Jude

Acts of the Apostates

A Study about the Prophesied Spiritual Condition of the Church at the Time of Christ's Return

Arlen L. Chitwood

Jude is a book dealing with *apostasy.* More specifically, Jude is a book dealing with Christians caught up in apostasy, detailing the course and nature of this apostasy, along with the end result.

We're living very near the close of the present dispensation, during the time when the Laodicean period of Church history is rapidly nearing completion.

Throughout the remainder of this dispensation, according to Scripture, *there can ONLY be a further deterioration* of existing conditions. And *the ONLY recourse* which Christians have to avoid being engulfed, to some degree, in this departure from the faith is *a knowledge of the Word of God.*

There will be *NO great awakening, great revival,* in Christendom during days ahead. Rather, deteriorating conditions will only intensify during the closing days of the dispensation.

And the end result of this deterioration — *COMPLETE apostasy, resulting from the working of the leaven which the woman placed in the three measures of meal* (Matt. 13:33) — will mark conditions throughout Christendom as the dispensation is brought to a close.

Jude, as all of the other New Testament epistles, deals with *the salvation of the soul.* And the special and particular emphasis in Jude is upon *an ever-intensifying deterioration — apostasy — relative to correct Biblical teaching pertaining to THIS proffered salvation, NOT relative to salvation by grace or relative to Biblical doctrine in general.*

And correctly understanding Jude 3, in the preceding respect, *is foundational to a correct understanding of the book as a whole:*

> "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

Go wrong here, and you will be wrong the rest of the way; *BUT*, correctly understand this verse, and…

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by
Arlen L. Chitwood

The
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or
74798 South 4710 Road
Westville, Oklahoma 74965

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"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert cold or hot.

So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

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:

I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with me.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

— Rev. 3:14-21

Cover Photograph: Sunset on South Carolina Coast, Spring, 2005

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FOREWORD

Apostasy is a major subject of Scripture, beginning among the Israelites in the Old Testament and continuing among Christians in the New Testament.

There were *false prophets* among the Israelites during and following Moses' day, "even as" there have been and are *false teachers* in Christendom during the present day. *And the message of the false teachers in Christendom* is described by the words, "damnable heresies," which had its counterpart in the message previously proclaimed *by the false prophets in Israel* (II Peter 2:1).

Over "the space of three years," Paul, "night and day with tears," had warned the Christians in Ephesus concerning individuals *who would arise within the Church and lead many astray.*

These individuals were described as "grievous ['savage,' 'violent'] wolves" who would proclaim "perverse things [distorting, twisting the truth]," and "draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-31).

Paul warned Timothy concerning *apostasy* "in the latter times." Many at that time would "depart ['apostatize'] from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons" (I Tim. 4:1-3).

That is, Christians would cease listening to those proclaiming the truth, *the deep things of God;* and, instead, they would listen to those proclaiming that which was false — truth which had been twisted, perverted — called, *the deep things of Satan* (I Cor. 2:10; Rev. 2:24).

Central Subject of the New Testament Epistles
The 2,000-Year History of the Church

Of the twenty-one New Testament epistles, *ALL center around ONE subject: the salvation of the soul, with everything dealt with in the epistles inseparably related to this central subject.*

And two of these epistles, II Peter and Jude, *center specifically around ONE particular aspect of the salvation of the soul* — apostasy in relation to this salvation.

Then, two accounts are given in the New Testament showing the complete history of the Church throughout the dispensation.

The first was given during Christ's earthly ministry before the Church was ever brought into existence (Matt. 13:3-33); and the second was given through the apostle John, following Christ's ascension (Rev. 2, 3).

Both accounts, written from two different perspectives, show *EXACTLY the same thing.* They both show the Church, *throughout the dispensation, progressively DEPARTING from ALL sound teaching concerning the salvation of the soul, referred to as "the word of the kingdom" in Matthew chapter thirteen.*

And both accounts show *EXACTLY the same outcome* for the Church in days immediately preceding the end of the dispensation, days during which Christendom presently finds itself.

Both accounts show the Church ultimately *so far removed* from any sound teaching pertaining to the Word of the Kingdom that, at the time of Christ's return, He will *NOT* find "faith [*lit.,* 'the faith,' an expression peculiarly related to this message in the N.T.] on the earth."

That is, at the time of Christ's return, *He will NOT find the Word of the Kingdom being proclaimed in the Churches of the land* (Luke 18:8). The Church, throughout 2,000 years of history, will have moved 180 degrees out of phase in relation to this message.

The Progressive Deterioration, Apostasy — Why?

At the beginning of the dispensation, the Word of the Kingdom was *the CENTRAL message known and taught* throughout Christendom (Col. 1:5, 6, 23).

However, at the end of the dispensation, Scripture states that conditions will be *EXACTLY the opposite. At the end of the dispensation, this message will NOT be taught in the Churches at all.*

HOW did this occur?

WHY did this occur?

As long as a person remains with what Scripture reveals about the matter, the answer is *very clear and simple.*

A woman placed leaven in three measures of meal very early in the dispensation. And the leaven, working in the meal throughout the

dispensation, has *NOT ONLY* progressively brought about the current conditions but it will continue working *UNTIL* "the whole" has been leavened, *UNTIL* "the whole" has been corrupted.

And all a person has to do to see this first-hand is go into practically any Church in the land (fundamental or liberal). Relative to a proclamation of the Word of the Kingdom, resulting from corruption produced by the leaven, *EXACTLY the same thing, EXACTLY the same corruption, can be found in either type Church or group of individuals.*

Fundamental and liberal Churches/groups are worlds apart on many things, but when it comes to a proclamation of the Word of the Kingdom, *they find COMMON grounds! There is NO difference!*

NEITHER proclaims this message, leaving fundamental Christianity to NOT be nearly as fundamental as they often purport to be. When it comes to the reason for and the results of the working of the leaven, the WHOLE has been corrupted, leaving NO distinction between segments of Christianity!

In this respect, resulting from the dispensation-long working of the leaven in the three measures of meal, the Word of the Kingdom has become *a message essentially UNKNOWN and resultingly UNTAUGHT* in Christendom today (*cf.* Matt. 13:31-33; Luke 18:8; Rev. 3:17).

The Books of II Peter and Jude deal with different facets of the apostasy which has been occurring over almost two millenniums of time, resulting in conditions as they presently exist.

And this book, *Jude*, deals with this overall apostasy *from the ONLY correct Biblical perspective — an ever-increasing departure from "the faith" as the dispensation progresses, with this departure being brought to completion at the end of the dispensation*.

And, as well, this book provides the reason for this apostasy, the reason why Satan has worked for two millenniums to bring the Church into its current, decadent condition, with the blinded Church not even realizing its own condition in this respect (Rev. 3:14-17).

(For additional information on the first four parables in Matt. 13, depicting a complete history of the Church throughout the dispensation, refer to Chs. III-VI in the author's book, *Mysteries of the Kingdom*.

Or, to approach the matter from the vantage point of the seven Churches in Rev. 2, 3, the *ONLY other place* where a complete history of the Church is given in the N.T.,refer to Chs. IV-XI in the author's book, *Judgment Seat of Christ*.)

1

The Great Apostasy

Among the Saved, NOT the Unsaved

Jude is an epistle dealing specifically with "apostasy" in the latter days and with "judgment" which follows this apostasy. The present dispensation had its beginning in the Book of Acts with the *Acts of the Apostles;* and the dispensation will end, as described in the Epistle of Jude, with the *Acts of the Apostates.*

The Book of Acts introduces *the beginning* and progression of the history of the early Church (from the inception of the Church [in 33 A.D.], during the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel [from 33 A.D. to about 62 A.D.]); and the Epistle of Jude reveals how this history will *end* (2,000 years later, as the dispensation draws to a close).

The exact positions which the Book of Acts and the Epistle of Jude occupy in the canon of Scripture are in perfect keeping with their respective contents.

The Book of Acts immediately precedes twenty-one epistles directed to Christians, providing a smooth, transitional flow from the gospels into the epistles.

And *the Epistle of Jude* appears as the last of these twenty-one epistles, introducing the Book of Revelation by *the great apostasy* which precedes the removal of the Church into the Lord's Day at the end of the present dispensation (Rev. 1:10ff; *cf.* I Thess. 4:16-5:10).

Apostasy

The word "apostasy" is itself *not* used in the Epistle of Jude. Rather, this word is taken from the Greek text of several corresponding Scriptures appearing elsewhere in the New Testament, referring to "the apostasy," seen as *a departure from the faith.*

This apostasy, this departure from the faith, actually began very early in the history of the Church, foretold by the Lord Himself in the first four parables of Matthew chapter thirteen (vv. 3-8, 18-33).

In the fourth parable (v. 33), very early in the dispensation, a woman had placed *leaven* in three measures of meal (a substance used in the symbolism of Scripture to depict "sin," "deterioration," "corruption"). And this leaven has not only been working throughout the dispensation (during time covered by all four parables) but will continue working *UNTIL the whole has been leavened, corrupted*.

This leavening process provides *the reason* for the existing conditions in Christendom today, very near the end of the dispensation — the absence of the proclamation of the Word of the Kingdom in the Churches of the land. And this leavening process also provides *the reason* why, when the Son of Man returns, He *will NOT* find "the faith on the earth ['faith' is articular in the Greek text, showing a specific faith, peculiarly related to the Word of the Kingdom]" (Luke 18:8).

Relative to *apostasy,* Paul states in II Thess. 2:3:

> "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day [the Day of the Lord] shall not come except there come *a falling away ['the apostasy']* first…"

Paul, again in I Tim. 4:1 states:

> "Now ['But'] the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall *depart ['apostatize']* from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons."

The writer of Hebrews calls attention to this same thing in Heb. 3:12:

> "Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in *departing ['apostatizing']* from the living God."

In the preceding verses, the words "falling away," "depart," and "departing" are translations of either the Greek noun *apostasia* or the verb *aphistemi* (the verb form of *apostasia*), meaning "apostasy."

The English word "apostasy" is a transliterated form of the Greek word *apostasia,* a compound word formed from *apo* and *stasis. Apo* means "from," and *stasis* means "to stand." And when used together, forming the word *apostasia,* the meaning is "standing away from."

This "standing away from" pertains to a position previously occupied and refers more specifically (drawing from contexts where the word is used) to *a standing away from "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints"* (*cf.* I Tim. 4:1; Jude 3).

In the true sense of the word, *NO ONE can stand away from something with which he has never been affiliated.*

This can be illustrated by the use of the Greek word *apostasion* (neuter form of *apostasia*) in Matt. 5:31; 19:7; Mark 10:4. In each instance the word is translated "divorcement." It is one person "standing away from" another person. There could be *NO* "divorcement," "standing away from," *UNLESS* a marriage had previously occurred.

In like manner, *NO ONE* could "stand away from" *the faith* (apostatize) unless he had previously been associated with *the faith.*

Believers *ALONE* occupy a position of this nature from which they can "stand away." Unbelievers have *NEVER* come into such a position, and, in the true sense of the word, *are NOT associated with the latter-day apostasy in Scripture.*

Reason for Apostasy

Christians familiar with that which Scripture teaches will have no difficulty understanding why the present dispensation will end in apostasy. As previously stated, the entire matter stems from an incident occurring very early in the history of the Church.

In Matt. 13:33, in the parables of the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens, a woman took leaven and hid this leaven "in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

> (Again, note *the parable of the Sower, the parable of the wheat and tares* and *the parable of the mustard seed* which immediately precede *the parable of the leaven.* These first three parables *show previous facets of the ultimate result of the working of the leaven in the fourth parable* [vv. 3-8, 18-32].)

All seven parables in this chapter have to do with the course of Christianity throughout the present dispensation and/or with events at the conclusion of the dispensation after the Church has been removed from the sphere of activity, with the last three parables having to do with events immediately preceding and leading into the Messianic Kingdom itself.

Once this woman had placed leaven in the three measures of meal, the course of Christianity was SET. The leaven would work in the meal throughout the dispensation, climaxing its work at the end of the dispensation with the entire three measures of meal being completely saturated with leaven.

"Leaven" in Scripture, as previously noted, *ALWAYS refers to that which is false or corrupt.* The "leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" was *false doctrine* (Matt. 16:6-12); and "leaven" associated with Christians, in like manner, can only refer to that which is *false or corrupt in their lives* (*cf.* Ex. 12:14-20; I Cor. 5:1-8).

Leaven in Exodus chapter twelve, because of that which it symbolized, could occupy *NO place* in the house of an Israelite following the issues surrounding the death of the firstborn in Egypt.

And that which leaven symbolizes must, in like manner, *NEVER* be allowed to occupy a place in the life of a Christian today.

"Three [the 'three' measures of meal into which the leaven was placed]" is the number of *Divine perfection.* The number "three," for example, is used of the Godhead — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is used concerning the time of Christ's resurrection. Christ was raised from the dead on the third day, which points to the coming third day (the third one-thousand-year period dating from Calvary) when all of God's firstborn Sons ("Jesus," "Israel," and "the Church" following the adoption [another triad]) will be raised up, *i.e., elevated to their proper positions on and over the earth.* In that day, *Divine perfection* in God's plan for the ages will be worked out to perfection in its fullness.

God has forbidden the placing of leaven in meal (Lev. 6:14-17), as this woman did in Matt. 13:33. Meal is made from crushed wheat. "Wheat" is sown by *the Sower* in Matt. 13:3 (the Lord Jesus Christ [Matt. 13:37; John 12:24]) and has to do with *that which is sown in the field* in Matt. 13:24 (the sons of the kingdom [Matt. 13:38]).

The three measures of meal, in the light of related Scripture, could *ONLY* point to doctrine emanating from the triune God. And *THIS* doctrine, in the light of the context, *MUST* pertain particularly to "the Sower," "the sons of the kingdom," and "the word of the kingdom."

Result of Apostasy

The woman in Matt. 13:33, a propagator of that which is false or corrupt, *can ONLY* be associated with Satan and his false system of doctrine. This woman inserted leaven into the three measures of meal very early in the history of the Church, as evidenced by the rampant apostasy which began to exist in the early Church, even during the first century.

And the leaven has been working for over nineteen centuries, it is presently working, and it will continue to work UNTIL "the whole" has been leavened.

Scripture places the completion of the leavening process *at the end of the present dispensation, EXACTLY where we are living today*. The latter days in Christendom, prophesied in Scripture, will be marked, *NOT* by great revivals or a widespread teaching of the Word of God, *BUT* by the completion of a leavening process, resulting in *apostasy.*

Conditions in Christendom throughout the dispensation are also set forth in the seven letters to the seven Churches in Revelation chapters two and three. These are seven epistles written to seven Churches existing in the first century during John's day, which portray the history of the Church throughout the dispensation. The leaven placed in the three measures of meal was already at work in these Churches; and one Church, the Laodicean Church (3:14-21), *had, even before the end of the first century, become completely corrupted by the leaven.*

This Church, the seventh and last of the named Churches, *can ONLY depict the final form of Christendom at the end of the dispensation AFTER the leaven has permeated all of the meal into which it had previously been placed.*

In this respect, the Epistle to the Laodiceans corresponds to the Epistle of Jude.

As in II Timothy and II Peter, the apostasy had already set in during the opening several decades of the dispensation; but conditions in both epistles portray Christianity more particularly at the end of the dispensation (when the leaven will be doing its most damaging, end-time work), immediately before the removal of the Church and the beginning of the Tribulation (Rev. 4:1ff; 6:1ff).

Several things distinguish the Laodicean Church from the others:

a) Nothing good was recorded about this Church.

b) Only a form of godliness remained within this Church (vv. 15, 16; *cf.* II Tim. 3:5).

c) Materialism had permeated this Church to such an extent that it was spiritually destitute (vv. 17, 18).

d) Christ stood on the outside, not within (v. 20).

To some individuals it is inconceivable that Christians can apostatize from *the faith* to the extent that they become as the Laodiceans

— "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." But this is *EXACTLY the Biblical picture of the Church in the latter days, AFTER the leaven has been at work for almost two millenniums*.

The "lukewarmness" of the Laodicean Church in John's day fostered the working of the leaven (v. 16), for leaven works best in a place where the temperature is not too hot nor too cold. And the "lukewarmness" of the Laodicean Church of today (where the proclamation of the Word of the Kingdom is all but absent) is allowing the leaven to do its most rapid and damaging work of the entire dispensation.

Because of this, apostasy is not only presently abounding but it will increasingly continue to abound on every hand as the Church moves even closer to the end of the present dispensation; and conditions wrought by the leaven within these lukewarm confines, will continue to rapidly deteriorate the mass until "fire" stops the working of the leaven after the dispensation has run its course (*cf.* I Cor. 3:11-15).

The message to each Church throughout Revelation chapters two and three concerns conditions existing among Christians in these Churches. Then, at the conclusion of each message is an overcomer's promise to Christians within these Churches, even to Christians in the most corrupt Church of all, the Laodicean Church: "To him that overcometh…" (2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 21).

Overcomers' promises of this nature *can ONLY be for Christians ALONE, for ONLY Christians are in a position to overcome and be recipients of the things promised in these two chapters — things which, in their entirety, are millennial in their scope of fulfillment.*

(For additional information on the seven parables in Matt. 13 and the epistles to the seven Churches in Rev. 2, 3, refer to the author's books, *Judgment Seat of Christ* and *Mysteries of the Kingdom*.)

Apostasy and the Mysteries

"Holding the mystery of the faith in all pure conscience…

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness…

Now ['But'] the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart ['apostatize'] from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons;

Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (I Tim. 3:9, 16a; 4:1-3).

1) "The Mysteries of God" (I Cor. 4:1)

Two mysteries are mentioned in I Timothy (3:9, 16), and both appear immediately before the reference to apostasy in the latter days (4:1-3).

"A mystery" refers to *a truth previously seen in the Old Testament but not fully opened up and revealed*, and teachings within all mysteries in the New Testament *move toward the SAME end (an end, in reality, toward which all Scripture moves) — the termination of this dispensation and the ushering in of a new dispensation.*

"The mystery of God" will be brought to completion immediately prior to the Messianic Era (Rev. 10:7); and all revealed mysteries, within their framework of completion, *move toward this SAME point in time.*

Mysteries in the New Testament begin with the "mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens" in Matthew chapter thirteen. These mysteries (seen in seven connected parables) provide a chronological sequence of events during and following the present dispensation, which will culminate in the Messianic Era.

Teachings within these mysteries have to do centrally with the present work of the Spirit among Christians (present dispensation) and the Son's future work on behalf of Christians (during and immediately following the Tribulation [a redemption of the inheritance], during and immediately following the last seven years of the preceding dispensation).

And the counter-work of Satan has to do with the "doctrines of demons," associated with the "mystery of iniquity," as he seeks to subvert the work of God.

The mystery dealt with more than any other in the New Testament was revealed to the Apostle Paul by Christ Himself via "revelation [personal appearance]" and is called in Scripture simply "the mystery" or "the mystery of Christ" (Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:3, 4, 9; Col. 1:26, 27; 4:3).

This mystery is defined by Paul as "Christ in you [*lit.*, 'Christ (the One Who will rule and reign) being proclaimed among you'], *the hope of glory"* (Col. 1:27), pointing to that future day when "Christ, who is our life shall appear," and Christians will "also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:4).

This mystery has to do with the fact that believing Jews and believing Gentiles, forming the "one new man" *in Christ,* will, after being

approved at the judgment seat of Christ, be the recipients of heavenly promises and blessings as joint-heirs with Christ in His kingdom (Eph. 3:6; *cf.* I Cor. 9:24-27; James 1:12; I Peter 1:7-9).

This mystery has for its end the realization of the Christians' present hope.

Another mystery is that of *Israel's present blindness,* awaiting "the fullness of the Gentiles" (Rom. 11:25).

This mystery, as the others, has to do with events during the present time which will be completed immediately preceding the coming kingdom, allowing for "the fullness of the Gentiles." And the purpose for "the fullness of the Gentiles" is that God may, in the coming dispensation, have "a people for his name [a people separate from Israel — *namely, the Son's wife, who will rule as consort queen with Him*]."

After "the fullness of the Gentiles be come in," Israel's blindness will be lifted (Rom. 11:26).

God will then have a people for His name here on earth (*Israel, following the nation's repentance, conversion, and restoration*) and a people for His name in the heavens (*the Church, following this new nation's removal from the earth, adoption, and establishment in heavenly places*).

Another mystery concerns the resurrection of the dead and the translation of the living "in Christ" (I Cor. 15:51-58; I Thess. 4:13-18).

This mystery has to do with the removal of the saints (body, soul, and spirit) from the earthly sphere to a heavenly sphere, with a view to the coming reign of Christ from the heavens.

Certain things concerning the resurrection of the dead, the translation of the living, and saints occupying heavenly places were revealed during Old Testament days (Gen. 5:24; II Kings 2:11; Job 19:25-27; Ezek. 37:12-14, 23-25; Dan. 7:25-27). But that which was not fully opened up to saints of preceding generations, "the mystery," focuses on a people separate from Israel, comprised of those "in Christ," who are to be associated with a separate resurrection, experience translation, and occupy heavenly places.

Other mysteries, such as those in I Tim. 3:9, 16, have to do with the present activities of the saints, with a view particularly to events during the coming millennial day. "The mystery of the faith" (v. 9) and "the mystery of godliness" (v. 16) have to do with the present faithfulness on the part of Christians, with a view to their receiving the "end ['goal']" *of faith, the salvation of their souls* (I Peter 1:9; *cf.* Heb. 10:38, 39; 11:1ff).

The word translated "godliness ['mystery of godliness']" in the Greek text is *eusebeia,* which is a term used of men alone, not of God.

This word refers to Christians exercising "piety," "godliness," "reverence" in their lives. Both "the mystery of the faith" and the "mystery of godliness," as they relate to the salvation of the souls of those "in Christ," were seen in the types dealing with the subject, though not fully opened up and revealed in the Old Testament.

In this respect, these types *could NOT* be properly understood apart from the antitypes.

The antitypes would unlock the types, and the types would THEN shed a world of light on the antitypes. (*cf.* I Peter 1:10-12). And, because later revelation was required to open up and explain this material in the Old Testament, these are termed "mysteries" in the New Testament.

2) "The Mystery of Iniquity" (II Thess. 2:7)

To counter the work of God within His revealed mysteries, Satan, in connection with his activities among Christians, has what Scripture calls, "the mystery of iniquity" (II Thess. 2:7, 9, 10).

In Rev. 2:24, "the depths of Satan," as opposed to "the deep things of God" in I Cor. 2:10, is mentioned as well. And the construction of the Greek text in both Scriptures is identical.

These opposing doctrines are literally called, "the deep things of God," and "the deep things of Satan."

The deep things of God reveal the things which God would have His people know; and we're told that "the doctrines of demons" emanate from *the deep things of Satan*, as Satan seeks to mislead God's people (I Tim. 4:1ff).

Thus, God has His "deep things," associated with His "mysteries" (*cf.* I Cor. 2:7); and Satan, the great counterfeiter, has his "deep things," associated with "the mystery of iniquity."

Satan's great objective today, within the scope of "the mystery of iniquity," is to counter teachings (through false doctrine) within "the mysteries of God."

Note how teachings concerning "the mystery of the faith" in I Tim. 3:9 are countered through "the doctrines of demons" in I Tim. 4:2. "The mystery of the faith" is to be held with "a pure conscience"; and in I Tim. 4:2, out of "hypocrisies and lying words," demons, through their

doctrines, "sear one's conscience" (literal thought from the Greek text).

Conscience has to do with "spiritual awareness." The word was used earlier in first Timothy concerning the spiritual warfare and faithfulness as they relate to "the faith" (1:19, 20 [the second use of "faith" in v. 19 is articular in the Greek text]). *The doctrine of demons* is designed *to scar one's spiritual awareness,* adversely affecting one's faithful, godly walk in the present world.

Satan, above everything else, *does NOT* want "the mysteries" proclaimed in a true, uncorrupted form.

These "mysteries" *ALL* pertain to some facet of the "word of the kingdom," which speaks of *that future day when Satan and His angels will be put down, with Christ and His co-heirs THEN moving in and taking the kingdom, i.e., THEN moving in and taking over the government of the earth.*

Christ has already shown Himself fully qualified to replace Satan as the Ruler over this earth, and Satan can do *NOTHING* about Christ and His present status.

However, Christians are presently in the process of qualifying (or being disqualified) to replace the fallen angels ruling under Satan; and if Satan could prevent this from happening, he could prevent Christ from taking the kingdom, for Christ would have insufficient, qualified personnel to occupy the necessary positions of power and authority in the kingdom. Thus, in a respect, *ALL* of Satan's present activity against Christians *can ONLY* be centered around this goal.

The entire present dispensation is an interval during which God is taking out of the Gentiles "a people for his name."

And *THOSE* whom God is removing from the Gentiles *are the ONES being offered positions with Christ in the coming kingdom. THESE are the ONES who will replace the incumbent rulers.*

THAT is what "the mysteries of God" are about; and *THAT* is also what "the mystery of iniquity," in a counter respect, is about.

The great *apostasy in the Church* during the latter days, brought into existence through the "leaven" placed in the three measures of meal and associated with the "doctrines of demons," is being accomplished *through ONE central means: taking the truth of the Word of God and twisting, perverting, this truth* (I Tim. 4:1-3).

And this is being done *with ONE central goal in view: the destruction (the leavening) of ALL sound doctrine pertaining to the coming kingdom of Christ.*

Introducing Apostasy in Jude

"Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified ['loved'] by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:

Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied" (Jude 1, 2).

1) "Jude"

Jude begins his epistle with his own name, which is literally "Judas" in the Greek text. The name "Judas" is derived from the Greek form of the Hebrew name for "Judah" (*cf.* Matt. 1:2, KJV).

This was a common name in Israel during the days when our Lord was upon the earth; but this name, understandably, is seldom used today. Through the actions of another person named "Judas" (Judas Iscariot), the name has become a synonym for *traitor* or *apostate.*

Judas Iscariot, numbered among the twelve, betrayed the Lord for thirty pieces of silver. Judas was appointed to the apostolate by the Lord (Matt. 10:1-4), and from this position he "by transgression fell ['turned aside,' 'fell away']" (Acts 1:25). Judas "stood away from" the other eleven. Insofar as the apostolate and the message being proclaimed were concerned, Judas became an *apostate.*

The fact that the Epistle of Jude was written by an individual whose name has become associated with traitorous actions (apostasy) is no mere coincidence. Nor is it coincidental that his name is the very first word which appears in the epistle. The Epistle of Jude, by the very name of the writer itself, begins with the mark of *apostasy.*

Jude was the brother of James (v. 1), apparently the same as the writer of the Epistle of James and a half brother of the Lord (Gal. 1:19).

In this respect, the writer of the Epistle of Jude would be the same Jude ("Judas," "Juda") mentioned in Matt. 13:55 and Mark 6:3, one of four half brothers of Jesus (*cf.* Ps. 69:7, 8). None of the half brothers of Jesus were numbered among the twelve apostles, but two (if this is the same Jude from Matt. 13:55 and Mark 6:3) were later singled out by the Lord to write New Testament epistles.

James, in his epistle, deals, at least in part, *with works in relation to the salvation of the soul;* and Jude, in his epistle, deals specifically *with apostasy in relation to the salvation of the soul* — an *apostasy* which will

engulf the Church in the latter days (the same as Peter presented in his second epistle), *producing a dark-age effect upon ALL correct Scriptural teaching pertaining to the salvation of the soul.*

The fact that the writer of the Epistle of Jude was apparently a family member of the Lord is itself, as the name "Judas," not without significance. The latter-day apostasy, of which Jude writes, will be entered into by family members of the Lord — those within the family of God, the children of God, the saved.

Thus, the name "Jude ['Judas']" and the apparent relationship of Jude to the Lord *SET the tone, at the very beginning, for the entire epistle.*

2) "Sanctified…Preserved…Called"

Jude directs his epistle to "them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called" (v. 1).

Most of the better Greek manuscripts have the word for "love" rather than the word for "sanctify" in this verse, and this is the translation which one will find in versions such as the ASV, NASB, NIV, *et al.*

The word for "love" is in the perfect tense in the Greek text, indicating action completed in past time, with present, continuing results (results based on the past, completed action). Through a completed act, *the love of God* has been manifested (past).

God manifested His love *at Calvary*; and the perfect tense shows that *the manifestation of this love, based on the Son's past, completed work, continues uninterrupted. God is the One Who loves, and man is the object of His love. God's love is an active, continuing, ever-abiding love which exists during ALL present time and will continue to exist during ALL future time.*

The recipients of God's love will NEVER be estranged from this love.

Paul asks the question in Rom. 8:35:

> "Who shall separate us from the *love* of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"

The question is then answered in verses thirty-eight and thirty-nine:

> "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come.
>
> Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature ['any other created thing'], shall be able to separate us from *the love of God*, which is in

Christ Jesus our Lord."

NOTHING in God's material universe, present or future, can separate Christians from His love.

A Christian may appear in the presence of Christ *naked* and *ashamed* at the end of this dispensation (*cf.* Rom. 8:35; Rev. 3:17, 18), *BUT* this, although resulting in dire consequences, *will NOT* separate him from the love of God. Man's unfaithfulness can have no bearing on God's faithfulness (II Tim. 2:13).

A Christian can pass through any experience of life and pass out of life into death *WITHOUT effecting a change in the nature of God's love toward that individual personally. God does NOT change, and His love toward His creature does NOT change. Based on a past, completed work, this love is a present reality which will endure FOREVER.*

The word "preserved," also in the perfect tense, could be better translated, "kept." Christians are "kept in Christ Jesus." This is in association with our past salvation experience and its present, continuing results.

And the word "kept" is *unique* insofar as introductory remarks in New Testament epistles are concerned. Paul used words such as "faithful," "beloved," and "called," but Jude alone used the word "kept."

A similar word appears in I Peter 1:5 (also translated "kept" in the English text, but from a Greek word having a slightly different meaning):

> "Who are kept [*i.e.,* 'guarded'; *lit.,* 'Who are being kept under guard' (passive participle)] by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Studying Jude in the light of this verse, it is not difficult to understand why *the guarding, keeping* power of God will be sorely needed by Christians in the latter days. Confronted with *apostasy* on every hand, *Christians MUST be guarded, kept by the power of God,* as they, "through faith," keep their eyes on the goal — the "salvation [salvation of the soul] ready to be revealed in the last time."

Not only were the Christians to whom Jude wrote "loved" and "kept," but they were also "called" (*saved, THEN "called"*) *And they had been saved for a purpose, with their calling having to do with that purpose.*

> "…God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:
>
> Whereunto he called you by our gospel [not the good news concerning the grace of God but the good news concerning the coming glory of Christ], to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thess. 2:13b, 14).

Other Scriptures show that an individual *MUST be* "called out" of the "called" (*cf.* Matt. 22:14) in order to be a partaker of "the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." The message in Jude is to the "called," *with a view to their being "called out" and realizing the hope of their calling, which is associated with the glory to be revealed* (*cf.* Titus 2:11-14).

3) "Mercy…Peace…Love"

Jude concludes his introductory remarks with, *"Mercy* unto you, and *peace,* and *love,* be multiplied." A similar Divine order beginning every Pauline epistle, with the exception of three, is *"Grace* be unto you, and *peace…"*

"Grace" must always stand *FIRST,* for, *apart from God's grace, ALL is meaningless and vain.* When God deals with man in *grace* He considers neither man's merits nor demerits. Grace is that which God is able to do completely apart from human intervention; and such dealings *MUST* always precede the manifestation of His *mercy, peace,* and *love.*

The fact that "mercy" is used in the salutations of I Timothy, II Timothy, and Titus possibly provides the reason for its usage in Jude 2. I and II Timothy are epistles which also, to some extent, deal with apostasy (*e.g.,* I Tim. 4:1ff; II Tim. 3:1ff); and Titus deals specifically with the "blessed hope" set before Christians (1:2; 2:13; 3:7), which has to do with life (salvation of the soul) in the coming age (*cf.* Jude 21).

Mercy is "Divine compassion," "Divine pity," which presupposes helplessness and need. God is "rich in mercy" (Eph. 2:4), and Christians are to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain *mercy,* and find *grace* to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16).

Helplessness and *need* in the lives of Christians will be manifested as never before as Christians move deeper into the present, ever-increasing apostasy. And *mercy* (Divine help), *peace* (peace of God), and *love* (love of God) *MUST* be multiplied to see Christians safely through the dark days produced by this apostasy.

2

Contending for the Faith

A Specific faith and Exhortation

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

Following introductory remarks (vv. 1, 2), Jude calls attention to the original intent of his epistle (v. 3). Jude had originally set about to write an epistle dealing with the "common salvation" (commonly possessed by all believers, *which could ONLY be salvation by grace through faith*).

But the Holy Spirit prevented him from writing upon this subject and, instead, moved him to write upon something entirely different. The Holy Spirit moved Jude to write upon *contending for the faith during a day of apostasy.*

In this respect, there are two indispensable keys which one *MUST* possess when studying the Epistle of Jude:

a) A correct understanding of what is meant by the expression "earnestly contend for the faith" (v. 3).

b) A correct understanding of what is meant by "apostasy from the faith" (I Tim. 4:1-3) as it relates to both individual Christians and to the Church as a whole.

These things *MUST* be grasped at the very outset, else the main message in this epistle will either be distorted or lost to the reader.

The first indispensable key which one *MUST* possess to correctly understand the Epistle of Jude is the subject matter at hand in our present study — "earnestly contend for the faith," which, in one sense of the word, is the opposite of "apostasy from the faith."

However, contrary to popular interpretation, this opposite meaning *has NOTHING to do with being a protector or guardian of the great Christian doctrines* (*e.g.*, divinity and virgin birth of Christ, salvation through a vicarious death and the shedding of blood, etc.). Rather, *something entirely different is in view*.

"Apostasy from the faith," the second indispensable key, was the main subject under discussion throughout the foreword to this book; and this introductory material should prove sufficient to provide a base upon which one can build as he moves on into the Epistle of Jude and views the various forms which apostasy can take.

Those who apostatize from the faith are *Christians, NOT those of the world*. It is *NOT* possible for an unsaved person to *apostatize*, to "stand away from" *the faith, for he has NEVER come into a position relative to the faith from which he can stand away. ONLY* individuals from among the saved can possibly come into this position, and *ONLY* these same individuals can enter into this latter-day apostasy in the true sense of the word.

Striving in the Contest

The words "earnestly contend" in Jude 3 are a translation of the Greek word *epagonizomai*. This is an intensified form of the word *agonizomai,* from which we derive our English word "agonize."

The word *agonizomai* is found in such passages as I Cor. 9:25 ("striveth"), I Tim. 6:12 ("fight"), and II Tim. 4:7 ("fought"). This word refers particularly to "a struggle in a contest."

In I Cor. 9:24-27, Paul pictured himself as *a contestant in a race*, with a victor's crown to be won through a successful completion of the race. And he pictured himself running the race in *the most intense manner possible,* using the word *agonizomai* to describe his actions as he ran.

Paul *strained every muscle of his being* as he sought to finish the race in a satisfactory manner and be awarded the proffered crown.

And Paul sought to encourage others to run after the same fashion, keeping the same goal in view.

I Timothy 6:12 states:

> "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called…"

This verse could be better translated:

> "Strive [Gk., *Agonizomai;* again, the word from which the English word 'agonize ' is derived] in the good contest [*agon*] of the faith; lay hold on life for the age, whereunto thou art also called…"

Agon, translated "contest," is the noun form of the verb *agonizomai,* translated "strive." A contest/race is in view (same as I Cor. 9:24-27), and it is a "contest [race] of the faith." It is "striving" *relative to the faith.*

The same thing is similarly stated in II Timothy 4:7a:

> "I have fought a good fight [*i.e.*, 'I have strived (*agonizomai*) in the good contest (*agon*)]…"

The "contest" here, as in I Tim. 6:12 and as seen in the latter part of this verse, has to do with *the faith.* And the goal set forth in both sections of Scripture is the same:

> "…I have finished my course [the contest/race], I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day…" (II Tim. 4:7b, 8; *cf.* I Tim. 6:12, 15, 18).

The contest or race here is the same race set forth in I Cor. 9:24-27, with one or more crowns in view at the end of the race. And successful completion of the race will result in the runner being crowned, anticipating the coming rule from the heavens over the earth as a joint-heir with Christ (called "life for the age" in I Tim. 6:12).

With these things in mind concerning the use of the word *agonizomai* in connection with "the faith," note the expression "earnestly contend for the faith" in Jude 3. In keeping with the other translations, the exact thought brought out by the word *epagonizomai* in Jude (an intensified form of *agonizomai,* the word used in I Tim. 6:12; II Tim. 4:7), could be better understood by using the translation "earnestly strive."

Once again, a contest/race is in view; and *earnestly striving* "for the faith" — contextually, and in the light of the preceding related Scriptures where *agon* and *agonizomai* are used — could be better understood in the English text by translating, *earnestly striving* "with respect to the faith," *for that can ONLY be EXACTLY what is being stated.*

Earnestly striving "with respect to the faith" in Jude carries the identical thought of *striving* "in the good contest of the faith" in I Timothy. The intensified form of *agonizomai* (used only this one place in the New Testament) undoubtedly appears in Jude because of the subject of the epistle (apostasy) and the immediate danger of the recipients of this message being caught up in the apostasy at hand.

Jude and II Peter

Understanding *EXACTLY* what is involved in *earnestly striving* "with respect to the faith" in Jude is possibly best brought out in II Peter.

II Peter is the companion epistle to Jude. Both epistles deal with the same subject matter throughout — "faith," and "apostasy." "Faith" appears first in both epistles (Jude 3; II Peter ch. 1), followed by "apostasy" *from the faith* (Jude 4ff; II Peter chs. 2, 3).

II Peter also occupies the same unique relationship to I Peter that Jude occupies relative to all the preceding epistles — Pauline and General.

I Peter deals specifically with"faith" in relation to the salvation of the soul (1:1-11), and II Peter deals with "faith" (ch. 1) and "apostasy" (chs. 2, 3) in relation to this salvation.

The same order is set forth in Jude and the epistles which precede. The epistles preceding Jude, Pauline and General, also deal specifically with the salvation of the soul. Jude then forms a capstone for the entire subject, presenting, as II Peter, "faith" in relation to the salvation of the soul first (v. 3), and then "apostasy" in relation to the salvation of the soul (vv. 4ff).

