

The Rising Of The Sons Of Dawn



Book 1:

Satan's Fall

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Introduction

This book is part of a series titled “The Rising Of The Sons Of God.” The Lord has recently taken me through multiple teachings regarding His Body’s rising up at the end of this age. Satan has deceptively built into the church many false teachings that are keeping us from entering into our destiny in Christ. Because of this, the Lord is exposing his lies and revealing the truth that will set us free. We cannot rise up when held in bondage to the devil. Through acceptance of his false teachings as truth, we are unable to grow up into Christ who is our Head.

It is crucial that we listen closely and receive the love of the truth so as to be saved (2 Thessalonians 2:10). A good place to start is “In the beginning...”, which this book does. God has chosen believers from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth, not lies. It is because of this, in this divinely appointed time of history, that the Lord is now calling His children to draw near to Himself so that He may share His heart, and protect them from the coming storm of His wrath on earth.

May the Lord bless you by giving you ears to hear and eyes to see that which the devil has hidden from us for years. To God be the glory, both now and forevermore!

Tim Bauer

Chapter 1

In The Beginning

When the Holy Spirit first led me into this study, He began by revealing the truth concerning Satan's creation. It soon developed into much more, including the truth of his eventual downfall from heaven. If we are deceived in regards to his origin, we will also be deceived in regards to the events surrounding his demise. This is his plan. The absence of light by way of truth ensures the continuance of his kingdom of darkness. Satan has never known any truth. He was a liar and a murderer the day he came into existence.

Some would question why it matters if we believe Satan is a fallen angel who was at his creation pure and innocent, or that he was actually created by God as an evil being. Either way, they would argue, we know according to the Scriptures where he will end up. Yes, we have been given clear knowledge of his promised doom in the lake of fire and brimstone where he will be tormented day and night forever and ever (Revelation 20:10), but this will not take place apart from God's children who rise up in faith after hearing the truth and dethrone him at the end of this age.

God said in Isaiah 46:9-10, *Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.* In order to know the truth in regards to the purposes of God in the end, we must understand the truth in

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regards to the beginning. This is why it's so crucial for us to know the truth concerning Satan's rise so that we will know the truth concerning his fall. We will understand his end when we understand his beginning.

The truth in regards to the question about Satan's origin will once and for all set mankind free from his reign of terror over us. His entire kingdom of darkness has been established on lies and deception. Exposure of falsehood through the light of God's truth will bring him crashing down from his temporary rule in the heavenly realm as the prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2).

As we will see, acceptance of any of his lies makes you susceptible to other lies. He systematically builds his stronghold within the hearts of mankind. The more we accept his doctrines of demons through deceitful spirits, the darker our hearts become. In time, we lose all sensitivity to the Spirit's warnings within us as we are finally given over to the devil to do his will. At this point we have what the Bible calls a "seared conscience," being unable to discern right from wrong.

The doorway for this deception is the practicing of a sin with an unrepentant heart. Romans 1, in describing the person who is given over to a sin, states that their foolish heart was darkened through the suppression of the truth in unrighteousness. This took place because they would not honor God in their life through obedience to His commands, but instead exchanged the truth of God for the lies of Satan, eventually calling good evil and evil good (Isaiah 5:20). Having been given what the Bible calls "eyes to see" through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, they no longer see because of adherence to deception. As Jesus taught, the light of God within them has become darkness (Matthew 6:23, Luke 11:35).

I'm not referring to the lost people within the world, but a Christian who drifts away from the Lord through sin and rebellion. Satan already holds captive the world; its God's children he seeks to devour (1 Peter 5:8). We are the prize possession he desires to sweep away with his river of deception.

As we near the end of this age, the Lord is exposing the lies of Satan that have infiltrated the church while we were asleep. It will soon be time for the Body of Christ to join the Head, Jesus Christ,

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on His rightful throne in the “air” referred to in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 and Ephesians 2:2.

Our rising up into this place at the appointed time in God's redemptive history for mankind will leave him no room. At this point Michael and his angels will wage war against Satan and his angels who are no longer strong enough to hold their position. The one who deceives the whole world will finally be hurled to the earth.

It is at this point when a loud voice from heaven will proclaim, *Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night. And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death* (Revelation 12:10-11). Amen.

Chapter 2

Genesis; The Book Of Origins

According to the introduction for Genesis in “The Open Bible”;

“The word for Genesis came into English by way of Latin from the Greek. In the Septuagint (LXX), it formed the superscription for the first book of the Bible. The word means ‘origin, source, or begetting.’ The Hebrew word reshiyth, translated ‘in the beginning,’ is the first word in the Bible.”

Genesis 1:1-5 says, ***In the beginning*** God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

As we saw, the Hebrew for the phrase “in the beginning” is *reshiyth* [ray-sheeth’]. It refers to the origin, the source of all creation, which is God. The earth, we are told, was “formless and void” which means a desolate waste, a formless place of confusion, unreality, and emptiness. The Word of God always turns a dark place of chaos and confusion into a place of order and meaning.

The other meaning for the Hebrew word *reshiyth* in the introduction above was “begetting.” The Word of God manifested is the only begotten Son of the Father, Jesus, who was with Him “in the beginning.” In Revelation 3:14 Jesus describes Himself as *The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God.*

In describing the origin of Jesus, John 1:1-5 says, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.*

The darkness of God's creation mentioned in Genesis 1:2 is not just a result of turning off the lights at night. One of the definitions for the Hebrew word refers to wickedness. The manifested ruler of this evil is Satan. According to the Bible, his dwelling is said to be the domain of darkness. According to Colossians 1, all things have been created by, and for, Jesus. This is why He could truthfully witness in John 8:44 that Satan was a murderer and a liar “from the beginning” (I'll discuss this in more detail in the next chapter). The devil's beginning, his coming into existence, therefore, was by Jesus, for Jesus!

Jesus' life is the light that shines in the darkness over all mankind. We cannot lay hold of it with our minds alone. We dwell in a state of darkness under the power and authority of Satan. According to the word of God, there is a separation between the two. Like the beginning of creation, our beginning in Christ can only happen when the Spirit of God moves over the confusing darkness in our hearts and minds, bringing meaning and understanding through the light of His Word, Jesus Christ, to the purpose of our existence.

No man can see the Truth of God until He says “Let there be light” over your mind. Satan's domain of darkness, his power of right and authority over fallen mankind, is what blinds us from seeing that which becomes obvious to all who have received the light.

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, *And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of*

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this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. It is only in Christ that the veil of darkness rolls away.

Colossians 1:13-18 declares, *For He delivered us from the domain of darkness [Satan's rule and authority], and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. And He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things have been created by Him and for Him [this includes Satan!]. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and **He is the beginning**, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything.*

Paul describes the preeminence of Christ in this passage, speaking of the deliverance from the domain of Satan He provides for mankind through redemption, the forgiveness of sins. When God said in Genesis 1:3 "Let there be light," Jesus became the willing Redeemer of mankind that was going to be manifested to the world. He was the image, the exact representation of the invisible God for all to see. John 1:14 says, *And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

The predetermined plan of God (Acts 2:23) was at that moment set in motion. This is what is meant by the phrase "the foreknowledge of God" in the Scriptures. The forethought, the prearrangement of God was to send the Son into the world to be crucified for the deliverance of His creation whom He knew would fall through the deception of the serpent. This was determined and accepted by the Son of God at the beginning of creation. This is why He alone is worthy of all the praise and glory and honor!

Chapter 3

Satan's Origin

Was Satan really a good angel at one time who fell in rebellion against God, or was he an evil being at the beginning of his creation? This question burned in my heart for quite some time. All my life I had been taught that Satan was a good angel who fell in rebellion. What difference would it really make one way or another?

I believe this question was placed within me by the Holy Spirit so that He could give me the answer. For me personally, this has often been His way of revealing truth. Within Christianity we frequently give people the answer to a question that has not yet been placed within their heart and mind by God. Waiting for the Lord to prepare a heart, and then being led to that person to give them an answer, is crucial for the reception of truth.

Jesus said in John 8:44 that the devil *was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies.* The phrase “the beginning” is taken from the Greek word *arche* [ar-khay']. It means “the beginning, the origin,” in other words, “when he came into existence.”

Using the same Greek word as John 8:44, 1 John 3:7-8 says, *Little children, let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the*

beginning [*arche*]. *The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil.*

Revelation 12:9 refers to him as “the serpent of old.” The Greek in this case for “old” is *archaios* [ar-khah'-yos] which just happens to be taken from *arche*. It means “original or primeval, that has been from the beginning.”

Through these verses, the Bible clearly declares that he has been evil from the time he was created. Some might ask or wonder, as I did, if God creates evil. In Isaiah 45:6-7 the Lord said, *I am the LORD, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things*” (KJV). Again, in Isaiah 54:16, the Lord says, *Behold, I Myself have created the smith who blows the fire of coals, and brings out a weapon for its work; and I have created the destroyer to ruin.*

I believe it is Satan's lie through the twisting of Scriptures to say that at his creation he was a loving, pure angel in heaven. He has come disguised to us through deception and false teachings as being, at his origin, an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14). As with Moses and the exodus of God's children, the authoritative staff of God's truth will expose and devour his deceptive lies, setting us free from the house of bondage ruled by the serpent nature (the “beast” nature within each one of us).

Jude 1:6-7 speaks of *angels who did not keep their own domain* [“their first estate” in the KJV], *but abandoned their proper abode* [“a dwelling place, a habitation, a residence”], *He has kept in eternal bonds* [“a shackle”] *under darkness for the judgment of the great day. Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example, in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.*

These angels are said to have left their “own domain,” which, once again, is interpreted from *arche*. According to the Scriptures, therefore, these angels origin is different than Satan's. His origin, his beginning, his coming into existence, is that of a murderer and a liar. These fallen angels left their first estate under light, causing them to be placed in eternal shackles under darkness until the final judgment. Their last dwelling is Satan's original dwelling, a place he never abandoned.

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Peter, like Jude, also deals with false teachers in the church. Referring to their judgment, he speaks in 2 Peter 2:1-4 of angels who sinned and were cast into hell, *committed to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment*. In verse 6 of this chapter he uses Sodom and Gomorrah as well, saying that God condemned these cities, burning them to ashes as an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly.

A good question that arose is, “Are these good angels who fell and were cast into hell, still able to roam the earth?” If not, that would mean Satan’s angels (demons), the ones carrying out his dirty work, were also created evil. I think the truth of the matter is revealed to us through the definition for the word “committed” in verse 4. The Greek for this word is *paradidomi* [par-ad-id'-o-mee]. It means “to surrender, to give into the hands of another, to give over into one’s power or use.” It is the same word interpreted multiple times within Romans 1 in English as “given over.”

It appears these fallen angels who sinned, who abandoned their proper abode under the authority of God (Jude 1:6), have now been given over to the authority of Satan for his diabolical use. They are already bound in a hell of judgment under Satan’s power, awaiting the final judgment of the great day. They have been cast out of God’s presence forever, kept in eternal bonds under the power and authority of darkness.

This is the separation of God that occurred at the beginning. It is impossible for a person to be dwelling in both kingdoms at the same time. As 2 Corinthians 6:15 says, *What fellowship has light with darkness?* You cannot be a Christian in communion with Christ, enjoying the benefits His kingdom provides, while at the same time communing with the devil through the practice of sin. This is when the Holy Spirit convicts us to repent, to turn away from the sin back to God, restoring our fellowship, and favor, with Him.

When we continually disregard the Spirit’s promptings, we risk being given over to that sin by God, learning the hard way the consequences of the wages of unrighteousness. Paul speaks in Romans 2:14 of Gentiles who do not have the law doing “instinctively,” or “by nature,” the things of the law. The natural instinct within man of right and wrong has been placed there by God at birth. Our conscience is our moral compass.

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The God given conscience within all of mankind tells us that it is wrong to murder, steal, commit sexual immorality, etc. When we continually commit a sin, not listening to the Divine warning system within that warns us to stop, we become hardened, calloused to that prompting. Continued disregard of the Holy Spirit's conviction toward a practiced sin eventually results in what the Bible refers to as a seared conscience.

