight signs in John's gospel but upon all the signs which Jesus had performed, whether recorded or not recorded in the other three gospels.

Then also, as in the first part of the verse, remaining within context, *both words can ONLY have to do with the Son's previous ministry to the Jewish people in relation to His kingship and the proffered kingdom.*

1) "And That by Believing"

The key words throughout Scripture are "believe" and "faith"; and both, in reality, are the same word. One is a verb (Gk., *pisteuo;* "believe"), and the other is a noun (Gk., *pistis;* "faith").

> "But without *faith* it is impossible to please him [God]: for he that cometh to God must *believe*…" (Heb. 11:6a).

And faith (or belief) is connected with the whole of man's salvation, whether that of the spirit, the soul, or the body (*cf.* John 3:16; Rom. 1:17; 8:13-23; Eph. 2:8, 9; Heb. 10:35-39; I Peter 1:3-9).

The reference to believing in the latter part of John 20:31 has to do, not with the salvation which we presently possess (the salvation of the spirit), but with present and future aspects of salvation (the salvation of the soul). *Believing,* with a view to "life" in this verse, has to do with *the saved and that which lies ahead for those among the saved who exercise faith.*

It has *NOTHING to do with the unsaved.* And because "signs" and *the saved ALONE* are in view, care should be taken when using these verses in a secondary respect relative to the unsaved.

> (As well, concerning the preceding, note several things about a comparison between John's gospel and his first epistle, both evidently written about the same time [*during the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel*].
>
> John, in both books, toward the end of each, provides *a CLEAR statement regarding the reason for writing each book* [John 20:30, 31 and I John 5:11-13]—"But these are written, that ye might believe…" [John 20:31a]; "These things have I written unto you that believe…" [I John 5:13a].
>
> *The message in both books has to do with "belief," exercising faith, and this message is directed to saved individuals, with life in the kingdom in view.*

In John's gospel, with the message directed to *the Jewish people*, "signs" *are in evidence.* In John's first epistle, though Israel was still in view [with the complete epistle paralleling John's gospel in different ways], the epistle is directed to *Christians*; and, accordingly, "signs" *are NOT in view.*

Thus, "believe ['Exercise faith']" in I John 5:13, exactly as in John 20:31, as previously shown, has to do with *the saved, NOT with the unsaved* [*Jews* in John's gospel, *Christians* in his epistle (with the same Jews seen in his gospel still in view in his epistle)].

Then, note that both John 20:31 and I John 5:13, though having to do with the saved, can be used in a secondary respect relative to the unsaved. Both state exactly what the unsaved *MUST* do to be saved [believe on, exercise faith in, the Lord Jesus Christ]; and, as well, both state exactly what the saved *MUST* do to realize that being dealt with in the passages [believe on, exercise faith in, the Lord Jesus Christ].

The former has to do with the past aspect of salvation, with eternal verities [with events foreshadowed by those occurring on day one of Gen. 1]; the latter has to do with present and future aspects of salvation, with millennial verities [with events foreshadowed by those occurring on days two through six of Gen. 1]. And the whole of the matter has to do with the seventh day, the Sabbath [foreshadowed by that which then occurred in the opening three verses of Gen. 2].

Another way of viewing the preceding is seen in Rom. 1:17, where the whole of the matter is summed up — "…from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." "Life" begins and continues through *ONE means alone, through faith, for, again, apart from faith [at any point], it is "impossible" to please God* [Heb. 11:6].

Seeing verses written to the saved, as John 20:31 and I John 5:13, yet applicable to the unsaved as well, is much like the thought of *being brought forth from above* as seen in John's gospel and his epistle. Though dealing strictly with the saved in all occurrences [John chs. 1, 3, and the ten occurrences in I John (along with those in James and I Peter — *ref.* Chs. VII-IX in this book)], an unsaved person can be saved *ONLY one way* — through this same means, through *being brought forth from above.*

And it should go without saying, though that is usually *NOT* the case in today's Christianity, care needs to be taken when using passages to deal with the unsaved which contextually deal with the saved. *The primary focus of the passages should NEVER be overlooked, set aside, ignored.*

And care particularly needs to be taken when using John 20:31 in this respect, for "signs" are in view [v. 30], and signs have *NOTHING*

to do with the message of eternal salvation. As previously stated, any attempt to mix the two can only open the door for false teaching and confusion to be introduced into the simple salvation message.)

2) "Ye Might Have Life in His Name"

(The expression "in His name" is somewhat lacking as a proper translation from the Greek Text. R.C.H. Lenski, in his Greek commentary on John, possibly captures the expression best — "in union, in vital connection with, His name" [*cf.* Ps. 138:2; Phil. 2:9-11].)