Parallels in the sections on *apostasy from the faith* in both epistles (II Peter 2:1ff; Jude 4ff) clearly illustrate the oneness of Peter's and Jude's messages. Numerous identical subjects, events, and places are recorded in the same order (*cf.* II Peter 2:1-3 and Jude 4; II Peter 2:4-9 and Jude 6, 7; II Peter 2:10-14 and Jude 8-10; II Peter 2:15, 16 and Jude 11; II Peter 2:17, 18 and Jude 12, 13, 16; II Peter 3:1-13 and Jude 17-19).

"Apostasy" in both instances is *from the same* "faith"; and since Scripture is to be interpreted in the light of Scripture, a proper study on either "faith" or "apostasy" in one epistle would necessitate a study of the same subject matter in the other epistle.

The best available commentary on Jude is II Peter, along with

other related Scripture; and the best available commentary on II Peter is Jude, along with other related Scripture.

Our main interest at hand is the parallel sections on "faith" in the two epistles. Where Jude devotes one verse to *earnestly striving "with respect to the faith"* (v. 3), Peter devotes the greater part of an entire chapter to *maturity in the faith* (ch. 1). And this chapter, in the light of Jude and other related Scripture, is actually a dissertation on *earnestly striving "with respect to the faith,"* which will result in the one engaged in this "contest of the faith" (if he runs according to the rules) "receiving the end ['goal']" of his *faith,* even the *salvation of his soul* (I Peter 1:9).

Thus, in order to properly understand Jude 3, the remainder of this chapter will be drawn from II Peter chapter one.

(Note that II Peter chapter one is Scripture's own commentary on Jude 3. And this commentary is perfectly in line with that which is stated about "the faith" at any other point in Scripture.)

Maturity in the Faith

Peter directs his second epistle to "them that have obtained like precious *faith* with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour [*lit.,* 'our God and Saviour'] Jesus Christ" (v. 1). This is a "faith" possessed by *ALL* Christians. We were *ALL* accorded the same measure of "faith" at the time we "passed from death unto life" (John 5:24; Eph. 2:1, 5). Every Christian begins at the same point with the same "like precious faith."

Then, in verses five through seven, Christians are told:

> "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to [*lit.,* 'abundantly supply in'] your faith virtue; and to ['in'] virtue knowledge;
>
> And to ['in'] knowledge temperance; and to ['in'] temperance patience; and to ['in'] patience godliness;
>
> And to ['in'] godliness brotherly kindness; and to ['in'] brotherly kindness charity."

Peter then states in verse eight:

> "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge [Gk., *epignosis,* 'mature knowledge'] of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The Greek word *epignosis,* referring to a "mature knowledge," occurs three times in II Peter chapter one (vv. 2, 3, 8).

In verse two, "grace and peace" are multiplied through *a mature knowledge* "of God, and of Jesus our Lord [*lit.,* 'of God, even Jesus our Lord' (*cf.* v. 1)]." In verse three, Christians are given "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" through *the mature knowledge* "of him that hath called us to glory and virtue"; and in verses five through eight, abundantly supplying the things listed (with "faith" as the foundation) will result in "fruit-bearing" (if these things "abound" *in the person*) *within one's mature knowledge* "of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Colossians 2:2, 3 is a corresponding passage concerning *a mature knowledge* "of Jesus our Lord" which deals with the same basic truths as II Peter 1:2, 3, 8.

In the Colossian passage, the "mystery of God" is revealed to be *Christ,* and *in Him* "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." The words appearing between "God" and "Christ" (v. 2) in the Authorized Version are not found in the best Greek manuscripts, and the latter part of this verse should literally read: "…unto a mature knowledge [*epignosis*] of the mystery of God, Christ."

The name "Christ" is placed in apposition to the word "mystery" in the Greek text, making Christ to be "the mystery of God."

The things in this mystery were not fully opened up in the prior dispensation; but now, through additional revelation, the Holy Spirit is making these things known to the saints.

Man today has *the complete* revelation of God; a*nd as this revelation is received into his saved human spirit, the indwelling Holy Spirit takes the Word and reveals things concerning the Son* (things previously made known but *NOT* fully opened up and revealed *UNTIL* dealt with in later revelation [John 16:13-15; I Cor. 2:6-13; *cf.* Gen. 24:4, 10, 36, 53]).

In Col. 2:2, 3, it is only the person coming into a mature knowledge of the "mystery of God" who will see the great storehouse of "treasures of wisdom and knowledge" *in Christ.*

In like manner, only the person coming into *a mature knowledge* of "Jesus Christ our Lord" in II Peter 1:2, 3, 8, contained in the "mystery of God" in Col. 2:2, will realize an increase of "grace" and "peace" (*cf.* "Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied" [Jude 2]), or come into possession of the numerous other things mentioned in this chapter.

In II Peter 1:3, 4, *a mature knowledge* of God's Son will result in the realization of two things:

a) Possessing "all things that pertain unto life and godliness": "Life" (Gk., *Zoe*) is used referring to life in its absolute fullness, which a Christian is to exhibit during his present pilgrim walk; and "godliness" refers to *piety* or *reverence,* which is to be exhibited at the same time.

A godly walk in the fullness of life is appropriating that which God has for man (revealed in His Word) and, at the same time, walking in a Godlike manner.

b) Possessing "great and precious promises": Through these "great and precious promises" (revealed in God's Word) individuals become *"partakers* of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world [by means of *epignosis*]…" (*cf.* II Peter 1:2, 3; 2:20).

The "divine nature" has been planted within the inner being of every Christian; but it, as *faith,* can be either dormant or very active. And to assure that the "divine nature," along with *faith, does NOT lie dormant*, a Christian, laying aside the things which defile, *MUST* receive the Word into his saved human spirit (James 1:21; I Peter 2:1, 2).

It is the reception of this Word and the corresponding work of the Holy Spirit ALONE which bring individuals into that position where spiritual growth is wrought, partaking of the "divine nature" is effected, and victory over the things of the world, the flesh, and the Devil come to pass.

The great problem among Christians today is *spiritual immaturity, which often results in fleshly or worldly living and resultant defeat in one's spiritual life. There is NO increase of "grace," "mercy," "peace," and "love."*

Such Christians, not in possession of a mature knowledge of the Word (*epignosis*), *CANNOT* be in possession of the things pertaining to "life and godliness"; and they can know very little to nothing of the "great and precious promises," or being "partakers of the divine nature." They, thus, can be easily "carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph. 4:14).

Fruit-Bearing for the Kingdom

In II Peter 1:5-11, *fruit-bearing* is in view; and *fruit-bearing* is

associated with *things abundantly supplied in faith (vv. 5-7), a mature knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (vv. 8, 9), one's "calling and election" (v. 10),* and *"entrance" into the coming "kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (v. 11).*

1) Things Abundantly Supplied in Faith (vv. 5-7)

Every Christian is in possession of *faith,* obtained "through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ." This faith can be very active, or it can be weak, anemic, or even dead (James 2:17, 20, 26). But faith, even though looked upon as anemic or dead, *is STILL present with the believer; and it can NEVER pass away* (I Cor. 13:13).

The word "dead" appearing in James 2:17, 20, 26 (KJV), in connection with *faith,* can only refer to a "barren" or "fruitless" *faith.* This type faith is void of works, and works are necessary to bring forth fruit and bring faith to its goal.

In a number of the older Greek manuscripts the word for "barren" appears in the text of verse twenty rather than the word for "dead," equating "barren" in this verse with "dead" in verses seventeen and twenty-six. However, one need not belabor whether or not the word for "barren" in these older manuscripts is the correct rendering of the text, for II Peter 1:5-8 teaches the same thing concerning a "barren" faith.

II Peter 1:5 should literally read: "But also for this cause, giving all diligence, abundantly supply in your faith…" Because of that which has preceded (outlined in verses one through four)—things resulting from a mature knowledge *(epignosis)* "of God, even Jesus our Lord" — the Christian is commanded to follow a certain stepped course of action.

And this course of action will result in "fruit-bearing," within one's mature knowledge *(epignosis)* "of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 8), with this, in turn, ultimately resulting in *an abundant entrance* "into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (v. 11).

a) "Add to ['Abundantly supply in'] your faith virtue" (v. 5): The words "Add to" should literally be understood as "Abundantly supply in" throughout verses five through seven. The Greek word translated "virtue" is *arete* (same as v. 3), which could be understood as either "virtue" or "moral excellence." And when used relative to God, the word has to do with *His power.* The thought contextually would have

to do with Christians exercising "moral excellence" under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Thus, with Christians conducting their lives in this manner, Divine power through the Spirit's leadership would be in view through the use of the word.

b) "And to ['in'] virtue knowledge" (v. 5): "Knowledge" is the translation of *gnosis* (the regular Greek word for "knowledge") rather than *epignosis* ("mature knowledge") as used in verses two, three, and eight. *Gnosis* refers to the accumulation of facts, which may result in *epignosis,* but not necessarily. *Epignosis* is more restricted in its usage, having to do with knowledge pertaining more particularly to things relating to the coming kingdom (*ref.* Part 2 on page 24, "A Mature Knowledge").

c) "And to ['in'] knowledge temperance" (v. 6): The Greek word translated "temperance" is *egkrateia,* which means "self-control," "mastery over oneself." This is a compound word from *en* and *kratos* (*en* means "in," and *kratos* means "power"). The reference is to passions and desires emanating from the man of flesh being held in check.

And this is accomplished through allowing the Spirit to govern and control one's life, which goes back to the Divine power previously seen through the word *arete* in verse five.

d) "And to ['in'] temperance patience" (v. 6): The Greek word translated "patience" is *hupomone,* which has to do with "patient endurance" under trials and testings during the pilgrim walk. This is a compound word from *hupo* and *mone* (*hupo* means "under," and *mone* means "stay," or "remain"). Thus, the word literally means, "remain under"; and the compound word is possibly best understood by the translation, "patient endurance."

Note how the verb form of this word *(hupomeno)* is used in James 1:12:

> "Blessed is the man that endureth ['patiently endureth'] temptation: for when he is tried ['approved'], he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

Note also the use of *hupomeno* in II Tim. 2:10, 12 (translated "endure" and "suffer" respectively). Both should properly be translated "patiently endure."

e) "And to ['in'] patience godliness" (v. 6): The Greek word translated "godliness" is *eusebeia.* This is a compound word derived from *eu* and *sebomai* (*eu* means "good," and *sebomai* means "to worship" or "to reverence"). Thus, *eusebeia* has to do with Christians exercising "piety," or "godliness" as they patiently endure the trials and testings of life during their pilgrim walk. The thought is simply a continued building upon that which had been previously stated in the book.

f) "And to ['in'] godliness brotherly kindness" (v. 7): The words "brotherly kindness" are a translation of the compound Greek word *philadelphia,* comprised of *phileo* ("love," "affection") and *adelphos* ("brother"). The word should be translated "brotherly love" or "brotherly affection."

g) "And to ['in'] brotherly kindness charity" (v. 7): The Greek word translated "charity" is *agape,* which, as *phileo,* means "love." However, *agape* moves beyond mere affection, or the type love between Christians set forth by the word *phileo. Agape* has to do with "Divine love," which God is in *His character and nature.* "God is love," *i.e.,* "God is *agape*" (I John 4:8).

> (The word "love," as the word "spirit" in John 4:24 ["God is spirit"; *ref.*, NKJV, NASB, NIV] is anarthrous in the Greek text [no article before the word], pointing to *God's character and nature.*
>
> The Greek text does not use indefinite articles [a, an], only definite [the]. Thus, the use of an indefinite article in the English rendering of John 4:24 ["God is a spirit," KJV] is clearly not only wrong but misleading, for it changes the meaning intended by the Greek text entirely.)

Agape is also the same word used relative to man in the context of this verse in I John. "Love" set forth by the word *agape* is the highest type love attainable.

This is love produced by the Holy Spirit in the life of a faithful believer. *Agape* appears after all the other things mentioned in II Peter 1:5-7. It must be supplied last, for it is placed at the height of Christian experience, and nothing can be added therein (*cf.* I Cor. 13:1ff; *agape* is used throughout this chapter).

2) A Mature Knowledge (vv. 8, 9)

Epignosis in Scripture has a peculiar relationship to the salvation to

be revealed, the salvation of the soul. This word appears in passages which have to do with the saints possessing a mature knowledge in things related to the coming kingdom.

The list is by no means complete, but throughout the New Testament *epignosis* is associated with a mature knowledge of "God," of God's "Son ['the mystery of God, Christ']," God's "will," truths pertaining to "faith," "life," and "godliness," the coming "judgment" of the saints, "the blessed hope," and the coming "inheritance" of the saints (Rom. 1:28; Eph. 1:17, 18; 4:13; Col. 1:9-12; 2:2; 3:10; I Tim. 2:4; II Tim. 2:25; 3:7; Titus 1:1, 2; 2:13; 3:7; Heb. 10:25-31; II Peter 1:1-8; 2:20, 21).

Epignosis, having to do with an impartation of things pertaining to "life and godliness," allows Christians to escape the "pollutions of the world" (II Peter 1:3, 4; 2:20). Rejection of *epignosis,* on the other hand, places Christians in the dangerous position of being easily entangled in the things which *epignosis* allows them to escape (Rom. 1:28; II Peter 2:20-22).

"All filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness" must be set aside prior to receiving the "engrafted ['implanted'] word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21); and the reception of this Word progressively produces the renewing of your mind "in knowledge [*epignosis*] after the image of him that created him," working the *metamorphosis* in one's life (Rom. 12:1, 2; Col. 3:10), allowing that person to escape the entanglements of the world.

Epignosis has to do with the "strong meat" of the Word, which is associated in Heb. 5:6-14 with Christ and His Melchizedek priesthood. Those who have been enlightened in these truths — have been allowed by God to move from *gnosis* to *epignosis* — and then "fall away" *are the ones who become entangled again in the affairs of the world* (Heb. 6:1-6).

And the fact that such individuals *CANNOT be renewed again unto repentance* (vv. 4, 6) will answer the question concerning why it would have been better for them *NOT to have known "the way of righteousness" (II Peter 2:21) through coming into possession of epignosis* (v. 20).

Hebrews chapters five and six *MUST* be understood in the light of chapters three and four, which contain the record of the Israelites being allowed to go on into things beyond the death of the firstborn in Egypt.

They first passed through the Red Sea. Going down into the Sea pointed to *death* (as it pertained to the old man, to Egypt), coming up

out of the Sea pointed to *resurrection* (as it pertained to the new man, to the land ahead). The events of Sinai then soon followed.

A "mount" in Scripture signifies *a kingdom.* This is where the Israelites received the Law (the rules and regulations governing the people within the theocracy which lay ahead), and this is where they both received the instructions for and built the tabernacle (the dwelling place of God among His people within the theocracy).

They were *THEN* allowed to go up to the very border of the promised land itself, hear the report about the land from the twelve spies, and taste the actual fruits of the land which the spies had carried back with them.

In this respect, the Israelites were allowed to move from *gnosis* to *epignosis;* but they turned away (fell away), and it was *THEN impossible to renew them again unto repentance* (Num. 13, 14; *cf.* Heb. 6:1-6).

They were *THEN subsequently overthrown in the wilderness.*

It would have been better for the ones who were overthrown (the entire accountable generation, twenty years old and above, save Caleb and Joshua) *NOT* to have known these things about the land (equivalent in the antitype to, "it had been better...*NOT* to have known the way of righteousness" for Christians in II Peter 2:21), than after they knew these things, "to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them" (Num. 13:30; Deut. 1:21ff; *cf.* Joshua 1:1, 2). It was so with the Israelites in the type, and thus will it be for Christians in the antitype.

3) Calling and Election (v. 10)

Individuals are to give *diligence* to make their "calling and election sure." The word "election" could be better translated *called out.* The words translated "calling" and "election" in this verse are from the same root forms as the cognate words translated "called" and "chosen" in Matt. 22:14, which should literally be translated, "For many are *called,* but few are *called out."*

> (Both an individual's *calling* and *out-calling* have to do with the same thing. His *calling CAN'T* have to do with the Christian's presently possessed salvation, for he *CAN'T* make that anymore "sure" than it already exists. Salvation by grace through faith has already been made "sure," based on Christ's finished work at Calvary.

> An individual has been saved for a purpose; and that "purpose" would equate to his *calling,* as "realizing that purpose" would equate to his *out-calling.* Both have to do with a future salvation, the salvation of the soul; and both have to do with Christians one day being *called out of the called and realizing positions as co-heirs with Christ in His kingdom.*)

The word "diligence" in verse ten is from the same word also translated "diligence" in verse five. With the same intensity that a person is to abundantly supply in his *faith virtue…,* he is to make his *calling* and *out-calling* "sure."

The word "sure" is the translation of a word which means "certain," "firm," "secure." And to make his *calling* and *out-calling* "sure," a Christian would have to be *knowledgeable* concerning that which is in view (note *epignosis,* "mature knowledge," in v. 8).

There can be no such thing as following Biblical guidelines surrounding the purpose for one's salvation and, at the same time, ignoring one's *calling* and *out-calling.*

The entire concept widely promulgated in Christian circles today which states or teaches that the one really important thing is just to be saved has *NO* basis in Scripture whatsoever. Scripture places the emphasis on *the purpose for one's salvation.* It is man who has turned this around and placed the emphasis back on salvation itself.

The entire purpose for the present dispensation is *to procure a bride for God's Son,* with a view to the coming age when the Son will reign over the earth with His consort queen (procured during the present dispensation).

God has set aside an entire dispensation lasting 2,000 years for this purpose. He sent His Spirit into the world at the beginning of the dispensation with specific instructions (seen in the type in Gen. 24:3-9). And the work of the Spirit throughout the dispensation, though it includes breathing life into the one who has no life (salvation of the unsaved), is primarily concerned with *procuring a bride for God's Son.*

And the bride is to be taken *from among the saved, NOT the unsaved* (seen in the type in Gen. 24 through the specific instructions which Abraham gave his servant and that which the servant did once he was in Mesopotamia — went to the city where Abraham's kindred resided, and dealt with Abraham's kindred in that city [vv. 3-27]).

The whole of the matter surrounding the reason for the Spirit being sent into the world at the beginning of this dispensation has to do with one's *calling* and *out-calling*. And Christians are to be knowledgeable concerning God's plans and purposes for the present dispensation, making their *calling* and *out-calling* "sure."

4) Entrance into the Kingdom (v. 11)

The word "entrance" is the translation of a word which means *a road into.* The route has been properly marked in the preceding verses, and one can not only follow this route, but he is exhorted to do so.

The Christian, through this means, can make his *calling* and *out-calling* "sure."

Peter did not follow "cunningly devised fables" when he made known "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." He was an "eyewitness of his majesty." He saw *the Son's glory* when he was with Christ "in the holy mount," and he penned the Epistles of I, II Peter as he was "moved ['borne along'] by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:16-21).

Peter not only saw and recorded things having to do with the coming kingdom, but he also left detailed instructions concerning that which Christians *MUST* do to have a part in this kingdom.

> *When will Christians learn that they have been saved for a purpose? And when will they learn that this purpose has to do with the coming kingdom?*

Positions as joint-heirs with Christ in the governmental structure of the kingdom *are PRESENTLY being offered, and crowns MUST be won by conquest.*

The arch-enemy of our souls is at work in the closing days of this dispensation as never before; but the route for an "abundant entrance" into the kingdom has been properly marked, and the promise of God stands sure:

> "To him that overcometh…" (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 21).

And the command given through Jude, in order that one might one day realize this promise, is clear:

> "Earnestly strive for [with respect to, in the good contest of] the faith…"

3

Falling Away from the Faith

A Specific Faith and Departure

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness ['licentiousness'], and ['even'] denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 4).

The "apostates" in Jude 4 are *false teachers* who are often erroneously thought of as unsaved individuals. However, from a Biblical perspective, such an understanding of the apostates in this verse, or elsewhere in Jude, would *NOT ONLY* militate against that which Jude has to say about false teachers but it would *NOT* be possible.

The context in Jude (continuing into v. 5) and the corresponding section in II Peter (2:1-3; *cf.* vv. 19-21) both demonstrate conclusively that *the unsaved are NOT in view at all*.

Jude 5 has to do with the Israelites under Moses, who were *saved out of the land of Egypt,* but *afterward destroyed. NOT ONLY had these Israelites appropriated the blood of the paschal lambs but they had ALSO been delivered from Egypt* (always a type of *the world* in Scripture).

In the antitype, this has to do with individuals who, as well, have both *appropriated* the blood of the Passover Lamb and have been *delivered* from the things of this world.

Thus, the antitype *can ONLY have to do with Christians under Christ* (*ref.* "…having escaped the corruption that is in the world…have escaped the pollutions of the world…" [II Peter 1:4; 2:20; *cf.* Heb. 3:1-4:16]).

Then, continuing with the antitype, Jude 5 points to *the destruction awaiting many of these individuals, awaiting numerous Christians* (not pertaining to eternal life [an impossibility] but pertaining to the subject matter at hand, *as in the type* — the inheritance set before them [inheriting as co-heirs with Christ], in another land [a heavenly land], within the theocracy [the coming kingdom of Christ]).

The reason for this destruction awaiting numerous Christians (*a destruction which will be seen in their failure to realize the goal of their calling*) is revealed in the context in Jude (vv. 3, 4) and in the Old Testament type (Num. 13:21-14:9, 27-37). *And this destruction will occur, EXACTLY as in the type, because of "unfaithfulness"* (resulting in *a falling away, apostasy*).

The companion epistle to Jude, II Peter, clearly states that these false teachers had been allowed to move from *gnosis* into *epignosis,* from "knowledge" into a "mature knowledge" (*cf.* 2:1-3, 19-21; "knowledge" in v. 20 is *epignosis* ["mature knowledge"] in the Greek text).

Operating in the spiritual realm is possible *ONLY for the saved*, whether dealing with *gnosis* (I Cor. 2:14), or with *epignosis* (II Peter 2:20). The unsaved are *spiritually dead* (Eph. 2:1) and can *NO MORE move about in the spiritual realm than can a physically dead person move about in the physical realm.*

An unsaved person knows *ONLY* the soulical nature; he lacks a redeemed spirit into which the Word of God can flow; and he lacks the indwelling Holy Spirit who can take this Word and lead him into all truth — turning the *Water* into *Wine,* moving from *gnosis* to *epignosis.*

All things associated with the new nature are *TOTALLY alien* to unsaved man, and any acquisition of knowledge relates to his soulical (natural) nature and *could NEVER be associated with epignosis.*

The widespread tendency to read into II Peter and Jude what is not there (*unregenerate* false teachers) has served only to cloud the true issue and rob both epistles of their correct message.

The unsaved existing in the midst of Christians today can present both an issue and problem, but *ANY issue and problem* presented by the unsaved *can ONLY be viewed as of little consequence compared with the issue and problem which apostate regenerate teachers existing in the midst of Christians today present*, dealt with in both II Peter and Jude.

As previously seen, the false teachers in these two epistles *can ONLY* be viewed as Christians who have *apostatized from the faith,* become *false teachers,* and now *stand in the way* of those who are *earnestly striving* "for [with respect to, in the good contest of] the faith."

Standing in the Way

The thought of false teachers standing in the way of those who are *earnestly striving* in "the good contest of the faith" is very similar to the

actions of the Scribes and Pharisees during the time Jesus was on the earth, prior to His crucifixion. The Scribes and Pharisees "shut up the kingdom of the heavens against men ['before men,' 'in the presence of men']" (Matt. 23:13). They were not going in themselves, and they sought to prevent anyone else from going in either.

They stood in the way of those who were striving to enter.

NO other religious group in Israel received a greater condemnation at the hands of Christ than did the Scribes and Pharisees.

Over and over Christ uttered the condemnatory words:

> "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" (Matt. 23:13-16, 23, 25, 27, 29).

He called them "fools and blind…serpents…vipers," and likened them to "whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness" (Matt. 23:17, 19, 24, 26, 27, 33).

Even the Sadducees, although spoken against for their unbelief and often placed in the same category with the Pharisees, were *NEVER* the recipients of such condemnatory words as those recorded in Matthew chapter twenty-three.

What made the difference? Why were *the woe's* and *the words of condemnation* directed toward the Scribes and Pharisees (the keepers and teachers of the Law, the fundamental legalists of that day) instead of the Sadducees (a group not holding to the exact letter of the Law [*e.g.*, Acts 23:7, 8], who could be looked upon as the liberals of that day)?

The answer is obvious. The ones who claimed to believe the Scriptures to the very letter (the Scribes and Pharisees) not only exhibited an unbelief greater than that of the Sadducees but this was done in an open, hypocritical manner, producing dire consequences.

The Scribes and Pharisees, the legalistic keepers and teachers of the Law, were, by far, the largest religious party in Israel. And they, by their very numbers, controlled the religious life in Israel.

They had *NOT ONLY* rejected the message and the Messenger — the kingdom of the heavens being proclaimed by Israel's Messiah, and His disciples — *BUT,* they had stood in the way of others heeding the message and receiving the Messenger. They had "shut up the king-

dom of the heavens" in the presence of those in Israel (Matt. 23:13).

This resulted in *a widespread unbelief* in Israel, climaxed by the nation's *rejection* of the King and the Kingdom, followed by *the crucifixion* of the King Himself.

Thus, the Scribes and Pharisees were *directly responsible* for that which occurred in Israel when Christ came the first time, which accounts for Christ's condemnatory words at the climax of His ministry, immediately preceding the events surrounding Calvary (Matt. 23:1ff).

The SAME basic thing exists in Christendom today relative to what is often termed the clergy and the laity. And the Word of God concerns itself *FAR more* with warnings directed toward those who follow in the paths of the hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees — the apostates and those who do their bidding — than it does with warnings directed toward those who have never become associated with "the faith."

And the basic issue today is the same as it was over 1,900 years ago — the offer of the kingdom of the heavens on the one hand, and certain individuals seeking to subvert this offer on the other hand.

False teachers, as their counterparts in Israel, are *shutting up* "the kingdom of the heavens against men ['before men,' 'in the presence of men']." They themselves are not going to enter into the kingdom; and their basic aim underlying all their pseudo systems of doctrine, whether they realize it or not, is to also prevent others from entering.

Thus, they stand in the way of others, producing, or resulting in, a widespread unbelief concerning the King and the Kingdom.

Sermon on the Mount

The mention of *false teachers* in Jude appears immediately following the exhortation *to earnestly strive* "with respect to the faith." The parallel section to this, as we have seen, is II Peter chapters one and two.

Another parallel section which should prove profitable to consider at this time is the section devoted to "false prophets" in the latter part of what is commonly called "the Sermon on the Mount" (Matt. 5-7). In this discourse, delivered by Jesus to His disciples while in *a mountain* (alluding to "the kingdom" in view — "a mountain" in Scripture always signifies *a kingdom*), "false prophets" are mentioned immediately *after* an exhortation *to enter in* "at the strait gate" and immediately before a rejection of certain

individuals for *entrance* "into the kingdom of the heavens" (7:13-23).

The contextual setting provides the reason for the appearance of false prophets at this particular point in Scripture; and a study of this contextual setting in the light of related Scripture will clearly reveal that these false prophets are, as in Jude 4, *false teachers,* not unregenerate individuals alienated from God.

The Sermon on the Mount is a connected discourse dealing with *entrance into or exclusion from the kingdom of the heavens.*

This discourse is actually an exposition of Matt. 5:20:

> "For I say unto you [Jesus' disciples; *cf.* v. 2], That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case *enter into the kingdom of the heavens."*

Two things must ever be kept in mind when studying the Sermon on the Mount:

a) The message is to *the saved, NOT the unsaved.*

b) The subject matter at hand is *entrance into the kingdom, NOT eternal salvation.*

The Sermon on the Mount was delivered by Jesus to His disciples during the time when the offer of the kingdom of the heavens was still open to the nation of Israel. This message was delivered during the closing days of God's past dealings with Israel and applied strictly to a people (Israelites) to whom the offer to occupy positions in the heavenly portion of the kingdom was being extended.

However, AFTER Israel's rejection of this offer and the subsequent removal of the heavenly part of the kingdom from Israel (Matt. 21:18-43), the words of the Sermon on the Mount could NO longer be applicable to this nation.

The Sermon on the Mount, dealing with entrance into or exclusion from the kingdom of the heavens, can be applicable *ONLY* to those to whom the kingdom of the heavens *is being extended* (*NOT* 'was' being extended [in relation to Israel in time past], *BUT 'is' being extended* [in relation to another entity today]).

With this in mind, the present recipients of the promises and blessings associated with the kingdom of the heavens comprise an entirely "new creation" *in Christ.* This new creation, separate and

distinct from Israel, was called into existence to be the recipient of that which Israel rejected — *the heavenly part of the kingdom.*

And the words of the Sermon on the Mount, remaining applicable to individuals associated with entrance into the kingdom of the heavens, *MUST, accordingly, NOW apply to Christians.* The words of the Sermon on the Mount — following a re-offer of the kingdom to Israel and a second rejection by Israel (seen in the Book of Acts) — *can apply to NO other group of individuals during the present dispensation.*

Dangers Confronting Christians

Matt. 7:13-23 records *two dangers* which confront all Christians during their present pilgrim walk. These dangers are produced by the actions of the false teachers (vv. 15-20) and concern Christians basically in their relationship to the coming kingdom.

a) *The first danger* confronting Christians is "lack of effort" (vv. 13, 14).

b) *The second danger* confronting Christians is "performing works for the Lord, but *NOT* doing the will of the Lord [*i.e.*, Christians running out ahead of the Lord, performing works themselves — using their own wisdom, ways, means, methods — rather than faithfully waiting on the Lord to perform works through them, under the power of the Spirit]" (vv. 21-23).

(In the preceding respect, note, in I Cor. 3:11-15, the two types of works which will be manifested in that coming day when Christians appear before the judgment seat of Christ — "gold, silver, precious stones" on the one hand [works which will endure the fire]; "wood, hay, stubble" on the other hand [works which will be burned by the fire].)

1) Lack of Effort (vv. 13, 14)

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

A parallel verse recorded in Luke 13:24 states,

> "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

The word "Strive" is the translation of the Greek word *agonizomai,* from which the English word "agonize" is derived (*ref.* Chapter II in this book). Effort — straining every muscle of one's being — is to be expended as Christians strive to enter through this gate. Every weight and hindrance is to be *cast aside,* everything not associated with the race is to be counted for *naught*, as Christians "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:7-14; Heb. 12:1, 2).

Striving in passages such as I Cor. 9:25; I Tim. 6:12; II Tim. 4:7; Jude 3 is in "the good contest of the faith." *Entrance into the kingdom* is in view in these passages, as in Matt. 7:13, 14 and Luke 13:24. Entering in "at the strait gate" in Matt. 7:13 requires *effort,* and related Scriptures reveal that this effort has to do with *striving in the race* set before Christians.

II Peter 1:11, a verse showing the result of properly striving in the race, refers to *an abundant entrance* "into the everlasting ['age-lasting'] kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The kingdom of the heavens and entrance into this kingdom comprise the subject matter at hand, which is the object of the race in all these verses.

The parable of the Sower in Matt. 13:3-9, 18-23 provides one of the best examples in Scripture showing how Christians are caused *to fail* in the race and *fall away* because of the ministry of false teachers.

This parable concerns four types of Christians who are sown out in the world by the Lord Jesus Christ (the words, "he that received seed" [vv. 19, 20, 22, 23], should be translated, "he that was sown" [*cf.* vv. 37, 38]). These Christians are categorized as the ones sown "by the wayside," the ones sown "upon stony places," the ones sown "among thorns," and the ones sown "into good ground." And *ONLY* the latter, the ones sown "into good ground," bring forth fruit. The other three types of Christians, for various revealed reasons, *do NOT* produce fruit.

The parable of the Sower in all its four parts concerns experiences in the lives of Christians who have both heard the word of the kingdom and been sown by the Lord Jesus Christ in various places

out in the world, with a view to bringing forth fruit for the kingdom.

The second part of this parable concerns Christians sown upon "stony places" (vv. 5, 6, 20, 21); and, because of "tribulation or persecution" arising in their lives, these Christians fail to bring forth fruit. The "tribulation" and "persecution" are seen to be brought about "because of the word ['the word of the kingdom'; *cf.* v. 19]."

These represent those who hear and joyfully receive "the word of the kingdom," finding themselves in a position to bring forth fruit when "tribulation or persecution" arises in their lives. Individuals responsible for bringing about "tribulation" or "persecution" in the lives of Christians sown upon "stony places" are said to cast a "stumbling block" in their path (the word "offended" [v. 21] should literally be translated "stumbling block").

In the parallel passage in Luke 8:13, this "stumbling block" cast before Christians is said to cause them to "fall away." The Greek word translated "fall away" in this passage is *aphistemi,* the verb form of the word *apostasia,* from which the English word "apostasy" is derived. This is *a falling away, an apostasy,* "from the faith."

Christians who have heard "the word of the kingdom" and have been placed out in the world, with a view of bringing forth fruit for the kingdom, are the ones engaged in *striving* "in the good contest of the faith." These are the ones who are striving to enter in at the strait gate.

Those who cast a "stumbling block" in their pathway are none other than *the false prophets/teachers* of Matt. 7:15-20; II Peter 2:1-3; Jude 4.

And the ministry of those proclaiming a false message concerning the kingdom centers around *seeking to prevent other Christians from bringing forth fruit by causing them to turn away from the "word of the kingdom," to fall away.* Such an act then results in fruit-bearing in an entirely different realm — the apostate teacher himself producing fruit (which could only be associated with "wood, hay, stubble"), diametrically opposed to "the word of the kingdom."

The apostates, through their ministry among Christians, produce other apostates (those caused to fall away through standing away from the faith). This is what is meant by the statement in Matt. 7:20: "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." This verse has to do with identifying *apostates among the saved ALONE, NOT with the common, false concept of testing a person who claims to be saved (seeking to ascertain*

the reality or non-reality of his/her conversion) by watching for fruit.

Such a concept, as the preceding, is completely alien to Scripture. A person is placed in a position to bring forth fruit *ONLY AFTER he has been saved,* and Scripture clearly teaches that *he MAY or MAY NOT bring forth fruit*, likened to "gold, silver, precious stones."

Whether a Christian bears such fruit or not is *NEVER* set forth as a test for salvation, a criterion to show whether or not he has been saved. Those who promote such teachings are seeking to bring works over into an area where works *CANNOT* exist (Rom. 11:6; *cf.* Eph. 2:8, 9).

Contrary to this entire false system of thought, Scripture teaches that there will be many Christians appearing at the judgment seat of Christ without one single good work to their credit (I Cor. 3:12-15).

Fruit-bearing in Matt. 7:15-20 pertains to "a falling away," to "apostasy"—*i.e.,* an apostate Christian producing fruit. The apostate Christian has *fallen away* "from the faith," and he bears fruit, mainly, by causing other Christians (who are in a position to bring forth fruit for the kingdom) to follow his false teachings and *ALSO fall away* "from the faith."

A tree *ALWAYS bears fruit* "after his kind" (Gen. 1:11, 12).

2) Performing Works, But… (vv. 21-23)

> "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of the heavens; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.
>
> Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils ['demons']? And in thy name done many wonderful works?
>
> And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity ['lawlessness']."

"Many" individuals to whom the offer to occupy positions of power and authority with Christ in His kingdom is presently being extended will, in that coming day, be rejected.

Matthew 7:21 is one of seven such statements in Scripture, teaching exclusion from the kingdom. The other six can be found in Matt. 5:20; 18:3; 19:23, 24; Luke 18:17; John 3:5; I Cor. 6:9, 10. Teachings relative to the Christian's calling, his present responsibility, and his future accountability must be understood in the light of these statements.

A travesty in Scriptural interpretation today is the use of Matt. 7:21-23 (or, for that matter, also vv. 13, 14, 24-27) as a message directed to the unsaved, for this serves *ONLY* to hide the correct interpretation.

These verses have to do, NOT with the message of salvation by grace, *BUT* with the Word of the Kingdom. These verses have to do *ONLY* with the saved relative to their future entrance into or exclusion from the kingdom of the heavens.

Such should be clear to anyone who *has NOT* already decided contrariwise and is willing to accept that which *Scripture ALONE* teaches.

a) The words "Lord, Lord" (vv. 21, 22), uttered by individuals who are denied entrance into the kingdom, constitute an expression peculiarly characteristic of disciples. According to I Cor. 12:3, "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit." An unsaved person, not in possession of the Holy Spirit, does not understand the things of the Spirit. These things are alien to his soulical nature (the only nature which he possesses). Jesus is not his Lord; and, apart from the Spirit of God, *he DOES NOT, he CANNOT, so acknowledge Christ*.

> (An unsaved person can, in a meaningless way, utter these words [Jesus is Lord]; but he *CANNOT* acknowledge Jesus as His Lord, as seen in Matt. 7:21, 22.
>
> He *CANNOT* do this apart from *his actions emanating from above, apart from being brought forth from above.* And actions of this nature would be possible *ONLY for the saved* [*cf.* Matt. 16:15-17].)

b) A three-part question is asked by those who acknowledge Jesus as Lord in verse twenty-two, and the construction of this question in the Greek text (using the negative *"ou,"* governing all three parts) designates that a positive, rather than a negative, response was expected from the Lord. That is, the manner in which the question was asked reveals that these individuals expected to hear the Lord say:

> "Yes, you have prophesied in my name; Yes, you have cast out demons in my name; and Yes, you have performed many wonderful works in my name."

These individuals had been proclaiming a message and performing works — even miraculous works — believing that these things were being done in the name of the Lord. However, the Lord's response

revealed that such was *NOT* the case at all. These individuals had, unknowingly, been deceived by the false teachers, with miraculous works emanating *from the ONLY source possible — the demonic world.*

As a result, Christ's answer to their question (v. 23) was *NOT at all* in keeping with the response which they expected.

1) Prophesying in the name of the Lord in this passage is simply proclaiming the truth concerning the Word of God. The meaning of the word for "prophesy" in the Greek text *(propheteuo)* is "to speak forth." The meaning could go beyond this and refer to prophetic (futuristic) utterance itself, but that is not what the text and context are dealing with.

This is the same word (in its noun form [*prophetes*]) translated "prophets" in verse fifteen, as well as in II Peter 2:1. Note that in II Peter 2:1 the "false prophets" are identified as "false teachers," synonymous with the false teachers in Jude. This entire thought surrounds a servant of the Lord (who himself is an apostate, or has been misled by the apostates) teaching things which are not in accord with the Word of God and, thus, could not be taught in the Lord's name.