The whole chapter of 2 Peter 2 warns the church about those who at one time heard and received the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit and then turned away, choosing to reject God's authority and indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires. Like these angels who also left their habitation, they too will be placed under punishment in spiritual darkness for the day of God's righteous judgment. At this point, Satan has once again become their rightful master. They have become what the Bible refers to as being "twice dead, uprooted" (Jude 1:12).

Paul writes in 2 Timothy 2:24-26 in regards to being held captive by Satan to do his will. Speaking of the proper attitude of a believer towards those who do not believe he says, *The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, **having been held captive by him to do his will.*** There is no other option. We either serve Christ and His will, or the devil and his will.

In Revelation 12:7-11, John saw the serpent of old, the devil, with his angels, being thrown down to the earth after losing a war with Michael and his angels. Has this already happened or will it in the near future? Did it begin when Christ was born and then crucified, defeating Satan on the cross, and will it end when we, His Body are conformed to His image and raised up in glory to our ruling position, casting Satan out from his place as "prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2)? These questions should be answered as we progress further in this study, looking at other verses that speak in regards to his being thrown down, or cast out.

Satan is also within this passage as the accuser of the brethren. This shows that, up until this point, he has had access before the throne of God. I don't know why this is. Why would God allow

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this wicked liar into His presence? I believe it has something to do with the authority he gained over mankind when Adam and Eve sinned in the garden of Eden.

Job 1:6 says *Now there was a day when the sons of God* [the NIV says “angels”] *came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.* He still has this access to the throne of God. I believe that Revelation 12 speaks of a time in the near future when Satan will be cast down from his current authority in the heavens, referred to as the “air” in Ephesians 2:2, when the Body of Christ gains back the authoritative glory we lost in the garden.

Mankind is now being stirred by God to remember the place from which we have fallen and do the deeds we did at first, at the beginning (Revelation 2:5). We are to forget what lies behind, pressing forward and upward in order to regain the glory that is rightfully ours in Christ Jesus!

As we seek the Lord together, preparing our hearts by faith in obedience to His revealed will, we will soon regain the authority of the Lord over the earth that Adam and Eve possessed. Jesus' authority over Satan was accomplished through the cross. This is why we too must take up our cross and follow Him (Matthew 16:24, Mark 8:34, Luke 9:23). The place of His victory is the place of our victory.

Revelation 12:11 describes the overcoming church that does not love their life even unto death. As we join Christ on His cross, we too will defeat our *arche* enemy once and for all. Praise the name of the Lord, it is time!

Chapter 4

Grasping The Serpent By The Tail

In Exodus 4 we see the Lord granting his deliverer, Moses, powers of authority before he is sent to Egypt. After receiving his mission, Moses said to the Lord *What if they will not believe me, or listen to what I say? For they may say, “The LORD has not appeared to you.” And the LORD said to him, “What is that in your hand?” And he said, “A staff.” Then He said, “Throw it on the ground.” So he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from it. But the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand and grasp it [“to take hold, to seize, to take possession”] by its tail”; so he stretched out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand, ‘that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.’*

In chapter 3 the Lord revealed Himself to Moses in a burning bush, describing the nature of his call in regards to delivering the children of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. This passage describes Moses' questions, and the response of God. One of the attesting signs given to Moses was the throwing down of his staff to the ground where it turned into a snake. It sounds like Revelation 12:9 where Satan, the serpent, is cast down to the earth.

The Lord then told Moses to stretch out his hand and take hold of the serpent by the tail. Verse 4 says that he stretched out his

hand and caught it. The Hebrew for “caught it” is *chazaq* [khaw-zak']. It means “to fasten upon; hence, to seize, be strong, to bind, restrain, conquer, to prevail, to be courageous, to be firm, to be resolute.” The possessing, the conquering, the taking hold of the serpent in the hand represents being the one in control, the one in authority. This speaks of the authority of God over the devil through his servant, the deliverer.

When Moses returned to Egypt he came with the staff of God, His authority, in his hand. The Lord is presently training His deliverer's for the end of this age, like Moses, through a humbling experience in the wilderness. They must be purged of all self-confidence so that they will rely solely on the strength and authority of God to fully conquer Satan. In due time they will appear on the scene and do “great exploits” (Daniel 11:32).

I think it's interesting that Moses already possessed in his hand what he would need to fulfill God's call, it just hadn't been revealed to him yet. The Lord gives us the tools necessary to fulfill our call first, often without our knowing it, and then He empowers them through the Holy Spirit. He opens our eyes to see the unseen. That which looked like a simple stick in Moses hand would soon become the manifested vessel used to reveal God's glory to all of mankind.

In Judges 3:31 a man named Shamgar used an oxgoad to kill 600 Philistines, delivering Israel from their enemies. A goad was a long pole with a sharpened metal point on the end. They were used by farmers to prod animals to keep them moving, but they could also be dangerous weapons. In other words, it was a long stick with a sharp end.

The Hebrew for goad is *malmad* [mal-mawd']. It is taken from a word that means “to goad, to teach (the rod being an Oriental incentive).” Ecclesiastes 12:11 states that the wise instruction of a good teacher acts like a goad.

Like Moses, the simple tool Shamgar possessed and used daily suddenly became the weapon of choice God used to kill His enemies and save His people. Likewise, the stick-like tools and gifts the Lord commits into our hands that become at times normal and mundane in our Christian walk can, at His discretion, suddenly be used to accomplish great things for His name's sake.

Another passage of Scripture referring to a stick being used for the deliverance of God's people is 2 Samuel 23:20-22. In this passage, Benaiah, one of David's warriors, killed an Egyptian who had a spear in his hand. All Benaiah had was a club, which is defined in the Hebrew as a rod, a staff, or a stick.

His name means "Jehovah has built," or "Yahweh has built up." Once again, God defeated the enemy through the simple means that He had built within this man.

Organized religion doesn't understand this. Like Saul, they will try to place their armor on the David's God is raising up to slay the Goliath's in our day. David wasn't trained in their ways of warfare. He hadn't been to their schools. His was a much, seemingly, simpler method the Lord had taught him while faithfully tending sheep in the wilderness.

George Warnock in his book "From Tent To Temple" speaks of this event in Scripture. He says;

"Oh, how God yearns over His people that they might discover His ways! When are we going to get away from the notion that every time the Enemy challenges the people of God, we have got to come forth and meet the challenge with equal kinds of weapons and with equal strategy? In obedience to God, and with nothing but the dry stick that we are, the devices of the Enemy become his own destruction."

In Christ, the ordinary can suddenly become extra-ordinary in order to defeat our enemies. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of this world (2 Cor. 10:4). The ways of God will almost always go against our natural instincts. Through this, we learn to trust Him, and He is glorified.

In God's economy, an unimpressive "stick" can suddenly become a rod of judgment. Apart from God, that is all we are; a simple stick. But under His anointing and authority, we become the rod of iron that rules the world. In fact, this Divine staff of authority will soon be manifested globally in the hands of His faithful servants.

Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon states that Benaiah was "one of David's mighty warriors, son of Jehoiada the chief priest, a Levite, set by David over his bodyguard, later having remained

faithful to Solomon during Adonijah's attempt on the crown, was raised into the place of Joab as commander-in-chief of the army." As we will now see, the Jehoiada priesthood will also play a crucial role at the end of this age.

The Jehoiada Priesthood

2 Chronicles 22-23 and 2 Kings 11 contain an incredible revelation in regards to the Lord's dealings with His people in the last days of this age. King Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, was known as a man "who sought the Lord with all his heart" (2 Chronicles 22:9). Before he died, he gave his first-born son, Jehoram, the kingdom. Jehoram then killed all his brothers to secure his position (2 Chronicles 21:1-4).

Elijah prophesied against him because he led the inhabitants of Jerusalem astray, causing them to play the harlot. In 2 Chronicles 21:12-15 he said, *This is what the LORD, the God of your father David, says: "You have not walked in the ways of your father Jehoshaphat or of Asa king of Judah. But you have walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and you have led Judah and the people of Jerusalem to prostitute themselves, just as the house of Ahab did. You have also murdered your own brothers, members of your father's house, men who were better than you. So now the LORD is about to strike your people, your sons, your wives and everything that is yours, with a heavy blow. You yourself will be very ill with a lingering disease of the bowels, until the disease causes your bowels to come out."*

The Philistines and the Arabs who bordered the Ethiopians carried out the Lord's will. After they invaded Judah and carried off all of Jehoram's possessions, including his family minus his youngest son Ahaziah, the Lord struck him with an incurable disease of the bowels and he died. 2 Chronicles 21:20 rightly declares that *he departed with no one's regret.*

The inhabitants of Jerusalem then made Ahaziah king. 2 Chronicles 22:2-4 says, *Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Athaliah, the granddaughter of Omri. He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, for his mother was his counselor to do wickedly. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD*

like the house of Ahab, for they were his counselors after the death of his father, to his destruction."

One day Jehu, whom the Lord had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab, killed Ahaziah. 2 Chronicles 22:10 says, *Now when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she rose and destroyed all the royal offspring of the house of Judah.*

Athaliah, whose name means "afflicted of the Lord," just happened to be the daughter of the wicked King Ahab and his wife, Jezebel. She had obviously learned her mother's evil ways very well. In order to gain control of the kingdom when her son died, she killed her own grandchildren.

The Lord intervened and spared one of the grandchildren. His name was Joash which means "given by the Lord." His aunt, Jehoshabeath, whose name means "Jehovah-sworn," hid him for six years in the house of the Lord while his wicked Grandma reigned.

2 Chronicles 23:1 tells us that in the seventh year Jehoiada the priest "strengthened himself" and entered into a covenant with the captains of hundreds. The Hebrew word interpreted as strengthened is *chazaq*, the same word interpreted as "caught it" in Exodus 4:4.

When it was time for Joash, the protected son given by the Lord to become king, Jehoiada, whose name means "Jehovah-known," courageously prevailed (*chazaq*), becoming an "overcomer," and then entered into a covenant with the leaders in Israel.

What we see revealed in this biblical account is a priest who was known by God and was used to put in place the hidden, protected heir of the throne of Judah. The Jehoiada-priesthood represents those servants who are also known by God because they have resolutely fastened (one of the definitions for *chazaq*) themselves to Christ.

At this present time there is a group like Jehoiada who are also being called to strengthen themselves in the Lord in order to be ready to rise up and take action. They too will answer the call to draw near to the Lord at the end of this age which is represented by the sixth year.

They will be counted as overcomers because they will not love their life even when faced with the threat of death. They are the faithful, trusted servants who will bring forth those similar to

Joash, the King of kings hidden, protected son who will be granted kingdom authority (see Rev. 3:21).

I believe God is currently protecting His young son (immature Christians) on the earth from the devil who desires to destroy them as well. The Jehoiada priesthood represents those who will be used to place this many-membered son of the King of kings on their rightful throne, with God's authority, dethroning Satan.

Also, notice that it took place in the seventh year. I believe this represents the time of the millennium reign of Jesus Christ. This divinely appointed time draws near.

First, the leaders, namely the "captains of hundreds," entered into a covenant with Jehoiada, the priest who walked in intimacy with the Lord. They, in turn, gathered the Levites and the heads of the "father's households" from all the cities who enter into another covenant with the new king, Joash, the one "given by the Lord" (2 Chronicles 23:1-3). These "covenant-keepers" were then made gatekeepers of key locations.

Gatekeepers were stationed so that no one should enter who was in any way unclean. This is the charge of all who are appointed as gatekeepers. They have been given authority by God to guard the entrances and exits of the Kingdom of God. When the gatekeepers sleep on duty, the spiritually unclean are allowed to enter into our midst. They are never confronted with their need to be cleansed. If not dealt with, it has the possibility of affecting, or should I say "infecting," all those whom they come into contact with.

At the end of this age, the Lord is sending out His trusted servants who will gather His people, preparing them for His return by turning their hearts back, if necessary, to Him. Through repentance they will reenter the covenant they have broken, rejecting the self-glorifying Athaliah leadership that has been seductively leading God's people into Baal worship within His house. The sword of the Lord will be given to them, just as Jehoiada placed weapons in the hands of the Levites in 2 Chronicles 23:7-10.