"Life," in keeping with the text and context, *MUST,* as well, also be understood as having to do with that which lies ahead for the faithful among the saved, not with eternal life through believing for the unsaved.

And, during the offer and re-offer of the kingdom, *that life would have been realized for saved Jews in the proffered kingdom.*

And, since the saved and the Messianic Era are in view, an application could be made for Christians (though apart from signs), for the realization of "life" is seen elsewhere to be exactly the same for the saved today — believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God — *a revelation which comes ONLY from above* (Matt. 16:15-17).

Note I John 5:1-5 in this respect:

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous ['heavy,' 'burdensome'].

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God."

As previously shown in this book (*ref.* Chs. VII-IX), the expression, "born of God" (*i.e.,* "brought forth from God," or "brought

forth from above" in John 3:3, 7; James 1:18; I Peter 1:3, 23) is used ten times in six verses in I John (2:29; 3:9 [twice]; 4:7; 5:1 [three times]; 5:4; 5:18 [twice]). Also see John 1:13, where the expression is the same as in I John, "born…of God."

The references from John's gospel, his first epistle, James, and I Peter form all the places in the New Testament using these two expressions, which refer to the same thing — *a bringing forth from God, from above.* And the usage throughout, textually and/or contextually, always has to do with a bringing forth in relation to *the saved,* not the unsaved.

A bringing forth from God, from above is contrasted in Scripture with *a bringing forth from below* (connected with Satan), which can be seen through two experiences of the Apostle Peter in Matt. 16:15-17, 21-23. As seen in Jesus' statements concerning both, there is *a bringing forth from above in the first* (vv. 15-17) and *a bringing forth from below in the second* (vv. 21-23).

In the first, relative to Peter's confession concerning Jesus' true identity — "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (v. 16) — Jesus said:

> "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (v. 17).

In the second, relative to Peter's denial and rebuke of Christ concerning His approaching death, burial, and resurrection — "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee" (v. 22) — Jesus said:

> "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men" (v. 23).

In this respect, there are *ONLY two places* in which man can conduct and govern his affairs — *from ABOVE* or *from BELOW* — in line with the thought that a person is either for Christ or against Christ (Matt. 12:30; Luke 11:23). *There is NO middle ground in either instance* (*cf.* I Cor. 15:45-50).

As previously shown, being brought forth from God, from above, in John's gospel, his first epistle, James, and I Peter has to do with *Christians ALONE.* Again, this is not to say that man is

saved through a means other than a bringing forth from above, for *unsaved man CANNOT be saved through any other means*. Rather, it is to say that references to a bringing forth from above in all four of these New Testament books (referenced sixteen times in twelve verses) *do NOT refer to salvation by grace, the past aspect of salvation.* Instead, without exception, *ALL of them* have to do with *present and future aspects of salvation, the salvation of the soul (life), with ramifications having to do with the Messianic Era.*

And, in connection with the preceding, as also previously shown, that seen in relation to the Jews in John 20:31 (concerning the previously referenced signs) is exactly the same thing seen relative to Christians in I John 5:1-5 (apart from signs).

There is a bringing forth from God, from above, in both instances. The first, In John 20:30, 31, would be shown back in the opening part of John's gospel (in John 1:13; 3:3, 7); and the second, in I John, is seen in the text itself (in I John 5:1, 4).

Believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, is seen in both references (John 20:31; I John 5:1, 5); and coming into possession of "life" in John 20:31 is seen through *overcoming the world* in I John 5:4, 5, for *overcoming* is with a view to realizing "life" in the coming Messianic Era.

(Again, as previously dealt with in the preceding section [pp. 215-220], care must be taken when relating passages of Scripture to the unsaved that have to do with the saved [*i.e.*, moving from a primary interpretation to a secondary application].

Note I John 5:1-5 in this respect. It is widely taught throughout Christendom that *being brought forth from above* [referenced four times in these verses], resulting in *overcoming* [vv. 4, 5], has to do solely with that experienced by the unsaved, passing "from death unto life." And, placing *being brought forth from above* and *overcoming* together and understood in this respect, *every Christian* is invariably seen as "an overcomer." *Overcoming* is then dealt with as somewhat of a synonym for *being saved* [though the Greek text could correct some of this type erroneous thinking, but not all].

Then note the negative ramifications this type thinking can have concerning the seven overcomer's promises in Rev. 2, 3, along with that taught in these chapters in general.)

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