2) Casting out demons and doing many wonderful works, supposedly in the name of the Lord, is perhaps best exemplified during the present time by the actions of those Christians involved in the Charismatic Movement, for this is exactly what these individuals are doing.

The Charismatic Movement can be properly understood only in the light of Scripture. Seemingly it is a movement which exists because of the simple failure of Christians to understand the proper place which signs, wonders, and miracles occupy in the Word of God. However, the crux of the matter goes far beyond this.

Matthew 7:15-23 reveals an apostate element resulting from the ministry of false teachers associated with a movement of this nature.

Signs, wonders, and miracles, such as were in evidence during the earthly ministry of Christ and for the first several decades of the existence of the Church, are peculiarly related to two things:

a) Israel.
b) The Kingdom.

That would be to say, God *MUST* be dealing with *Israel* in relation to *the Kingdom* for signs, wonders, and miracles to be manifested.

Israel *WAS* dealt with in relation to the kingdom in the past (relative to the O.T. theocracy and Christ's offer of the kingdom of the heavens at His first coming), *IS NOT* being dealt with in this manner today (during the present dispensation in which God is calling out a bride for His Son, with Israel set aside), *BUT WILL BE* dealt with after this fashion in the future (the Tribulation period and the Messianic Era).

Accordingly, signs, wonders, and miracles (associated with Israel and the kingdom) *WERE in evidence in the past, CANNOT BE in evidence today, BUT WILL BE in evidence once again in the future.*

Thus, *there can be NO present manifestation of signs, wonders, and miracles, as seen in the gospel accounts and the Book of Acts.* Those in the Charismatic Movement, claiming to be manifesting these signs during the present time, *CANNOT possibly be doing so.* That being seen in the movement today *can NEITHER be a continuation of NOR a restoration of the signs, wonders, and miracles evident during apostolic days.*

The Charismatic Movement has been singled out because of the movement's widespread influence in what is viewed as Christendom in the world today (crossing all denominational lines, Protestant and Catholic alike). But, to broaden the matter, suffice it to say, *ANY* manifestation of supernatural powers in the world today — in any movement, Christian or non-Christian — *can have NO association whatsoever with supernatural powers exhibited during apostolic times.*

Such powers, from a Biblical standpoint, simply CANNOT exist today.

These powers were for *a time PAST,* and are reserved for *a time FUTURE* (during the Millennium, if not also during the Tribulation as well when God once again begins to deal with Israel immediately preceding the Messianic Kingdom [Isa. 35:1-6]).

Consequently, any movement in the world today purporting to exercise these powers is *NOT at all what it claims to be.*

Manifestations of supernatural powers in the world today are *NO indication that these powers emanate from God*.

One thing which is almost completely overlooked is the fact that Satan possesses supernatural powers which can be exhibited through man. Scripture associates the *working of Satan* with "all power and signs and lying wonders" (II Thess. 2:9, 10). His efforts through the manifes-

tations of his powers are always directed toward one goal — *to deceive.*

He is introduced into affairs of the human race in this fashion, comprising *a first-mention principle* which remains constant throughout Scripture (Gen. 3:1-7; Ex. 7:11, 12, 22; 8:7; Matt. 24:24; Eph. 4:14; I Tim. 2:14; Rev. 13:13, 14). And the deception of individuals in Matthew chapter seven (vv. 21-23) by the false teachers (vv. 15-20) constitutes a warning to everyone involved in comparable activity today.

Signs, wonders, and miracles were in evidence during apostolic days as signs for Israel, showing what the nation could have if repentance was forthcoming (Matt. 10:1-8; *cf.* Matt. 4:23-25; 8:1-9:38).

This was during a time when God was dealing with Israel in relation to the kingdom. The kingdom of the heavens was "at hand," something which is not true at all today. Israel has been set aside, and the kingdom of the heavens is being offered to an entirely new entity, though the kingdom is not presently "at hand."

Since that condition NO longer exists, and the ONLY kingdom now in existence on the earth is Satan's kingdom, ANY present manifestation of signs, wonders, and miracles would, of necessity, have to do with this kingdom.

In this respect, individuals involved in any movement associated with signs, wonders, and miracles today are, in reality, producing works relating to a kingdom diametrically opposed to the kingdom of Christ; and any manifestation of supernatural power would have to emanate from this kingdom.

Thus, it is no wonder that they are called workers of iniquity and will, in the coming day of reckoning, be denied entrance into the kingdom of Christ.

(For additional information concerning *signs, wonders, and miracles,* refer to the author's book, *Message in the Gospels, Acts, Epistles.*

Or, refer more particularly to Appendix II in this book, "Signs, Wonders, Miracles.")

The words, "I never knew you" (v. 23), referring to the supernatural works previously performed, have been misunderstood by many individuals over the years.

In reality, God in His omniscience *knows everyone and everything.* Thus, all expressions of this nature in Scripture *MUST be understood as relative expressions, pertaining to the subject matter at hand.*

An expression of this nature used relative to eternal life, for

example, would limit those whom God *knows* to the ones in possession of eternal life. God *knows* all the others (the unsaved), *but NOT relative to eternal life.*

However, the subject under discussion in Matt. 7:21-23 is *NOT* eternal life at all. This subject has to do with "doing the will of the Lord" — *resulting in fruit-bearing — with a view to entrance into the kingdom.*

The words, "I never knew you," constitute *a relative expression* pertaining to the fact that the Lord did *NOT* know them concerning the works which they had performed; and, consequently, because of their lack of fruit, He also did *NOT* know them concerning entrance into the kingdom. These individuals did perform works, but these works were performed completely outside the will and purpose of the Lord, and He had *NOTHING* to do with these works.

Concluding Thoughts:

The future judgment of Christians will be based *solely on works* (*cf.* Matt. 16:27; I Cor. 3:13-15; II Cor. 5:10, 11). Being approved for a crown before the judgment seat of Christ involves accomplishing the will of the Lord. This concerns faithfulness to the task/tasks which God has called each individual to perform, resulting in fruit-bearing.

Being rejected for a crown before the judgment seat of Christ involves the exact opposite — *NOT* accomplishing the will of the Lord. This concerns unfaithfulness to the task/tasks which God has called each individual to perform, resulting in a fruitless condition.

The reckoning in Matt. 7:21-23 illustrates the latter — *a negative side* to the coming judgment of Christians, showing their rejection in that coming day because of *fruitlessness* during the present day.

The end of the present dispensation is to be marked by a rise in demonic activity, an increase in false teachers, and Christians being "carried about with every wind of doctrine," *being misdirected in every way possible. And the tremendous growth of such activity ushers in the great apostasy of the end-time, which can ONLY be expected to increase as the dispensation draws to a close.*

The *ONLY* recourse which Christians have during this day of apostasy is *the Word of God* and *the indwelling Holy Spirit* Who can take the Word received into man's saved human spirit and guide him *"into all truth,"* providing Christians with *"all things that pertain unto life and godliness."*

4

Saved, but Afterward Destroyed

The Result of a Specific Departure

"I will therefore put you in remembrance, though you once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not" (Jude 5).

(For additional information on the latter part of this chapter — the type-antitype structure of Heb. 6:4-6 — refer to Appendix I in this book.)

The beginning of spiritual lessons concerning apostasy in Jude is drawn from the experiences of the Israelites under Moses.

The Israelites were *saved out of the land of Egypt. NOT ONLY* had they *appropriated* the blood of the paschal lambs *BUT* they had also been *delivered* from Egypt itself.

As a redeemed people under Moses, they had been called into existence and saved out of the land of Egypt for *a purpose — a purpose to be realized in the land of Canaan.*

God's Firstborn Son

Israel's standing among the nations was that of *firstborn.*

Israel was *God's firstborn son* (remaining *God's firstborn son* today). And an announcement to this effect was to be proclaimed to the Pharaoh of Egypt before the Exodus, along with the command, "Let my son go, that he may serve me" (Ex. 4:22, 23).

This referred to the fact that the purpose surrounding Israel's removal from Egypt was associated with the nation's birthright. Israel was called out of Egypt to go into another land, the land of Canaan, and exercise the rights of the firstborn in that land.

The rights of the firstborn, the birthright possessed by Israel, consisted of three things:

1) Ruler of the household, under and for the Father.
2) Priest of the family.
3) Receiving a double portion of all the Father's goods.

The first segment of the birthright placed the firstborn in the position of "heir" with respect to *a rule of the Father's house, under and for the Father.*

"Sonship" implies *rulership* and carries the thought of *supremacy.* And this earth, a province in the kingdom of God, constitutes *the Father's house* when the birthright with respect to nations is in view (*cf.* Rev. 2:26, 27).

In this respect, Israel was to be *the supreme nation and exercise rule, as a national power in the Father's house, over ALL the other nations in the house, over ALL the other nations of the earth.*

Israel occupied this standing as *firstborn among ALL nations* while still in Egypt, but Israel *would NOT* actually realize these rights *UNTIL* the nation had been removed from Egypt and established in the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, within a theocracy.

The second segment of the birthright placed Israel in *a priestly position with respect to both God and the nations.* Israel was to be "a kingdom of priests" in the midst of the nations (Ex. 19:6), resulting in the nations being blessed through Israel in accord with Gen. 12:1-3.

A first-mention principle relating to these blessings had previously been established in Gen. 9:25-27. "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Ex. 3:6) was *FIRST* "the God of Shem" (Gen. 9:26). Neither Ham nor Japheth had a God, and *the ONLY way* they could realize spiritual blessings was through Shem and his God.

Or, to state the matter another way, the descendants of Ham and Japheth (the Gentile nations) are "without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12; *cf.* Ps. 96:5) and can realize spiritual blessings *ONLY through the descendants of Shem* (the nation of Israel) and their God (Ps. 33:12; 72:18, 19).

Although the lineage of Shem also includes, among others, the descendants of Ishmael, the sons of Keturah, and Esau, spiritual blessings for nations emanating from these lineages are derived through *the SAME means* as those for the Gentile nations (Gen. 17:18-21; 21:5-12; 22:2; 25:1-6).

The third segment of the birthright placed Israel in a position to receive *a double portion of ALL the Father's goods.*

This segment of the birthright, as the first two segments, *also had to do with Israel's position among the nations.* There are two spheres of governmental power and authority in a rule over the Gentile nations — *earthly,* and *heavenly* — and the double portion of the birthright pertained to Israel ultimately coming into possession of both (*cf.* Gen. 22:17, 18).

The way was opened at Kadesh-Barnea for Israel to go into the land and realize *the earthly portion* of this inheritance, but *the heavenly portion* of the inheritance was not to be opened to the nation until about fifteen hundred years later.

It was *necessary* that the nation be dealt with in relation *to BOTH* at one or more points in time, for Israel, as the firstborn, was *the appointed heir.*

At Kadesh-Barnea, when *the earthly portion of the inheritance* was in the offing, God Himself dwelt in the midst of the nation.

Fifteen hundred years later, when *the heavenly portion of the inheritance* was in the offing, God Himself once again (in the person of His Son) dwelt in the midst of the nation.

From Egypt to Canaan

When Israel left Egypt, the march was not directly to the land of Canaan. Before entering the land and assuming the rights of the firstborn, certain preparatory steps had to be taken first.

Thus, the march of the Israelites under Moses, beyond the Red Sea passage, was to a previously designated place in the wilderness — *a Mount* in "the wilderness of Sinai" (Ex. 3:1, 12; 19:1, 2) — where God would meet and commune with His people through Moses.

Here, before the Mount in the wilderness of Sinai, the people were to be prepared and equipped for the position which they were to occupy in the land of Canaan. During this time *the Law was given to Moses, the priestly ministry and tabernacle worship were established, and orderly arrangements of the tribes and families were set forth* (Ex. 19:3-Num. 10:10).

The Law given to Moses at Mt. Sinai, with all its rules and regulations, was to be Israel's constitution, given to govern the nation's affairs in the kingdom.

And the tabernacle, with God dwelling in the Holy of Holies in the midst of His people, was to be *the central place of worship* for "the kingdom of priests," through whom God would bless all the Gentile nations.

Israel, God's firstborn son, *was to ultimately rule after this fashion in a worldwide theocracy with pre-established laws, rules, and regulations.*

The tabernacle was "set up" in the wilderness of Sinai on the first day of the first month of the second year following the Exodus — a few days short of one year. On that day "the glory of the Lord" — the visible presence of God among His people — filled the tabernacle.

And at that point in time *a theocratic kingdom came into existence on this earth* (Ex. 40:1-38).

The kingdom with its constitution was actually established in the wilderness of Sinai, at Mt. Sinai ("a mountain" in Scripture signifies *a kingdom*).

BUT the actual rule within this kingdom could not begin until God's firstborn son had been removed from the wilderness and established in the land of Canaan. *THUS*, the march from the wilderness of Sinai was then to Kadesh-Barnea; and, in essence, at that juncture in history, *everything* was ready for God to begin fulfilling His purpose for having saved His people out of the land of Egypt.

Israel at Kadesh-Barnea

> "And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, 'Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.'
>
> But the men that went up with him said, 'We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we'" (Num. 13:30, 31).

All things dating back to Abraham and his removal from Ur of the Chaldees came to pass with an end in view, and that end involved the nation springing from the loins of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob realizing the very purpose for their national existence.

ALL the nations of the earth were to be blessed through Abraham and his seed, and this was to be realized through the seed of Abraham becoming a "great nation" and occupying *a predetermined position and place on the earth with respect to the surrounding nations* (Gen. 12:1-3).

National blessings for the nations of the earth were to be realized *through Israel*. God was to bless Israel and, in turn, bless the nations

of the earth *through Israel.*

The surrounding nations, alienated from God (Eph. 2:12; *cf.* Ps. 147:19, 20), were to be brought into a proper relationship with God *through* the "kingdom of priests" — *the nation in possession of the tabernacle, the dwelling place of God and the ONLY way of approach to God.*

Herein lies the reason that the people of God since time immemorial have been commanded, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem…" (Ps. 122:6).

When Jerusalem is at peace, the nations will be at peace; when Israel is at rest, the nations will be at rest; when Israel has been established in the land as a blessing, the nations will be blessed in their respective lands through Israel (Isa. 2:1-5; 14:1, 2; 40:3-5; 52:9, 10; 62:1-7; Jer. 3:17, 18; Zech. 2:4-11; 8:20-23; 9:10; *cf.* Deut. 32:8; Ezek. 5:5; Acts 17:26, 27).

Spiritual blessings are derived *through God's firstborn Sons*. This was the pattern established in history, this pattern remains true today, and this pattern will remain true throughout time and eternity. Genesis 12:3 remains in force today, as does Gal. 3:14.

However, during the present dispensation, God's firstborn Sons (Israel, and Jesus) are *NOT* occupying their God-ordained places with respect to their *Firstborn* status; and *the fullness of blessings* awaiting mankind *MUST* be deferred to that future time, to the coming age, when present conditions will be changed.

The prospect lying before the people of Israel upon their departure from the wilderness of Sinai was to enter into the land of Canaan and to ultimately be established in that land, *NOT ONLY as ruler over the nations of the earth, BUT ALSO as a kingdom of priests through whom God would bless the nations.*

The prospect lying before the Gentile nations at this point was, accordingly, *that of entering into a position of subjection to Israel, which would ultimately result in their being recipients of the blessings of God.*

1) The Twelve Spies and Their Report

During the first part of the second year following the nation's departure from Egypt, the Israelites under Moses arrived at Kadesh-Barnea. And, with their arrival, *the end of an era was at hand.*

Heretofore, the descendants of Abraham — over the past 400 years — had been considered "strangers" in relation to the land of Canaan (Gen. 15:13; 37:1; 47:9; Ex. 6:3, 4). But the sojourn of the seed

of Abraham had ended (Ex. 12:40, 41), *and the descendants of Abraham were NOW at the very borders of the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*

They were NOW ready to enter this land, overthrow the inhabitants, and exercise the rights of the firstborn in the land, within a theocracy.

At Kadesh-Barnea, God instructed Moses to send spies into the land of Canaan, one man from each of the twelve tribes. These spies were to traverse the land, obtaining a complete report concerning the land and its inhabitants prior to the nation's entrance into and conquest of the land.

The twelve men chosen searched the land "from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob" for forty days. They observed the cities and inhabitants of the land, and obtained samples of the fruits of the land to carry back with them ("grapes," "pomegranates," and "figs"). And among the inhabitants of the land were "the giants ['the *nephilim'*], the sons of Anak, which came of the giants ['the *nephilim'*]."

> (The word *nephilim,* a transliterated Hebrew word meaning "fallen ones," refers to *the offspring* resulting from a cohabitation of the "sons of God [angels]" with the "daughters of men [female descendants of Adam]."
>
> This subject is covered in Chapters V and VI in this book.)

Upon their return, the spies possessed a complete report concerning the land and its inhabitants. Their findings were then presented before Moses, Aaron, and all the congregation of Israel (Num. 13:1-33).

Ten of the twelve spies presented an "evil report" concerning the land and its inhabitants.

They stated that the land was truly a land flowing with "milk and honey," but *the people* that dwelt in the land were "strong," *the cities* were "walled, and very great," and it was *a land* that "eateth up the inhabitants thereof." According to their report, the Israelites would "be not able to go up against the people," for these people dwelling in the land were "stronger" than the Israelites.

In essence, the ten spies bringing this report were saying that *God would be UNABLE to complete His dealings with Israel through bringing the people of this nation into the realization of their calling* (Num. 13:26-29, 31-33), resulting in Gen. 12:2, 3 remaining unfulfilled.

However, two of the spies, Caleb and Joshua, believed God could and would do *EXACTLY* what He had promised. Caleb "stilled the people before Moses, and said, 'Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it'" (Num. 13:30).

Caleb and Joshua recognized that *the battle belonged to the Lord* (II Chron. 20:15), and circumstances were *NOT* to be looked upon from a naturalistic standpoint, but from a Divine viewpoint.

They knew that the Israelites within their own strength could NOT overcome the inhabitants of the land (cf. Num. 14:42-45); BUT they ALSO knew that with God dwelling in their midst, NO ONE, inside or outside the land, could overcome them.

In essence, their report stated that *God was WELL ABLE to complete His dealings with Israel through bringing the people of this nation into a realization of their calling* (*cf.* Num. 14:8), ultimately effecting the fulfillment of Gen. 12:2, 3.

2) Israel's Reaction

The nation of Israel at this point stood on the very threshold of entering into the land and ruling within a theocracy in the position for which the people had previously been saved out of the land of Egypt. They were in possession of *ALL things pertaining to the kingdom* (constitution, center of worship, presence of God Himself), they had heard the report concerning the land from those who had been there, and they had even tasted the actual fruits of the land.

They were at the end of one era and the beginning of another. Everything was now in readiness for them to move ahead.

They had been brought from the brickyards of Egypt to the borders of the land of Canaan. They had been brought from a place of subjection to the most powerful Gentile nation of that day to a position where they could enter into a land which belonged to them alone and ultimately rule over, resulting in a blessing to, the same Gentile nation which had previously held them in bondage. *THIS* was the prospect which lay before the people of Israel at Kadesh-Barnea.

If ever a people could be looked upon as having moved from a state of *gnosis* ("knowledge") to a state of *epignosis* ("mature knowledge" [particularly as it related to things pertaining to the purpose for their calling]) it would be the Israelites under Moses. They moved from *a*

simple knowledge (gnosis) of the rudimentary things concerning the death of the firstborn in Egypt to *an extensive knowledge (epignosis)* concerning the purpose of their calling at Kadesh-Barnea (Ex. 12-Num. 13).

> (On *gnosis* and *epignosis,* the preposition *epi* prefixed to *gnosis* [*epignosis*] intensifies the word.
>
> Note Paul's use of the verb form of *gnosis* [*ginosko*] without, and then with, the preposition *epi* in I Cor. 13:12:
>
> > "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know [*ginosko*] in part; but then shall I know [*epiginosko*] even as I also am known [*epiginosko*].")

And at Kadesh-Barnea the children of Israel, in possession of this knowledge, were in a position to move in one of two directions: they could either *believe the true report* proclaimed by Caleb and Joshua and go into the land, or they could *believe the false report* proclaimed by the other ten spies and refuse to enter the land.

The Israelites chose the latter; and, through this move, *the nation fell away* (Num. 14:1ff). *The nation of Israel stood away from* "the faith." They refused to believe that they could go into the land and, under God, be victorious in conquest.

Israel, *NOT ONLY to her own detriment BUT to the detriment of the nations of the earth, committed national apostasy at Kadesh-Barnea. Israel TURNED AWAY from their God-appointed position in the land of Canaan and LOOKED BACK toward the things in the land of Egypt* (*cf.* Luke 9:62).

The people rejected God's appointed leader, Moses, and sought to appoint a new leader who would lead them back to Egypt. They even sought to stone Caleb and Joshua because of their positive report concerning the land. *They refused to believe that God was able to victoriously lead His people into this land, and they wanted no part of it* (*cf.* Heb. 3:19).

This is the point in Scripture where one finds *a national apostasy resulting in a national overthrow.*

Caleb and Joshua *ALONE*, of the entire accountable generation, twenty years old and above, would ultimately be allowed to enter into the land and realize the purpose for their salvation. The remaining individuals were to be overthrown in the wilderness and fall short of the goal of their calling (Num. 14:29ff).

Christians at Kadesh-Barnea

(The material which follows, to the end of the chapter, has been written in a type-antitype framework, showing parallels between that which occurred in the camp of Israel under Moses [the actions of two types of Israelites] and that which would occur among Christians under Christ [the actions of two types of Christians].

And the matter was/is with a view to entrance into a land [the Israelites entering *an earthly land under Mose*s, Christians entering *a heavenly land under Christ*], with both realizing *an inheritance therein and exercising regality in relation to the nations of the earth, within a theocracy.*

However, the leaven which the woman placed in the three measures of meal in Matt. 13:33, which could *ONLY* have been very early in the dispensation, has, after almost 2,000 years, resulted in such a corruption of Biblical doctrine in relation to the kingdom in Christendom *that it is next to impossible today to find Christians who can form a true antitype of the Israelites under Moses.*

That is to say, it is next to impossible today to find Christians in the Churches of the land who, in their knowledge of Scripture, have moved from *gnosis* to *epignosis* in things particularly related to the coming kingdom of Christ. The Churches are filled with Christians who, in the preceding respect, *are wandering aimlessly about, either still back in Egypt or someplace in the wilderness, knowing LITTLE to NOTHING about the goal of their calling — regality with Christ, within a theocracy, in a land set before them.*

Thus, except in rare instances, a true antitype in keeping with the type *CANNOT be seen in Christendom today.* This could easily have been seen in first century Christianity; but, because of the working of the leaven since that time, the matter is completely different today.)

> "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit,
>
> And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world ['age'] to come,
>
> If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance…" (Heb. 6:4-6).

This passage in Hebrews has been an enigma to Bible students over the years, and it is possibly the most misunderstood section of

Scripture in the New Testament. But the passage is not nearly as difficult as the multiplicity of interpretations would lead one to believe.

The numerous interpretations advanced by various expositors have resulted basically from two exegetical errors:

1) A failure to take into account *the central message of this Book.*
2) A failure to take into account *the context of Heb. 6:4-6.*

The message of the Book of Hebrews centers around "the salvation of the soul in relation to the coming kingdom" (1:1-14; 6:13-20; 10:35-39; 13:17), and *the context leading into Heb. 6:4-6* has to do with "the experiences of the Israelites under Moses" (chs. 3, 4), which is why maturity in the faith — moving from *gnosis* to *epignosis* — is in view immediately preceding Heb. 6:4-6 (5:5-6:3). The summation of the matter is contained in chapter six; but the thought begins in chapter three, and the entire passage *MUST* be so understood.

(Note that the preceding material would explain why Heb. 6:4-6 is seldom correctly understood today, *resulting in the multiplicity of interpretations.*

A true type-antitype status of the passage is ALL BUT ABSENT in Christendom today, with the whole of the matter, for all practical purposes, NOT understood. Thus, there is really *NO* present-day base to work from.)

Israelites under Moses — Christians under Christ

As the Israelites under Moses (in their knowledge of God's plans and purposes) moved from a state of *gnosis* to a state of *epignosis* in the type, Christians under Christ (in their knowledge of God's plans and purposes) are to move from a state of *gnosis* to a state of *epignosis* in the antitype.

As the Israelites under Moses moved from Egypt toward the land of Canaan with an earthly inheritance in view, Christians under Christ are to move from the things of this world toward a land separate from this world with a heavenly inheritance in view.

As the Israelites under Moses were being prepared during the wilderness journey for entrance into the land, Christians under Christ are being prepared during the wilderness journey for entrance into the land.

As the Israelites under Moses were to go in, conquer the inhabitants of the land, and rule as God's firstborn son here on earth at the

head of the nations, Christians under Christ are to go in, be victorious over the inhabitants of the land (*cf.* Eph. 6:10-17), and, in that coming day (following the adoption [Rom. 8:14-23]), rule as God's firstborn son from the heavens over the nations.

But, as the Israelites refused to go into the land, conquer the inhabitants, and take possession of the land (with a view to a future rule), so can Christians refuse to go into the land, be victorious over the inhabitants, and take possession of the land (with a view to a future rule).

And, just as the Israelites at this point fell away, with *NO possibility* of being renewed again unto repentance, so can Christians at this point fall away, with *NO possibility* of being renewed again unto repentance.

And, just as the Israelites who fell away were overthrown in the wilderness and *failed to realize the GOAL of their calling*, so will Christians who fall away after this fashion be overthrown in the wilderness and *fail to realize the GOAL of their calling.*

The words, "once *enlightened,* and *have tasted* of the heavenly gift, and were made *partakers* of the Holy Spirit, and *have tasted* the good word of God, and the powers of the world ['age'] to come" (Heb. 6:4, 5), refer to a progression in growth from milk to meat to strong meat.

This is a progression from the rudimentary things concerning the antitype of the death of the paschal lambs in Egypt to the strong meat associated with things surrounding the antitype of Israel's experiences at Kadesh-Barnea (chs. 3, 4).

In the immediate context (ch. 5), "strong meat" is associated with things surrounding the Melchizedek priesthood.

This priesthood refers to things beyond Kadesh-Barnea, in the land itself. Melchizedek was a king-priest, setting forth in type the office which Christ will occupy in the coming age when He, as the great King-Priest, with His "kings and priests" (Rev. 5:10), takes the kingdom.

The entire thought in Heb. 6:4-6 is a progression in growth from *gnosis* to *epignosis,* followed by a "falling away" from *the faith*.

"Eternal salvation" — which, more often than not, is read into this text — is *NOT* in view at all. Viewing eternal salvation as the issue under discussion is completely unnatural and will serve *ONLY* to obscure the correct interpretation.

IF the Scriptures *ALONE* are allowed to interpret Heb. 6:4-6, *the entire matter will become clear.*

(Note the words, "enlightened," "partakers," and "have tasted" [vv. 4, 5]. These words are used elsewhere in the Book of Hebrews referring to individuals [Christians] entering into certain experiences [*cf.* 2:9; 3:1; 10:32].

And the usage of these words in Heb. 6:4-6 is within the same framework. The unsaved simply *CANNOT* enter into experiences seen through the manner in which these words are used in the text.)

Impossibility of Renewal

The thought that *it is impossible* "to renew" certain apostate Christians "unto repentance" is one of *the most solemn warnings* to be found in all Scripture. *The finality* of the matter for those who apostatize in this manner is set forth by the word "impossible."

This is *a particular apostasy,* and once a Christian *has fallen away from the faith* in the manner set forth in Heb. 3-6, *he can NEVER again* be brought back into the position which he occupied prior to his departure from the faith.

The Greek word translated "renew" refers to being *brought back into EXACTLY the same position previously occupied.* In the type, *Israel could NOT be brought back into this position; and in the antitype, NEITHER can Christians.*

The entire thought is very similar to the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit in Matt. 12:22-32. This was a national sin committed by the religious leaders of Israel — not something which man, saved or unsaved, can commit today. Once the religious leaders had committed this sin, their actions brought the nation into a state from which a restoration to the previously occupied position *could NEVER occur.*

At Kadesh-Barnea, however, the prohibition applied *ONLY* to the present generation, twenty years old and above (this would allow the nation of Israel, at a future time, to realize the position for which the generation under Moses had been called — *an earthly calling*).

In Matthew chapter twelve, anticipating Matt. 21:43, this prohibition *NOT ONLY* applied to the present generation *BUT* to future generations as well (this would prevent the nation of Israel from ever realizing the position unto which the generation during the days of Christ and the apostles had been called — *a heavenly calling*).

One thing which *MUST NOT* be overlooked when considering the impossibility of renewing an apostate unto repentance, who has fallen away in the manner specified, is the fact that in the type surrounding the experiences of the Israelites at Kadesh-Barnea the nation did repent.

The word "repentance" (Gk., *metanoia*) means *a change of mind.* This change of mind will lead to other things which are often mistaken for repentance (or part of repentance), but the simple, restrictive meaning of the word itself does not include these things.

> (*Metanoia,* translated "repentance" in the N.T., is a compound word comprised of *meta* ["with"] and *noeo* ["to know," or "to perceive (with the mind)"], derived from *nous* ["mind"]. *Metanoia* points to doing something with one's mind, and that which is understood in the Greek language through the use of this word is "a change of mind.")

Once the Israelites at Kadesh-Barnea had fallen away and had realized the consequences of their actions, they changed their minds (repented) concerning God's command and the inhabitants in the land of Canaan. They sought to occupy their former position, entering into and taking possession of the land, with a view to subsequently ruling over the nations.

Thus, bringing this over into the antitype, it is possible for Christians who have apostatized in this manner to also change their minds about the land set before them and seek to occupy their former position, looking ahead to the coming inheritance of the saints.

However, *God DID NOT change His mind* about what He had stated would befall apostate Israelites in the type; *NOR will God change His mind* about what He has stated will befall apostate Christians in the antitype.

After the Israelites had repented (changed their minds) at Kadesh-Barnea, the nation *FAILED* to regain the position which it had previously occupied. The Lord was *NO LONGER* among His people to lead them victoriously into the land; and when they tried to enter, the Amalekites and Canaanites "smote them" (Num. 14:40-45).

NOR will the Lord be among like-minded apostate Christians today who repent (change their minds) and seek to occupy their former, forfeited position. They can *NO LONGER* move victoriously into the land and overcome the inhabitants.

If they try, as in the type, *they will be overcome. That which awaited Israel in the type can ONLY await Christians in the antitype — an overthrow in the wilderness, by the enemy inhabitating the land (Satan and his angels), an overthrow on the right side of the blood but on the wrong side of the goal of their calling.*

The word "repentance" is only used three times in the Book of Hebrews (6:1, 6; 12:17), and two of these three times the word is used

in the heart of major warnings given to Christians. Hebrews 6:4-6 is the heart of the third major warning, and Heb. 12:14-17 is the heart of the fifth major warning.

Interestingly enough, in the fifth major warning in chapter twelve, Esau did repent. He changed his mind concerning the birthright after it had been forfeited. And his repentance led to a great show of emotion.

The words, "he found no place of repentance," refer to the fact that *"he found no place for a change of mind in his father"* (v. 17b, ASV). Esau sought to effect a change of mind on the part of his father, resulting in a reversal of that which had transpired.

However, this did not, it could not, occur. Isaac could *NOT* change his mind. The birthright, once forfeited, *was beyond Esau's grasp forever.*

The situation in Heb. 6:4-6 is identical. The apostates in this passage *CANNOT* occupy a previously forfeited position. As in Esau's case, it is *NOT* possible to renew them again unto repentance.

In the types — the Israelites at Kadesh-Barnea, and Esau in the presence of his father — both the Israelites and Esau repented; but, though they repented, they still found *NO place of repentance*.

That would be to say, though the Israelites changed their minds at Kadesh-Barnea, God *did NOT* change His mind (God *did NOT* repent); and, though Esau changed his mind when he appeared in Isaac's presence, Isaac *did NOT* change his mind (Isaac *did NOT* repent).

Repentance in the fifth major warning is *NOT* on the part of the one who forfeited his birthright, for he did repent. And repentance in the third major warning, as well, *CANNOT* be on the part of the ones who fall away. In the type, as previously seen, the Israelites did repent, necessitating that the antitype be viewed after the same fashion.

Again, NO CHANGE in that which God had decreed existed in the type; *NOR* can *A CHANGE* exist in the antitype.

Man turning his back upon that associated with the greatest thing God has ever designed for redeemed man — that of ascending the throne with God's Son during the coming age — is *a serious matter.*

In fact, it is *a VERY serious matter;* and God will deal with this matter in *an EQUALLY serious fashion.*

This is what Heb. 6:4-6, drawn from the type seen in chapters three and four, is about. *God overthrew the Israelites who fell away in the type, and He will ALSO overthrow Christians who fall away in the antitype.*

5

In Those Days...Also After That

The Sons of God, the Daughters of Men

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6).

There are two periods in the history of the earth where angels in the kingdom of Satan "kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation." *The first period was in days preceding the Flood,* and *the second period was in days following the Flood.*

The first of these two periods, alluded to in Jude 6, is referred to in Gen. 6:4 by the expression, "in those days [one hundred twenty years before the Flood (v. 3)]; and also after that [continuing time during this one-hundred-twenty-year period preceding the Flood]."

And the second of these two periods is dealt with in Jude 7.

(Note that the second part of the expression in Gen. 6:4 ["and also after that"] cannot refer to the days of Lot, for the complete expression ["in those days; and also after that"], textually, has to do with the days of Noah, preceding the Flood.

The complete expression has to do with time during that referenced in the continuing part of the verse — "when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men…")

II Peter 2:4-6 and Jude 6, 7 outline events resulting in the judgment of God in both periods.

Note the section in II Peter: The "angels that sinned" (v. 4) refers to acts by angels involving illicit, sexual perversions, both *preceding the Flood* (v. 5) and *following the Flood* (v. 6):

"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell [Gk., *Tartaroo*], and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

> And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the Flood upon the world of the ungodly;
>
> And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly" (vv. 4-6).

These angels, for this specific purpose, departed from "their own habitation," their dwelling place in the heavens, and came to earth. Once upon the earth, these angels, appearing in the form of man (*cf.* Gen. 18:1, 2, 20-22; 19:1-5), involved themselves in illicit, sexual relations with members of the human race.

This cohabitation in days before the Flood, insofar as the record is concerned, occurred only with the "daughters of men" — a heterosexual relationship. However, Scripture reveals both heterosexual and homosexual relationships involving angels and members of the human race in days following the Flood (Gen. 19:4, 5; Num. 13:33).

Attention is called to these two periods of time in sections of Scripture in the New Testament which deal with "apostasy," revealing the serious nature of "standing away from" the position in which one was originally created — whether in the angelic world, the old creation in Jacob, or the new creation in Christ (*cf.* Isa. 43:1; II Cor. 5:17).

In days before the Flood and again *in days following the Flood*, angelic beings in the kingdom of Satan "stood away from" their original, created state, involving themselves in something not only completely outside their own realm, but unlawful. This resulted in their being confined with chains in a place of darkness, awaiting judgment.

And *time* has wrought no change in God's attitude toward and action concerning their sin. They have been bound for millenniums, they remain bound today, and they will continue to be bound until a designated time of final judgment yet future.

Created to Rule and to Reign

The cohabitation of angels in the kingdom of Satan with members of the human race was *a deceptive, well-planned scheme with a specific purpose in view*; and this purpose can be traced to *the reason man was brought into existence in Genesis chapter one.*

The original earth, which had become a chaos because of Satan's aspirations to be "like the most High," was restored over a six-day period; and man, created on the sixth day, was brought into existence to rule the restored earth in the stead of Satan and his angels (Gen. 1:2b-28; Isa. 14:13, 14; Ezek. 28:15).

Satan, knowing the reason for man's creation, immediately began to move against man — something which he has continued to do since that time. Satan's objective was *to bring about man's disqualification through sin,* as he himself had previously been disqualified.

Thus, Satan, through deception, caused Adam to sin by first causing Eve (a part of Adam's very being) to sin. This act not only disqualified the man, preventing him from assuming the role for which he had been created, but Adam's sin also brought the entire restored creation under the bondage of that produced by sin — *corruption, decay* (Rom. 8:21).

Satan's move against Adam, through Eve, in Genesis chapter three, produces at least two first-mention principles in Scripture:

1) Satan's "method": *deception* (*ref.* Chapter III in this book).
2) Satan's "reason for this deception": *to prevent man from assuming the governmental reigns of the earth.*

These two principles surrounding Satanic activity remain constant, holding true at any point in Scripture where Satan is seen moving against man. Satan's methods are *ALWAYS deceptive*, and the underlying purpose behind Satan's every move against man *ALWAYS concerns the governmental reigns of the earth, which he himself holds.*

When Satan sinned, he was disqualified to rule, and his kingdom was brought into a ruined state; when man sinned, he also was disqualified to rule, and the restored domain over which he had been created to rule was brought under a curse (a ruin once again).

But man, created in the "image" and "likeness" of God, was a being quite different than angels. With man, his disqualification and resulting ruined domain *were by NO means the end of the matter.*

Fallen man, unlike fallen angels, was to be redeemed; and man's redemption was with a view to his ultimately occupying the position from which he had fallen — man restored, the domain restored, and man ultimately exercising regality.

Genesis 3:15 records God's promise concerning man's Redeemer (the Seed of the Woman), and Gen. 3:21 records God's immediate ac-

tion concerning a provision for man's sin (the slaying of one or more animals to provide skins to clothe Adam and Eve).

God's promise and action at this point in Scripture form two other first-mention principles, seen in Genesis chapters three and four:

> 1) *The way of salvation* was to be through a "Substitute/Redeemer," acting vicariously, in man's stead.
>
> 2) *The means of salvation* was to be via "death" and "shed blood."

Since no redemptive provision was made following Satan's sin, the principles in Gen. 3:15, 21 form something entirely new in God's dealings with His creatures. And, with this new turn of events, Satan, knowing that his own reign could continue *ONLY* as long as man remained in his fallen state, *MUST* now prevent man's redemption through whatever means might lie within his power.

Satan Against God's New Creation, Man

At the time of the birth of Cain, the firstborn of the human race, there is every indication that Eve believed he was to be the promised Redeemer. The words of Eve, "I have gotten a man from the Lord [referring to Cain]" (Gen. 4:1), are recorded literally in the Hebrew text, "I have gotten a man, Jehovah" (*cf.* Gen. 22:8).