Interestingly, Psalm 149:5-9 declares, *Let the godly ones exult in glory; let them sing for joy on their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance on the nations, and punishment on the peoples; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of*

iron; to execute on them the judgment written; this is an honor for all His godly ones. Praise the LORD! (See Hebrews 4:12; Revelation 1:16, 2:12) I don't know what this will look like when fulfilled, but it happens to be the word of God.

Daniel 11:31-32 prophesies of a time when a king that Daniel refers to as the king of the North will *arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation. And by smooth words* ["flattery, smoothness, fine promises"] *he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength and take action.*

In this passage, Daniel describes a time when those who have profaned the covenant through rebellion toward God's covenant with them will be led astray by the smooth talk of this king. On the other hand, those who know God, like Jehoiada, will rise up and take action, displaying great strength. The Hebrew for strength is, again, our word *chazaq*.

In other words, those who violate the holy covenant of the Lord will be corrupted, soiled, and polluted by acceptance of the smooth talk (flattery) of Satan's liars, his false prophets. In contrast, those who know God, who walk in obedience and therefore walk in true fellowship with Him, will, like Moses, reach out in His authority and grasp, or conquer, the serpent. In the right time, God's appointed time, they will be strong and take action.

The Coming Confrontation

In Exodus 7:8-12 there is a confrontation between Moses and Aaron, and Pharaoh. At the command of God, Aaron throws down his staff in Pharaoh's presence and it became a serpent. Through sorcery, the magicians of Egypt throw their staffs down, turning theirs into serpents also.

Satan always tries to imitate the authority of God in an attempt to undermine the Lord's true servants. The good news is when the true authority is nearby, it swallows up the inferior demonic counterfeit, as did Moses' staff with the magician's, taking authority over the false signs and wonders.

These sorcerers are believed to be the ones spoken of in 2 Timothy 3:8 who publicly opposed Moses. Their names were

Jannes and Jambres. In describing the difficult times that will come in the last days, Paul uses these two as an example of those who hold to a form of godliness (false religion), but have denied its power. They have said no to the transforming power of God within, usurping His throne in their hearts. He says that “among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Jannes' name means “he who seduces.” Jambres means “he who is rebellious.” These rebellious seducers who have crept into the church unnoticed are about to be exposed by the deliverers whom God sends. They are reprobate sons of destruction.

Paul goes on to say in 2 Timothy 3:9, *But they will not make further progress; for their folly will be obvious to all, as also that of those two came to be.* The manifestation of the obedient sons of God will soon display the true power of their King, exposing the deception of the sorcerers, the sons of disobedience, that hold God's people captive within the church by their *magic* powers.

Chapter 5

Creepers In The Church

In the last couple verses of the Bible, we are given a very strong warning from God that is not understood or taken seriously by most Christians. Revelation 22:17-19 says, *And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost. I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city [the New Jerusalem], which are written in this book.*

The Greek word interpreted as "take away" is *aphaireo*. It means "to remove, to take from, to take away, to cut off." Paul warns us as Gentile Christians not to become arrogant thinking we, like the Jews who rejected Jesus as the Messiah, could never be cut off from the tree of life once we have gained access to it (Romans 11:17-24). For some, it's not in their doctrines that a person can come into Christ, back into the garden of God, and then lose their place again. Belief in this lie from the devil could cost many their place at the Lord's table.

As he did with Adam and Eve in the garden, the goal of the doctrines of demons is to get God's people to be slothful in their

Satan's Fall

Christian walks by not guarding their hearts. Paul exhorts us to *Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you-- guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.* (2 Timothy 1:14)

We are urged further by Paul to work together with the Holy Spirit, and not receive the grace of God in vain (2 Corinthians 6:1). To receive the grace of God in vain is to not allow its transforming power to change us into the likeness of Christ. This occurs when we do not keep our ungodly human affections in check with the help of the Holy Spirit. Our lack of restraint restricts His work within us.

This is why Paul then says that we are to not touch what is “unclean” in God’s eyes in order to be welcomed and received by the Father. Having these conditional promises we are exhorted to *cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1) The fear of God is what Satan continuously attempts to remove from our hearts.

The entire context of Jude is to warn Christians in regards to keeping within the boundaries of the habitation of Christ. As with Adam, God warns us to guard the place where God has put us lest we too be cast out because of arrogance and disrespect of His salvation.

Jude warns us of false teachers who will “*creep in*” unnoticed, much like the serpent in the garden. These *creepers* in the church are those who cause divisions in our midst. They are worldly minded and devoid of the Spirit. Jude refers to them as *clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted-- twice dead.* (v. 12)

One of the definitions for the Greek word interpreted “twice” is “again.” A man by the name of Nicodemus once asked Jesus “How can a man be born again?” Another good question is “How can a person be *dead again*?” The answer is by turning to Jesus and receiving his salvation, and then not work together with the Holy Spirit in order to guard our hearts, thereby causing us to fall away from Him in a state of apostasy (Romans 11:17-22, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12, 2 Peter 2:20-22).

Like Adam and Eve, an unrepentant covenant breaker who continues in rebellion against God, will, in the end, be served an eviction notice. Because of our straying natures, it is essential that

we understand the truth that retains the border of the fear of the Lord, so as to retain our place within His paradise. Be warned; separate yourselves from the *creepers* that have crept into the church lest you be judged with them.

Snake Handlers

At His ascension, Jesus told His followers in Mark 16:15-19, *“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. And these signs will accompany [“to follow after, to follow near”] those who have believed in My name; they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it shall not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”* So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.

Jesus spoke in this passage of the signs that would accompany those who believe in Him. One was that they would “pick up serpents.” I don’t believe He was saying that His people would be literal snake handlers, but was instead referring to His authoritative power over Satan and his demons that flows through His obedient servants.

As we will discuss further on in more detail, some, like Simon the sorcerer in Acts 8 who had just believed in Christ and been baptized, would love to possess this authority for self-glorification. Their motives are not pure because they are still bound in “the gall of bitterness and the bondage of iniquity.”

God grants greater authority to those of His children who walk in greater obedience. What parent gives their young children full authority within their family structure? What employer gives great authority within his company to a young employee in training? That comes in time after maturity and responsibility are revealed through proven character. So it is with the kingdom of God.

Chapter 6

The Venom Of Serpents

Another sign mentioned by Jesus in Mark 16:15-19 that would accompany those who believed in His name was if they drank any deadly poison, it wouldn't harm them. Again, was Jesus speaking of literal drink, or was He possibly speaking of something else? It could speak of ingesting a deadly liquid, but I believe it also speaks figuratively in regards to Satan's poisonous teachings poured out for us through his deceived "creepers" in leadership.

In John 3, Jesus engaged in a conversation with a man named Nicodemus about being born again. He said in verses 14-15, *Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.* He was referring to Numbers 21:4-9 when the children of Israel became impatient during their journey in the wilderness. In so doing they complained against God and Moses. The Lord sent fiery serpents among the people which bit them, causing many to die, or *to fall*.

In their judgment from God, the people came to Moses and confessed they had sinned, asking him to intercede for them. The Lord told Moses to make a fiery serpent and set it on a standard, or a pole. If the Israelites looked toward it after being bitten they would live. It was a picture of looking to the Lord in order to be healed from the serpent's venom. So it is with us today.

The doorway opened to the serpent in the church in America through our rebellion toward God's "standard" can quickly be shut if we repent. The enemy's standard now rules within the majority of our congregations.

Psalms 74:3-4 says, *The enemy has damaged everything within the sanctuary. Your adversaries have roared in the midst of Your meeting place; they have set up their own standards for signs.* Satan's standards have become well entrenched within the churches of America. His false signs are everywhere. If we do not turn from our wicked ways (2 Chronicles 7:14), walking in obedience to Christ and His ways, many of God's children within our borders will fall away, like the children of Israel, to their death. The standard of Christ must be raised up in our midst so that His people might behold His truth, repent, and be healed.

Once the serpent, Satan, injects his poisonous venom of lies and deception into the Body of Christ, a deadly paralysis is sure to manifest. The encouraging word proclaimed in Mark 16:18 is that "deadly poison" will not harm the true believer in Jesus Christ. Like the camp of Israel, only those weak in heart towards the Lord's covenant will succumb to the serpent's venom.

Proverbs 23:29-35 says, *Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long over wine, those who go to taste mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly; at the last [or "in the end"] **it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper.** Your eyes will see strange things, and your mind will utter perverse things. And you will be like one who lies down in the middle of the sea, or like one who lies down on the top of a mast. "They struck me, but I did not become ill; they beat me, but I did not know it. When shall I awake? I will seek another drink."*

These verses speak of the negative repercussions of being a drunkard. To "linger long" means "to delay, hesitate, tarry, wait, stay behind." We all know what happens to those who hang out for long periods tasting wine or drinking beer. Spiritually speaking, mixed wine is a figure of speech referring to a mixture of truth and falsehood. As with someone who becomes inebriated,

there are negative consequences for those who “linger long” over falsehood. It affects their perception of reality.

The Bible says this wine, which represents the doctrines of demons, bites like a serpent. Its poison causes you to speak “perverse things” which means “to overturn truth, to pervert it.” The perversion in the church today and the deceitful overturning of truth is an obvious indicator that we have been snake bit. Also, like those in a drunken stupor, your eyes will behold “strange things.” Over the years, my wife and I have witnessed some strange things in meetings said to be in God's name. Now we know why.

The phrase “strange things” in Proverbs 23 is defined as “to turn aside, to commit adultery, a strange woman, a harlot.” The in taking of *mixed wine* (truth and falsehood) is comparable to the man who turns aside to commit adultery. In the end, like an alcoholic or a drug addict, its venomous poison actually causes you to seek more of that which is killing you. The result of a regular intake of mixed wine is a lifestyle of great delusion, leading to death.

After surviving a shipwreck, Paul, and those with him on the ship, swam to safety on the island of Malta. While gathering a bundle of sticks to put on the fire the local natives had started, a serpent came out because of the heat and bit Paul. Acts 28:3 states that it “fastened on his hand.” When the tribes people saw this they replied, *Undoubtedly this man is a murderer, and though he has been saved from the sea, justice has not allowed him to live.*

Verse 5 tells us that Paul then shook the creature off into the fire and suffered no harm. This is the desired fate of every demonic creature that attempts to bite the Lord's obedient children. We are to shake them off, not allowing them to stay attached, in our minds and hearts, where they can inflict great damage to us.

By detaching ourselves from them in obedience to God's word, their bite is ineffective due to the Lord's antidote injected from His righteous blood. In the end, the venomous teachings that have attempted to attach themselves through false teachers to God's obedient children will be shaken off and burned up, cast into the fire.

Paul used this same passage of Scripture in Numbers 21 while warning the church in Corinth, and us as well, stating in 1

Corinthians 10:9-12, *Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.*

Using Israel's rebellion during their wandering in the wilderness as an example for God's people today, Paul is clearly saying that Christians can fall through the bite of a serpent. He's not referring to a literal snake, but rather the venom of Satan and his demons.

He *strongly* warns us to be careful at the end of this age when there is a great increase in false signs, miracles, and wonders. We are to "take heed," which means "to look at, to see, to discern," lest we fall. The Greek for "fall" is the same Greek word used in Luke 10:18 (as we will see) for Satan falling. Jesus said in regards to what happened when He sent out the disciples with His authority, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning." In the end (Proverbs 23:29-35) we will either cause Satan to fall through our obedience, or we will fall with him.

In Deuteronomy 29 the Lord warns the children of Israel to keep the words of His covenant He was giving them in order to establish them as His people within the Promised Land they were about to enter. He warned them in verses 18-19, saying, *lest there shall be among you a man or woman, or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of those nations; lest there shall be among you a root bearing poisonous fruit and wormwood. And it shall be when he hears the words of this curse, that he will boast, saying, "I have peace though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart in order to destroy the watered land with the dry."*

The Hebrew for "poisonous fruit" is *ro'sh* [roshe]. It is defined as "generally poison (even of serpents), gall, venom, bitter." The Lord was telling them to guard their hearts lest they turned away from serving Him to serve the gods of the nations they were about to enter. It would literally affect the condition of the land.