Nothing like this was said about Abel, who, from all indication, was probably the twin brother of Cain, but born last (Gen. 4:1, 2). Eve apparently took her firstborn to be the promised Redeemer and uttered the recorded words concerning him prior to the birth of Abel. The record is silent concerning anything Eve might have said at the time of Abel's birth.

As the two sons grew into manhood though, Abel was the one who acted "by faith" (Gen. 4:3-5; Heb. 11:4). And Satan, having observed the entire matter, evidently reasoned that if one of these sons was to be the promised Redeemer, or possibly from the line through which the Redeemer was to come, it would have to be Abel, not Cain.

Thus, the first murder in human history occurred:

> "Cain, *who was of that wicked one*…slew his brother" (I John 3:12a; *cf.* Gen. 4:8).

The fact that God later appointed "another seed instead of Abel [Seth]" reveals that the Redeemer would have come through the lineage of Abel, had he not been slain (Gen. 4:25).

Following the birth of Seth and the birth of his son, Enos, the Genesis account states that "men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them" (Gen. 6:1). And Satan, at this point, appears to have turned his attention more to mankind in general, for the very next statement in Scripture reveals a cohabitation of the "sons of God [angels in the kingdom of Satan]" with the "daughters of men [female offspring from the lineage of Adam]" (Gen. 6:2).

Through this act, perpetrated by a segment of the angels under Satan's command, Satan evidently sought to corrupt the entire human race, not only attempting to prevent the ultimate appearance of the Redeemer but attempting to so corrupt the human race that man could never fulfill the reason for his creation in the beginning — replacing Satan and his angels in a regal capacity.

(The expression "sons of God," as in Gen. 6:2, 4, refers throughout Scripture *to special creations of God. All angels* are "sons of God" because of creation [*cf.* Job. 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Ezek. 28:15]; *Adam* was "a son of God" because of creation [Luke 3:38]; *Israel* was/is "God's son" because of creation [Isa. 43:1; *cf.* Ex. 4:22, 23]; *individual Israelites,* as well, are "God's sons" because of creation [Ex. 1:1, 7, 9; Isa. 43:1, 7]; and *Christians* are "God's sons" because of creation [II Cor. 5:17; *cf.* Rom. 8:14; Gal. 3:26; 4:6, 7; Heb. 12:5-8].

A sonship status should not be confused with that referred to by "adoption" in Scripture [Rom. 8:15, 23; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5]. "Adoption" is a translation of the Greek word *huiothesia* [from *huios,* "son," and *thesis,* "placing," or "positioning"]. Thus, *huiothesia* literally means "son-placing," or "son-positioning." Adoption in Scripture has to do with taking one who is already a son and placing that son in a "firstborn" status.

Israel, a son because of creation, has already been adopted [Rom. 9:4] and is presently *God's firstborn son* [Ex. 4:22, 23]. Christians, sons because of creation, have yet to be adopted. But Christians will one day be adopted [Rom. 8:14-23] and occupy the position of *firstborn* as well [Heb. 12:23].

For additional information on the preceding, refer to the author's book, *God's Firstborn Sons*.)

The use of "sons of God" in Genesis chapter six *can only be a reference to angels* (*cf.* Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7). The male descendants of Adam *could not be in view*, for they were begotten, not created.

Everything at this point in the Genesis account was apparently directed toward one goal: *total corruption of ALL the lineages of the families of the earth.*

Had Satan been successful, *NOT ONLY would he have prevented the appearance of man's Redeemer but the human race would have become corrupted in such a manner that redemption would NOT have been possible.*

Satan had sought to counter God's purpose for man's creation through the fall of Adam.

THEN, through the murder of Abel *he had sought* to destroy the one who could possibly be the promised Redeemer (or, at least of the lineage through which the Redeemer would come).

And *NOW*, with the appearance of the Redeemer still future, *he continued seeking* to counter God's purpose for man's creation through efforts directed toward a corruption of the human race — as previously noted, evidently *NOT ONLY* efforts to prevent the Redeemer from ever being born *BUT* efforts to so corrupt the human race that man could never fulfill the purpose for his creation, his very existence.

1) The Time of Genesis 6:1, 2

A corruption of the families of the earth through the cohabitation of the sons of God with the daughters of men was something which had to be accomplished over a period of many generations. The beginning of this cohabitation can be traced to a time hundreds of years before the Flood, and the fact that God only allowed eight individuals from one family to escape the judgment of the Flood may shed some light on the ultimate extent which Satan's activity in this respect possibly reached.

The time framework of Gen. 6:1, 2 is much closer to the creation of Adam than to the Flood. Sixteen hundred and fifty-six years separate these two events, and the time when the sons of God began their cohabitation with female offspring emanating from the loins of Adam and his progeny could not have been too far removed from the creation of Adam.

Note the wording of verse one:

> "And it came to pass when men *began to multiply* on the face of the earth…"

This cohabitation can evidently be traced to a time very near man's beginning on earth, very near man's creation.

2) The Result of Genesis 6:1, 2

Six hundred eighty-seven years following Adam's creation, Enoch, the seventh from Adam, begat Methuselah. The name "Methuselah" means, *When he is gone, it (judgment) will be sent; a*nd the judgment referred to by the name Methuselah was later revealed to be *the judgment of the Flood.*

So long as Methuselah remained alive, judgment would be withheld; but once Methuselah had died, judgment would fall.

Methuselah lived nine hundred sixty-nine years. The nine hundred sixty-ninth year of his life was the six hundredth year of Noah's life, the year of the Flood (Gen. 5:25-29; 7:11).

How did Enoch know, at the time of his son's birth, to name him "Methuselah," signifying a pending judgment associated with the length of his son's life?

The answer is given in Heb. 11:5: "By faith Enoch…" According to the record, Enoch walked with God for three hundred years after he begat Methuselah. Also, according to the record, at the end of these three hundred years, Enoch, "by faith," was translated.

It is evident that something happened to Enoch at or about the time of Methuselah's birth. *The name given to Methuselah, Enoch walking with God for three hundred years after he begat Methuselah, and Enoch subsequently being translated, by faith, ALL point to this fact.*

In order for Enoch to act "by faith" in any realm it was necessary for God to make certain things known to him, for *NO one* can act "by faith" apart from the Revelation of God. "Faith" is simply *believing that which God has to say about a matter*, and, consequently, *faith CANNOT exist apart from God's Revelation.* In order for Enoch to have acted as he did, *God HAD TO reveal certain things to him about his son, the coming judgment, and the fact that he would be translated before this judgment.*

From what we can glean in the record, God apparently revealed these things to Enoch at or about the time Methuselah was born. Methuselah was then given *a name* indicating that so long as he remained alive, God's judgment would be withheld; but when he was gone, it would be sent.

Enoch then *walked with God* for three hundred years in anticipation of *God removing him from the earth alive, before this judgment — EXACTLY*

as God had evidently previously revealed.

Scripture clearly implies that at the time of Methuselah's birth, six hundred eighty-seven years beyond the creation of Adam, the results of the cohabitation of the sons of God with the daughters of men had become a thing of such magnitude that it was necessary for God to intervene in the affairs of man. However, this actual intervention would not come until nine hundred sixty-nine more years had passed.

At the time of Methuselah's birth the announcement concerning impending judgment was given, and nine hundred sixty-nine years later judgment fell. God sent the waters of the Flood to destroy all the inhabitants of the earth, save Noah and his immediate family.

Thus, following Methuselah's death, judgment fell. Noah, his wife, and his three sons and their wives were in the previously prepared ark and passed safely through this judgment, evidently thwarting the ultimate goal which Satan had been working toward for centuries.

Following the Flood, the human race had to begin anew; and Satan, likewise, had to begin anew at this time.

Reserved unto Judgment

The angels who took upon themselves the form of man, left their positions of power in the heavens, and began cohabiting with female members of the human race, have been "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."

These angels were imprisoned in a particular place following the Flood during Noah's day, they remain imprisoned today, and they will remain imprisoned until their appearance in judgment before God's Son at a time yet future. All judgment has been committed into the hands of the Son (John 5:22), and these angels will one day be judged by the One Whose very appearance they had sought to prevent.

The angels imprisoned, awaiting judgment, are in a place which Scripture calls *Tartarus*. II Peter 2:4-6 refers to the angels who sinned during the days of Noah and during the days of Lot as being cast "down to hell [*Tartarus*]" (*Tartarus* is simply a transliterated Greek word, and it appears only this one time in the New Testament [in a verb form, *Tartaroo*; the noun form is *Tartaros*]).

All other occurrences of the word "hell" in English translations

are from the Greek words *Gehenna* and *Hades.*

Gehenna appears in Matt. 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5; James 3:6. And *Hades* appears in Matt. 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; 16:23; Acts 2:27, 31; I Cor. 15:55; Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13, 14.

There is a connection between *Tartarus* and *Hades* in the sense that one is housed within the other. *Hades* is the larger realm, with *Tartarus* comprising a section of *Hades.* The souls of both the saved and the unsaved go into *Hades* at the time of death, though the location in *Hades* into which the saved and unsaved go would not be the same.

Hades simply refers to a place in which the dead reside, whether saved or unsaved. It has nothing to do with "hell" per se. Rather, it simply has to do with *the place of the dead*, with no distinction made between saved and unsaved within the Word itself.

During Old Testament days, *Hades* (Heb., *Sheol) was* located in only one place — somewhere below the surface of the earth (Gen. 37:35; Num. 16:32, 33; I Sam 28:15; Job 7:9). Today, the place of the dead is located both below the surface of the earth and in the heavens. This change in location would be for only part of the dead — the saved of this present dispensation, "the dead in Christ" (II Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23).

The place into which the saved went at the time of death during Old Testament times apparently remains unchanged today. This place during Old Testament times could only be located *down,* and there is nothing in Scripture which would indicate that this place could be looked upon after any other fashion today. Old Testament saints would apparently still be in the same part of Hades which they have always occupied.

Christ's resurrection, ascension, and the ushering in of a new dispensation could have *NOTHING* to do with bringing about a change in the location of the Old Testament saints. *NOR* can Eph. 4:8 be understood to teach that Old Testament saints were removed into the heavens at the time of Christ's ascension, as is often done.

This is a quotation from a Messianic Psalm (Ps. 68:18), which has to do with *a deliverance of the captives in Luke 4:18.* The whole of the matter seen in Eph. 4:8 is yet future in the scope of its fulfillment (*cf.* Acts 2:29, 34).

No Old Testament saint is in *Tartarus*, though it is located in a section of *Hades,* as *Hades* (or *Sheol*) existed during Old Testament times.

Tartarus is located in a section of *Hades* into which man does not

enter. This section is reserved for the angels who sinned in accordance with II Peter 2:4-6; Jude 6, 7, along with, it would appear, their progeny also (*Tartarus* is discussed further in Chapter VI in this book).

Gehenna, the other word indiscriminately translated "hell" in most English translations of the New Testament, *is a word which always, with the exception of James 3:6, came from the lips of Jesus during His earthly ministry.*

EVERY appearance of this word in the gospel accounts is in passages *dealing with entrance into or exclusion from the kingdom of the heavens.* Thus, Christ used the word *ONLY* in connection with the proffered kingdom, *NOT* in connection with eternal life or damnation.

Gehenna, the Fiery Valley of Hinnom, was south of Jerusalem; and during the days when Christ was upon earth this valley was the place of refuse for the city of Jerusalem. *Gehenna* was the receptacle for all kinds of corruption. The sewage of the city flowed into this valley, and it was customary to cast the carcasses of dead animals therein. Even the bodies of executed criminals, by order of the Sanhedrin, were sometimes cast into this valley.

In Matt. 5:22, 29, 30 *Gehenna* is used in connection with judgment in the local Jewish courts and the judgment of the Council, which was the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin possessed the power to inflict a sentence of death by stoning, and also, should the Sanhedrin so rule, the punishment could be intensified by ordering the corpse to be cast into the Valley of Hinnom.

The decrees and determinations rendered by these earthly courts were used by the Lord to call attention to parallel decrees and determinations which will be rendered by heavenly courts, with the severest penalty being the same as that seen in the earthly courts — *death,* followed by the person *being cast into Gehenna.*

In Matt. 23:13, 25-28, 33 the Scribes and Pharisees were in danger of "the damnation of hell [*lit.,* 'the judgment of *Gehenna*']" *because they had closed the door to the offer of the kingdom of the heavens to the nation of Israel.*

In Mark 9:43, 45, 47, being "cast into hell [*'Gehenna'*]" is used as an antithesis to entering "into life" and entering "into the kingdom" (which are the same). And all the other occurrences of this word in the gospel accounts appear in the same type context.

Gehenna in James 3:6 is the only exception to the previous usage in the New Testament and the only place where this word is used outside

the gospel accounts. In James 3:6, the word is used in a symbolic sense, dealing with the tongue. But, even here, in a book dealing specifically with the salvation of the soul (1:21; 5:19, 20), the word has an inseparable connection with the way it is used in the gospel accounts.

Thus, being cast into *Gehenna* does *NOT* appear in any Scriptural passage as a reference to the unsaved being cast into "the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:14, 15), as is often taught; *NOR* can *Gehenna* be even remotely connected with *Hades* or *Tartarus.*

Rather, *Gehenna is associated with the judgment of those to whom the offer of the kingdom of the heavens was/is extended — Israel, past; Christians, present.*

The word is thus presently associated with *the future judgment of Christians in connection with issues pertaining to the millennial kingdom.*

Christ's Proclamation

> "Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit;
>
> In which also he went and preached [delivered a proclamation] unto the spirits in prison,
>
> That aforetime were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water" (I Peter 3:18-20, ASV).

The "spirits" in this passage are said to have been "disobedient" during days preceding the Flood. For this reason not only are they imprisoned but Christ also appeared in their presence at a time following their imprisonment and delivered a proclamation. *The time* and *purpose* of this proclamation evidently center around *the reason* for their previous actions, and the passage *MUST* be interpreted with this in mind.

These imprisoned spirits *CANNOT* be identified as descendants of Adam. The dead from the lineage of Adam are *NEVER* referred to as being in prison; *NOR* are individuals from the human race, living or dead, ever called "spirits." Man has *a spirit,* but he himself is *NEVER* called "a spirit." Scripture speaks of "the spirits of just men" (Heb. 12:23) and refers to Christ, *following His resurrection,* as "a quickening spirit" (referring to His position as Life-Giver in His resurrection body

[*a spiritual body* — I Cor. 15:44, 45 — *a body of flesh and bones,* the same body which had been placed in the tomb, but now possessing the Spirit rather than the blood as the life-giving, animating principle of the body]).

BUT, the descendants of Adam *CANNOT* be referred to by the use of the word "spirit" in this sense, for they have *NOT* received such bodies, with the possible exception of Enoch, Moses, and Elijah.

Among God's created beings, *ONLY angels* are called "spirits" in the Word of God:

> "Who maketh his angels *spirits,* and his ministers a flame of fire.
>
> Are they [angels] not all ministering *spirits,* sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1:7b, 14).

The "spirits" in I Peter 3:19 *can ONLY* be identified as *the angels who had left their positions of power in the heavens, had taken upon themselves the form of man, and had cohabited with women in the human race during days preceding the Flood.* The prison in this passage is *Tartarus;* and according to both II Peter 2:4 and Jude 6, these angels are not only confined in this prison but they are chained, awaiting judgment.

The word for "preach" in I Peter 3:19 is *kerusso* in the Greek text, which means, "to make an announcement." The word itself gives no indication concerning either the type announcement or the content of the message. These things *MUST* be determined from the context or other related Scripture.

Kerusso appears numerous times throughout the New Testament and is almost always used in connection with proclaiming some facet of the gospel message. In these passages though, either the Greek word *euaggelion* ("gospel," "good news") or other related qualifying words appear with *kerusso* to make this connection (*e.g.,* Matt. 4:23; I Cor. 1:23).

But there is *NOTHING* in I Peter 3:18-20 which would even remotely connect *kerusso* with the gospel message. In fact, the word *could NOT* refer to the proclamation of the gospel. *The message in this passage is directed to "spirits [angels]," and the gospel is for the descendants of Adam, NOT angels.*

Kerusso is used in I Peter 3:19 in the same sense that it is used in Rev. 5:2 — a proclamation concerning *something OTHER THAN the gospel.*

The *time* of this proclamation *did NOT occur,* as many infer, between Christ's death and resurrection while He was in *Hades; NOR,* as oth-

ers infer, did this proclamation have anything to do with the strange interpretation which is termed "the preaching of Christ [by the Holy Spirit] through Noah" during days preceding the Flood.

I Peter 3:18, 19 clearly reveals that Christ delivered this proclamation *Himself, FOLLOWING His resurrection.*

In verse eighteen, Christ was "put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit." At the time of His death, Christ possessed a "soulical [*psuchikos*]" body of flesh, blood, and bones. The life-giving, animating principle of this body was the blood (Lev. 17:11). But at the time of His resurrection Christ possessed a "spiritual [*pneumatikos*]" body of flesh and bones, without blood. The life-giving, animating principle of this body was the Spirit of God.

The body which Jesus possessed following His resurrection was the SAME body He had possessed before His death. The words "soulical" and "spiritual," in the preceding respect, have to do with the life-giving, animating principle of the body, *NOT* the body itself (*cf.* I Cor. 15:44-50).

The thought in verse eighteen is continued in verse nineteen by the statement:

> "In which also he went and preached [delivered a proclamation] unto the spirits in prison."

In verse eighteen, Christ was put to death in a soulical body and then raised in a spiritual body. *THEN*, in verse nineteen, *IN His spiritual (resurrection) body, Christ went to Tartarus and delivered a proclamation to the angels who had been directly responsible for the judgment of the Flood.*

The word "which" (v. 19) is a translation of the Greek relative pronoun *"ho."* A rule of Greek grammar states that the relative pronoun *MUST* agree with its antecedent in both gender and number. *"Ho"* is a singular case form of the word which can be either masculine or neuter (both case forms in this instance are the same in the Greek text, but the feminine is different).

The wording in verse eighteen, in the English text, would seemingly allow for two possible antecedents to be considered: "flesh," and "Spirit." However, in the Greek text, "flesh" is a feminine word and thus *CANNOT* be the antecedent. "Spirit," on the other hand, is a neuter word. Consequently, the antecedent of "which" *can ONLY be* "Spirit" (a neuter relative pronoun agreeing with its neuter antecedent).

With this in mind, note what is in view insofar as the time and manner of the proclamation are concerned.

In verse eighteen, Christ was "made alive in the Spirit." Jesus possessed a resurrection body animated by the Spirit.

Then verse nineteen states, "In which also he went and preached [delivered a proclamation] unto the spirits in prison." The relative pronoun "which," with its antecedent "Spirit," can only refer to His resurrection body.

Jesus, *in His resurrection body, went to Tartarus for the specific purpose of making an announcement to a particular group of imprisoned angels.*

These angels imprisoned in *Tartarus* had sought, under Satan, to completely corrupt the lineages of all the families of the earth, evidently attempting to prevent the appearance of *the Seed of the woman* in Gen. 3:15, preventing man's redemption.

BUT NOW, the second Man, the last Adam, *stood in their presence. He stood there in His resurrection body with His work of redemption completed.*

He had met Satan face to face in the wilderness, showing that He was fully qualified to redeem that which the first man, the first Adam, had forfeited in the fall. He then paid redemption's price at Golgotha, His Own shed blood. Man's redemption *was NOW NOT ONLY* an accomplished fact, *BUT* redeemed man (having descended from Adam through Noah and his three sons [an uncorrupted lineage]) could ultimately realize the purpose for his creation in the beginning.

The *ONLY* proclamation which Christ could have delivered to the imprisoned angels in *Tartarus* would have had to center around the fact that what they had attempted to do preceding the Flood was for naught.

An uncorrupted human race existed — a race uncorrupted by what these angels attempted — and the resurrected Redeemer stood in their presence. And not only would He, as the second Man, the last Adam, one day take the kingdom, but a great host of individuals redeemed from the lineage of the First Adam would reign as co-heirs with Him.

The angels in *Tartarus could NOW look forward to ONLY one thing: remaining chained, awaiting consignment to the lake of fire.*

Satan and the angels continuing to reign with him could, likewise, *NOW look forward to ONLY one thing: biding their time, awaiting the day Christ takes the kingdom, followed ultimately by their consignment to the lake of fire, "prepared for the devil and his angels."*

6

In Like Manner

Sexual Perversion, Angels, Men, Women

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7).

(This chapter, as the preceding chapter, deals with texts pertaining to *the sexual nature of angels.* And since many Christians believe that angels are sexless, often committing mayhem when attempting to deal with these texts, something needs to be said by way of clarification.

The teaching that angels are sexless would run counter to the occurrence of that which is clearly stated and dealt with in these texts — *i.e.*, a cohabitation, in a sexual manner, of angels with members of the human race.

In this respect, a question needs to be either answered or addressed: *Does Scripture EVER say, teach, or even intimate that angels are sexless?*

Matthew 22:30 is the text usually cited, but this verse has *NOTHING* to do with the sexual nature of angels. *ALL* angels are spoken of in a masculine respect in Scripture, and Scripture is filled with information concerning angelic involvement in sexual activity, both past and future.)

The world during Noah's day experienced *destruction* as a direct result of angelic intervention, in a sexual manner, in the affairs of the human race (Gen. 6:1-7).

Then, ten generations later, during Abraham's day, angelic intervention of the same nature was seen again, though on a more limited scale. Four cities in the Jordan plain, corrupted by angels in Satan's kingdom, involving themselves sexually with individuals in the human race, were *destroyed* by "brimstone and fire" from heaven (Gen. 19:24, 25; Deut. 29:23) .

Then seven generations later, during Moses' day, the same thing is seen again. The Israelites under Moses were told to go into the land of Canaan and *utterly destroy all the nations in the land, nations which had been corrupted through sexual relations with angels* (Deut. 7:1ff; *cf.* Num. 13:33).

Angels in the kingdom of Satan, both preceding and following the Flood, took upon themselves the form of man, left their positions of power in the heavens, came to earth, and cohabited with members of the human race.

Before the Flood, insofar as the record is concerned, this cohabitation was only between angels and female members of the human race — a heterosexual union. After the Flood, however, Scripture reveals both heterosexual and homosexual relationships of this nature.

Before the Flood, this union involved the families of the earth. After the Flood, this union appears to have been confined more particularly to the inhabitants of the land in the Abrahamic covenant.

The cohabitation of angels in the kingdom of Satan with members of the human race in days before the Flood and again in days following the Flood though *occurred with the SAME objective in view.*

(Satan's multi-faceted attacks were directed against the one whom God had created to ultimately hold the sceptre, *against man in general, then against man more specifically, against Israel.*

During the first 2,000 years of human history, Satan's attack was *against mankind in general.* But then, after 2,000 years, God narrowed the matter of regality down *to one man, to Abraham* [anticipated by the position which *Shem* had held in Gen. 9:26, nine generations earlier]. And God revealed, at the outset, His plans and purposes which were to be worked out through Abraham and his lineage [Gen. 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 22:17, 18].

Thus, Satan could now center his attack against one man and his progeny — seen four centuries later, during Moses' day, to be *the nation of Israel, God's firstborn son.* This was the nation which God, through Abraham, had called into existence to dwell in a particular land, hold the sceptre, and rule at the head of the nations within a theocracy.

And Satan knowing this well in advance, over generations of time, *could marshal his forces in the land in which Israel was to dwell when they ruled, the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* [Num. 13:33].

And for the same reason, because of Israel's identity, Satan's attack against this nation has continued down through the intervening three

and one-half millenniums, extending into modern times. Satan knows that God is *NOT* going to change His mind concerning the reason He called this nation into existence [Rom. 11:29]. *Israel is to ultimately hold the sceptre in the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*

Then, almost two millenniums ago, Satan had to broaden his attack. God brought into existence a third creation in the human race — *a new man, the new creation* "in Christ." And this new man was brought into existence for the specific purpose of occupying the very realm which Satan and his angels held at that time and continue to hold today — *a heavenly realm*, exercising rule over the nations from this realm, with Israel still destined to hold the sceptre in the earthly realm of the kingdom.

Thus, Satan's broadened attack began [Eph. 6:10-18]; and this broadened attack, a warfare, will continue to rage throughout the dispensation, intensifying as the dispensation draws to a close.

Then, once the dispensation has ended and God removes this new man, the Church, He will turn back to His dealings with Israel, working out His plans and purposes for this nation. And Satan in that day, knowing that his time is short [seven years will remain in Man's Day, which Satan will know], will launch his final and most intense attack against Israel, against God's firstborn son.

And this final attack by Satan against this nation will be of such a severe nature that "except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved" [Matt. 24:22].)

Man can rule *NOTHING* within the sphere of governmental control "before the time" (I Cor. 4:5).

The nation of Israel was placed in a position to rule following the Exodus under Moses. This nation consisted of *a special creation in Jacob, a redeemed people*, and *an adopted people.*

Israel was *God's firstborn son.* Israel had been created in Jacob (Isa. 43:1), allowing the nation to occupy the position of "God's son"; then God adopted Israel into *a firstborn status.*

Christians today have been redeemed and are *new creations* "in Christ." They are "sons of God" in that respect (*e.g.*, Rom. 8:14; Gal. 3:26; 4:6, 7; Heb. 12:5-8).

But Christians, unlike Israel, have yet to be adopted into *a firstborn status.* Thus, Christians are presently in *NO position* to rule, for it is not just "Sons" who will rule in the coming age, but *firstborn Sons.*

NOR is Israel presently in a position to rule. Even though the nation retains its status of being a special creation in Jacob and an adopted nation — *God's firstborn son* — Israel today resides on the earth *in unbelief.* And in conjunction with this unbelief, the nation has been set aside while God takes out of the Gentiles "a people for his name."

The TIME when both Israel and the Church will be in positions to rule is YET FUTURE.

Before the Flood, Satan's strategy evidently consisted of an attempt to corrupt the lineages of the families of the earth in order to not only prevent the appearance of the Seed of the Woman, man's Redeemer, but also an attempt to so corrupt the human race that man could not fulfill the purpose for his creation in the beginning.

After the Flood, knowing God's plans and purposes regarding Abraham, Satan appears to have somewhat changed his strategy. Satan then began concentrating his efforts on corrupting the nations dwelling in the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And Satan's work in this respect began long before the establishment of Israel as a nation and the subsequent Exodus from Egypt under Moses.

Satan knew that the land from "the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" belonged to Abraham and his seed, he knew that the families of the earth were to be blessed through the nation emanating from the loins of Abraham, and he knew that the Redeemer was to come through the lineage of Abraham (*cf.* Gen. 12:1-3; 14:19; 15:18-21; 17:7, 8; 22:1-18). Thus, Satan had marshaled his forces in the land ahead of Israel, evidently not only to contest the right of this nation to enter the land in a regal capacity but also to continue his efforts to prevent the appearance of man's Redeemer.

Aside from the fact that Israel was to be the channel through which the Redeemer would come, this nation was called out of Egypt for a more immediate, specific purpose.

Israel was *to enter the land of Canaan, smite and utterly destroy the inhabitants of the land (Deut. 7:1, 2), and exercise supremacy within a theocratic rule over all the nations of the earth.* And Israel's position of supremacy at this point was to, in turn, *result in the nations of the earth being blessed through the seed of Abraham in accordance with Gen. 12:2, 3.* Israel was to rule as a kingdom of priests (Ex. 19:5, 6), and the nations of the earth were to be blessed through Israel's national kingly-priestly position.

These were the nations over which Satan and his angels ruled; and a rule by Israel within a theocracy of this nature would, in reality, at least to a degree, be a wrestling of governmental control from Satan and his angels.

Not only was Israel to occupy this position of governmental power and control among the nations here on earth, but Israel was also in possession of heavenly promises and blessings. This would necessitate the nation one day controlling, with at least a segment of the nation occupying, the very heavenly places from which Satan exercised power over the nations (continuing to exercise this same power today).

The seed of Abraham — both earthly and heavenly — *MUST* ultimately "possess the gate of [exercise governmental control over] his enemies" (Gen. 22:17, 18).

Thus, Satan, as the incumbent ruler over the Gentile nations from this heavenly realm, to assure his continuance on the throne in this realm, *MUST* not only prevent the appearance of man's Redeemer, but he *MUST* also destroy the nation of Israel itself.

> (Note that Israel, the old creation in Jacob, has forfeited the right to occupy the heavenly sphere of the kingdom [*cf.* Matt. 12:22-32; 21:43].
>
> This right has been assumed by the Church, the "one new man," the "new creation" *in Christ,* called into existence for this purpose [*cf.* Matt. 16:18; 21:43; I Peter 2:9, 10]. And since this heavenly realm *MUST be occupied by God's firstborn son*, Christians, who are "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise [the heavenly portion of the promise in Gen. 22:17; *cf.* Gen. 14:19]," *will, following the adoption into a firstborn status*, "possess the gate" of the enemy in the heavenly realm [Eph. 6:1ff].
>
> *Ref.* the author's book, *Message in the Gospels, Acts, Epistles*.)

Satan tried to destroy Israel in Egypt before the Exodus through the afflictions in the brickyards and the death of the male Hebrew children at birth. He continued trying to accomplish this task at the time of and following the Exodus under Moses through the armies of Pharaoh pursuing Israel to the Red Sea, the Amalekites attacking Israel in the wilderness, and the corrupted nations awaiting Israel in the land of Canaan itself. And he has tried to destroy Israel in many instances since (*e.g.*, in modern times, the destruction of six million Jews under Hitler during the years of the Third Reich in Europe [1933-

1945]), and he will try in the immediate future through the nations of the earth during and immediately following the Tribulation.

His attempts in the past *have ALWAYS been for naught, as will be his attempts in the future.* Not only has Israel brought forth the Redeemer, but Israel herself remains, *as a nation, YET to occupy her God-ordained position as the one by whom and through whom the nations of the earth will be both ruled and blessed.*

Nephilim and Rephaim

Prior to the Flood, the cohabitation of the sons of God with the daughters of men resulted in offspring called *Nephilim.*

Following the Flood, when this union occurred again, these offspring were referred to by two names: *Nephilim* (Num. 13:33, translated "giants," as in Gen. 6:4, KJV) and *Rephaim* (Gen. 14:5 [*Rephaim*, a transliterated word, KJV]; Deut. 2:11, 20, 3:11, 13 [*Rephaim* translated "giants," KJV]; also note "Emims," meaning, *dreaded ones*, in Deut. 2:11).

> (The translators of the Septuagint [Greek version of the Old Testament] used the word *gigantes* in most instances for both of these words. *Gigantes* is the Greek word for "giants," and this is the thought that is carried over into several verses of the KJV [Gen. 6:4; Num. 13:33].
>
> However, this meaning may have been only secondary to that which the translators of the Septuagint Version could have had in mind. *Gigantes* comes from a root form of a word which, in the secular Greek world, signified *"earth-born" rather than gigantic stature.* If the use of *gigantes* is understood in this respect, the word would, contextually, refer to *"earth-born individuals [individuals born on the earth, having heavenly fathers and earthly mothers]," with a secondary thought having to do with "physical stature."*)

Nephilim is simply the plural form of a Hebrew word meaning "to fall," and *Rephaim* is the plural form of a Hebrew word which the Jewish people at that time would have associated with *the underworld.*

Thus, the thought from both of these words brought together would be *fallen ones (Nephilim) associated with the underworld (Rephaim).*

The word *Nephilim* is used only three times in the Old Testament in passages referring to offspring resulting from the cohabitation of the sons of God with the daughters of men (Gen. 6:4; Num. 13:33). But the word *Rephaim* is used numerous times referring to these in-

dividuals (Gen. 14:5; 15:20; Deut. 2:11, 20; 3:11, 13; Joshua 12:4; 13:12; 15:8; 17:15; 18:16; II Sam. 5:18, 22; 23:13; I Chron. 11:15; 14:9; 20:4, 6, 8; Job 26:5; Ps. 88:10; Prov. 2:18; 9:18; 21:16; Isa. 14:9; 17:5; 26:14, 19).

English versions of the Old Testament handle the Hebrew words *Nephilim* and *Rephaim* in different ways. The words are many times transliterated rather than translated. Other times translations are attempted (*e.g.,* "giants," "departed spirits," "spirits of the dead," "deceased," "death," "dead" [*ref.* KJV, ASV, NASB, NIV]). Everything that can be known about the *Nephilim* or *Rephaim MUST* be derived from these passages, in conjunction with related Scripture.

During the days of Abraham, the *Rephaim* could be found among the inhabitants of a number of cities in the land (Gen. 14:1-5). Four of these cities in the Jordan plain — Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim — were destroyed by brimstone and fire from heaven (Gen. 19:23-29; Deut. 29:23). Zoar, a fifth city in the plain, associated with the *Rephaim,* was spared to serve as a refuge for Lot and his two daughters when the Lord destroyed the other cities of the plain.

It is evident from Gen. 14:1-5 that the *Nephilim* or *Rephaim* were in the land of Canaan preceding Abraham's entrance into the land. Note that the very first statement of Scripture following Abraham's journey from Ur of the Chaldees to the land of Canaan concerned the inhabitants of the land: "And the Canaanite was then in the land" (Gen. 12:6b).

Since the *Nephilim* or *Rephaim* were associated with the nations of Canaan, *this verse, in all likelihood, would be a reference to these individuals.*

In this respect, the reference would call attention to a fact of primary importance concerning Abraham's entrance into the land: Satan had already begun to marshal his forces in the land in order to oppose God's purpose surrounding the call of Abraham.

Then, continuing matters, there were two entrances of His people into the land of Canaan: Abraham's entrance, following his departure from Ur, constitutes the first; and Israel's entrance, following the Exodus from Egypt, constitutes the second. Satan's forces — the *Nephilim* or *Rephaim* — however, were marshaled in the land first each time.

The *Nephilim* or *Rephaim* were individuals of gigantic stature and great strength. Their gigantic stature can be seen in the report of the ten faithless spies at Kadesh-Barnea (Num. 13:33), the apparent size of Og, king of Bashan (Deut. 3:11), and the size of Goliath, who appeared later in

Jewish history (I Sam. 17:4; *cf.* II Sam. 21:18-22). Their great strength can be seen in the fact that they were "mighty men [the Hebrew word pertains to 'strength']" (Gen. 6:4), the fact that they were the ones who had built the sixty "great cities" of Bashan (Deut. 3:4, 5; I Kings 4:13), and the position of Goliath as a "champion" in the army of the Philistines (I Sam. 17:1ff).

The first time that the *Nephilim* or *Rephaim* appeared (called *Nephilim* only in antediluvian days), God destroyed them by the waters of a Flood. The second time that these individuals appeared, God destroyed a segment of them in the destruction of the cities of the plain; and God later commanded His people, the nation of Israel, to go into the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and *utterly destroy* all that were in the land.

By this time the *Nephilim* or *Rephaim* had so infiltrated the nations in the land of Canaan (note again, the sixty "great cities" of Bashan) that God commanded *total destruction* of these nations (Deut. 7:1, 2).

However, the failure of the Israelites to carry out the command of God completely when the nation entered the land under Joshua resulted in the *Nephilim* or *Rephaim* persisting in Jewish history as the bitter enemies of the people of God for hundreds of years beyond that time.

The Cities of the Plain

Scripture, in several places, singles out angelic activity involving sexual perversions in the cities of the plain during the days of Abraham. Jude 7 specifically states that individuals living in the cities of the Jordan plain committed illicit sexual acts with angels.

The words, "in like manner," should literally read, "in like manner to these." The words "to these" refer to the angels in verse six. The inhabitants of "Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them" had given themselves over to "fornication" and had gone after "strange flesh" in the same manner as the angels.

The word "strange" is *heteros* in the Greek text, referring, textually, to "another kind" of flesh. The angels in the kingdom of Satan who came to earth and took upon themselves the form of man, cohabiting with members of the human race, *did NOT* possess the same type flesh as man. There was an unrevealed difference, which is set forth by the Greek word *heteros,* as opposed to the word *allos.* Angels went after

"strange flesh [another kind of flesh]" by cohabiting with the inhabitants in the cities of the plain, and the inhabitants of these cities went after "strange flesh [another kind of flesh]" by cohabiting with angels.

> (Both *heteros* and *allos* carry the same basic meaning ["other," "another"]; and the two words, insofar as their basic meaning is concerned, could be thought of as synonyms. A distinction though can be seen through the contextual use of the two words. *Heteros*, unlike *allos*, can be used to reference "*another of a different kind*," as in the text.)

Jude 7 is usually taken to refer only to homosexuality, in accord with Gen. 19:1-11. This interpretation, however, is too limited.

Rephaim were associated with the cities of the plain (Gen. 14:1-5), necessitating past sexual relations between angels and female members of the human race as well. Jude 7 and the parallel section in II Peter 2:6 actually have to do with both homosexual and heterosexual acts, and the Genesis account points to widespread perversions in both realms.

1) Degeneracy of the Sodomites

The account in Gen. 19:1-11, showing the utter degeneracy of the inhabitants in the cities of the plain, has to do with men and homosexuality; but the Scriptures in II Peter and Jude, alluding to both homosexual and heterosexual acts between angels and members of the human race, place both types of sexual perversions occurring in these cities on the same basic level. And, in this respect, the apparent utter degeneracy of the entire populace — both male and female — can be seen by what is revealed in the Genesis account.

The night preceding the destruction of the cities of the plain, Lot had given two angels, sent to Sodom by the Lord, lodging inside the safety of his home. After Lot, his family, and the two angels had eaten, the men of Sodom began to gather outside Lot's house.

These men are described as *"both old and young, ALL the people from every quarter,"* and they had come for one sole purpose: they wanted the two "men," the two angels, under Lot's roof to be brought forth in order that they might "know them," *i.e.*, have homosexual relations with them.

Lot came outside, shut the door behind him, and offered his two virgin daughters to these men in order to protect the two angels under his roof. But the men of Sodom showed no interest in his daughters.

Their *ONLY* apparent interest lay in having illicit, carnal relations with the two "men," the two angels. Then, the intensity of their interest is shown in verse nine: "And they said [to Lot], 'Stand back'…And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door."

But the two angels intervened. They pulled Lot back inside the house and smote the men who were at the door with "blindness." The angels then revealed Sodom's impending destruction to Lot.

2) Evident Past History of Sodom

There is far more to Genesis chapter nineteen than Lot (within an Eastern mindset) just being very insistent that two unknown strangers spend the night inside the safety of his house, and the men of Sodom just wanting two strangers turned over to them. Why was Lot so insistent that these two men not remain in the streets during the night? Why, in seeking to protect these two men, did Lot go to the point of even offering his two virgin daughters to the men of Sodom?

Then there is the attitude and actions of the men in Sodom. These men, *"both old and young, all the people from every quarter," wanted these two men so badly that they were going to break down the door of Lot's house.*

They were *NOT* interested in Lot's daughters; *NOR* were they interested in having illicit, carnal relations with one another. Their interest lay *SOLELY in obtaining the two strangers inside Lot's house.*

The inference from the record appears to clearly indicate that both Lot and the men of Sodom knew that these two strangers were *angels.*

Lot went to great lengths to protect them from the Sodomites, *evidently to prevent what he knew had been happening in Sodom* (II Peter. 2:7, 8). And the men of Sodom, on the other hand, went to great lengths to obtain these two individuals, *for they had evidently been brought into this depraved mindset through their past ungodly manner of living.*

Then, by comparing Gen. 19:4-25; Deut. 29:23; II Peter 2:4-8; Jude 6, 7, *it appears clear that widespread homosexual activity of this nature had been occurring NOT ONLY in Sodom BUT also in other cities of the plain.*

It cannot be known how long illicit, carnal relations of this nature had been occurring; but according to the record, immediately before the destruction of the cities of the plain, the men of Sodom had become so sex-crazed that their only apparent real interest lay in having homosexual relations with angels.

Thus, because of the widespread prevalence of this gross sexual perversion, God rained "brimstone and fire" from heaven upon these cities following the removal of Lot, his wife, and his two virgin daughters from Sodom.

Angels, Nephilim, and Rephaim in Tartarus

The angels who sinned both before and following the Flood by leaving their positions of power in the heavens, coming to earth, and taking upon themselves the form of man for the specific purpose of cohabiting with members of the human race, are today confined with chains in *Tartarus.* Not only are they confined in this place, but their progeny, the *Nephilim* and *Rephaim,* are probably also there with them.

Tartarus is located in a particular section of *Sheol* reserved specifically for these individuals.

Sheol (Gk., *Hades*) is the place into which the souls of individuals from the human race go at the time of death. Scripture has *very little* to say about this place. Scripture doesn't concern itself *to any extent* with man's existence between death and resurrection, particularly unsaved man.

And, contrary to common interpretation, Luke 16:19-31 is really *NOT* a section of Scripture dealing with the issue at hand (*ref.* the author's article, "The Rich Man and Lazarus").

Suffice it to say, in the Old Testament, *Sheol* was always spoken of as being *down,* below the surface of the earth. And at the time Christ died, His soul went *down* into *Sheol* and remained in this place until the time of His resurrection (Acts 2:30, 31).

Today, the matter would be different for Christians. They, as Christ, would go into *Sheol* (or *Hades*) at the time of death; but the location of *Sheol* is different today for the saved. Today, for Christians, the place of the dead (which is what *Sheol* [or *Hades*] refers to) is located in the heavens (*ref.* Chapter V in this book).

Sheol in the Old Testament was located beneath the surface of the earth, and, as previously stated, directionally, it was always spoken of as being "down" (*cf.* Num. 16:32, 33; Isa. 14:9; Jonah 2:2, 6).

This is where the thought from the so-called "Apostles Creed" concerning Christ descending "into hell [*'Sheol'*]" is derived. Christ descended into *Sheol/Hades* simply because that place, located beneath

the surface of the earth at that time, was where the soul of every person during those days went at the time of death. When Christ died, His "spirit" went into the presence of the Father in heaven, His "soul" went into *Sheol,* and his "body" was later taken down from the Cross and placed in Joseph of Arimathaea's tomb (*cf.* Ps. 16:10; Eccl. 12:7; Luke 23:46-53).

However, when Christ descended into *Sheol* following the events of Calvary He did not then, as many Bible students believe, go to *Tartarus* and deliver a proclamation to the angels imprisoned in this place. His presence in *Sheol* between His death and resurrection was not in any way connected with this announcement, for the announcement could not be delivered at this time. Although He had paid redemption's price — His Own shed blood — the victory was not yet complete. He must first be victorious over death itself, which awaited His resurrection.

It was only following His resurrection, in accord with I Peter 3:18-20 — when body, soul, and spirit were reunited — that Christ went to *Tartarus* and delivered His proclamation to these imprisoned angels.

Although the angels who had committed these sexual acts both before and after the Flood were in *Tartarus* at this time (II Peter 2:4-6), only the angels who had done so before the Flood are mentioned in I Peter 3:20 as being recipients of Christ's proclamation. Their actions had to do with two things:

1) An attack against the Seed of the woman.
2) An attempt to so corrupt the human race that man could never realize the purpose for his creation.

And the folly of that which they had attempted could now be demonstrated. Not only did *an uncorrupted human race exist, but the resurrected Christ, the Seed of the woman — the second Man, the last Adam — stood in their presence.* He had paid the price for man's redemption, He had been victorious over death itself, He was now man's resurrected Redeemer Who held the "keys of hell [*'Hades'*] and of death" (Rev. 1:18), and His finished redemptive work would allow a great host of redeemed individuals from the lineage of the first man, the first Adam, to ascend the throne with Him (*ref.* Ch. V, pp. 67-70, in this book).

The angels who committed these sexual acts, both preceding and following the Flood, have counterparts in angels who will become

engaged in these same acts at the end of the present age, at the end of man's 6,000-year day:

> "As it was in the days of Noah…Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot…Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke 17:26-30).

The cohabitation of angels with members of the human race will occur once again, both on heterosexual and homosexual levels. This latter-day angelic attack *can ONLY* be directed primarily against Israel through the Gentile nations, as during the days of Lot, which anticipated events during Moses' day.

A post-Flood cohabitation of the sons of God with the daughters of men, occurring both preceding and during Moses' day, had infiltrated and corrupted the nations of Canaan. They were present in the land at the time of the Exodus, evidently in great numbers; and they were contesting Israel's right to that land, for Satan knew Israel's identity and *EXACTLY* what Israel dwelling in that land within a theocracy meant.

Thus, God's command to His people concerning *the total destruction of the nations in the land was in complete keeping with His previous actions during pre-Flood times*, during Noah's day. God's decree, because of that which had occurred, involved *total destruction of those on earth* during Noah's day on the one hand, and it involved *total destruction of those in the land* during Moses' day on the other.

And possibly an announcement similar to the one which Christ delivered to the angels who sinned before the Flood awaits not only the angels who sinned following the Flood but also the angels committing this same sin once again in the latter days. If so, such an announcement would be forthcoming *ONLY after* the corresponding sin of the angels at the end of this age and after Israel has subsequently been elevated to her rightful place at the head of the nations.

The man of sin will be of the *Rephaim.* He will be the actual son of Satan. Note the expression, "thy [Satan's] seed," in Gen. 3:15. He will also have *Rephaim* ruling the earth with him during the Tribulation. Rulers who will possess power directly under the man of sin, mentioned in the Book of Revelation (*cf.* chs. 13, 17), are revealed in Old Testament Scriptures to be *Rephaim* — "men" (*cf.* Rev. 13:18), but *NOT* men as we know them today.

Satan will rule the earth through his son during the Tribulation; and high-ranking angels in Satan's kingdom will also rule the earth, with Satan, through sons begotten by angels—evidently their very own sons.

Isaiah 26:13, 14 reveals that during the Tribulation "other lords," *Rephaim,* will have dominion over Israel:

> "O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.
>
> They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased [*lit.,* 'they are *Rephaim*'], they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish."

These "other lords" who will have dominion over Israel during the Tribulation, specifically called *Rephaim,* will be destroyed before the Messianic Era commences. And this destruction will be so complete that the *Rephaim will NOT even be remembered by Israel.*

Isaiah 26:19 reveals the destruction of the *Rephaim,* and Job 26:5 reveals where they will be consigned following their destruction. The passage in Isaiah states, "…the earth shall cast out the dead [*lit.,* '…the *Rephaim* will be caused to fall on the earth']"; and the passage in Job states, "Dead things are formed from under the waters, and the inhabitants thereof [*lit., 'Rephaim* are put to pain (*i.e.,* writhe like a woman in travail) deep under the waters, and their inhabitants']."

These *Rephaim* are further seen imprisoned in a section of *Sheol* with Satan in Isa. 14:9-11 (the word translated "dead" in v. 9 is *Rephaim* in the Hebrew text. Also, note from this text that the "bottomless pit ['*abyss*']" in Rev. 20:1-3 is located in a section of *Sheol*).

The prison where the *Rephaim* from the coming Tribulation are to be confined with Satan appears to be in the section of *Sheol* called *Tartarus.* Other inhabitants are mentioned, which, evidently, could not only be the *Nephilim* and *Rephaim* from days before and after the Flood, but also their angelic fathers.

This place is located "deep under the waters," at the bottom of the sea, which places it in Sheol, the place of the dead (*cf.* Jonah 2:5, 6).

Events which set all of this in motion began very early during Man's Day; and the whole of the matter will be brought to a conclusion at the end of Man's Day, *with God's three firstborn Sons at long last holding the sceptre, in BOTH heavenly and earthly places.*

7

Defiling One's High Calling

Examples, Old Testament, New Testament

"Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, 'The Lord rebuke thee.'

But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves" (Jude 8-10).

The message throughout the Epistle of Jude is twofold:

1) Christians are exhorted *to earnestly strive* "for ['with respect to'] the faith."

2) Christians are warned concerning apostasy manifested in the lives of those who, instead, *stood/stand away* "from the faith."

Verses three and four introduce this message, verses five through seven form examples to illustrate that which has been introduced, and verse eight continues within the framework of teachings set forth in verses three through seven:

> "Likewise [in like manner to the individuals previously mentioned in the examples] also these filthy dreamers [those in verse four] defile the flesh [*cf.* v. 7], despise dominion [*cf.* v. 6], and speak evil of dignities [*cf.* v. 5]."

Proper and improper attitudes toward dignitaries are then given in verses nine and ten.

A basic teaching throughout the entire passage, beginning with verse three, has to do with the governmental administration of the earth and with apostasy in relation to this administration.

And Christians, heeding the message/warning concerning apostasy, are *to earnestly strive "with respect to the faith," with a view to attaining the goal of their faith, the salvation of their souls* (I Peter 1:9).

The realization of this salvation will follow the issues of the judgment seat of Christ and involves *the placement of Christians in positions of power and authority as joint-heirs with Christ in His coming kingdom.*

Thus, Christians earnestly striving "with respect to the faith" is *with a view to their occupying positions in the coming governmental administration of the earth following that time when "the kingdom of the world" has become "the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ"* (Rev. 11:15, ASV).

Examples of Apostasy

Apostates depart from the faith through various, revealed forms.

In the first ten verses of Jude, lessons concerning apostasy are drawn mainly from the three periods in Old Testament history referred to in verses five through seven; and within the spiritual lessons drawn from these verses, apostasy in Christendom, wrought through the deception of Satan and in connection with the doctrines of demons, is always directed toward one goal: *to effect failure in the race of the faith.*

1) Verse Five: The Israelites under Moses were to enter the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and rule as *God's firstborn son* over all the nations of the earth. Israel was not only to exercise *national supremacy* in this capacity but Israel was also to be *a kingdom of priests* through whom the nations would be blessed (Ex. 19:5, 6).

The promise in Gen. 12:2, 3 was to be, and will yet be, fulfilled through Israel dwelling in her own land in this position. Spiritual blessings were/are to flow out to the nations of the earth through *God's firstborn Sons from the lineage of Abraham.*

Through the lineage of Seth and Shem, God chose Abraham and decreed, "…*in thee* shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

Beyond this point in Genesis chapter twelve, Scripture, up to the time of Calvary, could be summarized by two statements, with both statements seen as foundational, portending future events:

a) In the Old Testament, God so loved the world that He not only called His son, Israel (the seed of Abraham), into existence but *He BOTH sent and gave this son.*

b) In the New Testament, God so loved the world that He not only begat His Son Jesus (the Seed of Abraham), but *He BOTH sent and gave this Son.*

(Thus, both Sons — firstborn Sons [Ex. 4:22, 23; Heb. 1:6], in possession of the rights of primogeniture — were NOT ONLY sent BUT given.

God *sent* His son, Israel. God *THEN gave* His son, Israel.

His son, today, as Jonah [disobedient to his calling], resides in the place of death, awaiting resurrection. And resurrection will occur "after two days…in the third day" [Gen. 23:1, 2; 25:1; Hosea 6:1, 2; John 11:6, 7, 25, 43, 44].

God's son, Israel, in *THAT* coming day [after two days, after two thousand years], will be raised up to live in God's sight. *THEN,* this son will carry the message of the one true and living God to the nations of the earth, with the nations being blessed through this son.

God *sent* His Son, Jesus. God *THEN gave* His Son, Jesus.

And His Son was raised from the dead after two days, on the third day — foreshadowing *THAT which is about to occur* [John 1:14; 2:18-21; 3:16].

After two days, after two thousand years, God's Son, Jesus, will be raised up to ascend David's throne in Jerusalem [Ps. 2:6, 7; 110:1-4; Luke 1:31-33].

And, *in THAT day*, the message which one son [Israel] will carry to the nations of the earth will be about the other Son [Jesus], dwelling in their midst. And, *in THAT day*, the nations of the earth will be blessed through both Sons.

THEN, as the overall thought of death and resurrection pertains to God's firstborn Sons, note Christians during the present dispensation [presently *sons*, but awaiting the adoption into *a firstborn* status].

Christians, in relation to their calling, as both Christ and Israel, are seen in the place of death throughout the two-day, the two-thousand-year, dispensation [*cf.* Matt. 16:24; John 12:24; I Cor. 1:18; Col. 2:20; 3:3].

And Christians residing in this place throughout the two days is with a view to their being raised up on the third day [the third 1,000 years], *following the adoption, with God's other two firstborn Sons.*)

And the purpose for the preceding, which will be worked out in God's way and in God's time, involves that which God desires for all mankind: *Spiritual blessings*, beginning with man's salvation and continuing with "all spiritual blessings" (Gen. 12:2, 3; 22:17, 18; John 8:37; Gal. 3:16; *cf.* Eph. 1:3ff).

In the working out of God's plans and purposes, the Israelites during Old Testament days apostatized in the matter surrounding their calling. Under Moses they refused to go into the land and occupy the very position for which they had been called out of Egypt.

This was done not only to their own detriment but to the detriment of the nations of the earth as well. The generation of Israelites who fell away at Kadesh-Barnea was overthrown in the wilderness; and the nations, consequently, remained alienated from God's blessings.

A second generation of Israelites later entered the land under Joshua; but through continued disobedience lasting for hundreds of years, the nation never realized the goal of her calling.

And because of this continued disobedience, God eventually, in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C., allowed Gentile nations to come into the land and uproot His people. The Israelites were then scattered among and became subject to the nations, *EXACTLY* as God had warned (Lev. 26:1ff; Deut. 28:1ff).

And, consequently, as at Kadesh-Barnea centuries before this time, the nations remained alienated from God's blessings.

Since that time, conditions have continued relatively unchanged. Israel has remained scattered among the Gentile nations, subject to Gentile power. There have been partial restorations to the land (following the Babylonian captivity, and during modern times); but the Israelites, by large, have remained in the same subjective position for the entire period — over 2,500 years.

And there will be no change in Israel's present status among the nations until Israel's Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, effects a change following His return.

As Israel was called out of Egypt under Moses for a purpose, the nation will be called out from a worldwide dispersion under her Messiah for *the SAME purpose;* as the old covenant was made with Israel following the nation's removal from among the Gentile nations, a new covenant will one day be made with the nation; and as Israel

was to enter into the land under Moses and exercise supremacy over the nations of the earth, and be a blessing to these nations, the restored nation under Jesus will enter into the land and occupy this position.

In that day the nation WILL realize her calling, set forth 4,000 years ago through God's promises to Abraham.

2) Verse Six: The thought of "apostasy" is continued through the acts of angels in the kingdom of Satan. This, of course, is a different type apostasy than is covered in verse five. It is standing away from the position in which one was created rather than standing away from the faith.

Apostasy from the faith, the central theme of the Epistle of Jude, is possible *ONLY* for those in a position *to stand away from* "the faith," *i.e.,* for the saved. However, as illustrated in verse six, spiritual lessons can also be drawn from other forms of apostasy.

Angels apostatized in the sense that they stood away from their regal positions in Satan's heavenly kingdom. They took upon themselves the form of man, left their positions of power in the heavens, came to earth, and cohabited with members of the human race.

And God's immediate judgment upon these angels resulted in their being confined with chains in a place of darkness — in *Tartarus* — awaiting final judgment by God's Son at a future date.

3) Verse Seven: The thought concerning angels entering into a form of "apostasy" in verse six is continued in verse seven by showing the inhabitants in the cities of the plain also entering into a form of "apostasy," committing the same sin as the angels.

Apostasy in relation to angels is easy to understand, for they had something from which they could stand away. But, from what did the inhabitants of the cities of the plain stand away? They were not part of a present existing kingdom in the same sense as were the angels.

Thus, since the underlying thought under consideration throughout these verses has to do with the governmental administration of the earth, the inhabitants of the cities of the plain were seemingly in no position to stand away from anything so related.

However, bear in mind that the very purpose for man's creation in the beginning had to do with *the government of the earth* (Gen. 1:26-28); and the inhabitants in the cities of the plain, although fallen creatures and in no position to rule, were *STILL* of the creation which had been

brought into existence to exercise this power and authority.

Note in verse seven that the sin for which they were judged had to do with "fornication, and going after strange flesh [a different type flesh — the flesh of angels]."

The inhabitants in the cities of the plain entered into this sin "in like manner" to the angels. Both departed from a certain position for the purpose of going after a different type flesh.

The angels who apostatized were of *the fallen creation presently ruling*, and the men who apostatized were of *the fallen creation which had originally been brought into existence to assume this power and authority.*

Thus, apostasy among angels was associated with a cohabitation among the creation which had been brought on the scene to usurp their positions, and apostasy among the inhabitants of the cities of the plain was associated with a cohabitation among the incumbent rulers which were to be replaced by man.

"Fallen ones" cohabiting with "fallen ones" — angels with men, men with angels — is associated with *standing away from* a certain position on the part of both. And standing away from this position had to do with a departure from the position for which both had been created, and this departure is dealt with in the Epistle of Jude as a form of apostasy from which spiritual lessons are drawn.

Defiling the Flesh (v. 8)

Defiling the flesh refers back to the people in the cities of the plain going after strange flesh in verse seven. There is a parallel drawn in verses seven and eight between the inhabitants in the cities of the plain defiling the flesh and redeemed man today defiling the flesh.

In both instances there is a departure from a certain position, and this position has to do with *the reason for man's creation in the beginning*.

The old creation in Adam (also, in Jacob) and the new creation in Christ were brought into existence *for essentially the same purpose — man ultimately exercising governmental power and authority over the earth.*

And lessons are drawn from the former to teach spiritual truths in the latter. These truths concern Christians who defile the flesh through forsaking their high calling, departing from the revealed reason for their creation in Christ.

Warnings in the Epistle of Jude, derived mainly from spiritual lessons taught through the use of Old Testament historical events, are directed *to Christians ALONE.* The admonition placed at the beginning of the epistle concerning *earnestly striving "with respect to* the faith" *is directed ONLY to Christians, and so are ALL of the subsequent warnings throughout the epistle.*

God deals with unregenerate man and with regenerate man *on two entirely different planes.*

Unregenerate man is dealt with, *NOT on the basis of admonitions and warnings, BUT on the basis of Christ's finished work on Calvary.*

Regenerate man, on the other hand, has already been dealt with on the basis of Christ's finished work. *He MUST NOW be dealt with in an entirely different manner. ONLY NOW do admonitions, promises, warnings, etc. come into view.*

This dual aspect of God dealing with man is seen in Old Testament history through two means:

1) God dealing with *ALL* in the land of Egypt the night of the Passover strictly on the basis of the death and proper application of the blood of the paschal lambs.

2) God subsequently dealing, in an entirely different manner, with those who had appropriated the blood.

The vicarious death of the firstborn *MUST* be dealt with prior to anything else (Ex. 12:1-13). They had to *FIRST* appropriate the blood of a slain lamb. *NOTHING* could be done *UNTIL* they had moved beyond this point. *ALL* warnings concerning sin in the lives of the people, especially relating to things pertaining to the land of Canaan beyond Egypt, would have been pointless prior to observing the Passover.

The putting out of the leaven (typifying that associated with sin, corruption) *FOLLOWED* the Passover (Ex. 12:14-20; *cf.* Lev. 23:4-8), and it *MUST* ever be so. There is *NO such thing* as God commanding leaven to be put out prior to the appropriation of the blood.

It is ALWAYS *the blood FIRST, and THEN the leaven. This order has FOREVER been established in the books of Moses, and it can NEVER change.*

The works of the flesh, associated with leaven which is to be put out following the appropriation of the blood, are reiterated in Gal. 5:19-21; and the warning concluding these words *MUST be looked upon*

as directed to Christians ALONE.

The list of the sins of the flesh in this passage concludes with the statement, "…*they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*" And I Corinthians 6:9, 10, a very similar passage, states *EXACTLY* the same thing:

> "Know ye not that *the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God*? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,
>
> Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, *shall inherit the kingdom of God.*"

Inheritance is STRICTLY a family matter. One *MUST* be a child of the Owner to be in line for the inheritance: "If children, *then* heirs…" (Rom. 8:17).

The issue at hand in both Gal. 5:19-21 and I Cor. 6:9, 10 has to do with *an inheritance in the kingdom, NOT with eternal life.*

Thus, ONLY the saved can be in view.

Contrary to what Scriptures such as the preceding teach concerning the sins of Christians, there is a widespread, false teaching in Christendom today which states that all of a Christian's sins — past, present, and future — were taken care of through the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary; and, on the basis of the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice, a Christian can never come into judgment for any sin which he commits. Therefore, warnings concerning God's judgment to be visited upon individuals indulging in the sins of the flesh cannot be directed toward Christians.

Romans 8:1 is one of the verses usually cited to support this line of teaching:

> "There is therefore now no condemnation to ['a rendering of judgment against'] them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

However, this verse, contextually, *ISN'T* even dealing with eternal salvation. It is dealing with *the existing warfare between the man of flesh and the man of spirit.* That is what lies before the verse in chapter seven, and that is what lies after the verse in chapter eight. The context on both sides of this verse deals with problems which *this body of death* presents.

The latter part of the verse — "…who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit" — has been questioned by numerous textual critics over the years. This part of the verse is in the Textus Receptus, which would account for it being in the Authorized Version. And this part of the verse is also present in a number of other manuscripts, though it is also absent in a number of different manuscripts as well.

This questioned section of Scripture fits perfectly within the text if one remains within context. However, the opposite of that will be true if one departs from the context and attempts to use this verse relative to eternal salvation.

Erroneously viewing this verse relative to eternal salvation possibly accounts for the absence of these words in many of the Greek manuscripts which we have today (copyists and textual critics over the years misunderstanding the verse and possibly thinking that the words were spurious, with the words gradually being left out of the text over time); and, with translators following later Greek texts (*e.g.*, the Nestle text, a main Greek text used for translation work today, views these words as spurious and having them in the footnotes only), most of the modern-day translations (*e.g.*, NASB, NIV) do not include this part of the verse in the text, though the NKJV does.

A Christian's positional standing *in Christ,* which *can NEVER* be subjected to judgment beyond Calvary, is one thing; but a Christian's present existence upon this earth *in a body of death,* with a responsibility to expel the leaven, is something entirely different.

And Rom. 8:1, *contextually, deals with the latter, NOT the former.*

Because of the existence of this *body of death,* housing the old sin nature, Christians can and do sin. In fact, because of this *body of death,* Christians cannot live apart from sin, which necessitates Christ's present high priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary.

Sin is wrought in the lives of believers through the old sin nature:

> "If we say that we have no sin [old sin nature], we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (I John 1:8).

And the abiding presence of this old sin nature places believers *in a position where they can and do sin, necessitating the promise seen in I John 1:9:*

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Sin manifested in the lives of believers will, without exception, be dealt with by the Lord in one of two ways:

1) Through the present high priestly ministry of Christ during the present day.

2) Through the issues of the coming judgment seat of Christ during that coming day.

Christians can either judge their own sins now, confessing them and receiving forgiveness, or they can await issues of the judgment seat of Christ and have their sins judged by the Lord (I Cor. 11:31, 32; II Cor. 5:10, 11; I John 1:9; *cf.* I Peter 4:17).

Christ is presently exercising the office of *High Priest* in the Holy of Holies of the heavenly tabernacle for the former, and he will exercise the office of *Judge* at the judgment seat of Christ for the latter.

Confession now will result in cleansing, but waiting will result in chastisement.

Christ is exercising the office of High Priest to effect *a present cleansing for the "kings and priests" which He is about to bring forth.*

These "kings and priests" will be manifested as "the sons of God" at the end of this dispensation and fill positions of power and authority as joint-heirs with Christ in the kingdom. The judgment seat will reveal their approval to occupy these positions.

However, there is another side to the judgment seat. Not only will certain individuals be *approved,* but other individuals, because of the sins of the flesh, will be *disapproved.*

Christians who, today, refuse or neglect to avail themselves of the high priestly ministry of Christ will have their sins dealt with before the judgment seat; and this will be done, not by Christ as *High Priest,* but by Christ as *Judge.*

Chastisement will then follow; and numerous Christians in that day, because of the sins of the flesh, will be shown to have forfeited their inheritance, resulting in their disqualification for positions as joint-heirs with Christ.

Despising Dominion (v. 8)

Despising dominion refers back to the sin of the angels in verse six. The word "despise" is from a Greek word meaning to "set aside," "disregard." Angels in the kingdom of Satan "set aside," "disregarded" their positions of power in the heavens and came to earth in the form of man for the specific purpose of cohabiting with members of the human race.

These angels set aside the positions for which they had been created and involved themselves in something completely alien to their very existence.

This account has been recorded in Jude, allowing the Spirit of God to draw spiritual lessons from Jude, showing how Christians can, in like manner, despise dominion; and this dominion is the very same dominion which the angels despised.

The Church has been brought into existence to occupy heavenly places, to fill positions of power and authority in the heavens as God's firstborn son during the coming age; and these positions are the same positions presently being occupied by angels ruling from heavenly places in Satan's kingdom.

Angels holding positions of power and authority under Satan in the present kingdom of the heavens will continue to rule from this heavenly sphere until that day when they, along with Satan, are cast out of the heavens onto the earth.

The Church will then be brought to the goal of its calling, and, as the bride of Christ, be placed in this heavenly realm and occupy these positions.

Christians have been saved with a view to their replacing the incumbent rulers in the heavens, and the warning in this passage concerns the present existing danger of Christians "setting aside" or "disregarding" their calling.

Angels apostatized in the past by standing away from the position for which they had been brought into existence; and Christians can, in like manner, apostatize during the present time by standing away from the position for which they have been brought into existence.

Corruption, followed by judgment, was the inevitable outcome of this apostasy by angels; and corruption, followed by judgment, will *ALSO* be the inevitable outcome of *the SAME* apostasy by Christians.

Speaking Evil of Dignitaries (vv. 8-10)

Speaking evil of dignitaries in verse eight refers back to verse five and moves forward into verses nine and ten. The same word translated "speak evil" in the Greek text of verse eight is also used in verses nine and ten (*blasphemeo,* the verb form, appears in vv. 8, 10; and *blasphemia,* the noun form, appears in v. 9). The word is translated "railing accusation" in verse nine and rendered, once again, as "speak evil" in verse ten.

This is the Greek word from which the English word "blasphemy" is derived; and the translation, "railing accusation," in verse nine actually captures the thought expressed by the word somewhat better than the translation, "speak evil," in verses eight and ten.

Railing accusations, emanating from unbelief on the part of the people of Israel in the historical account covered by verse five, were directed against Moses. However, by so doing, the people were actually directing these railing accusations against God Himself.

Moses was the one whom God had chosen to lead the Israelites out of Egypt and into the land covenanted to Abraham and his posterity through Isaac and Jacob. His power and authority were of Divine origin; and, consequently, accusations leveled against the leadership of Moses were, in actuality, accusations leveled against God Himself.

The people of Israel who questioned Moses' authority, seeking to appoint a new leader and return to Egypt, were questioning the very authority of God vested in Moses (*cf.* Num. 14:2, 27).

Because of this sin, resulting from unbelief concerning their ability to go into the land as God had commanded, judgment fell upon the people of Israel. They could no longer enter the land under Moses and realize the purpose for their salvation from Egypt.

They had fallen away, apostatized, *in such a manner that it was impossible to renew them again unto repentance*. As a result, during the next thirty-eight and one-half years, the entire generation — murmuring against Moses, and thus against the Lord — perished in the wilderness.

Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and those who followed them constitute another similar example (Num. 16:1ff).

They rose up against Moses and Aaron in matters concerning their authority — Moses as leader of the people, and Aaron as high priest in the camp. When this occurred, Moses "fell upon his face" (v. 4).

Moses knew that Korah and those with him were questioning, *NOT just his and Aaron's authority, BUT the authority of God.*

This rebellion against authority led to unacceptable incense being offered upon the altar at the door of the tabernacle by two hundred fifty prominent men who had sided with Korah, Dathan, and Abiram against Moses. And this, in turn, led to God's judgment on the entire group.

God exhibited his wrath upon Korah, Dathan, and Abiram by opening a chasm in the earth and causing them, along with "all that appertained unto them [their wives, children (save Korah's sons; *cf.* Num. 26:11, 58]),," to go down into *Sheol* alive:

> "And the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods.
>
> They, and all that appertained unto them, went down alive into the pit ['into *Sheol*'], and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation" (Num. 16:32, 33).

A fire then came out from the Lord and consumed the two hundred fifty men which had offered the incense upon the altar (v. 35).

Immediately after the destruction of Korah and those following him, the people of Israel again murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying, "Ye have killed the people of the Lord." Again, as before, this was a murmuring not only against Moses and Aaron but against God. God was the One Who had performed the execution of Korah, Dathan, Abiram, their families, and the two hundred fifty men offering incense.

And because of this same sin of murmuring against Divinely established authority, God sent a plague into the camp of Israel. This was done so speedily that before Aaron had time to make an "atonement for the people," standing "between the dead and the living," fourteen thousand seven hundred Israelites perished (vv. 41-50).

According to Scripture, it is *a serious thing* to murmur against, bring railing accusations against, those whom God has placed in positions of power and authority. *ANY rebellion against Divinely established authority is a rebellion against the Lord.* It was so during Moses' day, and *it is NO different during the present day.* The "powers that be" *WERE* during Moses' day, and *ARE* today, "ordained of God."

ALL positions of power and authority are by Divine appoint-

ment. And whosoever "resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation ['judgment']" (Rom. 13:1, 2).

God rules in the kingdom of men and gives it "to whomsoever he will." God is the One Who establishes rulers, and He is also the One Who removes rulers (Dan. 4:17, 25-32).

"There is no power but of God" (Rom. 13:1), which today, in view of the coming age, is vested in His Son.

Jesus told His disciples, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18). In view of this, any rebellion against existing ordained powers — whether in the heavens or upon the earth — is a rebellion against the power vested in God's Son, which is simply a rebellion against Christ Himself.

Note the example given in Jude 9: Michael, the archangel, would not bring a railing accusation against even Satan. He, knowing that Satan held his position by Divine appointment and that Satan possessed no power but that which emanated from God, would go no further than to simply say, "The Lord rebuke thee."

Michael knew that ANY accusation against Satan would be an accusation against the One Who had appointed him to this position, the One in whom all power and authority reside (*cf.* I Sam. 24:8-10; II Sam. 1:2-16).

> (The parallel section in II Peter 2:11 is expanded to include other angels and other dignitaries as well: "Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them [dignitaries] before the Lord.")

Now, with all this in mind, the particular apostate element existing in Christendom in the latter days — with its parallel drawn from experiences of individuals during the days of Moses — should be clear.

Bringing railing accusations against those whom God has placed in positions of power and authority is a form of apostasy.

It is that simple. Such reviling or railing against Divinely established authority *is NOT only standing away from* the God-ordained position which a Christian is to occupy, *BUT, as well, it is moving into* a position wherein the apostate, in actuality, brings these accusations against the Lord Himself. And through such accusations, these apostates, as "brute beasts…corrupt themselves" (Jude 10; *cf.* II Peter 2:12).

8

Woe unto Them

Teachings Drawn from Cain, Balaam, Korah

"Woe unto them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Korah.

These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever" (Jude 11-13).

The admonition to "*earnestly strive with respect to the faith*" in Jude 3 is followed by the introduction of apostates — *those who have stood away from the faith* — in verse four. Three Old Testament examples concerning apostasy are then given; and the Holy Spirit moved Jude to record a triad in verse eight, drawing from these three examples.

The apostates who had been introduced in verse four reappear in verse eight, and verses nine and ten continue with the thought of apostate acts committed by these individuals. Verse eleven then presents another triad concerning these same individuals, continuing with thoughts concerning the various forms which apostasy may take.

Jude's manner of teaching is with constant reference to the Old Testament.

In verses five through seven he calls attention to three periods in Old Testament history. These form the object lessons, and the central teaching in verses eight through ten is then taken from these three periods. Verse eleven presents three Old Testament individuals, along with events surrounding these individuals; and verses twelve and thirteen describe the folly of those who follow in the paths of these three individuals: "Woe unto them…"

The Old Testament is filled with *word pictures, types, and illustrations.* There is *NOTHING redundant or superfluous; NOR is anything lacking. It is God's Revelation to man, perfect in EVERY detail.*

EVERY historic event occurred under God's Sovereign control of ALL things. THEN, "holy men of God" were guarded from error as they, "moved ['borne along'] by the Holy Spirit," recorded these events (II Peter 1:21).

And this record has been preserved in order that the Holy Spirit might have these things to draw upon as He teaches Christians the deep things of God.

The true nature of the Old Testament is *spiritual.* "God is spirit"; this Revelation emanates from Him; it is the "breath of God"; and the Holy Spirit takes the breath of God and imparts spiritual truth to man through his saved human spirit.

Thus, the Old Testament is *a book written for the spiritually minded to guide them in their spiritual lives unto spiritual maturity.* And the lessons in Jude, drawn from the Old Testament Scriptures, have been recorded for this purpose (*cf.* Luke 24:25-32).

The Way of Cain

The way of Cain is the "way of the man of flesh." It is following the old nature. It is doing things after the manner, wisdom, and strength of man. It is doing things *outside the realm of faith, walking by sight.*

The great section in the New Testament on *walking by faith* is Hebrews chapter eleven. This is a chapter which draws its material entirely from the experiences of individuals in the Old Testament.

One central truth pertaining to a walk by faith in relation to the salvation of the soul is presented, and this chapter forms, in this fashion, the capstone to the Book of Hebrews (*cf.* Heb. 10:35-39). The key verse in chapter eleven, reflecting on the central message throughout this book, is verse six:

> "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Abel offered unto God "a more excellent sacrifice" than Cain. Abel offered his sacrifice "by faith." Cain did not (Heb. 11:4). Consequently, Abel's sacrifice was accepted, but Cain's was rejected.

Abel brought "of the firstlings of his flock," and Cain brought "of the fruit of the ground." Abel brought that which God required, but Cain brought something other than that which God required.

This was evidently an offering of the first-fruits (Gen. 4:4). And in an offering of the first-fruits, Abel, "a keeper of the sheep," would be expected to bring of the first-fruits of his flock; and Cain, "a tiller of the ground," would be expected to bring of the first-fruits of the field (Gen. 4:2).

They both brought the right type offering. In this respect, the acceptance of one offering and the rejection of the other evidently had to do with one person (Abel) bringing the amount which God required and the other person (Cain) *NOT* doing so (*ref.* the author's book, *By Faith*, Chapters III, IV).

God's acceptance of Abel's offering and rejection of Cain's offering followed the principle set forth in Heb. 11:6. God could only have previously revealed to both individuals *EXACTLY* what He required, else neither could have acted "by faith."

"Faith" is simply *believing that which God has to say about a matter.* Abel, believing that which God had to say (exercising faith), acted accordingly through bringing the offering which God required. But Cain, rejecting that which God had to say (*NOT* exercising faith), acted accordingly through not bringing that which God required.

Cain was the first of a long list of individuals, following the fall, who governed their lives in "a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 16:25).

Cain failed to take into account that *man's ways and thoughts are in contradistinction to God's ways and thoughts:*

> "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" (Isa. 55:8, 9).

Man's perspective is *finite*, emanating from a fallen human nature. God's perspective is *infinite*, emanating from a place where that which is imperfect *CANNOT* exist.

The Creator's ways and thoughts can become the creature's ways and thoughts *ONLY* in the realm of "faith," *i.e.*, in the realm where

the creature "believes God," *followed by his acting in the realm of "faith."*

Redeemed man *MUST* follow the man of spirit in a walk "by faith." *There is NO other way to please God.*

Christians have a Book, a Book *containing the ways and thoughts of God.*

This Book, the written Revelation of God, has been given for *a definite and specific purpose;* and that purpose is twofold:

1) Unredeemed man being brought into *a right relationship with God.*

2) Redeemed man following the man of spirit in *a walk by faith within this right relationship.*

In order to walk "by faith," man *MUST* know the Revelation of God; for he *CANNOT* believe God and act accordingly *APART FROM knowing that which God has to say about the matter.*

Thus, redeemed man, through the man of spirit, ascertains the ways and thoughts of God through this Revelation; and his pilgrim walk, "by faith," is then governed accordingly.

Going "the way of Cain," *the way of the man of flesh,* is set forth in the Epistle of Jude as a form of "apostasy," *a standing away from the faith.*

Christians knowing God's ways and thoughts can apostatize through removing themselves from God's ways and thoughts revealed in His Word and going in a contrary direction, governed by their own ways and thoughts. Man's goals, aims, ambitions, aspirations, plans, methods, and schemes then come into view and find their place among the acts of the apostates and those who do their bidding.

"The way of Cain" is not necessarily something offensive in the eyes of man. In fact, in the eyes of religious man today it is quite the contrary, and the way of Cain is often exalted and held in high esteem.