Whenever we turn away from the Lord you can be sure you will experience a period of "dryness" in your life. There will be no life-giving rain from heaven until there is repentance. Without this, the

fruit of the Spirit dries up and withers away. The rivers of living water become nothing more than a dry creek bed.

The Hebrew for “wormwood” in verse 18 is “*la'anah*” [lah-an-aw']. It comes from an unused root supposed to mean “to curse.” It is associated with that which is accursed. Metaphorically, it means bitterness. When a person turns from the Lord to serve the so-called gods of his land, the idols of the world, you are opening your heart to the accursed venom of the serpent, Satan, which produces the poisonous fruit of bitterness in your life.

Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary describes wormwood as;

“any of several aromatic plants which yield a bitter, dark green oil. A woody shrub covered with small green leaves, with greenish-yellow flowers growing in clusters. Wormwood grows in the desert regions of Palestine and Syria. This plant is mentioned many times in the Bible. It had a bitter taste and a strong aroma (Jer. 9:15). Wormwood was used symbolically to refer to any calamity or bitter experience (Deut. 29:18; Proverbs 5:4; Amos 5:7; Rev. 8:10-11). An intoxicating drink could also be made from this plant (Lam. 3:15). Wormwood is sometimes translated as bitter weeds or hemlock (Amos 6:12), (KJV).”

Hebrews 12:15 says to Christians, *See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many are defiled.* The verses surrounding this passage exhort us to pursue holiness of life, reminding the “holy brethren” (Hebrews 3:1) that no immoral or godless person like Esau will inherit the blessing of the inheritance in Christ. He sold his birthright for a fleshly appetite. The warning is that it is possible for us to do the same. New Testament Christians can lose our inheritance in Christ, if we drift from the covenant boundaries, the holy standards, used by God to establish us as His people.

In Deuteronomy 32:24-33 the Lord is describing Israel's judgment for their unfaithfulness toward Him. One was the venom of serpents. By serving other gods they were said to be partaking from “the vine of Sodom, and the fields of Gomorrah,” whose grapes were poison and clusters were bitter. He also said their wine is the venom of serpents, and the deadly poison of cobras.

In Revelation 18:1-3, John describes the fall of Babylon. He says in verse 3, *For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality.* Her wine is the venomous poison of a harlot. It may taste sweet at first to your physical senses, but, according to Proverbs 7, following in the paths of a harlot leads to destruction.

This is why the Lord strongly warns HIS PEOPLE to get out of Babylon in verses 4-5, as Lot did Sodom, before He judges her. If we do not repent and leave her midst of sensuality and immorality, we too will “receive of her plagues.”

A couple of years ago the Lord gave me a teaching about the so-called prosperity gospel so widely preached in our nation and around the globe. The main text was God's rebuke of His people's rebellion in Isaiah 65:11-17. Verses 11-12 say, *But you who forsake the Lord, who forget My holy mountain, who set a table for Fortune, and who fill cups with mixed wine for Destiny, I will destine you for the sword, and all of you will bow down to the slaughter. Because I called, but you did not answer; I spoke, but you did not hear. And you did evil in my sight and chose that which I did not delight.*

The NKJV says *who prepare a table for Gad, and who furnish a drink offering for Meni.* The Hebrew for “Fortune” in verse 11 is *gad* [gawd] which means “fortune,” or “good fortune.” The Hebrew for “Destiny” is “*meni*” [men-ee] which is defined as “fate,” or “fortune.” They were actual heathen deities the Jews worshipped in Babylonia.

This passage speaks of the mixed wine, or mixed word of truth and falsehood partaken among those who are seeking after personal fame and fortune. The Proverbs 23 passage we discussed earlier and this passage are the only two places in the Bible that use this Hebrew word. Both are in a negative manner.

Again, “Gad” (fortune) and “Meni” (destiny, or fate) were pagan gods the Jews worshiped in Babylonia. Remember, Babylon means “confusion,” or “confusion by *mixing*.” These heathen deities are still being worshiped in the church today!

The “prosperity gospel” is the present day manifestation of these demonic spirits. If they remain unrepentant, these false

teachers/prophets who promote this deception will be slain by the Lord (see Isaiah 65:15).

I believe there will soon be a Mount Carmel showdown between the modern day prophets of Baal in our nation who have exported our harlotries around the world and are leading God's people astray, and the Elijah-like prophets. Amongst a remnant, the pure, unadulterated altar of God is being restored.

Many Christians have been injected with the poison of Satan while carousing (fellowshipping) in spiritual "Sodom," causing spiritual paralysis and blindness. Having at first been given eyes to see and ears to hear, they no longer see or hear. They walk as Israel in the stubbornness of their heart, deceived into thinking through deceptive spirits and doctrines of demons that, while in rebellion, they have peace with no concern for judgment. The false prophets given over to the power and authority of the scarlet beast cry out "Peace, peace!" when there is no peace.

The Lord cried out to His people in Jeremiah 23:14-20 in regards to their apostasy. He said, *Also among the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing: the committing of adultery and walking in falsehood; and **they strengthen the hands of evildoers**, so that no one has turned back from his wickedness. All of them have become to me like Sodom, and her inhabitants like Gomorrah. Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets, "Behold, **I am going to feed them wormwood and make them drink poisonous water**, for from the prophets of Jerusalem pollution has gone forth into all the land.*

*Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you. They are leading you into futility; they speak a vision of their own imagination, not from the mouth of the LORD. They keep saying to those who despise me, 'The LORD has said, 'You will have peace'; and as for everyone who walks in the stubbornness of his own heart, they say, 'Calamity will not come upon you.' But who has stood in the council of the LORD, that he should see and hear His word? Who has given heed to His word and listened? Behold, the storm of the LORD has gone forth in wrath, even a whirling tempest; it will swirl down on the head of the wicked. The anger of the LORD will not turn back until He has performed and carried out the purposes of His heart; **in the last days you will clearly understand it.**"*

Acts 8:18-23 describes an encounter Peter had with a new convert. When Simon the sorcerer saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of hands by the apostles, he offered them money for this authority. Peter said to him, *May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! You have no part or portion in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity.*

This believer in Christ had no part or portion with Him, even though he had believed and been baptized! This won't fit the theology of many Christians who have also been stung by the serpent's deceptive tail of falsehood. He was not ready to receive the Spirit, still being held captive to the gall of bitterness and the bondage of iniquity. Simon still needed to get set free from the fruit of the serpent's venom in his life lest he perish **AFTER** turning.

This is the New Testament warning given through Jude 5 where he says *Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all, that the Lord, **AFTER SAVING** a people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.* He "saved" them, set them free from the bondage of Egypt, and then destroyed them for unbelief. They had become unbelieving believers, not standing firm until the end (Matthew 10:22, 24:13).

John speaks in Revelation of a book in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne that was sealed up with seven seals. The seventh seal involved the seven angels who stand before God. Seven trumpets were given to them. Chapter eight, verses 10-11, says, *The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water-- the name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter.*

The Greek for "bitter" is *pikraino* [pik-rah'-ee-no]. It means "to embitter, to exasperate, to visit with bitterness, to grieve (deal bitterly with)." Is this a literal star that falls out of the sky or a figure of speech describing some being who is cast out of the heavenly realm, bringing bitterness with him to destroy mankind?

Satan's Fall

Maybe it's both. I'm not sure of the first, but am very convinced of the latter per the previously discussed Scriptures.

Because of the deception adhered to by God's people in the church today, many will fall away in bitterness when things don't occur as they have been taught. They will simply curse God and die.

Chapter 7

Two Signs From Heaven

In Revelation 12 John describes two distinct signs that appear in heaven. The first, in verses 1-2, is a woman who cries out, being in labor and in pain, about to give birth to a male child who will rule all the nations with a rod of iron. This son that Satan unsuccessfully tries to kill is caught up to God and to His throne, the place of ruling authority. He is raised from earth up to heaven.

Who is this woman that gave birth? She is said to be *clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars*. Because of the twelve stars, most would say this refers to Israel, the nation Christ was born into. I think this speaks of both physical Israel through whom Jesus Christ was born, and spiritual Israel made up of both Jew and Gentile who have been born again through the power of the Holy Spirit, thereby sharing in the First-born Son's glory. Being clothed with the radiance of the Son, they walk with Him in His authority, reigning with Him on His throne.

In describing our sonship in Christ, Paul says in Galatians 4:4-5, But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, so that He might redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. This is referred to as "sonship."

The woman was Mary, the favored one of God, who gave birth to Jesus Christ. In the fullness of time, the first witness of Israel's salvation was placed before them, and they rejected Him.

When the fullness of the Gentiles has been entered into at the end of this age (Romans 11:25-27), again in the *fullness* of time, the second witness will be placed before Israel. It will not be just one human body, as Jesus was, filled with the glory of God, but rather many “sons of God” that have been conformed to His image. At this time their partial hardening will be removed and all Israel, the Israel of God (Galatians 6:16) made up of both Jews and Gentiles, will be saved.

The righteous “Mary” amongst God’s people who has also found favor with Him will once again be used to give birth to a “male child”, to those born in the image of the Son, Jesus Christ. They will be *caught up* to the Lord in the air (Rev. 12:5), the rightful place of His throne where Satan now resides due to mankind’s fall, where they will rule the nations with Christ through His uncontestable authority.

Actually, I believe that the “Mary’s” of God have been the ones since the birth of the church in Acts at Pentecost to pass on the righteous seed of Jesus through mankind until the end of this age.

The Greek for “caught up” is *harpazo* [har-pad'-zo] which is defined as “to seize, to carry off by force, to claim for oneself eagerly.” It’s taken from a word that means “to take for oneself, to prefer, to choose, to elect to office.” Paul used this Greek word in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 concerning the coming of the Lord. He says, *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel* [this is Michael who defeats Satan in Revelation 12:7-9], *and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be **caught up** [harpazo] together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord.*

What Paul is describing here is the catching up of the male child in Revelation 12. This is not the well-entrenched doctrine of demons called “The Rapture,” but rather the exalting of the many-membered sons (Romans 12:4-5) who have gained the glory of their Head, Jesus Christ. They’re the chosen ones, the elect of the Lord who have been raised up to a place of ruling authority in the heavenly realm, dethroning Satan in the “air.” They have willingly chosen Him as Lord of their hearts, so He has chosen them to rule and reign with Him. At this time Michael and his angels will have

the privilege of defeating Satan and his angels, casting him down to the earth.

If you believe the “catching up” of the sons of God is the rapture of the church instead of the *seizing of the serpent by the tail* through the authority of Jesus Christ, you will be unprepared and uninvolved with the final assault to cast Satan from his place in “the air.” You will never hear the call of the Lord in this appointed time of history to purify your heart by faith in preparation to rise up at the end of this age and reach out, as He directs His hand of authority within His Body, seizing the serpent by the tail and hurling him down.

Healing The Withered Hand

In Mark 3:1-5, Jesus demonstrated His authority by healing a man's withered hand. It says that Jesus *entered again into a synagogue; and a man was there with a withered hand. And they [the Pharisees] were watching Him to see if He would heal him on the Sabbath, in order that they might accuse Him. And He said to the man with the withered hand, “Rise and come forward!” And He said to them, “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to kill?” But they kept silent. And after looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored.*

I see in this a picture of the restoration of spiritual authority that is presently taking place amongst the Body of Christ. Throughout the Scriptures, the hand is a representation of the power and authority of God. He told this man the same thing He told Moses when he grasped the serpent; “Stretch out your hand.” At the command of the Lord the withered hand of authority will be fully restored to His people. This group of restored believers will then be used to reach out and grasp the serpent by the tail.

Right after these verses, in Mark 3:13-15, Jesus summons His “hand picked” group to Himself. It says that Jesus *went up to the mountain and summoned those whom He Himself wanted, and they came to Him. And He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him, and that He might send them out to preach, and to have authority to cast out the demons.*

When they heard the call, they came to the place of the Lord's choosing (see Deuteronomy 12:5) where they received personal instruction in His presence before being sent out to preach with authority. There is a group of unknown servants being trained by God right now. When they are sent out by their Master, everything will change.