Actions of this nature though are not called "the way of Cain." Rather, they are *disguised, clothed in proper religious attire, and passed off in Christian circles as the way and work of the Lord.*

This is a relatively easy task to accomplish because very few Christians are grounded in the Word of God in a manner sufficient to ascertain the thoughts and ways of the Lord; and understanding only the thoughts and ways of man, it is a very simple thing for them to, unknowingly, be led in "the way of Cain."

(For man to act "by faith," two major things *MUST* exist:

1) The person *MUST KNOW that which God has said*, for "faith" is simply *believing God.*

2) The person *MUST THEN wait on the Lord if his actions are to be solely in the realm of faith.*

There is *NO* getting around either of the preceding. There is *NO* such thing as "blind faith." A person *MUST* know that which God has said in order to act "by faith." *There is NO alternative*.

The latter is where Christians have the most difficulty. They find it difficult to simply wait, to wait on the Lord [*cf.* Isa. 40:31]. They, too often, want to get out and do something [*cf.* Gen. 16:1-5; 17:15-21].

A person *can EITHER exercise faith,* waiting upon the Lord to do a work through him, *OR NOT exercise faith*, running out ahead of the Lord and doing a work in the energy of the flesh himself.

A person *DOESN'T* prepare himself [a study of the Word, allowing an exercise of "faith"] and then go out and do a work for the Lord. Rather, a person prepares himself [again, a study of the Word, allowing an exercise of "faith"] and then goes out and lets the Lord do a work through him [*i.e.*, *acts by faith*].

BOTH require a knowledge of the Word, allowing the person to act "by faith." *BUT, ONLY the latter, which involves waiting on the Lord to do the work through that individual, actually has to do with that person acting "by faith."*

The alternative [the *ONLY* alternative] is *to NOT wait, to run out ahead of the Lord.* And even though the person knows the Word and is in a position to act by faith, even though he brings forth works through his own efforts [which may appear to surely be the Lord's work in man's eyes], "faith" is simply *NOT* involved.

And *"WITHOUT faith it is IMPOSSIBLE to please him"* [Heb. 11:6].

The whole of the matter is that simple, *and there is NO middle ground. It is EITHER one OR the other* [Luke 11:23; Rom. 14:23].)

The only protection which Christians have against the onslaught of the enemy is a knowledge of the Word of God, providing the necessary instructions concerning the manner of one's pilgrim walk.

Christians *MUST* receive the Word of God into their saved human spirits and allow the indwelling Holy Spirit to lead them into "all truth" concerning *the ways* and *thoughts* of God! *There is NO substitute!*

ONLY in this manner can there be an effective walk by faith, one which pleases God and ultimately results in the salvation of their souls.

The Error of Balaam

Jude 11 records "the error of Balaam," II Peter 2:15 records "the way of Balaam," and Rev. 2:14 records "the doctrine of Balaam."

All three of these are used in passages referring to Christians entering into a state of affairs within Christianity which not only defiles their high calling but also dishonors the Lord Who purchased their salvation with His Own blood.

The error and way of Balaam appear in companion portions of Scripture and would seem to refer basically to the same thing. *The error of Balaam* is associated with "reward" in Jude, and *the way of Balaam* is associated with the "wages of unrighteousness" in II Peter. Thus, *the error and way of Balaam* have to do with "monetary gain"; and, according to the Old Testament account, this monetary gain is acquired through one's willingness to compromise the principles of God and proclaim things contrary to the revealed Word of God.

The error and way of Balaam can be found in Numbers chapters twenty-two through twenty-four.

Balak, king of the Moabites, hired Balaam to come into his land and pronounce a curse upon the children of Israel. Balak had seen what Israel did to the Amorites; and knowing that this nation would soon be passing through his country, he was afraid. He feared the Israelites because of the power which the nation exercised through their God.

Balak knew that the only way in which the Israelites could be defeated was through severing the relationship which existed between Israel and their God. Thus, Balak hired Balaam to come into Moab and pronounce a curse upon the Israelites, incurring God's anger upon them in an effort to sever this existing relationship and to ultimately bring about their defeat at the hands of the enemy.

However, once in Moab, on three separate occasions, only blessings proceeded from the lips of Balaam. And Balak, angered by the turn of events, sent Balaam out of Moab into his own country.

The doctrine of Balaam is different than *his error and his way. His doctrine* had to do with that part of his teaching which was contrary to the

Word of God. However, an inseparable relationship existed between *his doctrine, his error, and his way.* That part of his teaching which was contrary to the Word of God (his doctrine) resulted from his willingness to prophesy either good or bad for monetary gain (his error and way).

And, remaining within this same framework, it would be little different among servants of the Lord today. One's willingness to compromise the principles of God (*the error and way of Balaam*) — for whatever reason — would precede and be inseparably linked to teaching that which was contrary to the Word of God (*the doctrine of Balaam*).

1) Doctrine of Balaam — Past

Scripture surrounding the doctrine of Balaam and its tragic results is given in Num. 25:1-3:

> "And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.
>
> And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods.
>
> And Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel."

The Israelites, after coming into Moab, began to commit fornication with the "daughters of Moab," eat meat sacrificed to idols, and bow down and worship the gods of the Moabites.

And in order to put a stop to these sins and stay the hand of God's judgment upon the entire nation, Moses was instructed *to slay every Israelite who had "joined himself unto Baal-peor."* And twenty-four thousand Israelites perished under God's judgment because of these sins.

What caused the Israelites to depart from the one true and living God Who had delivered them from Egypt? What caused them to begin serving false gods and following the idolatrous ways of the Moabites?

The answer is given in Num. 31:16:

> "Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord."

Balaam could *NOT* curse Israel. *ONLY* beautiful prophecies filled

with blessings flowed from his lips when he was called into Moab by Balak. But Balaam did succeed in leading the Israelites astray through his counsel.

The Israelites, through the counsel of Balaam, *were led to commit fornication, eat things sacrificed to idols, and bow down before other gods.* And, because of these sins, the judgment of God fell upon His people.

The counsel of Balaam — i.e., "the doctrine of Balaam" — had to do with sins committed by a people under covenant relationships with God — the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants. The former was unbreakable and the latter, in relation to the former, was misrepresented by the doctrine of Balaam — *IF you will, THEN I will; BUT, IF you DON'T…*

It was true that Israel's covenant relationship with God *could NOT be broken*; it was also true that Israel's position as firstborn *could NOT be changed*; but *it was NOT true* that Israel could sin with immunity, as the doctrine of Balaam evidently inferred.

God's wrath was manifested because of the sins of His people, and the thousands of Israelites who succumbed to the counsel of Balaam were overthrown in the wilderness, short of the goal of their calling.

2) Doctrine of Balaam — Present

The doctrine of Balaam is one of the most widely taught doctrines in the Church today. Christians know — as their counterparts in the Church in Pergamos (Rev. 2:14) — that they have been saved by grace through faith, and *NOTHING can alter their positional standing "in Christ."*

And in view of this unalterable positional standing, they reason that they can conduct their lives in any manner which they choose and it will make no difference.

However, as in the case of the Israelites, so in the case of Christians.

Christians, as the Israelites under Moses, *have been saved for a purpose.* Every Christian is enrolled in a race (I Cor. 9:24-27), and every Christian is engaged in a conflict (Eph. 6:10-18; II Tim. 2:4, 5).

The goal set before Christians is to win the race, be victorious in the conflict. And God has made provision for Christians in order that at the end of the race they might say with Paul:

> "I have fought a good fight ['I have strained every muscle in the good contest'], I have finished my course ['race'], I have kept the faith:

> Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (II Tim. 4:7, 8).

The enemy, Satan, on the other hand, is doing all within his power to bring about defeat in the lives of Christians. Satan's main objective in the present warfare is to prevent Christians from qualifying for crowns and thus positions of rulership with Christ in His coming kingdom.

God is presently bringing into existence *a new order of sons* to replace the order now ruling in the heavens; and the incumbent rulers — Satan and his angels — are doing all within their power to retain their present governmental control over the earth.

The main facet of the doctrine of Balaam which is being widely promulgated in Churches today is the teaching that future blessings and rewards are guaranteed for every Christian solely on the basis of Christ's finished work at Calvary and the Christians' positional standing "in Christ." Thus, all Christians — regardless of their conduct during the present time — will receive crowns and positions of power and authority with Christ in the kingdom.

However, the teaching throughout the Word of God is to the contrary.

The Israelites did NOT sin with immunity, and NEITHER can Christians.

Sin in the camp of Israel resulted in the Israelites being overthrown in the wilderness, short of the goal of their calling. And it will be NO different for Christians.

> "…and I took *the crown* that was upon his head" (II Sam. 1:10).
>
> "Behold I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take *thy crown*" (Rev. 3:11).

The Gainsaying of Korah

Korah was a Levite, the cousin of Aaron and Moses (Ex. 6:18-21). His sin was speaking against the authority God had vested in Aaron and Moses. Korah sought, particularly, to intrude into the priestly office held by Aaron, saying that all the Levites were "holy," and any of the Levites had as much right as Aaron to perform these priestly functions (Num. 16:1ff).

The word "gainsaying" in Jude 11 is *antilogia* in the Greek text, which means "against the word," or "speaking against."

Korah *moved against, he spoke against, the Word of God.* Aaron was the high priest whom God had appointed, and the power to exercise this priestly office was vested in him alone. Korah dared to question God's choice of Aaron and the power which He had vested in Aaron, which is looked upon in the three preceding verses (vv. 8-10) as a rebellion against Divinely established authority.

And a rebellion of this nature is *a rebellion against the One in whom all power and authority reside, against God Himself* (*ref.* Chapter VII in this book). Accordingly, questioning Divinely established authority is *a VERY serious matter, to say the least.*

In Num. 16:25-35, God's displeasure with Korah and those who followed him is shown by their removal from the camp of Israel through:

1) Being taken down into *Sheol* alive.
2) Being consumed *by fire* proceeding out from the Lord.

Christians following the path trod by Korah and those who followed him are looked upon in the Epistle of Jude as "apostates."

Korah *stood away from* the position which he was to occupy in the camp of Israel, and Christians following his example likewise *stand away from* the position which they are to occupy as *new creations* "in Christ."

They move out of the arena of faith — *stand away from* "the faith" — and become involved in things which are foreign to their very existence. And, as set forth in Numbers chapter sixteen, God *will NOT* countenance such acts.

Christendom today is filled with those who follow "the gainsaying of Korah." They refuse to recognize that power and authority reside in God alone, and that He has vested His power in certain individuals (men and angels) whom He has chosen and placed in various positions.

They, as Korah, *move against, speak against, the Word* — whether they realize it or not — when they move against or speak against those whom God has chosen and appointed, in whom He has vested His power.

1) Government of the Earth

The government of the earth is presently in a very complex state. Satan was originally given dominion over the earth, and a vast

number of subordinate angels were placed in positions of power and authority under him. Following his rebellion, Satan and those angels who followed him were rejected. They were no longer qualified to continue in their regal positions, but they were not immediately deposed. They were allowed to continue exercising dominion over the earth for a period of time.

> (God does not leave a throne of this nature vacant.
>
> A principle of Biblical government necessitates that an incumbent ruler [in this case, Satan, with his angels] continue on the throne *UNTIL* his replacement [in this case, Christ, with His co-heirs] is *NOT ONLY* on the scene *BUT* ready to ascend the throne.)

During this time, God brought man into existence to assume the governmental power which Satan and his angels possessed.

The first man, the first Adam, though was disqualified through sin; and Satan continued to rule.

God then sent His Son, the second Man, the last Adam, to redeem that which the first man, the first Adam, had forfeited in the fall. And Christ *NOT ONLY* showed that He was fully qualified to take the governmental reigns of the earth *BUT* He also paid the price for man's redemption (Matt. 4:1-11; John 19:30).

But the incumbent ruler, Satan (with his angels), was not immediately put down at this time. Jesus *DID NOT* immediately take the sceptre; *NOR* has He taken it to this day.

Jesus is presently in a place removed from the kingdom. While in this place, He is calling out a select group to occupy the throne with Him when He returns to take the kingdom.

And individuals whom He is calling out are *NOT* to become caught up in and involved in the present system under Satan.

The present and future status of both Christ and Christians in relation to the government of the earth is graphically set forth in Biblical typology in the Books of I, II Samuel.

> (Saul had been anointed king over Israel, but Saul rebelled against the Lord and was rejected by the Lord. David was then anointed king over Israel. And there were, following that time, two anointed kings in Israel; but Saul continued to occupy the throne.

As Saul continued to reign, David was forced into exile. The hills of Judaea became the headquarters of David. Certain Israelites gathered themselves unto David. They are described as those who were *in distress, in debt, and discontented* [I Sam. 22:2]. Those who followed David in this manner constituted a hidden group, separate from the camp of Israel under Saul, and separate from the kingdom plans of Saul.

So long as Saul remained in power, *NEITHER* David *NOR* his faithful followers sought to control any facet of the affairs of the kingdom under Saul. David had already been anointed king over Israel, but the time had not arrived for him to assume power.

David and his followers *WAITED.*

The day though finally arrived when Saul was put down, his crown taken and given to David, and *THEN* David ruled over Israel. And the faithful men who followed David during his time of exile *THEN* found themselves occupying various positions of power and authority in the kingdom under David.

In the antitype, Satan has been anointed king over the earth. He is the earth's present ruler. Satan rebelled against the Lord, and was rejected by the Lord. Jesus was then anointed King over the earth.

Thus, EXACTLY as in the type, there were THEN two anointed Kings, but Satan continued to occupy the throne. And as Satan continued to reign, Jesus departed into a place of exile.

Jesus is presently at the right hand of the Father in heaven. Certain Christians ally themselves with and follow Jesus during this time. And they are typified by the Israelites *in distress, in debt, and discontented,* who gathered themselves unto David. They constitute a hidden group, separate from the world system under Satan, and separate from the kingdom plans of Satan and those who rule with him.

So long as Satan remains in power, Jesus *will NOT* seek to control any facet of the affairs in the kingdom under Satan. And in like manner, *NEITHER should Christians*. Jesus has already been anointed King over the earth [*cf.* Matt. 2:2; 16:16], but the time *has NOT arrived* for Him to take the kingdom, to assume power. *Jesus is waiting UNTIL "the time," and SO should Christians* [*cf.* I Cor. 4:5; Heb. 10:13].

The day though will eventually arrive when Satan will be put down, his crown taken and given to Jesus. *THEN Jesus will rule over the earth.* And the faithful men who follow the Lord during His time of exile will *THEN find themselves occupying various positions of power and authority in the kingdom under Jesus the Christ — positions previously held by angels ruling under Satan.)*

2) Subject To — Co-Regent With

One of the ancient rabbis in Jewish history stated, "The secret of Adam is the secret of the Messiah."

To come into an understanding of the entire panorama of Biblical truths, one *MUST* view them after the same fashion in which God gave these truths. And to do this, one *MUST* go back to the very foundation upon which these truths rest — the Book of Genesis — and ascertain *the SAME truths relative to Adam.* Scripture *MUST* be interpreted in the light of Scripture, and Scripture *MUST* be interpreted after the manner in which it was written (types, shadows, word pictures, etc.).

ALL other methods of Scriptural interpretation — apart from the way in which God gave His Word — *can ONLY* lead to the multiplicity of pseudo thoughts and opinions originating from and held by man today.

The Church is to one day reign with the second Man, the last Adam, in the same position that Eve was to reign with the first man, the first Adam. But, during the time when the effects of the fall are present, prior to this reign, the Church is to occupy the same position relative to Christ that Eve occupied relative to Adam following the fall.

Eve, following the fall, was *NO longer* in the position of *co-regent with Adam* but was placed in *subjection to Adam* (Gen. 3:16; *cf.* Gen. 1:26-28).

In like manner, the Church today is *NOT* in the position of *co-regent with Christ* but, rather, is *subject to Christ* (Eph. 5:24; *cf.* Eph. 3:6). And the Church in this subjective position is *completely out of place* exercising governmental power and authority today, particularly since that power and authority is presently being exercised by Satan and his angels.

As Eve was to reign as *co-regent with Adam*, the Church is to one day reign as *co-regent with Christ.* Eve *could NOT* reign while *subject to Adam*; *NOR can* the Church reign while *subject to Christ.*

The completion of the redemption of Christians *MUST* occur first (body and soul). *THEN, and ONLY THEN*, can they be placed in the position which Eve occupied in relation to the first Adam prior to the fall. *THEN, and ONLY THEN*, can they reign as "joint-heirs" with Christ in the kingdom (*cf.* Rom. 8:16-23; I Peter 1:9-11; 4:12, 13).

Concluding Thoughts:

The condition of Christians who follow "the way of Cain," "the error of Balaam," or "the gainsaying of Korah" is depicted different

ways in Jude 12, 13.

Their present condition is depicted by showing a fruitless, shameful condition in which they are carried about every which way in the world; and their future condition is depicted by the statement, "wandering stars," to whom is reserved "the blackness of darkness forever."

(The word "forever [Gk., *aion*]" in verse thirteen should be translated "for an age," or "with respect to an age." referencing the Messianic Era. Refer to the author's article, "Aion, Aionios.")

Apostate Christians described in Jude 12, 13 will occupy no position with Christ in the kingdom. These are the same ones who previously, prior to the establishment of the kingdom, will have found themselves in the place called, "outer darkness," during the time of the wedding festivities (Matt. 22:1-14; *cf.* Matt. 8:11, 12; 25:14-30; Luke 13:28, 29); and the thought of darkness is used by Jude to describe the continued condition of these Christians in the kingdom itself.

Compare Jude 13 with I Peter 1:4. There is *an inheritance* "reserved" for Christians, and there is also *the blackness of darkness* "reserved" for Christians (the word "reserved" is the same in both passages in the Greek text). The former is reserved for *faithful Christians*, and the latter is reserved for *unfaithful Christians.*

"The inheritance," according to I Peter 1:5, is reserved for those "who are kept by the power of God through faith [faith being brought to its goal through works (*cf.* vv. 6-9; James 2:14ff)] unto salvation [salvation of the soul (*cf.* vv. 9-11; James 1:21)] ready to be revealed in the last time"; and "the blackness of darkness," according to Jude 10, 11, is reserved for those who "corrupt themselves" through following "the way of Cain," "the error of Balaam," or "the gainsaying of Korah."

"Faith" is the key issue in both I Peter and Jude. The salvation of one's soul, associated with the inheritance reserved in heaven, is contingent on "faith" being brought to its proper goal; and the apostates in Jude depart from this path by *standing away from* "the faith."

Both an inheritance and the blackness of darkness are being kept in reserve. The faithful ALONE will come into a realization of "the inheritance." And the apostates have ONLY one thing to which they can look forward: that described by Jude as "the blackness of darkness."

9

Behold, The Lord Cometh

Events Surrounding Christ's Return

"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage" (Jude 14-16).

The prophecy of Enoch, recorded by Jude, is one of the oldest prophecies in all Scripture; and there is no mention of this prophecy elsewhere in Scripture (Enoch is only mentioned four other places in Scripture [Gen. 5:18-24; I Chron. 5:1; Luke 3:37, 38; Heb. 11:5]).

There does exist a non-canonical, apocryphal book, the *Book of Enoch,* which contains a prophecy similar to the one Jude records; but this is of no moment whatsoever. Jude derived his information, not from apocryphal writings, but from the same source where he derived his information in all other portions of his epistle — from the Lord.

And the Lord has seen fit to reveal Enoch's prophecy through Jude at this exact juncture in His Revelation to man in order to continue the same line of teaching seen thus far in Jude — drawing from events in the lives of individuals in the Old Testament in order to teach Christians different facets of deep spiritual truth.

Enoch, as all the other prophets in the Old Testament, received that which he proclaimed *from the Lord.* He prophesied about an event concerning which he himself, apart from God, could know *nothing* — an event which would occur over 5,000 years in the future.

Furthermore, the prophecy had to do with judgment upon a particular group of people who would not even be brought into existence for over 3,000 years removed from Enoch's time.

Both Enoch's prophecy and the record of this prophecy in the Epistle of Jude are, as "all Scripture," *supernatural in origin.*

> (Note that Jude also called attention to another historic event not recorded by any other writer of sacred Scripture — The contention between Michael and Satan concerning the body of Moses [v. 9].)

It is commonly taught by most interpreters of Jude that Enoch's prophecy concerns judgment befalling the unregenerate earth-dwellers when Christ returns to the earth at the end of the Tribulation. However, that is *NOT* at all what the text states.

Enoch "prophesied of *these"* (vv. 14-16). The reference is to individuals in the preceding verses, to apostates. The scope of judgment in Enoch's prophecy is "upon all" Christians, but he particularly singles out the apostates "among them" (v. 15).

Attention has been called in past chapters to the fact that II Peter and Jude are companion epistles, paralleling one another in a number of places.

The parallel section to Jude 14-16 is II Peter 2:18, 19. These verses in II Peter, as the verses in Jude, refer to the ones who have corrupted themselves through apostate acts, outlined in the preceding verses. These are the ones for whom the "blackness of darkness" *is reserved* (II Peter 2:17; Jude 13), rather than the "inheritance" *to which Christians have been called* (I Peter 1:4).

II Peter 2:18, 19 leads immediately into the thought of having escaped "the pollutions of the world through *the knowledge* of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (v. 20), though being "again entangled therein [again entangled in these pollutions], and overcome" (vv. 21, 22). The same individuals are in view throughout all these verses.

Note the expressions:

> "For when *they…"* (v. 18).
> "While *they…"* (v. 19).
> "For if after *they…"* (v. 20).
> "For it had been better for *them…"* (v. 21).

The entire section refers to individuals who escaped "the pollutions of the world," and then apostatized — *stood away from* "the faith." They had come into *a knowledge* of "the way of righteousness," and then *turned from that revealed through this knowledge* (*cf.* v. 15).

The words "knowledge" and "known" in verses twenty and twenty-one are translations of a word in the Greek text which means "mature knowledge" (*epignosis,* the noun form, appears in v. 20; and *epiginosko,* the verb form, appears in v. 21).

And, as previously pointed out in this book (*ref.* Ch. II, pp. 19-21), escaping the pollutions of the world through a mature knowledge (*epignosis*) of the Lord Jesus Christ is *impossible* for unsaved individuals. They do *NOT* possess a saved spirit into which the Word of God can be received; *NOR* do they possess the indwelling Holy Spirit to lead them into "all truth."

Consequently, ascribing this passage to the unsaved is *COMPLETELY out of the question.* The unsaved *CANNOT* apostatize — *i.e.*, stand away from *a position which they have NEVER occupied*, which, itself, would require *a mature knowledge (epignosis) of the matter at hand*.

The Seventh from Adam

The record is given of only two individuals in the antediluvian world who carried God's message to man. There were undoubtedly many (*cf.* Gen. 4:26), but God has seen fit to reveal *only the one prophecy* which Enoch uttered and the fact that Noah was *a preacher of righteousness.*

Both of these accounts are passed over without mention in the Old Testament and are revealed *only* by Peter and Jude in the New Testament. Noah's preaching is mentioned in II Peter 2:4, 5, and Enoch's prophecy is recorded in Jude 14-16.

The parallel section to II Peter 2:4, 5 in Jude (v. 6) does not refer to Noah's preaching; *only Peter records this*. And the parallel section to Jude 14-16 in II Peter (2:18, 19) does not refer to Enoch's prophecy; *only Jude records this*.

"Enoch," in typology, has to do peculiarly with *Christians;* and "Noah," in typology, has to do peculiarly with *Israel.*

Enoch was removed into heaven before the Flood, while Noah, remaining here on earth in a place of safety, passed through the Flood.

"The Flood" coming upon the world in the Genesis account typifies *the Tribulation* which is to come upon the world yet future (Luke 17:26-30); "Enoch" being removed before the Flood typifies *the Church* being removed before the Tribulation; and "Noah" passing through the Flood in a place of safety typifies *the nation of Israel* passing through the Tribulation in a place of safety (Luke 17:26ff).

This is the order set forth in the Genesis account, the book wherein the roots of all Biblical doctrine lie (*cf.* Heb. 11:4-7).

And the Word of God clearly states:

> "And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man" (Luke 17:26; *cf.* Matt. 24:37-39).

During the days of Noah, preceding the Flood, *one man* was removed from the earth *alive* and taken into the heavens.

During the days of the Son of Man, preceding the Great Tribulation, *one man — the one new man* "in Christ" — will be removed from the earth *alive* and taken into the heavens.

Then, as Noah passed safely through the Flood during his day, Israel will pass safely through the Tribulation during that coming day.

In view of the place which Enoch occupies in Biblical typology, it was only natural that God chose this man, millenniums before the Church was even brought into existence, not only to be the one to typify the Church being removed but also to be the one to prophesy concerning judgment upon Christians following their removal.

Enoch's prophecy is *a warning,* not to individuals during his day, but to individuals during our day. It is *a warning* concerning judgment awaiting all Christians throughout the present dispensation at the time of the Lord's return, with severe consequences awaiting apostate Christians at that time.

In the type dealing with *Enoch* in Genesis chapter five, the genealogy in this chapter moves through *ten generations* — from Adam to Noah. Within this genealogy, Enoch was *the seventh* from Adam, and Noah *the tenth.*

"Seven" and "ten" are two of several numbers used in Scripture

to show *completeness,* with each showing a different aspect of completeness. "Seven" shows *the completeness of that which is in view,* and "ten" shows *numerical completeness.*

In each case, at a terminal point in each of the two sets of generations — *seven generations* extending to Enoch, and *ten generations* extending to Noah — Divine intervention into the affairs of man is seen.

At a terminal point in the first set of generations, a man was removed from the earth alive.

Then, at a subsequent terminal point in the second set of generations, a man (along with his family) passed safely through a time of destruction, with the remainder of the world perishing during this time.

That to which this introductory, overall type points (the antitype), as previously seen, is simple and easy to see, though this type only presents particular facets of the complete picture.

"Enoch" being removed from the earth preceding the Flood typifies *Christians being removed from the earth preceding the coming Tribulation*.

And "Noah" passing safely through the Flood typifies *Israel passing safely through the coming Tribulation, with Gentile world power, in the end, destroyed, and Israel THEN occupying the nation's proper place in relation to the remainder of mankind* (*cf.* Gen. 9:26, 27; 10:10; 11:1-9).

The things seen in Gen. 5-11a form a foundational type upon which *ALL* subsequent Scripture dealing with the subject *MUST rest* (similar to Gen. 1:1-2:3 forming a foundational framework upon which all subsequent Scripture rests). And, in complete accord with that established in this foundational type, the things foreshadowed by events in the type will occur in the antitype *when matters are being brought to completion relative to both the Church and Israel.*

The Church at this time, typified by "Enoch," *the seventh from Adam,* will be removed; and Israel at this time, typified by "Noah," *the tenth from Adam,* will pass safely through the worldwide destruction which will follow the Church's removal.

At a future time, God will intervene in the affairs of man once again, supernaturally bringing matters foreshadowed by events in this complete, overall type to pass.

This is the first part of the picture presented in Scripture.

Then, from here, to complete the picture, an individual has to move to subsequent types dealing with the subject. Each subsequent

type presents a different facet of the picture and further adds to that which, in the end, sets forth a complete word picture, *given to shed light upon and help explain the antitype.*

Coming with His Saints

1) "Holy Ones"

At the time of the Lord's return for Christians, as set forth in Jude 14, He will be accompanied by "ten thousands [*lit.,* 'myriads' (an innumerable multitude)] of his saints." The word "saints" is a translation of the Greek word *hagios,* meaning "holy," or in its plural form as used here, "holy ones."

The word *hagios* is used in the New Testament to refer to individuals, places, and things which are "*separated* unto the service of God."

It is used of Christians, Jewish prophets, angels, the city of Jerusalem, the Holy of Holies in the temple, the Scriptures, etc. (*cf.* Matt. 4:5; 24:15; Luke 1:70; Rom. 1:2; Eph. 1:1; Rev. 14:10).

This is also the word used throughout the New Testament referring to the Spirit of God — *the Holy* Spirit. Thus, the manner in which this word is used in New Testament passages *must always be shown* by accompanying, identifying words or textual considerations.

Jude used the word *hagios* four times in his epistle (vv. 3, 14, 20). In verse three *the reference is to Christians;* in verse fourteen the reference is to *angels* (shown by textual considerations, along with related passages); and in verse twenty t*he reference is to the faith of Christians* and to *the Holy Spirit.*

Enoch's prophecy in verse fourteen has to do with the Lord coming with His "saints ['holy ones' (*angels*)]," to execute judgment upon His "saints ['holy ones' (*Christians*)]," referred to in verse three. These two groups of individuals, both called "saints [from *hagios*]," *MUST be kept separate and distinct.*

Many individuals among those who do not understand that Jude 14 has to do with the return of Christ for Christians (bringing Christians into judgment preceding the Tribulation [*in keeping with the place Enoch occupies in Biblical typology*], rather than judgment befalling the earth-dwellers when He returns at the end of the Tribulation) believe that the word *hagios* in this verse is a reference to Christians accompanying the Lord at the time of His revelation.

However, the thought of Christians returning to the earth with Christ at this time is *NOT* at all in accord with Scripture.

Christ will be accompanied *by angels, NOT Christians*, when He returns to deal with Israel and the nations. He will be revealed at this time with "his mighty angels," "the armies" of heaven (II Thess. 1:7; Rev. 19:14; *cf.* Job 25:3; Ps. 103:20; Zech. 14:5; Rev. 12:7).

Christians at the time of Christ's return, those retaining their birthright, will constitute *the bride of Christ.* And, as Biblical typology plainly reveals, Christ's bride (about to become His wife at this point in time) *will NOT* accompany Him to the earth when He returns to deal with Israel and the Gentile nations.

Moses' wife, Zipporah, *did NOT* accompany him when he returned to Egypt to deal with his brethren, followed by the destruction of Gentile power in the Red Sea.

She remained behind and was reunited with Moses, appearing with him *ONLY AFTER these events* (Ex. 4:19-26; 18:1ff).

Joseph's wife, Asenath, in the same fashion as Zipporah in relation to Moses, *was NOT* with Joseph when he dealt with his brethren. She was in another part of the palace at this time (Gen. 45:1ff).

Thus will it be when Christ returns to the earth at the end of the Tribulation.

Christ's bride, comprised of those Christians called out of the called, will, according to the clear teaching of Scripture, remain behind (probably in the New Jerusalem) and be reunited with Him, *as HIS WIFE*, appearing with Him in the antitype of Zipporah in Ex. 18:1ff, *AFTER He has finished dealing with Israel and the nations.*

(For an explanation of the preceding, how Christ's bride will become His wife and when this will occur, refer to the author's book, *The Time of the End*, Chapters VIII, IX.)

Deuteronomy 33:2 provides a similar reference to the subject under discussion in Jude 14.

In this passage, "ten thousands of saints [*lit.*, 'myriads of holy ones'],," are said to have accompanied the Lord at the time He gave the Law through Moses at Mt. Sinai. These *saints* were instrumental in giving the law and are identified in Ps. 68:17 as "angels" (*cf.* Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2).

Angels ("saints," "holy ones") will accompany the Lord when He returns for His Church before the Tribulation and again when He returns to deal with Israel and the nations following the Tribulation (*cf.* Matt. 16:24-27). Enoch prophesied concerning the former, and his prophecy *MUST NOT* be confused with events surrounding the latter.

(The Hebrew word translated "saints" in Deut. 33:2 is *kodesh,* a Hebrew equivalent of the Greek word *hagios* used in Jude 14.

See also Ps. 89:5-7; Dan. 8:13; Zech. 14:5; I Thess. 3:13 where angels, called "saints," are referred to by the Hebrew word *kadosh* [a cognate of *kodesh*] and by the Greek word *hagios*

Also note that the angels at Sinai acted under fixed laws, as will the angels accompanying Christ when He returns to the earth. And with angels exercising delegated power and authority in this manner, their actions become the Lord's actions.

For more information on the preceding, refer to the author's book, *By Faith*, Chapter IX, pp. 151, 152.)

2) "Ministering Spirits"

Angels were instrumental in God's dealings with Israel in the Old Testament (*cf.* Gen. 18:1ff; I Kings 19:5; Ps. 103:21; 104:4; Dan. 8:16, 17; 9:20ff).

They were instrumental in events surrounding the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ at His first coming (Matt. 4:11; Luke 2:9ff; 22:43; John 20:11ff).

They are instrumental in God's dealings with the Church today (*cf.* Heb. 1:7, 13, 14; Rev. 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14).

They will be instrumental in events affecting Israel and the nations during the Tribulation (*cf.* Rev. 7:1ff; 8:1ff; 9:1ff; 10:1ff…).

And they will be instrumental in events surrounding Christ at His second coming.

Angels are "ministering spirits" who execute the will, purpose, judgments, etc. of the Lord; and angelic accompaniment at the Lord's return will be for this purpose (*e.g.*, angels accompanying Christ when He returns to the earth after the Tribulation will be instrumental in regathering Israel and in removing from Christ's kingdom "all things that offend, and them which do iniquity" [Matt. 13:41; 24:30, 31]).

To Execute Judgment

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator" (I Peter 4:17-19).

1) Upon Christians

When the words "ungodly" and "sinner" appear, as in I Peter 4:18 and the text in Jude 15, the normal reaction among Christians is to think in terms of *unsaved individuals* and of *eternal verities.*

However, *NEITHER* the unsaved *NOR* eternal verities are in view in these passages. Thinking along these lines is a shift from the subject matter at hand to things which *are NOT* being dealt with at all.

These passages concern judgment upon those in the house of God, and this judgment is with a view to a salvation placed in the future, having to do with the Messianic Era.

NOT ONLY is it evident from *the futuristic aspect of judgment awaiting Christians* that the salvation which we presently possess *is NOT in view* (judgment relating to one's presently possessed salvation occurred, *in its entirety, in past time*), *BUT* the words "scarcely be saved [*lit.,* 'with difficulty be saved']" *ALSO make this fact clear.*

NO ONE who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ is saved "with difficulty," for eternal salvation is based entirely on the finished work of Christ at Calvary. And viewing a person as having come into possession of this salvation "with difficulty" could only emanate from *a complete misunderstanding of salvation by grace through faith.*

Eternal salvation is the simplest thing in the world:

"What must I do to be saved?

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:30, 31).

NOTHING on man's part involves difficulty. It CAN'T! That would be IMPOSSIBLE, for unsaved man is "dead in trespasses and sins," totally

incapable of operating in the spiritual realm! ALL he can possibly do is receive that which has already been done on his behalf!

And he does this by simply believing, putting his trust in, the One Who did everything on his behalf.

The Epistles of I, II Peter and Jude, as all other epistles, deal specifically with the salvation of the soul.

The salvation which Christians presently possess has to do with *the spirit, NOT the soul* (John 3:6).

The epistles, Pauline, Hebrews, and General, deal with those who already have eternal life — *salvation of the spirit,* wrought through believing on the Lord Jesus Christ — and pertain to things surrounding a salvation to be revealed. Each epistle has its special and particular emphasis in this area; and when studied together, in the light of one another, the epistles present a complete, composite revelation concerning this future salvation.

The special and particular emphasis in the Epistle of Jude is upon exhorting Christians *to earnestly strive with respect to* "the faith," with attendant warnings against *standing away from* "the faith," *apostatizing.*

*I*ssues pertaining to the unsaved, eternal damnation, *DO NOT, in any way,* enter into this subject matter.

It is *NOT* the unsaved who are called "ungodly," "sinners," "murmurers," "complainers," etc. *NO!* These are words which Jude used to describe individuals from among the saved. These were apostates, those *who had stood away from* "the faith" and will, before the judgment seat of Christ, experience the loss of their souls.

I Peter 4:17-19 begins with a reference to *judgment,* which "must begin at the house of God" (v. 17), and there is then an exhortation to suffering Christians to "commit the keeping of their souls to him [God] in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator" (v. 19).

Then, placed squarely between these two verses lies a question, having to do with two groups of Christians:

> "And if the righteous scarcely ['with difficulty'] be saved, where shall the 'ungodly' and the 'sinner' appear?" (v. 18).

I Peter 4:18 *MUST* be understood and interpreted in the light of its context — *the judgment of Christians (v. 17), and issues surrounding the souls of Christians (v. 19).*

The salvation in verse eighteen is in connection with both *a future judgment* in verse seventeen and *suffering according to the will of God and committing the keeping of one's soul to the Lord in verse nineteen.*

To understand this verse in any other fashion is to ignore the context and, in this manner, obscure teachings which the Spirit of God, through Peter, is setting forth.

As evident from I Peter 4:17-19 and Jude 15, the words "ungodly" and "sinner" are used in a broader sense in Scripture than many realize.

These words are used of those in the world in relation to eternal salvation, the salvation of their spirits (Rom. 5:6, 8, 19); but, as in both I Peter 4:17-19 and Jude 15, these same two words are also used of Christians in relation to salvation for the coming age, the salvation of their souls (*cf.* II Tim. 2:16; Titus 2:12; James 4:8; Jude 4, 18).

Scriptures dealing specifically with the salvation of the soul in the epistles (Pauline, Hebrews, and General) *MUST* be understood and interpreted in the light of their subject matter.

For example, in James 5:19, 20, *a brother* erring "from the truth [truth revealed in the message of James]" is called "a sinner." This sinning brother is *in danger of losing his soul, and the ONLY thing which will prevent this from happening is his conversion* (his being turned about, turned back to the truth, as it is expounded in James).

There is *NOTHING* in this passage about eternal verities. James, in his epistle, deals with *an entirely different subject.*

James expounds on works, emanating out of a Christian's faithfulness, which bring faith to its proper goal (James 2:14ff; *cf.* I Peter 1:9).

And a man who turns aside from the truth expounded in James places himself in danger, not of suffering eternal damnation, but of experiencing the loss of his soul. Faith will not have been brought to its proper goal.

James 5:19, 20 *MUST* be understood and interpreted in this light.

Thus, *ALWAYS* follow the text, context, and message of the book when interpreting Scripture.

Making certain basic errors through erroneous interpretations one place in Scripture will, *more often than not*, open the door to other erroneous interpretations elsewhere in Scripture; but, realizing certain basic truths one place in Scripture will *always, at some point,* open the door for one to see and grasp other truths elsewhere in Scripture.

Then, once a person begins to build upon these basic truths, he begins moving from *gnosis* (knowledge) to *epignosis* (mature knowledge); and the great truths of Scripture throughout the Word of God begin to unfold before him.

2) Future Judgments

For over 1,900 years Christ has been exercising the office of *High Priest* in the Holy of Holies of the heavenly tabernacle *on behalf of Christians.*

Although all judgment has been committed into His hands (John 5:22), He has not been judging during this time. Judgment has been deferred to a future date. Christ will execute judgment *ONLY AFTER* He comes forth from the tabernacle at the end of the present dispensation.

Following the present high priestly ministry of Christ, when He comes forth as *Judge*, Christians will come under His judgment *first.*

This will be followed approximately seven years later by judgment upon Israel and saved Gentiles.

And then, 1,000 years later, the unsaved from all the ages will stand before God's Son to be judged (Isa. 1:18-31; Ezek. 20:33-44; Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 20:11-15).

Every person who has ever lived or ever will live *MUST,* at some point in time, appear before God's Son in judgment. There is no escaping this fact; for, in connection with "death," either *in Christ* or *outside of Christ,* this is an appointment which *MUST* be kept (Heb. 9:27).

The principle that judgment *MUST* begin at the house of God establishes a certain order for future judgments.

God is today dealing with *the Church,* during which time Israel has been set aside. And God will conclude His dealings with the Church, which include both Christ's present high priestly ministry and Christ's future appearance upon the judgment seat, *BEFORE* resuming His national dealings with Israel.

> (Note that events surrounding the judgment seat of Christ *occur following the rapture but preceding the beginning of the Tribulation* [Ruth 3, 4; Rev. 1-6].)

Then, once God resumes His national dealings with Israel, the principle concerning judgment beginning at the house of God will hold true relative *to Israel.*

In a respect, the Tribulation itself will be a time of judgment upon all who dwell upon the earth — *Israel first, and then the nations.* This period of time is specifically called "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7).

After the Tribulation, when Israel and the Gentiles stand before God's Son in judgment (those Gentiles saved during the Tribulation, both resurrected martyrs and those surviving the Tribulation), Israel will still retain priority. Though both could be viewed as *the house of God*, Israel will, at that time, be judged *first.*

There are a number of parallels between the judgment of Israel and the judgment of Christians which should not be overlooked, for one will cast light upon the other.

Preceding both judgments, Christ will come forth accompanied by angels. Preceding both judgments, the dead will be raised and, together with those who are alive at that time, will be taken to designated places to be judged.

Christians, before the Tribulation, will be taken into heaven; Israel, after the Tribulation, will be taken into "the wilderness of the people" (Ezek. 20:34-37), which is possibly a reference to the Sinai area (the new covenant to be made with Israel could very well be instituted in the same place that God brought Israel into the bonds of the old covenant).

Both the judgment of Christians and the judgment of Israel have to do with *the house of God.* These constitute judgments upon the people of God, and both judgments are for the same basic purpose.

The Church and Israel constitute two separate and distinct groups of individuals which are about to assume positions of power and authority over and on the earth, and these individuals *MUST FIRST* appear in judgment before God's Son to either be apportioned or be denied positions in the kingdom.

At the time Christ judges Israel, following His return to the earth, there will be two classes of individuals: *the faithful,* and *the unfaithful.* At this time He will "purge out" *the rebels* and *transgressors,* "and they shall not enter into the land of Israel."

One Scripture passage showing exactly what is involved concerns God's judgment upon the Levites at this time (Ezek. 44:10-16). Among the Levites there will be those singled out who had previously involved themselves with idolatry and, in this manner, had led other Israelites astray. These individuals will, during the coming age, bear

their "shame" and "abominations" by being servants rather than priests in the Lord's house (*cf.* Ezek. 20:37, 38).

The judgment of Christians, preceding Israel's judgment, will be identical in nature. There will be a division between *the faithful* and *the unfaithful,* and *ONLY* the faithful will be apportioned positions of power and authority with Christ in the kingdom.

In the coming age, the lot of unfaithful Christians in the heavens will be comparable to that of unfaithful Israelites on the earth. They — the "murmurers, complainers…" — will bear their *shame,* occupying *NO place* among the "kings and priests" reigning with Christ (Jude 16; *cf.* v. 13; I Cor. 3:11-15).

Then, following Israel's judgment, there will be a judgment of saved Gentiles coming out of the Tribulation — both those slain for their faith (resurrected) and those surviving the Tribulation.

And two classes of individuals, both *faithful* and *unfaithful*, will appear at this judgment as well. (Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 7:9-17; 20:4-6).

(For additional information on saved Gentiles coming out of the Tribulation, refer to the author's books, *By Faith*, [Ch. XVIII[, *Prophecy on Mount Olivet* [Chs. XXII-XXIV], and *The Time of the End* [Chs. XXVI, XXXIII.

Also, as previously referenced, the judgment of individuals preceding the Millennium has to do with *the saved ALONE. The unsaved are judged ONLY following the Millennium.*

The reasoning for this is very simple. The judgment of *the saved has to do with the Millennium, NOT with the eternal ages*; and the judgment of *the unsaved has NOTHING to do with the Millennium, ONLY with the eternal ages.*

The judgment in Matt. 25:31-46 is often misunderstood in the preceding respect. For comments on this passage, refer to Ch. X, pp. 168-170, in the author's book, *O Sleeper! Arise, Call!*)

Decisions and determinations rendered at the judgments of the Church, Israel, and saved Gentiles precede and anticipate the kingdom to follow. Out of these judgments will come the ones who are to exercise supremacy — from the heavens, and on the earth.

And in that day, following these judgments, God's complete purpose pertaining to the existence of both the Church and Israel will be brought to pass.

10

Mockers in the Last Time

Divisive, Sensual, Willingly Ignorant

"But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit" (Jude 17-19).

Verses seventeen through nineteen conclude Jude's remarks on the apostasy prophesied to prevail throughout Christendom in the latter days. And the remaining six verses in Jude (vv. 20-25) have to do with exhortations and promises to believers in the face of the existing apostasy.

In these closing remarks on apostasy in verses seventeen through nineteen, we are introduced to "mockers," who are associated specifically with "the last time."

The apostles had previously spoken of their appearance (*cf.* I Tim. 4:1-3; II Tim. 4:1-4; II Thess. 2:2, 3). And their appearance near the close of the dispensation results from the terminal corrupting process of the leaven which the woman placed in the three measures of meal in Matt. 13:33 ("…till *the whole* was leavened"), which could only have been placed in the meal very early in the dispensation.

And because of this, one could only expect to see *Satan's most corrupt, most damaging, work* occurring near the end of the dispensation when the Church finds itself rapidly moving into *a completely leavened state* — a state in which Christ's question in Luke 18:8b, requiring *a negative answer*, will be true of the Church in a universal respect:

> "…when the Son of man cometh [a Messianic title], shall he find faith [*lit.*, 'the faith,' an expression having to do peculiarly with *the Word of the Kingdom*] upon the earth?"

And *the spiritually destitute condition* of the Church in the end-time is not really a state into which the Church is yet to move, except for the fact that the leaven is still working, producing *an even more corrupt and a deeper spiritually destitute condition.*

Christians in the world today are living during the time prophesied in Scripture when the leavening process has already worked into the entire mass and is about to complete its deadly work.

This is a time immediately preceding Christ's return, when the prophesied apostasy of Scripture is *rapidly nearing its most intense stage.*

This is a time depicted by the Laodicean period of Church history seen in Rev. 3:14-21. And the present spiritual condition of the Church in this respect is described by the words, "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev. 3:17).

It is in these days, during the very time in which the Church in the world finds itself, that the "mockers" from Jude appear in all their destructive force.

Mockers

Jude's point of termination for his discourse on apostasy is the same point of termination which Peter records in the parallel section of his second epistle. This, of course, is easy to understand, for the Holy Spirit moved both of these men to write about the same thing, revealing the end of the matter through both men (*cf.* Deut. 17:6; II Cor. 13:1).

That which Peter and Jude wrote are their words *ONLY* insofar as their being the human instruments used to record these words. Their writings, as all Scripture, are the very Word of God.

The Spirit of God, near the beginning of the present dispensation, revealed through Peter and Jude *EXACTLY* how conditions would be at the end of the dispensation, immediately preceding His Son's return.

II Peter 3:1-13 forms the parallel section to Jude 17-19. In the Authorized Version of Scripture, the word "scoffers" appears in II Peter (v. 3) rather than the word "mockers," as in Jude. However, the same word *(empaiktes)* appears in both passages in the Greek text; and there can be *NO difference* in the way that these two passages are understood, for both passages refer to the same individuals and their actions.

Empaiktes means "mocker," or "scoffer." The only other appearance

of this word in the New Testament is in its verb form *(empaizo)* in the gospel accounts. And with only two exceptions (Matt. 2:16; Luke 14:29), *empaizo* is used in these accounts in passages describing the degradation which Christ endured at the hands of both the Roman soldiers and the religious leaders in Israel during His trial and crucifixion (*cf.* Matt. 20:19; 27:29, 31, 41; Mark 10:34; 15:20, 31; Luke 18:32; 22:63; 23:11, 36).

The same basic thought is in view throughout all these references, including II Peter 3:3 and Jude 18. *Mockers,* in the Word of God, are those who "belittle," "ridicule," "scorn," "make light of" *the written Word of God.*

And making light of the written Word is synonymous with making light of the living Word, for They are inseparably related.

> ("The Word" [John 1:1, 2] "made flesh" [John 1:14] was simply the O.T. Scriptures [inseparably identified with God] manifest in another form [*in the person of the Son, God ("the Word") manifest in the flesh*].)

A cognate form of *empaiktes* is the word *paizo* used in I Cor. 10:7 (the only appearance of this word in the N.T.). This word means "amuse" or "play" and is itself closely related to the word *pais,* meaning "child." Thus, the thought behind *paizo* has to do with "acting as a child," "childlike," etc. And moving the thought of "acting as a child" into the rationale of the mockers in II Peter 3:3 and Jude 18 will illustrate one facet of their actions.

Another facet of their actions can be derived from the way *paizo* is used in I Cor. 10:7 (*cf.* vv. 6, 11). Events in this passage have to do with the time in the wilderness of Sinai when the Israelites *reveled in pagan idolatry* (Ex. 32:1ff). *They, reveling in this pagan idolatry, "sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play"* (Ex. 32:6).

This occurred after Moses had been away from the camp, in the Mount, for many days. The people "saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the Mount," and their thoughts turned to new leadership and back to the things of Egypt which they had left.

They desired to make a god (an *elohim* [*cf.* vv. 1, 4, 8, 23, 31], same Hebrew word used for the one true and living God throughout the O.T.) who would "go before" them, for they didn't know what had become of Moses. A "molten calf" was formed to serve as their god (their *elohim*), sacrifices were offered to this calf, and within the festivities surrounding these sacrifices there were *times of eating and drinking.*

The people rising up *to play during the festivities* was associated with the gay times of pagan dancing, etc. attendant such festivities. And all of these things were performed after the manner, customs, and idolatrous practices of the Egyptians.

Moses in the Mount, away from the camp of Israel for a period of time, forms a type of Christ in heaven, away from the Church for a period of time.

The Israelites, because of Moses' lengthy stay in the Mount, not knowing what had become of him, looked toward new leadership and fell into idolatry.

And Christians, because of Christ's lengthy stay in heaven, not knowing what has become of Him, *have done EXACTLY the same thing* (*e.g.*, note the "scoffers" question from II Peter 3:4: "Where is the promise of his coming?").

Upon Moses' return, God's judgment fell upon His people (Ex. 32:15-35); and upon Christ's return, God's judgment will, once again, fall upon His people (Jude 14-16).

Thus, putting these things together, the "mockers" in II Peter and Jude are seen as individuals who have not only *stood away from* "the faith" but their actions are associated with both *those of a child and those of the world.*

They, in their oft-times pretense of exhibiting a spiritually mature, superior knowledge, in reality exhibit a carnally immature, inferior knowledge (*cf.* II Peter 2:18; Jude 16). They, as their counterparts in the wilderness of Sinai during Moses' day, *revel, NOT in the things of God, BUT in the things of the world. They have rejected the wisdom that comes from above and resorted to that which is base, that which is from below.*

Divisive, Sensual

The *mockers* who appear "in the last time" are said to "separate themselves [*lit.*, 'cause divisions']" (Jude 19a). They, through their false doctrines, cause schisms among Christians, seeking to overthrow the faith of those to whom Jude's epistle is addressed.

They themselves are no longer *earnestly striving "with respect to* the faith"; and their efforts are directed toward, *NOT* those in the arena which they now occupy, *BUT* those in the arena which they left.

The method which they use to produce divisions among Chris-

tians, according to II Peter 3:4, is *questioning the Word of God.* They, in essence, *sit in judgment on God.*

Through *their* "great swelling words" *they make light of that which God has promised in His Word*; and Peter, introducing his message on apostates, stated that *many* would follow the "pernicious ways" of men such as these, "by reason of whom the way of truth" would be "evil spoken of."

These *apostates* have defiled their own garments; and, through "damnable heresies," they seek to lead other Christians to do the same (II Peter 2:1, 2, 18).

These *mockers* are further described as being "sensual, having not the Spirit" (Jude 19b). The word "sensual" is a translation of the Greek word *psuchikos,* meaning "soulical," "natural."

"The soul" is that part of man associated with *the natural life.* The soul is the seat of a person's emotions, feelings, and desires pertaining to his man-conscious existence. Christians possess an unredeemed soul, and Christians resorting to the soulical nature are following the man of flesh rather than the man of spirit.

The thought in this passage is not at all that the Spirit of God does not indwell these individuals, for He indwells every believer; and these are "apostates"—believers who have *stood away from* "the faith."

The thought centers around the fact that here are individuals who, within their apostasy, now "mock" the things of God. They follow the ways of the man of flesh, and the Spirit of God has *NOTHING* to do with the entire matter.

The leaven has done its work, everything is alien to the Spirit's control, and these apostates are completely estranged from the Spirit's work in their lives.

> (An unsaved person, unlike a saved person, is spiritually dead. He is no more in a position to act in the spiritual realm, understand spiritual truth, than a physically dead person is in a position to move about in the physical realm.
>
> A similar situation exists between Christians who have an understanding of the Word of the Kingdom and the apostates existing among these Christians [along with numerous other Christians in the Laodicean Church of today who would not be considered true apostates but still have no understanding of, and often have an aversion to, the message concerning the coming kingdom of Christ].

One group is *spiritually attuned to the Word of the Kingdom*, and they can not only understand the message but they can experience spiritual growth through a continued study of the message.

The other group though is *completely estranged from the Spirit's work in this respect.* And, relative to the Word of the Kingdom, they find themselves in a similar position, spiritually, to that of the unsaved person. Their spiritual senses either remain or have become so dulled and deadened that they cannot understand any more about the message than an unsaved person can understand about it [*cf.* Heb. 5:13, 14].

And this, of course, will explain one aspect of what the working of the leaven has done over time. Christendom, at the end of the dispensation, could NOT possibly exist after any other fashion. Scripture is quite clear on this matter.)

Their Message

1) Where Is the Promise of His Coming

The pseudo message proclaimed by the mockers who appear during the latter days is given in II Peter 3:4. This message involves a naturalistic, uniformitarian outlook which smacks at the very heart of all prophetic Scripture:

> "Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

This message, sequentially, appears immediately following Enoch's prophecy. Enoch prophesied during the days before the Flood — five millenniums ago — concerning the very thing which the mockers of the end-time deny. Enoch's prophecy pertained to a judgment which would come upon the mockers, other apostates, and all other Christians — *faithful and unfaithful alike* — at the time of Christ's return.

The Lord is going to "judge his people"; and Scripture states, concerning Christians in relation to this judgment:

> "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:30, 31; *cf.* I Cor. 3:11-15; II Cor. 5:10, 11).

Many Christians deny that such a judgment will occur, but the mockers carry this one step further and deny the very return of Christ to bring about this judgment. They deny Enoch's prophecy *in toto.*

God, in His Word, is very specific and clear concerning the fact of His Son's return. *Jesus will return;* and insofar as Scripture is concerned, *that's the END of the matter. The subject is NOT open for discussion.*

Jesus' words, "And if I go…I will come again" (John 14:3), mean *EXACTLY what they say. He has gone away to prepare a place for Christians,* fulfilling the first part of this verse; and *He will come again to receive Christians unto Himself,* fulfilling the latter part of this verse.

His departure, as Moses' departure into the Mount, was fulfilled in a literal manner; and His return, as Moses' return back to the camp, will, likewise, be fulfilled in a literal manner.

Moses, prior to his departure, promised that he would return, and *he did* (Ex. 24:15; 32:15ff); Christ, prior to His departure, promised that He would return, and *He will* (John 14:3; I Thess. 4:16, 17).

The mockers, however, in spite of all the great prophecies of Scripture, ridicule and belittle the doctrine of Christ's return.

Their reasoning is built around a naturalistic, uniformitarian premise that nothing has changed since the creation of the heavens and the earth, and nothing is going to change. Time, as we know it, will continue on and on, uninterrupted.

God is not going to intervene in affairs as they relate to the earth or to man. He has not so done in the past, nor will He so do in the future.

This is their reasoning, but, of course, this is *NOT* at all in accord with that which the Word of God has to say about the matter.

2) Willingly Ignorant

The interesting point which Scripture reveals concerning these mockers and their message is the fact that they are *willingly ignorant* concerning their false claims of uniformitarian ideology.

The word "ignorant" in the Greek text is *lanthano,* which means to "escape notice," or "be hidden." They have *willingly allowed that which Scripture has to say about the matter to escape their notice, be hidden from them.*

They are in a position to understand God's Word. They possess a saved human spirit into which the Word of God can be received, and they possess the indwelling Holy Spirit to lead them into "all truth."

But they have resorted to the soulical man, rejecting the leadership of the Holy Spirit in their lives (Jude 19). Through this means, *they have willingly allowed a veil to be placed over their eyes* (*cf.* II Cor. 4:3-5).

That which the mockers have willingly allowed to be hidden from

them is something which would expose the entire pseudo uniformitarian claim upon which their pseudo message rests.

They seek to substantiate their question concerning Christ's return by resorting to that which is itself false (a naturalistic, uniformitarian premise). And the Holy Spirit, through Peter, showing the utter futility of their ways, exposes their pseudo message *by destroying the false premise upon which it is built.*

The Holy Spirit draws from Biblical history to show that all things *have NOT continued* "as they were from the beginning of creation." *God has intervened in affairs as they relate to this earth in the past* (vv. 5, 6).

Then, the Holy Spirit advances this same thought into the future to show that all things *will NOT continue* indefinitely as they presently exist. *God will intervene once again in affairs as they relate to this earth* (v. 7).

3) The World That Then Was

II Peter 3:6 has to do with a destruction of the world following its creation, referred to in verse four.

There is some controversy in theological circles concerning whether this pertains to the pre-Adamic destruction in Gen. 1:2a or to the post-Adamic destruction produced by the Flood during Noah's day (Gen. 6-8).

Either of these destructions would serve to expose the mockers' false uniformitarian ideology in verse four. However, even though this is true, it *MUST* be kept in mind that Scripture at this point is dealing with *ONLY one of these two destructions*; and it is necessary that the correct destruction be ascertained in order to properly understand this section of the Word of God.

As will be shown, "the world that then was," refers to *the pre-Adamic world, NOT to the post-Adamic world of Noah's day*. Peter dealt with the Noachian Flood in chapter two (v. 5), but in chapter three he dealt with something entirely different.

First of all, the text has to do with a destruction of the earth following its creation, *NOT* a destruction of the earth following its restoration. This destruction came upon a creation which, "by the word of God," was "of old" (v. 5). These words are a direct allusion to the creation of the heavens and the earth in verse four, referring back to Gen. 1:1.

The world of Gen. 1:1 (a *cosmos,* an orderly arrangement) is the world which was destroyed (became a *chaos*) in II Peter 3:6. Genesis

1:2a, revealing this destruction, forms the Old Testament commentary for II Peter 3:6, not the Flood during Noah's day.

Second, the parallel drawn between past and future destructions in II Peter 3:5-7 will show that *ONLY the destruction of Gen. 1:2a* can possibly be under consideration in verse six.

The pre-Adamic destruction was quite different than the post-Adamic destruction during Noah's day. The destruction of Gen. 1:2a *involved NOT ONLY the earth BUT the heavens as well.* The light of the sun, moon, and stars was blotted out (*cf.* Gen. 1:2a, 3, 14-19). *NOTHING comparable to this occurred during the Noachian Flood.*

II Peter 3:7, paralleling the past destruction, reveals a future destruction of the earth which will also include the heavens. Thus, in the sense of *parallel counterparts* — comparing past and future destructions, revealing a textual parallel — *ONLY the destruction of Gen. 1:2a can be considered as the past destruction to which the text refers.*

Further, the emphasis, and really the only matter under consideration in the pre-Adamic destruction, was upon *the material creation, as in the future destruction.* However, the emphasis or main thrust of the matter under consideration in the destruction during Noah's day was upon *a people inhabiting this material creation — upon the people of the earth.*

The pre-Adamic destruction was of such a nature that God had to restore the heavens and the earth. This He did over the six-day period of Gen. 1:2b-25. God brought into existence order out of disorder. He brought into existence a *cosmos* out of a *chaos.*

The destruction during Noah's day, however, was quite different. The heavens were untouched, and the earth itself was not destroyed in the same sense as the destruction in Gen. 1:2a. No restoration of the earth followed the Flood during Noah's day, as in the pre-Adamic destruction, simply because no restoration per se was necessary.

4) The Heavens and the Earth, Which Are Now

The expression, "the heavens and the earth, which are now," refers to the heavens and the earth existing since the restoration of Gen. 1:2b-25. Both the heavens and the earth were destroyed in the previous destruction, and both will be destroyed in the future destruction. This future destruction will occur at the end of the coming Day of the Lord, at the end of the Messianic Era.

At the close of the millennial reign of Christ the present heavens and earth will, through a destructive process, pass out of existence; and a new heavens and earth will, through a creative process, be brought into existence (II Peter 3:7, 10-13; *cf.* Isa. 65:17).

Following "the Day of the Lord," following the time of the destruction of the present heavens and earth and the creation of a new heavens and earth, "the day of God" will be ushered in (II Peter 3:12).

Immediately prior to this time, at the conclusion of the Day of the Lord, the Son *will hand over* "the kingdom to God, even the Father." All rule, authority, and power will have been "put down," *abolished;* "the last enemy," *death,* will have been "destroyed"; all things will have been placed under the Son's "feet," "subdued unto him."

Then the kingdom, in this state, will be *handed over to God the Father* that "God may be all in all [*lit.*, 'God may be all things in all of these things']" (I Cor. 15:24-28). At this time, at the end of the Day of the Lord and the beginning of the Day of God, the first of the endless ages, comprising eternity, will commence.

Mockers in the last days have willingly allowed both Biblical history and Biblical prophecy to escape their notice. The leaven in the meal has accomplished its deteriorating work, and this leaven will be allowed to continue working — the mockers will be allowed to continue their pseudo message — *UNTIL* Christ Himself returns and puts a stop to the entire matter.

That is, the mockers will be allowed to continue their pseudo message *UNTIL* the time when the very event which they have been speaking against occurs. They will then be brought into judgment, as unfaithful servants, to render an account.

God has intervened in affairs as they relate to this earth and/or man in the past, and God will intervene yet future.

Make NO mistake about these matters, for they have been set forth in an unchangeable manner in Biblical history and Biblical prophecy.

This One Thing

> "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (II Peter 3:8).

Peter's summation of the matter concerning "the world that then was" and "the heavens and the earth which are now" involves a period of time referred to by the expressions "day" and "one thousand years"; *and Peter does NOT want Christians to be ignorant concerning this time.*

The word "ignorant" is a translation of the Greek word *lanthano,* the same as in verse five; and the manner in which the prohibition appears in the Greek text of verse eight indicates that those addressed were, as the mockers in verse five, allowing something *to escape their notice.*

In a corrected text, Peter states:

> "But, beloved, *stop allowing this one thing to escape your notice,* that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

1) One Day, One Thousand Years

The time in verse eight is to be ascertained by reference to the preceding verses. These preceding verses set forth Biblical history as it relates to Biblical prophecy. This section covers the complete scope of revealed events pertaining to the heavens and the earth — from the point of their creation, through the time of their first destruction, to the time of their second and final destruction.

Time, however, does not come into view until the restoration of the ruined creation following its first destruction.

Behind this is *a dateless past, wherein time, insofar as the revealed scope of time in Scripture is concerned, is NOT reckoned.* Thus, *time* in verse eight, within its context, *MUST* be reckoned to begin at the point of the restoration of the heavens and the earth ("the heavens and the earth, which are now") in verse seven.

II Peter 3:5-8 can be outlined under four headings: *Creation, Ruin, Restoration,* and *Rest.*

a) Creation (v. 5b): Parallel II Peter 3:5b with Gen. 1:1.

> "…by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water ['the earth having been placed together out of water and through [*i.e.*, between] water']."
>
> "In the beginning God created the heaven ['heavens'] and the earth."

b) Ruin (v. 6): Parallel II Peter 3:6 with Gen. 1:2a.

"Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished."

"And the earth was ['became'] without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep ['became upon the face of the raging waters']."

c) Restoration (v. 7): Parallel II Peter 3:7 with Gen. 1:2b-25.

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, *by the same word* …" [*ref.* v. 5].

"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters [beginning the restoration process for 'the heavens and the earth, which are now']…"

d) Rest (v. 8): Parallel II Peter 3:8 with the septenary arrangement of time set forth in Gen. 1:2b-2:3.

(God worked six days and rested the seventh in the past restoration; and, following man's sin, bringing both himself and the material creation under "the bondage of corruption," God began working to bring about another restoration — that of the creature and the creation.

The latter restoration and rest is patterned after the former. God will, once again, work six days and rest the seventh.

In the latter restoration and rest, each day is one thousand years in length. This is the teaching set forth in II Peter 3:8.

Note that within the septenary arrangement of time in II Peter 3:8 attention *can ONLY* be directed to the restoration of the heavens and the earth destroyed in Gen. 1:2a. Thus, the destructions of Gen. 1:2a and II Peter 3:6 *MUST* be looked upon as synonymous, for the septenary arrangement of time in verse eight is drawn from its context [vv. 5-7].

Note also that the epistle beginning in chapter one [vv. 15-18; *cf.* Matt. 16:28-17:5], is seen to be built around the same septenary structure which pervades all Scripture.

Refer to the author's book, *The Study of Scripture*, Chapters II-IV for a detailed discussion of the septenary structure of Scripture.)

2) The Sabbath

According to Ex. 31:13-17, the Sabbath was given to Israel to keep

the thought ever before them that the present six- and seven-day (six- and seven-thousand-year) pattern of restoration and rest is based on the original pattern of restoration and rest in Genesis chapters one and two. Just as God rested on the seventh day following six days of restorative work in the Genesis account, He is going to rest for one day following the present six days of restorative work.

The Sabbath was "a sign" established between God and the children of Israel forever. It was a sign which drew from the day of rest in Gen. 2:2, 3 and pointed forward to that coming day of rest yet future.

Every time the Israelites kept the Sabbath they were *acknowledging* the God-ordained pattern of one day of rest following six days of work. They were acknowledging that the six and seven days of Genesis chapters one and two form a pattern of God's present restorative work and future rest.

Their failure to keep the Sabbath, on the other hand, was looked upon as *a rejection of this truth.* Such failure always ultimately resulted in God's judgment, with dire consequences befalling both individuals and the nation as a whole (*cf.* Num. 15:32-36; II Chron. 36:18-21).

The present day counterpart to the Israelites failure to keep the Sabbath, and thereby rejecting that which God had to say concerning a day of rest following six days of work, is Christians who reject that which Scripture has to say concerning the coming Sabbath of rest.

These individuals in Christendom today are known as "amillennialists," a word designating their belief that there will be *no Millennium or Sabbath rest following the present six days of work.*

And it should come as no surprise that amillennial teaching has become far more prevalent in Christendom than millennial teaching. Why? Simply because of the corrupting process of the leaven over a period of nineteen hundred years.

Then there is the matter of another aspect of the working of the leaven in this overall realm. Many Christians today would not overtly espouse amillennial teachings, though they either know nothing about or never deal with the coming Sabbath rest, the coming Millennium.

Again, this is how COMPLETE the leaven has done its damaging work.

God judged the Israelites in the Old Testament for their failure to recognize *the sign of the Sabbath*, and God will judge Christians for exhibiting *this same attitude today toward that which Scripture teaches.*

A Sabbath rest is coming. Hebrews 4:9 states:

> "There remaineth therefore a rest ['Sabbath keeping,' 'Sabbath rest'] for the people of God."

The word translated "rest" is *sabbatismos* in the Greek text. This is a form of the word for "Sabbath," referring to "a Sabbath keeping," which is *a seventh-day rest.*

The allusion is by no means to a present rest into which Christians enter, for such has *NOTHING* to do with the seventh day. The *sabbatismos can ONLY be millennial in its scope of fulfillment.* This is in keeping with the context (vv. 5-11), the septenary arrangement of the pattern established at the very beginning of Scripture (Gen. 1:1-2:3), the reason why the Sabbath was given to Israel in the Old Testament (Ex. 31:12-17), and the meaning of the word *sabbatismos* itself.

God answers the mockers in II Peter 3:3, 4 by calling attention to a panorama of events which encompasses the entire scope of God's Revelation to man, written in a septenary structure, in complete keeping with the septenary arrangement of time established in the opening thirty-four verses of the Book of Genesis.

ALL the Scriptures are about Christ (Luke 24:27), and Christ is simply the Old Testament Scriptures in the form of flesh — *the Word which became flesh in the person of God's Son* (John 1:1, 2, 14). And His first coming (extensively dealt with in the O.T.) is incomplete without His second coming (extensively dealt with in both the O.T. and N.T.).

"Where *is* the promise of his coming?" It's in Genesis… Psalms… Malachi… Matthew… Acts… Revelation. The enlightened Christian might well ask, "Where *isn't* the promise of His coming?"

> (Regarding the septenary structure of II Peter, note that both the O.T. and the N.T. begin by revealing a septenary structure and continue by showing the subject matter in each Testament, which is the same throughout both Testaments, set forth in different ways.
>
> The N.T. is simply a continuation of that seen in the Old, structured in the same septenary manner as the Old. And this could only be the case, for the same Spirit moved different men to pen that seen in each.
>
> Refer to the author's article, "Genesis and John," which will provide a basic understanding of the preceding.)

11

"But Ye, Beloved..."

Building, Keeping, Looking for…

"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

And of some have compassion, making a difference:

And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen" (Jude 20-25).

As foretold in Jude 17-19 and II Peter 3:3ff, "mockers" will appear "in the last time" with *a pseudo message concerning Christ's return.*

They will follow a uniformitarian philosophy that *NOTHING* has changed in the past, and *NOTHING* is going to change in the future. God *has NOT* intervened in affairs as they relate to the earth or man in the past, and He *is NOT* going to intervene in the future.

And through this form of reasoning, *originating from man's wisdom during Man's Day,* mockers appearing in Christendom during the latter days will *scoff at, make light of, belittle, the great doctrines surrounding Christ's return.*

The Old Testament counterpart to that which Scripture has foretold will occur in Christendom during the latter days is *the experiences of the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai during the time Moses was in the Mount.* And a word study of "mockers" from Jude 18 will lead directly to this particular time in the history of Israel, referred to in I Cor. 10:7 (*ref.* Chapter X in this book).

And Christians have been instructed in I Cor. 10:6, 11 that "all these things" occurred "as ensamples ['as types']," *within the sphere of God's sovereign direction and control of ALL things in order that He might have these experiences to draw upon in teaching Christians the deep things pertaining to His plans and purposes relating to man and the earth.*

Moses in the type, before departing the camp of Israel and ascending the Mount, *left SPECIFIC instructions for his people:*

> "*Tarry ye here* for us [Joshua accompanied Moses], *until we come again* unto you…"

The people of Israel were to tarry in the wilderness of Sinai, awaiting Moses' (and Joshua's) return.

But after a lengthy period of time, seeing that "Moses delayed to come down out of the mount," the people grew weary and sought new leadership. They went to Aaron (who, along with Hur, had been left in charge [Ex. 24:14]) and said:

> "Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him" (Ex. 32:1b).

Aaron, acceding to their request, collected gold from the people, melted the gold, and formed "a molten calf." The people then offered sacrifices unto the calf, worshipped the calf, and engaged in times of festivities surrounding the sacrifices and worship. In this manner the people of Israel, during the wilderness journey, became involved in *pagan idolatry* (Ex. 32:2ff; *cf.* Num. 25:1ff; I Cor. 10:8).

Because of this lapse into idolatry, God's thoughts turned toward the destruction of the entire nation.

God revealed both the idolatry and His intentions to Moses while he was still in the Mount, and Moses then interceded and fasted for "forty days and forty nights" on behalf of the nation. As a result, God stayed His hand (*cf.* Ex. 32:10-14; Deut. 9:13, 14, 18-20, 25-29).

But upon Moses' return from the Mount, even though the nation itself had been spared, God's judgment still fell upon His people. The molten calf was burned and ground to powder. The powder was then cast "into the brook that descended out of the mount," and the

children of Israel were made to drink of the water.

Following this, three thousand Israelites were slain by the sword; and a plague was sent throughout the camp (*cf.* Ex. 32:15ff; Deut. 9:21).

Had the Israelites believed Moses and followed his instructions — tarrying in the wilderness of Sinai, awaiting his return — they would NOT have fallen into idolatry, incurring God's wrath.

Thus, carrying this over into the antitype, one can immediately see *the importance of Christians understanding and following EXACT Biblical guidelines concerning activity during Christ's absence while awaiting His return.*

Christ, as Moses, is away from the camp today. He is in heaven, interceding on our behalf; and He has been there for an extensive period of time.

> ("Forty" is a number showing *completeness,* and the number is used extensively throughout Scripture in this manner [*e.g.*, Gen. 7:17; Num. 13:25; Luke 4:12; Acts 1:3; 7:23, 30].
>
> Moses' intercession for "forty days and forty nights" on behalf of the Israelites because of their sins foreshadowed Christ's present intercession as High Priest on behalf of sinning Christians. And, as Moses, Christ is interceding in this manner for *a complete period of time — for the entire dispensation.*)

Before His departure into heaven, Christ, as Moses before his departure into the Mount, *left SPECIFIC instructions for His people:*

> "And he called his ten servants ['ten,' the number of *ordinal completion, signifying all His servants*], and delivered them ten pounds [*signifying all His business*], and said unto them, *Occupy till I come*" (Luke 19:13).

ALL Christians, by direct command from their Lord, are to be engaged in His business (NOT their business, BUT His business, left in their charge), AWAITING His return. And also by direct command from their Lord, they are to remain engaged in His business (again, NOT their business, BUT His business, left in their charge), UNTIL He returns.

However, Christians, as the Israelites, have taken their eyes off this command. They have grown weary, ceased to be engaged in the Lord's business, and ceased to await His return. And they, as the Israelites, have become involved in other things, namely *idolatry.*

The "molten calf," formed by Aaron during Moses' stay in the Mount, was an idol apparently derived from the Israelites' former association with Egypt.

According to Joshua 24:14, the Israelites had previously worshipped the false gods of Egypt; and the ox was the principle Egyptian god ("Apis") with which the Israelites had been familiar.

In the antitype, idolatry in which Christians find themselves involved during the time Christ is in heaven, has, in like manner, been derived from their former association with the world.

Anything coming between a Christian and God, in actuality, constitutes an idol (*e.g.,* note that "covetousness" is called *idolatry* in Eph. 5:5); and the Church today is filled with Christians following *the ways and practices of the world from which they have been delivered.*

One need only look at the state of Christendom today to see that idolatry of this nature is rampant.

Nakedness, Shame

Scripture reveals three very significant points concerning Israel's degenerate condition at the time Moses returned (Ex. 32:25):

1) The people were *naked.*
2) The people were *ashamed.*
3) Aaron, the one (with Hur) left in charge, was held *responsible.*

This refers, in the antitype, to a parallel degeneracy which will exist in Christendom at the time Christ returns:

1) The people will be *naked.*
2) The people will be *ashamed.*
3) The leaders (shepherds of the flock) will be held *responsible.*

(The Hebrew word translated "naked" [KJV] in Ex. 32:25 has to do with "loosening," from the idea of *loosening* or *casting off* one's garments, *shaving* the head, etc. [*cf.* Lev. 10:6; 13:45; 21:10; Num. 5:18; II Chron. 28:19].

Most translators and interpreters have understood the thought of "loosening" in this verse to be a reference to the *removal of all restraints* upon individuals, *i.e.,* to "lawlessness," to "running wild," etc. [*ref.* NASB, NIV].

> However, understanding the word in this latter sense is still only another apt illustration of Christians in the latter days, with *nakedness* at the time of Christ's return still being seen as the end result.)

Nakedness and *shame* are subjects which have their roots in the second and third chapters of Genesis, in Scriptures surrounding the creation and fall of man. Adam and Eve, in an unfallen state, following their creation, *were both "naked" and "were not ashamed"* (Gen. 2:25).

However, in a fallen state, following the entrance of sin, they "knew that they *were naked" and were "afraid"* (Gen. 3:10).

And they had attempted to hide their nakedness by constructing fig-leaf aprons, and they had "hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden" (vv. 6-9).

God, rejecting their fig-leaf aprons as completely unsuitable for covering their nakedness, then provided His Own covering, made from animal skins (v. 21):

> *He performed the work to bring about the covering.*
>
> *A vicarious sacrifice was involved, wherein death and shed blood would have occurred.*

This is the method which God used at the very beginning to cover fallen man's nakedness, *i.e.*, to effect fallen man's redemption; and this method, originally set forth by God in Genesis, establishes a pattern *which can NEVER change throughout Scripture.*

The promised Redeemer in Gen. 3:15, at some following point in time, *MUST effect man's redemption after the established pattern in Gen. 3:21.*

That is:

> *First, the Redeemer MUST be God, for ONLY God can perform the work of redemption.*
>
> *Second, the Redeemer MUST provide a vicarious sacrifice, wherein death and shed blood would occur.*

Christians today, because of Christ's vicarious sacrifice, in complete fulfillment of all the types and promises, are clothed in the righteousness of Christ — the antitype of Adam and Eve clothed with the provided animal skins in Gen. 3:21. Christians, in this respect, now possess a right relationship with God, for this relationship is based entirely on

the righteousness of Christ and His finished work.