As it was with Jesus, the people will be amazed at their teaching. It will not be like the majority of our present high-profile religious leaders, but rather it will come with the true power and authority of Almighty God. Their message and their preaching will not be spoken with persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power so that people's faith might not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God (1 Corinthians 2:1-5).

Jesus said in Matthew 11:12, *From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men **lay hold of*** [*harpazo*- "caught up" in Revelation 12:5) *it*. Jesus speaks in this passage of a forceful seizing of the kingdom of heaven by strong men. God is preparing them in this day as he did with Moses.

Those who respond to the present call of the Lord to "come up higher" through consecration, spending time in His presence, learning His ways instead of man's and the devil's, will be the ones He sends out at the end of this age for the last great harvest of souls on earth (see Romans 10:13-15).

They will forcefully seize the serpent, taking full authority over him in Christ's name, while overcoming him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony gained through joining Christ in His cross. You will recognize them by the authority of the Lord in their lives, not by the titles man gives them. He will lead them in His victory.

Chapter 8

The Second Sign

The second sign in Revelation 12:3 is a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, upon whose heads were seven diadems. This is also the scarlet beast referred to in Revelation 17 upon whom Babylon sits. The tail of this multi-headed dragon is said to sweep away a third of the stars of heaven, throwing them down to the earth.

The definition in Greek for “swept away” is “to draw, drag, haul.” As previously stated, Satan’s desire is to draw us away through lies and deception from obedience to Christ.

John specifically tells us in this passage that it’s the tail of the dragon that is inflicting great damage. What is the significance of the tail and, practically speaking, what does it look like to grasp it?

In Revelation 9 John speaks of the fifth of seven trumpets that will sound. He tells of a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth that was given the key of the bottomless pit. He opened the pit releasing locusts that had power like scorpions. They were permitted to torment everyone on earth who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads.

Verse 10 says, *And they have tails like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men for five months. Their king over them is the angel of the abyss. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon which means “destruction.” In the Greek he has the name Apollyon which means “destroyer.”*

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Verses 13-21 describe what takes place when the sixth trumpet sounds. Four angels who are bound at the Euphrates River are released. Verse 15 says they kill a third of mankind. He talks of horses who have power *in their mouths and in their tails; for **their tails are like serpents** and have heads; and with them they do harm*. In both of these cases John is using the tail as a description of something he is seeing that has the power to cause great harm to mankind.

Exposing The Tail

I believe Isaiah 9:15-16 tells us what and who the tail is. In speaking of God's judgment against apostate Israel, Isaiah declares, *The head is the elder and honorable man, and **the prophet who teaches falsehood is the tail**. For those who guide this people are leading them astray; and those who are guided by them are brought to confusion*. The Hebrew for confusion is *bala* [baw-lah']. It means "to destroy, to be swallowed up, to engulf, to eat up."

False prophets are described as the tail. They are the ones who guide God's people into confusion, into a place of destruction. If they are your leader, they will eat you up. If God is your leader, like Aaron your staff will consume them.

Catching the serpent's tail is reaching out through the direction and authority of Christ, subduing the false prophets who are the mouthpiece for Satan. In Exodus 7:12 when Aaron threw down his staff against the wise men and the sorcerers it says, *For each one threw down his staff and they turned into serpents. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs*.

The Hebrew for "swallowed up" is the same word interpreted as "confusion" in Isaiah 9:16. It means that, through the power and authority of God, Aaron destroyed the false prophets. He ate them up... literally!

Peter describes in 2 Peter 2:12-15 those who have left the "straight way," the way of following Christ, wandering off the path of righteousness and obedience. They have jumped the fence bordering the corral of God's dealings, despising the confining restraints of the Holy Spirit on their flesh. Instead, they have chosen to indulge their sinful appetites on the tempting lush fields

of immediate self-gratification that lie outside the boundary established by the Lord. In so doing they now serve a new master, the devil, who uses them to spread his destructive doctrines of demons.

Peter says in verse 12, *But these men blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like brute beasts, creatures of instinct, born only to be **caught and destroyed*** [as Moses did with the serpent in Exodus 4:1-5], *and like beasts they too will perish.*

The Greek for “brute” is *alogos* [al'-og-os] which means “irrational, contrary to reason, absurd.” They have become comparable to a wild beast. Pursuing the deceptions of Satan, they have foolishly turned away from following Christ, choosing instead to fulfill their fleshly desires to their own destruction.

Interestingly, the Greek for “perish” at the end of verse 12 is defined as “to shrivel or wither, to spoil or to ruin, to destroy; in an ethical sense, to corrupt or deprave.” This entire chapter is a warning from Peter in regards to the rise of false prophets within the church who will be used by Satan to destroy the faith of many. God's true prophets will reach out in the authority of God, catching the tail of the serpent which we now know is the false prophet, and destroy them.

Revelation 12:15-16 says *So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth* [his mouth is the false prophets who spew out his lies] *like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away* [which means “overwhelmed by a stream”] *by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.* The Greek for “swallowed up” is *katapino* [kat-ap-ee'-no]. It means “to drink down, to devour, to swallow down, to destroy.”

This is a flood of all types of demonic lies, counterfeits, and manifestations. The good news from Isaiah 59:19 is, *When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him. Hallelujah!*

The way of escape from all this deception is revealed in John 16:13 which says, *But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.*

As the end of this age draws near there appears to be two distinct paths that *all* people will choose; either the path of *all* truth found in Jesus Christ, or the path of *all* lies found in the devil.

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:54-56, *But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up [katapino; same as Revelation 12:16] in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.*

This all speaks of the perfecting of the believers at the end of this age when we will have finally gained the glory of God. Sin will have no more dominion over us at all. We will once and for all be set free from the serpent nature that has harassed and tormented us since mankind's fall in the Garden of Eden.

A promise of this is revealed within Revelation 7:4-8 which describes the sealing of 144,000 from every tribe of the sons of Israel before the judgment of the earth and the sea. Dan is excluded from the list. In his place the tribe of Manasseh is named.

In his book "From Tent To Temple," George Warnock states;

"Why is Manasseh mentioned as well as Joseph? For the line of Joseph includes both Ephraim and Manasseh. I can only conclude that God is showing us that in this new overcoming Israel, the 'serpent' nature has finally been eradicated, for of Dan it was said, 'Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path' (Genesis 49:17). And by inserting Manasseh God is showing how there has come into the midst of His people total deliverance from the serpent in the sin-conscience, for Manasseh means 'cause to forget.' This new Israel has the fruitfulness of Joseph through Ephraim his son, which means, 'double-fruitfulness.' But to come to this there has to be a Manasseh, a forgetting of 'those things which are behind.' We cannot come into the place of total victory in Christ until there has been a cleansing and a purging; not only of the serpent of Dan, but from the very remembrance of it all. The serpent of our fallen nature, with all its shame, its frustrations, its failures, is completely swallowed up by the rod of Aaron (which became a serpent even as Christ was made sin for us)."

Hebrews 2:14-15 says, *Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power* ["force, strength, power, dominion"] *of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.*

The Greek for "powerless" is *katargeo* [kat-arg-eh'-o]. It's defined as "to render idle, unemployed, inactivate, or inoperative; to deprive of force, influence, or power." As we take up our cross and follow Jesus (Matthew 16:24), we will walk in His victory over the devil. Like Jesus, we are loosed from the power of death, depriving Satan of his force and influence over us. We no longer fear death, knowing Jesus will save us. By definition he becomes *unemployed* in the business of our souls!

1 Peter 5:8 says *Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.* The Greek for devour is the same word interpreted "swallowed up" in 1 Corinthians 15:54 and Revelation 12:16. The driving force for Satan is his insatiable desire to destroy mankind.

In verse 9 Peter goes on to say *But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.* We are called to stand firm in Christ against the devil, knowing that we are not alone in this struggle. Daily, our Christian brothers and sisters around the world face the same warfare.

Jesus said in Luke 10:19, *Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall injure you.* The Lord is telling us that, in Him, neither the serpent's bite nor the scorpion's sting will affect or harm us. In Christ, walking by His Spirit, we have His authority over them, trampling them under our feet.

In fact, the Greek word for tread is *pateo* [pat-eh'-o] and is, according to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, from a derivative probably of *paio* [pah'-yo] which means "to strike, to hit; specifically to sting (as a scorpion)." Through the power and authority of Christ, instead of them stinging us, we will sting them. Amen!

Chapter 9

War In Heaven

Revelation 12:7 declares there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels were waging war with the dragon and his angels. In this battle, the dragon, “the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan,” along with his angels, are not strong enough and lose their place in heaven. As previously discussed in chapter 7, they are then thrown down to the earth.

The result of this battle is that Satan goes the opposite way than the male child (Rev. 12:5) who is *caught up* to God and His throne. The “prince of the power of the air” (Ephesians 2:2) will finally be dethroned. One loses his authority in the heavens, while the other gains it.

As stated earlier, I believe this final transfer in authority is when the Body of Christ enters what the Bible refers to as “the fullness” of Christ. It’s the revealing of the sons of God, the male child, which all creation longs for. They have, at this time, grown up into Christ who is the Head, gaining His glory and, therefore, His authority to cast out Satan from his place of ruling over fallen mankind in the heavenly realm.

I see the male child raised up to God and his throne as the accumulation of all the children of God, beginning with Christ our Head, born again through this age. As the Bible tells us, He is the “firstborn among many brethren” (Romans 8:29). At the end of this age we will be raised together, the dead in Christ first and than those who remain on the earth, to the place prepared by the Lord

for us where we shall forever be with Him in, sharing in His glory (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

Some might say this Scripture was already fulfilled when Christ was born, died, and raised to the right hand of the Father. It was in part, but we have not yet seen it in its entirety, its fullest measure. In regards to the authority of Christ, Hebrews 2:8 says, *Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. **But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.*** Remember, this was written after His death and resurrection.

The Greek for “subjected” is *hupotasso* [hoop-ot-as'-so]. It means “to subordinate, to arrange under, to put in subjection.” One look at the chaos, destruction, and deception in this world proves that Satan has not yet been put in total subjection “under his feet.”

The feet are the portion of the body that touches the ground, the earth. Paul wrote in Romans 16:20, *And the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.* The time draws near when Satan will finally be crushed under the “feet” of the Body of Christ, thrown down to the earth under us. We will be raised up as our Head, Jesus Christ the Forerunner was. It is at this point that we have gained His glory, being fully conformed to His image.

In speaking of the day when the Lord will battle Jerusalem's foes, Zechariah 14:3-5 says, *Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. And in that day **His feet** will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. And you will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!* Is this literally the feet of Jesus, or is it speaking figuratively in regards to the portion of the Body of Christ that walks on the earth in the authority of the Lord? Could this be Christ in His Body? We will find out in the near future.

Jude 1:14-15 also refers to “holy ones” with Christ. He speaks about the return of the Lord to judge false teachers who have crept into the church, turning the grace of God into a license for

immorality while denying the lordship of Jesus Christ over His people. It says, *Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him."*

In Matthew 24 Jesus is describing to His disciples the signs of His coming and of the end of the age. He says in verses 29-31, *But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light* [remember the first sign in Revelation 12:1 of the woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet], *and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.*

Could the stars that have fallen, and the powers of the heavens that have been shaken, as well as the sign that appears in the sky be a direct reference to Revelation 12:1-9? I think so. This passage clearly says that it will take place after the tribulation. Jesus also speaks of the sign of the Son of Man that will appear in the sky. The word for sky is the same word interpreted "heaven" in Revelation 12:1 and 3. Again, these verses appear to be speaking of the same event.

Jude 13 describes false teachers in the church as *wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever*. The Greek for "wandering" is *planetes* [plan-ay'-tace]. It is described as "a wanderer, a rover (planet), figuratively an erratic teacher." Jude says that the black darkness has been reserved for them.

One of the definitions for "blackness" refers to darkened eyesight or blindness. Like the judgment of the roving, sensual mob that pressed hard against Lot in Sodom, false teachers will also be unable to find the "doorway," who is Christ. The blindness sent by God sealed their doom in the destructive judgment that was about to be executed on Sodom.