NOTHING which man does — typified by the fig-leaf aprons — can have anything to do with either establishing or adding to this right relationship.

Man's reception of imputed righteousness is ENTIRELY of God. Man can bring NOTHING whatsoever into a work — either before or after his salvation — which God Himself, in the person of His Son, has finished.

Consequently, Christians *MUST* remain clothed in the righteousness of Christ forever, else the completeness, sufficiency, etc. of the very redemptive work of God Himself would be brought into question.

Hence, in this respect, Christians can NEVER be found naked.

Thus far the subject under discussion has been "nakedness" relative to *the righteousness of Christ and eternal salvation.*

However, there is another type "nakedness" in Scripture. The Israelites *HAD* appropriated the blood of the paschal lambs in Egypt. *YET*, they were later found "naked" in the wilderness (or in a "lawless" state, which would, of necessity, be associated with *nakedness* through the exact meaning of the Hebrew word in relation to the antitype).

Individuals in the Laodicean Church in Rev. 3:14ff — saved individuals, those clothed in the righteousness of Christ, those who [in the preceding respect] could *NEVER* be looked upon as naked — *WERE SAID*, among other things, to be "naked" (v. 17).

In Rom. 8:35, "nakedness" is mentioned alongside six other things — "tribulation," "distress," "persecution," "famine," "peril," and "sword" — *as something POSSIBLE for Christians to experience.*

The main thrust of this verse though has to do with *something which Christians CANNOT experience — separation* "from the love of Christ."

And since the things listed in this verse *CANNOT* separate one from the love of Christ, it becomes evident immediately that "nakedness," as used here, can have *NOTHING* to do with Christians being clothed in the righteousness of Christ. Rather, the possibility of Christians appearing *naked,* as in Rom. 8:35, as well as in Rev. 3:17, refers to something else entirely (*cf.* Rev. 16:15).

Two Justifications

Understanding the matter surrounding more than one type nakedness is contingent on understanding that there is more than one type

justification, as dealt with in James chapter two (vv. 14-26).

There is *a justification by faith,* and there is also *a justification by works.* Accordingly, there is a covering for one's nakedness associated with each.

Justification by faith has to do with the salvation which we presently possess, *the salvation of the spirit.*

And *justification by works* has to do with the salvation to be revealed at the time of our Lord's return, *the salvation of the soul.*

The covering for nakedness which we presently possess, associated with eternal salvation, is *the righteousness of Christ*

And *the covering for nakedness,* associated with the hope set before Christians, is *the righteous acts of the saints* — the wedding garment.

"Justification" is *NEVER by faith and works* (*i.e.,* a single justification where faith and works are both involved). It is always by one or the other, *NEVER* a combination of the two (though, in the salvation of the soul, works emanate out of faith); and justification *by faith MUST always precede any mention of justification by works.*

Justification by works emanates out of *a person's faithfulness following his justification by faith,* and works of this nature bring faith (a Christian's faithfulness) to its proper goal (James 2:22; I Peter 1:9).

Thus, a person *MUST* first be in a position to exercise faith before works can enter. That is to say, he *MUST first be justified by faith before he can be justified by works.*

The wedding garment ("fine linen") in Rev. 19:8 is specifically said to be made up of "the righteous acts [works] of the saints" (ASV).

The word translated "righteous acts" ("righteousness," KJV) is plural in the Greek text *(dikaiomata)* and *CANNOT* refer to the imputed righteousness of Christ. *Dikaiomata* in this verse has to do with "righteous acts" resulting in *justification.*

In this respect, these are "justifying acts" *of the saints* (the same word, appearing in the singular, is translated "justification" and "righteousness" [referring to *justification by faith,* made possible through Christ's *righteous, justifying act*] in Rom. 5:16, 18; and the cognate verb [from *dikaioo*] is translated "justified" in James 2:24 [referring to both *justification by faith* and *justification by works — a justification by faith (Christians exercising faithfulness) which is inseparably connected with a justification by works*]).

Justification by faith, inseparably connected with *justification by works*, in James 2:24 has to do with the saved alone, with Christians, with those *who have already been justified by faith* (completely apart from works) as seen in Rom. 5:16-18. James 2:24 has to do with *works emanating out of faith*, with justification seen in connection with both in this respect (*cf.* James 2:14-23). And *works emanating out of faith, resulting in justification by works, provide the Christian with a wedding garment.*

(For additional information on *faith and works* in the Book of James, refer to the author's book, *Salvation of the Soul*, Ch. V, "Faith Made Mature."

Also, for additional information on "nakedness" both before and after the fall in Gen. 2, 3, refer to Ch. I, pp. 4-6, in the same book.)

Apart from the wedding garment, a Christian will be found *naked* at the time of Christ's return.

Having been justified by faith and clothed in the righteousness of Christ, he can *NEVER* be separated from the love of Christ. He can *NEVER* be found *naked* relative to his justification by faith. *BUT*, failing to be justified by works *following* his justification by faith — resulting in no wedding garment (*nakedness relative to justification by works*) — dire consequences will follow at the time of Christ's return (note: "judgment" on the basis of *works* [I Cor. 3:12-15; *cf.* Matt. 16:24-27; Luke 19:15-26]).

Appearing in the presence of Christ without a wedding garment is portrayed in Matt. 22:11-14 by the man appearing at the marriage festivities without a wedding garment (the man from among the "guests" [Gk., *anakeimenon,* "reclining ones" — *i.e.*, not 'guests,' but *those reclining at the table*]). *This man would NOT have been at these festivities in the first place had he NOT previously been justified by faith.*

This section of Scripture is prophetic in its scope of fulfillment. The festivities portrayed here have to do with festivities surrounding the marriage of the Lamb; and these festivities will occur *in heaven at the end of the present dispensation.*

The man *WITHOUT* a wedding garment was questioned concerning both *his presence at the marriage festivities* and *the manner in which he appeared.* The subtle distinction between two different negatives in the Greek text of verses eleven and twelve (*ou* and *me*) show that *the man knew he was supposed to have a wedding garment, but he knowingly, defiantly, appeared WITHOUT the necessary attire.*

Because the man was *NOT* properly clothed, he was denied admittance to the festivities, bound, and cast into the darkness outside.

That is, *he was found naked;* and, as a result, *he was denied admittance to the festivities, bound, and cast into a place comparable to a darkened courtyard outside a brilliantly lighted banqueting hall.*

This man sets forth the fate awaiting, *NOT* unsaved individuals, *BUT* certain saved individuals. The wedding garment (righteous acts of the saints) is in view, *NOT* the imputed righteousness of Christ.

This man typifies those Christians who, in that coming day following their removal from the earth, seek admittance to the festivities surrounding the marriage of God's Son *WITHOUT* being clothed in the proper attire — the wedding garment (*cf.* Matt. 25:10-13).

Apostasy in the camp of Israel during Moses' day could have been prevented had the Israelites followed Moses' instructions: *"Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you."*

Apostasy in Christendom today could, likewise, have been prevented had Christians followed Christ's instructions: *"Occupy till I come."*

During Moses' day the blame for the Israelites' departure from Moses' instructions was laid directly at the feet of *the leadership in the camp during the time Moses was in the mount* (Deut. 9:20; Jer. 23:1, 2).

And the blame for Christians presently refusing to follow Christ's instructions must, in like manner, be laid directly at the feet of *the leadership in Christendom during the time Christ is in heaven* (Matt. 24:45-51; I Peter 5:1-4).

The shepherds in Christendom, the ones who are supposed to keep the great truths surrounding Christ's return ever before the people, have become engaged in other activities; and they have led their flocks into these other activities.

And the end result, foretold thirty-five hundred years ago during the days of Moses, has been *apostasy.* The mockers are present, and the Laodicean Church of the end-time is in existence.

It is all EXACTLY as foretold.

In Christendom, we're presently seeing on every hand the antitype of activities in the camp of Israel immediately before Moses descended the Mount, and it is only a matter of time before we witness the antitype of activities in the camp of Israel at and following the time Moses descended the Mount.

Building Oneself Up, Praying…

Immediately preceding Jude's discourse on apostasy (vv. 4-19), he exhorted Christians to "earnestly contend for ['earnestly strive with respect to'] the faith." Then, immediately following Jude's discourse on apostasy, he again refers to the proper place which "faith" is *to continuously occupy in a Christian's life:*

> "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on [by means of] your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit" (Jude 20).

Rather than an exhortation though, as in verse three, verse twenty simply refers to *Christians being built up in the faith.*

The thought from the Greek text has to do with building upon an existing foundation.

Verse twenty is actually a continuation of verse three, with the intervening section on apostasy separating the verses.

Jude exhorted Christians concerning "the faith" prior to his discourse on apostasy; and now, having completed this discourse, he picks up with the Christians' relationship to faith *EXACTLY* where his discourse leaves off.

How does a person "earnestly contend for ['earnestly strive with respect to'] the faith"? Jude's response concerning the manner in which this exhortation is to be carried out is given in the continuation of the subject in verse twenty.

A person *earnestly strives with respect to* "the faith" through *building himself up by means of his faith,* which is in perfect agreement with the parallel section to Jude 3 in II Peter 1:5-8.

In this parallel section, Christians are exhorted to "add to ['abundantly supply in'] your faith…" And II Peter 1:5-8 and Jude 3, 20 refer to the same thing (*ref.* Chapter II in this book).

Christians are presently engaged in a battle. This battle is *spiritual.* It is *NOT* against "flesh and blood," *BUT* "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places ['against the spirit forces of wickedness in heavenly places']."

In this battle, Christians are to properly equip themselves with an armor, and among the pieces of this armor is "the shield of faith."

Christians holding forth this shield in the warfare against the spirit forces of wickedness will be able "to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked ['wicked one']" (Eph. 6:11-17).

According to Rom. 10:17, "faith cometh by ['out of'] hearing, and hearing by ['through'] the word of God." Individuals equip themselves with the shield of faith by being *built up in* "the faith."

It is in THIS manner, and in THIS manner ALONE, that Christians are able to protect themselves from the wiles of Satan — his "fiery darts" in the form of *apostasy,* as in Jude, etc.

Immediately following the statement concerning individuals being *built up* by means of their "most holy faith," Jude refers to "praying in the Holy Spirit." The Divine commentary on this verse is Rom. 8:26, 27:

> "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself ['Himself'] maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.
>
> And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

Praying in the Holy Spirit is prayer motivated by the Holy Spirit which emanates from the man of spirit. It is praying by means of and dependence upon the indwelling Holy Spirit. Prayer of this nature plays an integral part in Christians being built up in the faith.

The Word of God is "spiritually discerned," and Christians receiving this Word into their saved human spirits *MUST* rely upon the indwelling Holy Spirit to lead them "into all truth" (I Cor. 2:14; John 16:13). Christians *MUST* ever combine their study with prayer after this fashion.

1) Concluding Exhortation

Jude, in his discourse on faith and apostasy, has been building toward a climactic exhortation. He previously exhorted Christians to *earnestly strive with respect to* "the faith" (v. 3); he warned Christians concerning *standing away from* "the faith" (vv. 4-19); and he then came back to the positive side of *the Christians' relationship to faith* (v. 20), continuing from verse three.

All things in the first twenty verses point to that which Jude states in verse twenty-one:

> "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for ['awaiting'] the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life ['life for the age']" (Jude 21).

The "love of God" in which Christians are to keep themselves is the same love previously mentioned in verse two.

The word "love" in both instances is *agape* in the Greek text, the same as in II Peter 1:7. *Agape* refers to "Divine love" *which God is in His character and nature.* "God is love," *i.e., God is Agape* (I John 4:8).

This is the highest type love attainable. It is the love produced in the life of faithful believers by the indwelling Holy Spirit, and Christians are to keep themselves within the sphere of this love.

Agape appears at the conclusion of the list of things to be "abundantly supplied in" a Christian's faith in II Peter 1:5-8. And it is placed last, as also in Jude 20, 21, because it is the height of Christian experience, and *NOTHING can be added therein.*

Christians — being brought unto *maturity* through being built up in the faith (v. 20; *cf.* "knowledge," Gk., *epignosis* [II Peter 1:8]), keeping themselves in *the love of God* (v. 21a) — are *to await* "the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life ['unto life for the age']" (v. 21b). This, of course, is the goal upon which all things in the present pilgrim walk focus.

The goal of faith is the salvation of the soul (life), which has to do with life in the coming age. The entire concept concerning *faith* in relation to *one's calling* and *life in the coming age* set forth by Jude is identical to that set forth by Paul in I Tim. 6:12:

> "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life [*lit.,* 'Strive in the good contest of the faith; lay hold on life for the age'], whereunto thou art also called…"

Jude directs his entire epistle toward *exhorting and warning Christians*, with one thing in view. Jude looked out toward that day when Christians would be called to an accounting and, at that time, either realize or be denied the goal of their calling.

Jude's concluding exhortation centers around Christians *awaiting Christ's return in a prepared, ready manner.* The failure of innumerable Christians to do so has resulted in the present apostasy throughout Christendom — *AS Israel in the wilderness of Sinai, SO Christians in the world today.*

Unto them that "look for him" will He "appear the second time

without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28). No such promise is given to *those who do not await His return.*

2) Concluding Thoughts

> "And of some have compassion, making a difference [*lit.*, 'And you show mercy to the ones who are wavering (or 'doubting,' 'being contentious')']:
>
> And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 22, 23).

As Christians are to await "the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ," they are, themselves, to show mercy, have compassion on other Christians.

The words, "making a difference" (KJV) in verse twenty-two are the translation of the Greek word *diakrino,* which is often used in other portions of the New Testament in the sense of "wavering," "doubting," or "being contentious" (*cf.* Matt. 21:21; Acts 10:20; 11:2, 12; Rom. 14:23; James 1:6; Jude 9).

This would appear to be the way it should be understood in Jude 22. Those Christians who are wavering, doubting, or being contentious concerning the great truths set forth in verses twenty and twenty-one are to receive mercy at the hands of Christians who understand these truths, *not* a contentious, doubting, or wavering spirit in return. Such responses as the latter will only serve to further alienate them. *Mercy* is the quality which must be exhibited to win them.

The salvation in verse twenty-three has *NOTHING* to do with eternal life. That's *NOT* the issue being dealt with at all. The text is dealing with *Christians awaiting* "the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ" *unto life for the age* (vv. 22, 23).

The same basic thought is set forth in James 5:19, 20:

> "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him [turns him back to the truth];
>
> Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

Turning Christians either to the truth or back to the truth, as in James 5:19, 20 and Jude 22, 23, has to do with *the salvation of the soulALONE* The entire matter of the unique relationship which Christians have with

one another occurs on the basis of the fact that *BOTH are new creations* "in Christ"; but, within this relationship, Christians *MUST* look *from the present forward to the land set before them, NOT from the present back to the land which they left* (typified by Egypt). Christians *MUST keep their eyes fixed on the goal of their calling, the goal of faith, the salvation of their souls.*

The thought of pulling Christians "out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (v. 23) is similar to Joshua the high priest in Zech. 3:1-7 being clothed in filthy garments and plucked as a brand "out of the fire." The thought in Jude though would have to be brought over into the context of Christians being clothed in the wedding garment rather than unsaved individuals, as portrayed by Joshua, being clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

The thought in Jude extends into the area with which Joshua found himself confronted *following* his being plucked as a brand from the fire and being clothed with a change of raiment.

He was then told:

> "*If* thou wilt walk in my ways, and *if* thou wilt keep my charge, *then* thou shalt also judge my house" (v. 7).

Just as there are two different justifications and two different garments in connection with these justifications, there are also dual truths on being removed as a brand from the fire.

Zechariah 3:2-4 sets forth one, and Jude 23 sets forth the other.

How are Christians able to so live as Jude has previously exhorted? How are Christians able to govern their lives in such a manner that an *abundant entrance* "into the everlasting ['age-lasting'] kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" will be their portion? (II Peter 1:11).

They are able to so live and govern their lives in this manner *ONLY* because the One Who loved them and gave Himself for them continues to love them and is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:20).

Then, the concluding words of Jude sum up his entire epistle:

> "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.
>
> To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen" (Jude 24, 25).

Appendix I

"If They Shall Fall Away"

An Apostasy with Far-Reaching Consequences

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit,

And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Heb. 6:4-6).

Hebrews 6:4-6 is looked upon by numerous Christians as possibly the most difficult and/or controversial passage in all Scripture.

And the reason why the passage is looked upon after this fashion is because of an erroneous interpretative approach. The passage is invariably approached from the standpoint of teachings pertaining to the Christians' presently possessed eternal salvation — salvation "by grace through faith."

This passage though *DOESN'T deal with the Christians' presently possessed eternal salvation*. And, *NOT* dealing with this subject, it is understandable why those who seek to interpret the passage from the standpoint of salvation by grace through faith find themselves in unfamiliar and unexplainable surroundings.

And *NOT only* is this the case, *BUT* they often, as well, find themselves being forced into erroneous views concerning salvation.

Then, beyond the preceding, the correct subject matter is *NOT* even being dealt with. Rather, through this erroneous interpretative approach, the correct subject matter is, instead, completely obscured.

And such can only foster the present work of the enemy as it is outlined in II Cor. 4:4 — *blinding the minds of Christians* relative to "the gospel of the glory of Christ" (ASV), for Heb. 6:4-6 *deals with THIS facet of the gospel, NOT the gospel of grace through faith.*

Contextually, Heb. 6:4-6 *MUST* be looked upon as dealing with *four basic issues* surrounding Christians, from the standpoint of possibility (*"If they shall fall away…"*):

> *First,* the Christians referred to in this passage *MUST* have come into a mature knowledge and understanding of the things pertaining to Christ as *King-Priest, "after the order of Melchizedek* [a position which Christ will realize *ONLY* during the coming Messianic Era]" (Heb. 5:6ff).
>
> *Second,* these same Christians *MUST* fall away, apostatize.
>
> *Third,* after these Christians fall away, they *can NEVER* be restored to the position from which they fell.
>
> *Fourth,* such a falling away *WOULD* negatively reflect on Christ Himself.

These four issues will be dealt with under two subsequent headings. The first and second will be dealt with under the first heading, and the third and fourth will be dealt with under the second heading.

Once Enlightened…but Fell Away

Certain descriptive words appearing in verses four and five make it virtually impossible to look upon these verses as describing unsaved people.

There is the word, "enlightened" (v. 4), which is used in Heb. 10:32, translated "illuminated." And according to I Cor. 2:14, "the natural man" *CANNOT be enlightened or illuminated in spiritual matters.*

Then, beyond that, the passage is dealing with things other than *the "milk" of the Word;* it is dealing with *the "strong meat" of the Word* (5:12-14).

Then there is the word, "tasted" (vv. 4, 5). This is *the SAME word* used for Christ *tasting death* "for every man" in Heb. 2:9. The experiences entered into by those in Heb. 6:4, 5 *MUST* be looked upon as *a tasting to the SAME extent that Christ tasted "death" at Calvary.* The latter was full and complete, and the former *MUST* be as well.

And the last descriptive word is "partakers" (v. 4). This is *the SAME word* translated "fellows" in Heb. 1:9 and "partakers" in Heb. 3:1, 14. These are translations of the Greek word *metochoi,* which could be better

rendered, "companions." It is used in chapters one and three describing Christ's co-heirs, His *companions,* in the coming day of His power.

Being "enlightened," tasting "of the heavenly gift," being made "partakers of the Holy Spirit," tasting "the good word of God," and tasting "the powers of the world ['age'] to come" form a description of Christians progressively coming into a mature knowledge and understanding of *the things pertaining to Christ as the great King-Priest "after the order of Melchizedek" from chapter five.*

This entire sequence, thus, has to do with *Christians coming into a mature knowledge and understanding of Christ and His companions' coming reign over the earth.*

Then, spiritual lessons pertaining to the possibility of Christians *falling away* after coming into this mature state is drawn from the type dealt with prior to the introduction of Melchizedek in chapter five — the account of the Israelites under Moses (chs. 3, 4).

The Israelites under Moses, following the death of the firstborn in Egypt, passed through similar experiences within the framework of their earthly calling, climaxed by their hearing the report of the twelve spies and tasting the actual fruits of the land which they had brought back with them.

And that which happened to the Israelites at this point (in the type) is where one *MUST* go in order to understand the falling away and accompanying statements (in the antitype) in Heb. 6:6.

The Israelites at Kadesh-Barnea were in possession of the Word of God (received at Sinai), God dwelled in their midst (in the Holy of Holies of the tabernacle, built and erected at Sinai), they had heard the report of the spies, and they had tasted the actual fruits of the land (brought back by the spies).

And occupying this position, they were then ready to enter the land, conquer and possess the land, and subsequently realize their calling in the land as God's firstborn son.

They, at this point, were in possession of what could *ONLY* be looked upon as *a mature knowledge* of the whole of that which was in view.

They understood their calling and that which lay out ahead.

And it is at *THIS point* that they fell away and, within the framework of that stated in the antitype in Heb. 6:4-6, found it *IMPOSSIBLE to be renewed* "again unto repentance."

Impossible to Renew Again…Because…

The report which the spies brought back concerning the land was both *positive* and *negative.* It was a good land, flowing with "milk and honey"; but the inhabitants, infiltrated by the *Nephilim,* were strong and lived in walled cities (Num. 13:26-29, 32, 33).

Caleb and Joshua, exhorting the people, said:

> "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (Num. 13:30).

But the remaining ten spies said:

> "We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we" (Num. 13:31).

The people of Israel heard the report and both exhortations; *BUT,* they believed *the evil report* of the ten spies rather than *the true report* of Caleb and Joshua.

And their resulting actions said it all.

They wept, began to murmur against Moses and Aaron, and then looked back to Egypt, wishing that they had never left.

Then, to climax matters, they sought to appoint another leader and return to Egypt (Num. 14:1-4).

They, in the words of the antitype, *fell away.* They had turned their backs upon God; and God, correspondingly, turned His back upon them. And because of that which had transpired, *the most severe judgment possible* was pronounced upon the entire accountable generation. Every single individual comprising that generation, twenty years old and above, save Caleb and Joshua, was to be overthrown in the wilderness.

And once this apostasy had occurred (with its corresponding pronounced judgment), there could be *NO renewal* "again unto repentance" (as in the antitype).

And the reason, drawing again from the antitype ("crucify to themselves the Son of God"), is because they had brought shame and reproach upon the One (God) dwelling in their midst, Who was to have led them victoriously into the land.

("Repentance" simply means *a change of mind.*

And in both the type and antitype, the change of mind was/is *on the part of God, NOT* on the part of the Israelites [type] or on the part of Christians [antitype].)

The Israelites, the very next day, repented (changed their minds). They "rose up early" and sought to "go up unto the place" which the Lord had promised.

BUT, the Lord DIDN'T repent (He *DIDN'T* change His mind). He was *NO longer* with them relative to their entering the land and victoriously combating the enemy.

And, consequently, the Israelites, trying to enter the land apart from the Lord's leadership, were smitten and driven back (Num. 14:40-45).

And THAT'S what Heb. 6:4-6 is about.

If God allows a Christian to come into a mature knowledge of His Son's coming reign as *the great King-Priest* "after the order of Melchizedek," and that Christian apostatizes, the same thing will occur as that which occurred with the Israelites under Moses (it would have to, for the antitype *MUST* follow the type in exact detail).

That Christian would be *cut off* insofar as those things surrounding his calling were concerned.

He *would NOT* be allowed to subsequently enter that heavenly land to which he had been called and victoriously combat the enemy therein. He could never be brought back to the position which he had previously occupied. Which is to say, he could not be *renewed* "again unto repentance."

Though the Christian may later change *his mind* about the matter (as the Israelites did), God *would NOT* change *His mind* (as in the type). The Christian, like the Israelites, would be overthrown on the right side of the blood but on the wrong side of the goal of his calling.

And the reason for such severe judgment on God's part results from the fact that, through this act, such a Christian could only bring shame and reproach upon the name of Christ.

Note the entire expression:

"…crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh ['afresh' is not in the Greek text, though implied], and put him to an open shame" (v. 6).

The thought has to do with *the shame and reproach surrounding Calvary,* not with subjecting the Son to a second crucifixion, for such an act is impossible (Heb. 7:27).

But subjecting the Son to this same type shame and reproach at the hands of the world is very possible today; and such shame and reproach can result from the act of any Christian falling away in the antitype of the Israelites at Kadesh-Barnea.

A Christian though, to fall away after this fashion, would have to do two things:

1) He would *FIRST* have to come into a mature knowledge and understanding of the things pertaining to Christ's coming reign over the earth.

2) He would *THEN* have to apostatize after *the SAME fashion* in which the Israelites apostatized:

For the Israelite, apostasy was looking away from Moses and the land (an earthly land), back to Egypt

For the Christian, apostasy would be looking away from Christ and the land (a heavenly land), back to the world.

And doing this, a Christian would be subjecting God's Son to the same type *humiliation and shame* which He experienced at Calvary.

The expression, "crucify to themselves," is actually explained by the remainder of the verse — "put [expose] him to an open shame." It is subjecting the world's coming Ruler to *humiliation and shame* through the one "in Christ" turning from that which lies out ahead and focusing his attention back on the present world system under the incumbent ruler, Satan.

And this is something which *God will NOT allow.* Thus, the verse introducing Heb. 6:4-6:

"And this will we do [we will go on to maturity in the things surrounding Christ's coming reign over the earth], if God permit [*IF God permits us to go on*]."

(For additional information on Heb. 6:4-6, from the perspective of the fourth major warning in the Book of Hebrews, in chapter ten, refer to Appendix II in this book.)

Appendix II
The Wilful Sin
Consequences of Christians Sinning Wilfully

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith [*lit.*, 'the confession of our hope'] without wavering; for he is faithful that promised;

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge [Gk., *epignosis*, 'mature knowledge'] of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (Heb. 10:23-27).

Christ provided Himself as the Sacrifice for sin, His blood is today on the mercy seat in heaven, and He is presently occupying the office of High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary on behalf of sinning Christians.

Christ is presently performing a cleansing from defilement for Christians who sin, and all a Christian needs to do in order to avail himself of this provided cleansing is to confess his sin. And when he does this, cleansing will occur (I John 1:9).

The wilful sin of Heb. 10:26 results in defilement, as any sin. But, a different situation exists with this sin. This verse states that *NO sacrifice* exists for those who sin after the manner dealt with by the verse, which separates it from Christ's present ministry.

How does this sin differ from any other sin which Christians can commit? Is it possible that this sin could somehow be brought under Christ's present ministry and confessed, with forgiveness resulting from the person's confession?

If so, How? If not, Why not?

Christ's Present Ministry

To properly understand *the wilful sin,* for several reasons (one reason being contextual), it should be viewed, first of all, in the light of Christ's present high priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary.

Note the context of Heb. 10:26 (vv. 19-22) and also I John 1:6-2:2. The "blood" of Christ is presently on the mercy seat in the "holiest [Holy of Holies]" of the heavenly sanctuary; and a "new and living way" of access has been provided through the One Who shed this blood, our "high priest over the house of God."

The *blood of Christ,* presently on the mercy seat of the heavenly sanctuary, "cleanseth ['keeps on cleansing']" Christians who have become defiled (through sin) as they "walk ['keep on walking'] in the light" (I John 1:7; *cf*. Heb. 10:22).

It is impossible for the ones walking in the light to occupy a position other than being cleansed from sin.

BUT, viewing the other side of the picture, it is entirely possible for Christians *to NOT walk in the light, in which case there will be NO cleansing.*

To understand *EXACTLY* what is meant by *walking in the light*, one *MUST* draw from the typology of the tabernacle.

The light was provided by a seven-leafed golden candlestick inside the Holy Place where the priests carried on part of their ministry, and *the ONLY way that these priests were permitted to enter the holy place and walk in this light was through a previous washing/cleansing at the brazen laver in the courtyard.*

This laver lay between the brazen altar and the Holy Place and had upper and lower basins for washing the hands and feet. The entire bodies of these priests had been washed upon their entrance into the priesthood (Ex. 29:4; 40:12-15) — an act *NEVER* to be repeated — *BUT,* in their subsequent ministry, it was necessary to avail themselves of partial washings (washings of parts of the body) at the laver.

Their hands and feet became soiled in their ministry, and these parts of the body had to be cleansed prior to entering the Holy Place (Ex. 30:18-21; 40:30-32).

EXACTLY the same thing holds true for Christians, New Testament priests, in the antitype today. Christians have received a complete washing (received at the point of the birth from above, upon their

entrance into the priesthood) — an act *NEVER* to be repeated.

But, as the Old Testament priests, they *MUST* now avail themselves of partial washings / cleansings in their ministry. And this is seen in the type through the actions of Old Testament priests washing at the laver.

This is what Jesus alluded to in John 13:8b, 10b:

> "…If I wash [Gk., *nipto*, referring to a part of the body (the Septuagint uses this same word in Ex. 30:19, 21)] thee not, thou hast no part *with me* [note: not 'in me,' but 'with me'].
>
> …He that is washed [Gk., *louo*, referring to the entire body (the Septuagint uses this same word in Ex. 29:4; 40:12)] needeth not save to wash [Gk., *nipto*] his feet…"

This is also what is alluded to in Heb. 10:22 and I John 1:7.

Old Testament priests whose hands and feet had become soiled through activity in the courtyard *could NOT* bypass the laver and proceed on to the Holy Place. They *HAD TO FIRST* wash their soiled hands and feet at the laver.

NOR can New Testament priests bypass the laver. New Testament priests *MUST FIRST*, as the Old Testament priests, avail themselves of cleansing. Defilement in the Christians' case comes through contact with sin; and cleansing, according to the context of I John 1:7, is accomplished through confession of sin:

> "If we confess our sins, he [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (v. 9).

And this cleansing is accomplished SOLELY through Christ's present ministry, on the basis of His shed blood on the mercy seat in the heavenly sanctuary:

> "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate [Gk., *Parakletos*, one called alongside to help in time of need] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:
>
> And he is the propitiation [Gk., *hilasmos*, (God appeased, through Christ's present high priestly work on the basis of His shed blood on the mercy seat)] for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world [contextually, a reference *to ALL of the saved in the world, NOT the unsaved* (*a cleansing for the saved ALONE is in view*; the unsaved and eternal salvation are *NOT* in view at all in these verses)]" (I John 2:1, 2).

Thus, the ones walking in the light in I John 1:7 are Christians who have availed themselves of the provision in I John 1:9. As they continue walking in the light (continue availing themselves of this provision, allowing continued access to the Holy Place), the blood of Christ continues cleansing them from *"all sin."*

And a Christian refusing to avail himself of provided cleansing today is seen walking in darkness. He *has NOT* come to the laver and, consequently, *can ONLY* remain in the darkened courtyard outside the light in the Holy Place.

He has refused confession of sin; he has refused the cleansing provided by Christ. And for such an individual, in reality, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." That is, there is *NO sacrifice* for those refusing the sacrifice which God has provided in the person of His Son.

Thus, contextually (Heb. 10:19-22), one might think that the wilful sin in verse twenty-six (for which there is *NO sacrifice*) would be a Christian's refusal to avail himself of Christ's present high priestly ministry.

In this respect, though the sacrifice exists, there would be *NO sacrifice* for his unconfessed sins (for a Christian refusing to confess his sins would be refusing the provided sacrifice).

But...

But Christians harboring sins of the flesh and refusing to confess these sins *CANNOT possibly* be that which they are warned against in Heb. 10:26. This verse continues the thought from the immediately preceding verses (vv. 23-25), and this thought has *NOTHING* whatsoever to do with Christians confessing (or not confessing) their sins.

NOR can the wilful sin in this verse be thought of in the broad sense of sins committed by Christians in a wilful, or a deliberate, or a knowing manner.

If the truth were known, it could probably easily be shown that most sins committed by Christians would fall into a singular category — things which Christians knew were sins before they committed them, knew were sins during the time in which they were committing them, and knew were sins after they had committed them.

The *ONLY* possible way to properly understand the wilful sin in Heb. 10:26, for which there is no sacrifice, is to view this sin, *contextually, within the Book of Hebrews where it is found.*

IF this is NOT done, a person will invariably go wrong at this point in Scripture.

Note first that *ALL* of the warnings in Hebrews are closely related, drawing heavily from the Old Testament types. The second warning (chs. 3, 4) draws from the account of the Israelites under Moses, and the same thought is continued in the third warning (6:4ff), relating the matter to Christians.

In both the type (chs. 3, 4 [second warning]) and the antitype (ch. 6 [third warning]), the sin referenced in the fourth warning (10:26ff) is present.

The Israelites under Moses committed a sin for which there was *NO* sacrifice (second warning).

And Christians today can commit *EXACTLY the SAME sin, with the SAME result following* (third warning).

Then the fourth warning continues with thoughts pertaining to this sin; and the matter has to do with "so great salvation" (ch. 2 [first warning]), resulting in "blessings" associated with the "birthright" (ch. 12 [fifth warning]).

That is the broad contextual scope of the matter. The Israelites, in the type, through their actions at Kadesh-Barnea — refusing to go in and take the land to which they had been called — committed a sin for which there was *NO sacrifice*. And, with there being *NO sacrifice* for this sin, God *DIDN'T*, He *COULDN'T*, change His mind concerning that which He had decreed pertaining to the matter.

And Christians, in the antitype, can commit *EXACTLY the SAME sin relative to the heavenly land to which they have been called.*

And, as in the type, *NO sacrifice* exists for such a sin. As in the type, God *WON'T*, He *CAN'T* change His mind concerning that which He has decreed pertaining to this sin, if committed by His people today.

This is plain from that which is stated in Heb. 6:4-6, again drawing from the type in chapters three and four:

> "For it is impossible…if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance…"

(For additional information on Heb. 6:4-6, refer to Appendix I in this book.

Also, for information on the first two major warnings in the Book of Hebrews, refer to the author's books, *So Great Salvation* [covering chapters 1, 2] and *From Egypt to Canaan* [covering chapters 3, 4].)

Then note that the reference to this sin is the continuation of a text having to do with a central purpose for Christians assembling together during the present dispensation — whether on Sunday at a regular meeting place, or at any other time or place during the week (vv. 23-25).

And the particular purpose given in the text is *singular*.

The purpose for Christians meeting together in these verses has to do with *exhortation and encouragement in the race of the faith concerning the hope set before each one of them* ("profession of our faith" [v. 23, KJV] should be translated, "confession of our hope").

And this hope set before every Christian is *the hope that they might one day realize the very thing to which they have been called — win a crown in the present race of the faith and, as a result, occupy a regal position with Christ during that coming day of His power.*

In short, Christians are *exhorted to assemble together for a particular purpose,* and then they are warned concerning *the danger of failing to assemble together on a regular basis for this purpose.* They can either find mutual strength in the race of the faith through assembling together, or they can fail to assemble for this mutual strength and find themselves in danger of *falling away and becoming involved in that which Scripture refers to as wilful sin.*

The wilful sin, simply put, has to do with *apostasy, after one has come into a mature knowledge of the things pertaining to the hope set before him* — something seen in the type in the second warning and in the antitype in the third warning.

And sinning after this fashion will result in a Christian failing to come into possession of *so great salvation* (first warning), synonymous with failing to realize *the rights of the firstborn* (fifth warning).

Numbers 15:30, 31, immediately following the account of the Israelites refusal to enter into the land at Kadesh-Barnea (chs. 13, 14) deals with God's statement concerning a sin for which there was *NO*

sacrifice. And immediately following this statement, Scripture provides an example of such a sin — a man violating the Sabbath (vv. 32ff).

God's statement concerning a sin for which there was *NO sacrifice* in this passage had to do with a person acting in open rebellion, followed by his being cut off from the people of Israel (which was *EXACTLY* what occurred at and following the events at Kadesh-Barnea).

And the contextual example, having to do with a man violating the Sabbath (Num. 15:32-36), reflected back on the experiences of the Israelites, beginning at Kadesh-Barnea (chs. 13, 14).

Immediately following the events at Kadesh Barnea, in the person of one Israelite, God provided an example of that which had just occurred. *AS* with the nation at Kadesh-Barnea, *SO* with the man violating the Sabbath. *There was NO sacrifice for the sin committed by either.*

Rather, in BOTH instances, the Lord commanded that a sentence of death was to be carried out. And, resultingly, an entire accountable generation died on the one hand, and a man was taken outside the camp and stoned on the other.

The land set before Christians is associated with a rest, *a Sabbath rest,* drawing from Gen. 2:1-3 (Heb. 4:4-9). And a Christian turning his back on this land (after coming into a mature knowledge of the things surrounding the land) would be doing *EXACTLY* the same thing which the Israelites under Moses did at Kadesh-Barnea (after hearing the report concerning the land by the twelve spies).

Then, in another respect, such a Christian would be doing violence to that which God had to say about *the Sabbath rest set before the people of God*, in a similar respect to the man violating the Sabbath in Num. 15:32-36.

The Sabbath was *a sign* pointing to a day of rest following God's present six days of work (Ex. 31:13-17). As God rested on the seventh day after working six days to restore a past ruined creation (the material creation) — establishing an unchangeable, foundational pattern — He is going to rest on a seventh day (a 1,000-year day) after working six days (six 6,000-year days) to restore two present ruined creations (both man and the material creation once again).

Thus, drawing from both Numbers chapters thirteen through fifteen and Hebrews chapters three, four, and six, it can easily be shown how Christians, in Heb. 10:26ff, can sin wilfully today. They

can do so through *ONLY one means: coming into a mature knowledge of the truth surrounding their calling, and then apostatizing (turning away from this truth).*

Any Christian committing such an act, according to Heb. 10:29, will have done three things:

1) *Trodden* "under foot the Son of God."
2) *Considered the blood of Christ* "an unholy ['a common'] thing."
3) *Insulted* "the Spirit of grace."

God places the wilful sin in a category of this nature simply because of the high place in which He holds that which He has stated concerning the coming reign of His Son.

And, according to Scripture, any Christian coming into a mature knowledge of that which God has stated in this realm, and then *turning away — apostatizing* — has only one thing awaiting him:

> "…a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (v. 27).

Then note how verses thirty and thirty-one parallel II Cor. 5:10, 11:

> "For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.
>
> It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Events of the judgment seat will be one of *the most terrible times* many Christians will ever experience, for Christians who have refused to follow the Spirit's leadership during the present day and time will, at the judgment seat, "fall into the hands of the living God."

Such Christians will find it to be a "fearful," "terrible" experience, for there the *"terror of the Lord"* will be manifested, and *a completely just recompense* will be meted out.

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