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The blinding of all wandering stars (i.e. false teachers) in our land will be a sign that the judgment of the Lord draws near. In contrast, the righteous Lots of our day will also be removed from the accursed places the Lord is about to destroy.

Crushing Satan

In Luke 10 Jesus sends out seventy disciples two by two ahead of Him to every place He was going to come. Upon their return He was filled with great joy, telling them He saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning. This was, by the way, well after His birth and Satan was still in the heavenly realm. When we rise up in the authority of Christ, Satan falls. When we fall in disobedience to Christ (as Adam and Eve did), Satan rises up over us. He feeds on the fallen nature of mankind.

In Genesis 3, when the Lord God cursed the serpent who deceived Eve, He said *And dust you shall eat all the days of your life*. To Adam He said, *You are dust, and to the dust you shall return*. I see the dust as a representation of the fallen nature of Adam. It's what the serpent feeds on. When there is no dust, no fallen nature to devour because of the authority bestowed through the life-giving spirit of the last Adam, Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:45), the serpent's life-giving source is removed and he will fall.

Jesus told the disciples in Luke 10:19, *Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall injure you*. The Greek for tread is *pateo* [pat-eh'-o]. It means "to trample, to tread under foot, to crush with the feet." The Lord is telling us that neither the serpents bite nor the scorpion's sting will affect those who have been given His authority in their lives. We will, in fact, trample them under foot.

Paul says in Romans 16:17-20, *Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them for such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good, and innocent in what is evil. And*

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the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

Unlike in the garden where the serpent deceptively told Eve in order to be wise you must partake of evil (see Genesis 3:1-5); Paul says in verse 19, being aware of evil, put into practice good and flee from, or be “unmixed” from evil. When Paul says that God will soon crush Satan under your feet, does he mean that when we do what is good and avoid evil that He will eventually crush him at that moment of trial in your life, or at the end of this age? I think it means both.

When we are being harassed by Satan, say through a continuing temptation, if we will look to the Lord and do good God will soon come and crush him around us. Ultimately, at the end of this age, Satan will also be destroyed, crushed under the feet of the Body of Christ that has risen up over him. To crush Satan, therefore, is to stand in Christ's authority over him.

Chapter 10

Falling Stars

Another question that came to my mind was if the event described in Revelation 12:4 concerning falling stars from heaven takes place at the end of this age, which means angels have fallen away earlier in a separate rebellion, who then are these fallen stars? In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul, using the children of Israel that were destroyed in the wilderness because of disobedience as an example, warns Christians “upon whom the end of the ages have come” to take heed that we do not fall as they did.

Could this mean the fallen stars are the deceived teachers and their followers in the Body of Christ who are described in 1 Timothy 4:1 and 2 Thessalonians 2 as those who fall away from the faith in later times?

I believe the widely accepted teaching in regards to Satan's fall from being an angel of light is his deceptive diversion to keep us from seeing that the Bible is actually talking about God's rebellious children falling from their place in heaven with Christ, as angels once did. All falsehood keeps mankind, including God's people, in bondage with a false sense of security. The only thing it secures is Satan's dominion in the heavenly realm.

Understanding the truth about Satan's beginning will set us free from other lies associated with it. When we rise up in spirit and in truth at the end of this age, *in the true knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs*

to the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13), Satan will finally fall from heaven (the “air”), never to return.

The Bible says he will try once more to gain this place, but will be soundly thrashed. He will be bound for a thousand years during which we reign with Christ. Afterwards, he is released for a short period of time during which he again deceives the nations, inciting them to come against “the camp of the saints and the beloved city.” The Bible says that fire comes down from heaven and devours them (again, much like Aaron’s staff). It is at this point in time that Satan is finally destroyed, cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.

Falling Away From Christ

2 Peter 3:14-18 is filled with a few powerful Greek words, warning Christians to be on guard against falling away from Christ. Peter says, *Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things* [Peter is speaking in this passage of the coming “day of the Lord” and the events surrounding it], *be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, and regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable* [“vacillating”] *distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. You therefore, **beloved*** [this is an obvious reference to other Christians], *knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error* [this is the same Greek word used for “delusion” in 2 Thess. 2:11] *of unprincipled men, **you fall from your own steadfastness** [the NIV says “**from your secure position**”], but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*

The phrase “carried away” in verse 17 comes from the Greek word *sunapago* [soon-ap-ag'-o] which means “to lead away with or together; to experience with others the force of what carries away.” This implies that you can be swept away, or seduced, along with those whom you are associating. As I said earlier, Satan does not want us to understand that Christians can also fall through

rebellion from our position in Christ as angels did (Jude 1:6-7 and 2 Peter 2:1-4).

In order to solidify this deception in the minds of God's children he introduced the doctrine of demons called "eternal security," or "once saved always saved." There is eternal security in Christ, if we continue abiding in Him (John 15:6).

Basically, these doctrines state that a person who has been given and received the salvation knowledge of Jesus Christ, and then turns away in rebellion will still enter heaven. They say that a person can never fall from this condition. These verses alone say otherwise.

Another important word to define is "error." The Greek for this is *plane* [plan'-ay]. It is described as "a wandering, one led astray from the right way." Metaphorically speaking, it speaks of "a mental straying; an error, a wrong opinion relative to morals or religion." This describes those who wander from the paths of righteousness. They are led astray by deceitfulness or fraud.

Paul also warns us in 2 Peter 3:14-18 to be on guard from being swept away by the error, or lies, of *unprincipled men*, causing us to fall from our *secure position*. The Greek for "unprincipled" is *athesmos* [ath'-es-mos]. It denotes "one who breaks through the restraint of law and gratifies his lusts." In other words, he is a man of lawlessness, a son of destruction (2 Thessalonians 2:3).

Peter is clearly warning Christians to be careful lest we wander from the truth, fellowshiping with those walking in lawlessness, and fall from our steadfastness, our "secure position" in Christ. Understanding this truth will give us the reason why we need to work out our salvation with fear and trembling (Phillipians 2:12-13). There is neither fear nor trembling if you believe you can never fall away with an apostate heart like Judas.

The word for "fall" is *ekipto* [ek-pip'-to]. It means "to lose, to fall from a position, to fall off, **to fall to the ground.**" Revealing a New Testament example of those who fall away from Christ, I wrote in my book "The Plague Of Abortion~ Babylon's Guilt Of Bloodshed";

"In Acts 8 we are given the account of Philip proclaiming Christ to the people in the city of Samaria. As they heard and saw the miraculous signs which he was doing in His name, many believed

and were baptized. Acts 8:9-11 states, 'But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, 'This man is the great power of God.' And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time.'

*The word 'astonished' is taken from the Greek word 'existemi'. It means 'to put out of wits, to throw out of position, to displace.' It is taken from two other words that denotes '**origin** (the point where action or motion proceeds), out of, away from,' and 'to set, to make firm, to stand.' **The two words imply a moving out of, or away from a firm position.** This defines the fruit of Simon the sorcerer's so called 'power of God.'*

He represents the deceived, false prophets of Babylon. Through their sorceries, or witchcraft, God's children are led away from their firm, secure position in Himself. This is the 'error of unprincipled men' spoken of earlier in 2 Peter 3:17. The result of their teachings is the numerous amount of covenant breakers that now make up the church in America."

Within the same portion of the book I share another insight the Lord revealed to me in regards to falling away from Him that I think is also worth repeating here. It concerns those who, like the "unprincipled men" described in 2 Peter 3:14-18, break through the restraining barrier established by the Lord. I wrote;

"Deuteronomy 22:8 states, 'When you build a new house, make a parapet around your roof so that you may not bring the guilt of bloodshed on your house if someone falls from the roof.' According to Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, a parapet is a railing, wall, or latticework around the edge of the flat roofs of Palestinian houses, required by Mosaic law as a protection against accidents.

A responsibility of someone building a new house was to place a railing around the roof to protect others. If you did not, you would be guilty of innocent bloodshed. You may say 'That's not fair! I didn't push them over the edge. They fell off because of their own carelessness.' Yes, they will be held responsible for their own

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choices, but this reinforces that we are indeed our brother's keeper.

God holds His family responsible for one another's welfare. In God's eyes we are guilty if we are not watching out for our brother and sister, making it more difficult for them to 'fall away' from God's house through the establishment of a railing of truth. In Philippians 2:3-4 Paul admonishes us to 'Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.'

This is why judgment begins in the house of God. The world is deceived, being held captive by Satan to do his will. The church on the other hand, is held to a much higher standard. We have been given revelation by the Holy Spirit concerning God's standard. Therefore, to whom much is given, much is required (Luke 12:48).

I believe this represents an important building code for God's house. We need a 'railing' [of truth!], so to speak, around the periphery. If someone gets too close to the edge with nothing set in place to restrain them, they may fall (away) to their demise. It is our responsibility within His house to build according to the plans laid out for us in His word. Paul warns us in 1 Corinthians 3 to be careful how we build upon the foundation of Jesus Christ that he laid. He says in verse 13 that 'each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.'

The wall around the edge is the restraining force of truth God wants us to establish..."

The Final Apostasy

In 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 Paul tells the brethren in the church that the coming of the Lord and our being gathered together as one in true unity will be preceded by a great falling away from the faith. This apostasy, which means a defection from the truth, will reveal the man of lawlessness, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

These “evildoers” within the Body of Christ have cast off the requirements of the holy covenant of Jesus Christ. They “took pleasure in wickedness” instead, breaking through the barrier of His righteousness. They fall away from the truth, exalting themselves as God by seating themselves on His throne within their hearts, to their own destruction.

The writer of Hebrews, in chapters 3 and 4, gives the “holy brethren” (Christians) a clear warning concerning unbelief. Hebrews 3:12 says, *Take care, **brethren**, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in **falling away*** [which means “to excite to revolt, to desert”] *from the living God*. An evil heart in a Christian that resists the consecrating work of the Holy Spirit is the incubator for the spirit of antichrist.

In speaking of the Sabbath rest of God, Hebrews 4:10-11 says, *For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. Therefore let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, **so that no one will fall**, through following the same example of disobedience.*

The example of disobedience in Hebrews was the children of Israel who died in the wilderness because of unbelief. The Bible says the word, the good news they heard, did not profit them because it was not united with faith. True faith involves good works. If you truly believe in something your actions will prove it. James 1:22 says, *Prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.*

He goes on in chapter 2, verses 14-26, speaking clearly in regards to faith and works. Verse 14 says, *What use it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him?* The obvious answer is “No.” Saving faith, a living faith, is one that involves works. Faith without works is useless (verse 20).

The majority of the church has gone too far in regards to the issue of works to the point where ANY mention of works of ANY type is immediately seen as heresy. If works are not important for salvation, why would James say without them you won’t be saved?

Most Christians have been taught that works play no part in our salvation. They base this on a couple of Scriptures that have been twisted by the devil. There is a difference between what the Bible

refers to as “works of the law” in Romans 3:28, and the works of faith in James 2:14 (also referred to in John 6:28 as “the works of God”). One is led by the will of man, the other by the Spirit of God.

The result of this teaching is that many of God's people have become lazy, not submitting to the leading of the Holy Spirit in their lives. They do not understand their part in finishing the works of Christ in their life so as to bring to completion His redemption. On the brink of disaster, they apathetically sit in their pews with a false sense of security. The Lord refers to them as foolish virgins.

The judgment of God, His dreadful day of vengeance and wrath on all evil draws near and many Christians are unprepared. They have become careless in their walks with the Lord, causing them to be spiritually deaf to what the Spirit is saying to the church in these last moments. Without repentance, sudden destruction is inescapable. They are the last-days apostates who, like Judas, will fall away from following Jesus Christ.

James 2:26 says, *For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.* The dead congregations throughout America are an outward sign of the dead faith without works they possess inwardly. They would rather be entertained than join Jesus on His cross. They are the sons of destruction in the Body of Christ who have enthroned themselves as God.

Hebrews 6:4-6 again warns us as Christians, *For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit [a non-Christian is NEVER called a “partaker of the Holy Spirit”!], and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have **fallen away**, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.*

How much clearer can this be! The author of Hebrews warns Christians over and over to take care lest **WE** be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin and defect from the kingdom of God.

This is why Hebrews 10:25-27 also exhorts us to *not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-- and all the more as you see the Day approaching* [the day of the Lord's righteous judgment]. *If we deliberately keep on sinning **after we have received the***

knowledge of the truth [again, by breaking through the barrier of truth established by God], *no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.* Many in the church scoff in arrogance when they hear this. Unfortunately for them, they will be swept away with the devil's tail of deceit, his river of falsehood, never to return.

Chapter 11

Paying Attention To Deceitful Spirits

Paul says in 1 Timothy 4:1-2, *But the Spirit explicitly* [“clearly”] *says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron.* Paul begins his discussion by letting us clearly know that there will be, per the revelation of the Holy Spirit, a falling away from the faith in the latter days. He says this will occur because they paid attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons. The Greek for paying attention is *prosecho* [pros-ekh'-o]. It means “to hold the mind towards, to apply oneself to, to adhere to.” It’s also defined as “to be given or addicted to, to devote thought and effort to.”

This all speaks of someone who turns his or her attention away from devotion to Christ and His truth, to walking in agreement with Satan’s thoughts and ideas. Paul warned us in 2 Corinthians 11:3-4, *But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you **receive** a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.*

The Greek for “receive” is *lambano* [lam-ban'-o] which means “to take, to get hold of, to make one's own.” Once the seduction of Satan in our thought life has been accepted as truth, we are given over in our hearts, quickly becoming addicted, so to speak (part of the definition for “paying attention” in 1 Timothy 4:1), to his false teachings. Acceptance of one lie leads to acceptance of other satanic lies. At this point you become wide open for any and all deceiving spirit's teachings.

Paul went further in 2 Timothy 4:3-4 saying, *For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.*

America has been inundated with these ear-tickling preachers who prophecy pleasant words to their congregations delight. Have a good band and tell people what they want to hear and you just might be able to start a mega-church in your town. These deceived mouthpieces for the devil have changed the message of truth, soothing the conscience of the foolish virgins that surround them.

In my book “Walking In The Light” I wrote the following in chapter six, “Witchcraft And The Growth Of A Disciple”;

“Romans 1:18 tells us, ‘The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness.’ When we, whether a Christian or not, engage in some form of wickedness, the truth that could set us free is powerless because of our rebellion against the commands of God. In the original Greek, the word interpreted ‘suppress’ means, ‘to hold back, to detain, to hinder the course or progress of.’ Sin and its affects on the spiritual body are similar to the affects of an addictive drug on the physical body. It interferes with the Holy Spirit's ministry of communicating the word from the Head, Jesus, with His Body, the church.

The messages He delivers are intended to mature us, conforming us to the image of Jesus Christ. At times He warns us to refrain from certain indulgences, while at other times urging us to get involved in a particular activity. Wicked, unrestrained behavior allows outside demonic influences to enter into our spiritual

neurological pathways, like an addictive drug, suppressing the power of the truth in our lives. The original message from the Head, Jesus, gets distorted, altered, or even lost as it makes its way through the Body of believers.

The process of carrying a message from nerve cell to nerve cell, across the synaptic gap between them, is performed by a chemical called a neurotransmitter. Drugs can interfere with just about every step in the work of neurotransmitters. These chemicals are produced within our body and stored in each nerve cell. Some are stored in the body of the cell, while others are stored near the end of a branch that extends away from the cell, called an axon, in a storage vesicle. They affect how the receiving nerve cell, or 'second messenger,' in the pathway will respond and react. The chemical and electrical changes that take place within it are determined by the type of neurotransmitter that is received. If you can change the neurotransmitter, you can change the original message, determining the response and outcome of the receiving cell...

The false word is like a false neurotransmitter in the body that affects the understanding and response of the "second messenger" to the message. As they continue to accept the "fine sounding arguments" of the deceived leader, not listening to the check of the Holy Spirit within them, their hearts are in danger of being given over to a state of no return. They are placed under the "spell" induced through the falsehood being declared in the name of the Lord, much like a drug addict is. False prophets are, in reality, practicing witchcraft in the house of God! If they do not repent, they will be exposed and destroyed by the Lord.

Satan has greatly infiltrated our ranks with his false doctrines. While the church was in a state of sleep induced by the practice of unrestrained wickedness, our enemy secretly introduced his doctrines. Demons now watch over their leader's word from the strongholds that have been firmly established right inside the sanctuary of the Lord. The result has been a great increase in dead religious rituals, totally void of the life of Christ. Like a drug addict, they crave more of that which is slowly killing them. The fruit of the enemy has infiltrated every denomination in one form or another. The "addicts" often go from meeting to meeting,

looking for another spiritual fix to satisfy their “unnatural” craving.”

In 2 Thessalonians 2 Paul teaches us concerning the coming of the Lord and the great falling away from the faith. He speaks of the mystery of lawlessness that is at work among the hearts of His people who will not stand firm, but *took pleasure in wickedness*. Because they will not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved, God sends a *strong delusion* upon them. This is said to be with *ALL the deception of wickedness* through Satan, with *ALL power and signs and false wonders*.

The Greek for “all” in verses 9 and 10 is *pas* [pas]. It is defined as “including all the forms of declension, everything, any, all, the whole, some of all types.” The church in America is now filled with “some of all types” of demonic counterfeits. Within some of the charismatic divisions in particular, any and all spiritual experiences and manifestations are, for the most part, accepted as from God. There seems to be very little discernment of spirits in these churches any more.

According to Webster's Dictionary the word declension is described as “a falling off or away, decline, deterioration.” The manifestation of all forms of evil deception in the church is proof that we are now in the great apostasy, the falling away from the faith, Paul spoke of.

According to James 3:13-16, bitter jealousy and selfish ambition (self-seeking) are doorways for Satan to enter in, bringing with him any and all sorts of destabilizing wickedness into the Body of Christ. James says with this heart in our midst there will be *disorder* [confusion and instability] and **EVERY** [our word “*pas*” again] **evil thing**.

The Greek for “bitter” also means, metaphorically speaking, “harsh, virulent.” Webster's Dictionary defines virulent as “1 (a) extremely poisonous or injurious; deadly (b) bitterly antagonistic or spiteful; full of hate and enmity; venomous; rancorous/ 2 Med. (a) violent and rapid in its course; highly malignant (b) able to overcome the natural defenses of the host; highly infectious.”

This sounds like those in 2 Timothy 2:17 whose godless chatter is said to spread like gangrene. The Greek for gangrene is defined as “a disease by which any part of the body suffering from

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inflammation becomes so corrupted that, unless a remedy be seasonably applied, the evil continually spreads, attacks other parts, and at last eats away the bones.”

Unless this demonic venom is restrained by the Holy Spirit through enforcing church discipline, God's orderly manner prescribed in His word, it will rapidly spread through the Body of Christ, corrupting and destroying its members. This is why the church in America is now so weak and sickly, about to die. Most congregations are already under the judgment of the Lord. Having at one time been given eyes to see and ears to hear, they no longer see or hear the Lord.

Chapter 12

Jerking And Holy Laughter

The parable of Jesus in Matthew 13:24-30 describes the tares that will be separated from the wheat in God's field at the end of this age, during the last day harvest of the earth. As they mature it becomes obvious which is which, making it easier to remove. So it is spiritually. The reapers will first bind the tares for a fiery judgment, and then gather the wheat.

False wheat (i.e. tares) is a result of false teaching. According to Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words defines tares as being "poisonous to man and herbivorous animals, producing sleepiness, nausea, convulsions and even death." The acceptance of false teachings, the intaking of the poisonous seeds produced within tare-like teachings, has resulted in spiritual sleepiness within the majority of God's people.

The parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25:1-13 gives a picture of what it will be like at the return of Jesus Christ at the end of this age. It says while the bridegroom was delaying that they all got drowsy and began to sleep. The spiritual apathy within the church in America is proof that we have accepted and consumed the poisonous seeds of false teaching.

The good news is that five virgins, when they heard the midnight call, got the oil they needed right before the bridegroom appeared. The oil is the Holy Spirit poured out for those in the church who walk with a repentant heart. Only those in the church who hear the

midnight call to repent, and then reject the tare teachings that have permeated our midst, will wake up and be ready for Christ's return.

Another side affect of partaking the poisonous seeds of tares is convulsions. According to Webster's Dictionary, a convulsion is "a violent, involuntary contraction or spasm of the muscles; a violent fit of laughter; any violent disturbance, as a social upheaval or an earthquake." This describes the fruit of many so-called revival meetings in recent times within North America.

There are those who twitch and jerk in an "involuntary contraction or spasm of the muscles," claiming that the Holy Spirit is producing these movements. You now know why they jerk in a convulsion like manner and where it truly comes from.

So-called "holy laughter" is also nothing more than the result of ingesting poisonous teachings. It is venom from the serpent, Satan, which is causing these unsettling, abnormal manifestations in the Body of Christ. The final affect of not being set free from the poison of tares is death. We must wake up from our sleep and shake them off as Paul did the serpent in Acts 28, separating ourselves as far as possible from the doctrines of demons.

Mark 1:23-28 tells of the time when Jesus cast out an unclean spirit from a man who was in the synagogue. When the demon saw Christ he cried out, saying, *What do we have to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are-- the Holy One of God!*

Verse 25 says that Jesus rebuked him, saying, *Be quiet, and come out of him!* The demon then threw him into convulsions and came out of him. The Greek word for convulsions is *sparasso* [spar-as'-so]. It means "to mangle, to convulse, to tear."

The demon in this passage threw the man into convulsions, tearing at his insides, when commanded by Jesus to come out. The involuntary convulsions (jerking) manifested in some churches is a manifestation of a divisive, *tearing* demon. It attaches itself to those who have attached themselves to false teachings.

These people receive them because they have a tear in their heart. They have a divided heart toward Christ and are therefore open to any and all deception. Tare-like teachings produce a tear in the Body of Christ. Only through a spirit of repentance will we be able to receive the knowledge of the truth that can set us free.

Paul tells us in Romans 12:2 to *not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind*. Through acceptance of Christ as our Lord and Savior we are given His mind through the Holy Spirit. Our mind, our patterns of thinking that have been controlled by the devil are now being made new according to God's word of truth. Adhering to His word sets us free. Rebellion against His word, and therefore applying our will to Satan's thoughts, makes us fall away from God every time.

Paul says in 2 Corinthians 2:10-11 that we are to walk in forgiveness toward others *in order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes*. The Greek for schemes is *noema* [no'-ay-mah]. It means "a mental perception, an evil purpose, the intellect, the mind." The mind is a part of the soul of man. Whichever spirit controls the mind also controls the body.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 says, *Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*. That is the order of sanctification. The human body responds to the soul, which responds to the spirit.

Apart from Christ our spirits are said to be dead, controlled by Satan's kingdom of darkness. When the Lord's kingdom of light comes within, the process of renewal begins. Satan continuously tries to interfere with this ministry of the Holy Spirit within a Christian. From experience he understands very well the damage that occurs to his plans when a Christian walks in obedience to the Holy Spirit. The more we become conformed to the image of Christ, allowing His light to shine within us, the less darkness there is for the devil to operate within. Light always exposes what lurks in the darkness of our hearts and minds.

Every follower of Jesus Christ must learn to guard their heart from rebelling against the purging process of the Holy Spirit. In the Bible, rebellion is associated with witchcraft. Samuel's decree against Saul in 1 Samuel 15:23 states, *For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he also has rejected you from being king* (NKJ). We too can be rejected from sharing the throne of Jesus' authority over the darkness when we reject His word of truth.

This is what Paul describes in 2 Thessalonians 2. He says that the *lawless one*, the person who rebels against the lordship of Jesus Christ over them, will, instead of being *caught up* with God to share His throne, be *caught up with **all the deception of wickedness** for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.* They chose the momentary pleasure of indulging in wickedness rather than exercising the fruit of self-control with the help of the Holy Spirit. Like King Saul, they rebelled against obeying God after receiving the knowledge of salvation. The knowledge of this truth is there to produce the proper fear of the Lord so as to keep us within the boundaries of God's house.

The Greek for deceitful in 1 Timothy 4:1 is *planos* [plan'-os]. It's defined as "wandering, roving, misleading, leading into error." These false teachers are the "wandering stars" spoken of in Jude 13 and the discussion earlier in regards to Revelation 12. Demonic doctrines are taught by deceived teachers, hypocritical liars who believe they have the truth, but instead possess a seared conscience.

Their moral consciousness, through acceptance of Satan's lies, has been cauterized, causing them to be insensitive to what is right and wrong, true and false. The church in America has been leavened with these teachers.

John said in Revelation 18:1-2, *I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory. And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! And she has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit..."*

Babylon, the harlot bride of Christ that prostituted themselves to the world, will be swept away from their place through the tail of the serpent; the lies of deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons. Like Eve, Satan enticed them through their non-crucified fleshly passions and desires which they accepted as the truth.

We need each other in this battle. It's not easy which is why so many defect from following Christ to His cross. Our flesh will look for an alternate route which the devil is more than willing to provide. He has already felt the power of Calvary. The Holy Spirit reveals truth to encourage us to stand firm, always abiding in

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Christ. He promises to help us if we will just look to Him in our time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16).

According to Revelation 17:3, Babylon sits upon *a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns*. This same beast, having seven heads and ten horns, is also in Revelation 12:3. He is said to be Satan, the one thrown down to the earth. Babylon falls because Satan, the one she is seated upon, falls. They fall together because they are one in heart and mind. Satan's rule, his governmental authority, is what guides her. She "sits upon" his kingdom of darkness.

The tail wags at the heads command. Fallen angels and unregenerate mankind are under Satan's authority. The only way to escape his venomous doctrines is through Jesus Christ. He may bruise our heel, but we will crush his head. The Bible proclaims that, through the authority of the Lord's truth, we will seize the serpent and cast him down. Amen!

Babylon the harlot's fall will only serve to reveal the sons of God who will rise up and dethrone Satan. As in the days of Noah, that which judges the wicked (the flood) is also that which God will use to elevate His sons and daughters.

Satan will fall once and for all by the power of God working in and through His obedient servants. In fact, Babylon's fall will be contrasted with the true sons and daughters of God's exaltation as they gain His glory. This is what's being described in Revelation 12. Jesus, the Forerunner, has gone ahead of us, preparing the place of our inheritance in Himself. We will soon be *caught up* to this place in the air where we will forever be with Him. Praise the Lord!

Chapter 13

Lucifer... “Light-Bearer”?

Two Scriptures from the Old Testament are used when defending the position that Satan is a fallen angel. They are Isaiah 14:1-23, mainly verse 12, and Ezekiel 28:1-19. We need to take a look at both passages to see if they are legitimate.

Isaiah 14 is a future promise of deliverance from the cruel oppression of Babylon over Israel. Verses 3-4 declare that when the Lord gives them rest from their pain, turmoil, and harsh service in which they had been enslaved, they will take up this taunt, this proverb, against the king of Babylon. The taunt goes on through verse 23.

In the King James Version verse 12 says “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!” This is the only time the word “Lucifer” is used which, by the way, is only in the KJV and the NKJV of the Bible. It’s actually the Latin name for the planet Venus which is named after the Roman goddess of love and beauty. After the Moon, it is the brightest natural object in the night sky. Venus reaches its maximum brightness shortly before sunrise (right before the dawning of a new day), or shortly after sunset, for which reason it has been known as the Morning Star or Evening Star.

Lucifer is not in the NAS or the NIV versions of the Bible. Instead they use the actual Hebrew definition for the word *heylel* [hay-lale'] which is “morning star” (NIV) and “star of the

morning" (NAS). These two versions also add "son of the dawn" after the morning star. If it's not Satan being described than who is it? In a future chapter it will be extremely clear that the "son of the dawn" is definitely not referring to the devil.

I see this as a hidden reference to those in the harlot church (i.e. Babylon) that have enthroned themselves as king and lord within their own hearts. Unlike Satan, they at one time bore the Light of Christ within their hearts (Hebrews 6:4), but fell through acceptance of the devil's lies, his venomous false doctrines, just as Adam and Eve did in the garden.

Remember, the Bible says their judgment was that they were cast out of God's presence. This is what will happen at the end of this age, according to Revelation 12, when Satan sweeps away a third of "the stars of heaven" which, I believe, represents fallen Christians in the great falling away from the faith, the apostasy, mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2.

The Hebrew word *heylel* is defined as "light bearer, the shining one, the morning star." There seems to be a big contradiction between what we think of when we hear the name Lucifer and this definition.

As I previously stated, Paul says in 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, *For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds.* Again, it appears that Satan would like to disguise himself, making us think that at one time he was actually an angel of light.

Isaiah 14 speaks of this king's desire to be like God. This was the serpent's temptation to Eve in the garden (Genesis 3:5). Verses 13-14 say, *But you said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."*

Five times the king said "I will." This matter of the will is the bottom-line for all of mankind. It will either be the will of God being manifested through our lives for His glory, or the will of Satan enticing us to assert ourselves in self-glorification to our destruction.

Interestingly enough, this thought from the heart of the king of Babylon is the same thought expressed in the New Testament of the hearts of those in spiritual Babylon. As we already discussed, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 speaks of the heart of those who will fall away from the faith in the great apostasy right before the return of Christ. Like the king of Babylon, they are the light bearers gone bad, the “sons of destruction.”

They too are guilty of self-exaltation, taking their seat in the temple of God within the heart of man, displaying themselves as being God. They are kings in their own eyes, having rebelled against the Lordship of Jesus Christ over them. Because they would not receive the love of the truth, God sends upon them a powerful delusion so that they will believe what is false in order that they may all be judged. It is a self-imposed judgment for self-exaltation.

If you do not receive “the love of the truth so as to be saved” (the true love revealed in the Word of Truth, who is Jesus) you will be swept away in the love of falsehood; a false love revealed to us in the serpent's lies.

Knowing the truth about God's righteous judgments is what drives us into the waiting arms of a loving God who desires to remove the bondage of sin. According to 1 Corinthians 13:6, love *does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth*. Love wins only when it's based upon truth.

The Hebrew for “weaken” in Isaiah 14:12 is *chalah* [khaw-lash']. It is defined as “to weaken, to disable, to prostrate; by implication, to overthrow, to decay.” Remember, this was a taunt against the king of Babylon. He had done great damage to the nations, causing great decadence. Speaking in regards to the falling of Babylon and her judgment by God, Revelation 19:2 says, *for He has judged the great harlot [Babylon] who was corrupting the earth with her immorality [porneia- “harlotry; figuratively, idolatry”], and He has avenged the blood of His bond-servants on her*.

The Greek for “corrupting” is *phtheiro* [fthi'-ro] which means “to shrivel or wither, to spoil or ruin, to destroy; figuratively, by moral influences, to deprave.” Thayer's defines it as “to lead away a Christian congregation from that state of knowledge and holiness in which it ought to abide; in an ethical sense, to corrupt, to

deprave.” This is exactly what is being said in Isaiah 14:12 in regards to the actions of the king of Babylon. He weakened the nations, bringing them down by a heavy hand of oppression to the brink of destruction.

The idolatrous, harlot doctrines of spiritual “Babylon” oppress the world today. They have not conformed people to godliness, but have instead produced a false sense of security among those who have been betrothed to Christ and yet continue to indulge the flesh. Through a spirit of harlotry they reject the restraints of God’s eternal covenant. The fruit of their doctrines of demons is a false sense of *peace and safety* while walking in opposition to the Holy Spirit’s leading.

These self-enthroned kings in the kingdom of God will all perish if they do not repent (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4). As verse 15 says, *You shall be brought down to hell*. They are those in the camp of God who were warned but did not listen. Because of rebellion they were given over to their sin and became a wild beast, “twice dead” (Jude 1:12). They are the wild waves of the sea, the wandering stars in Jude 1:13 who exhibit their lawless deeds without shame.

Satan has deceptively twisted the truth of Isaiah 14. Not wanting God’s people to see themselves in this passage if they fall away from devotion to Christ in disobedience and rebellion (which defines “Babylon,” the harlot bride of Christ), he has created a doctrine of darkness which says it’s him who is being described. What a wicked and fatal lie that many within the church have accepted as truth to their own destruction. All this starts with the foundational teaching that a person can never fall away from Christ no matter how bad they rebel against His leading.

The King Of Tyre

Ezekiel 28:1-19 is a lamentation over the leader and the king of Tyre. Are they one and the same or different? You will see right away that this leader’s issue in verses 1-10 is identical to the king of Babylon in Isaiah 14. He also desires to be like God.

The Lord says in verse 2, *Because your heart is lifted up and you have said “I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods [sounds like 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 again] in the hearts of the seas”*; yet you are a

man and not God, although you make your heart like the heart of God...

The heart of man is an accursed thing apart from God's influence over it. This is why the Lord said in Jeremiah 17:9 *The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?*

In describing this man, verses 9-10 say, "*Will you still say, 'I am a god [remember, 2 Thessalonians 2:4 speaks of the great falling away from the faith by those who display themselves as being God], in the presence of your slayer, although you are a man and not God, in the hands of those who wound you? You will die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers, for I have spoken!'*" declares the Lord GOD!

Circumcision in the New Testament is of the heart, by the Spirit (Romans 2:25-29). It is a cutting away of the fleshly nature. To not allow God to be Lord in our hearts after turning to Him is to grieve the Holy Spirit's ministry of conforming us into Christ's image. In the great apostasy at the end of this age, Christians who are unwilling to submit to the Lord will rebel against Him just as the angels did in their rebellion per Jude 1:6, taking over the throne of God in their hearts. If they will not repent, they too will "die the death of the uncircumcised."

Verses 11-19 are the ones used to defend the teaching of Satan being an angel of light at his creation who fell leading a rebellion in heaven. It is true that he leads a rebellion, but not from the position of being at one time in perfect communion with God. As Jesus said, he was a murderer and a liar from his beginning, from his origin. In his case; once a rebel, always a rebel.

These verses describe a fallen Cherub, an angel who was created blameless according to verse 15. Verses 12-13 say *You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God.* This is thought by many to be speaking of Satan because we know, through his deception of Adam and Eve, that he was in the garden. We've already seen, though, that Satan was a murderer and a liar from the time he came into existence. Because of what Jesus said in John 8:44, I believe this passage is not describing him, but rather a fallen angel, as it says, spoken of in Jude 1:6-7 and 2 Peter 2:1-4.

2 Peter 1:19 exhorts us to pay attention to the prophetic word of truth *as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts*. Peter uses “the morning star” as a name for Christ. It means “light bearing” or “giving light.” Satan never had the capability of being an angel of light.

The definition for the Greek word interpreted as “morning star” is very similar to the Hebrew in Isaiah 14:12 interpreted as “Lucifer” and “morning star.” Believing that the two verses use the same phrase for Satan and Jesus is downright blasphemous!

This verse aligns with Isaiah 60:1-3 which says, *Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For behold, darkness will cover the earth, and deep darkness the peoples; but the LORD will rise upon you, and His glory will appear upon you. And nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising*. They both speak of darkness and the rising of light in a new day, the dawning of a new day, as Christ, the Morning Star arises on His people who have heard what the Spirit is saying to the church in this moment of history and responded in obedience.

Concerning the sharing of His authority over the nations with those of His children who stand firm until He comes, Jesus makes a clear distinction between Satan and the morning star. He says in Revelation 2:24-29, *But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them-- I place no other burden on you. Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come. And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father; and I will give him the morning star. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches*.

Obviously, when Jesus says he will give the one who overcomes the morning star, He is definitely not speaking of Satan. They are obviously not one and the same as most of us have been taught. Can you imagine how many Christian theology books would have to be rewritten because of this truth, if accepted as such? It will test the hearts of many leaders in the church.

Chapter 14

The Fleeing, Twisted Serpent

Speaking in regards to the coming judgment of the Lord upon the earth at the end of this age, Isaiah 26:20-27:1 says, *Come, my people, enter into your rooms, and close your doors behind you; hide for a little while, until indignation runs its course. For behold, the LORD is about to come out from His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; and the earth will reveal her bloodshed, and will no longer cover her slain. In that day the LORD will punish Leviathan **the fleeing serpent**, with His fierce and great and mighty sword, even Leviathan **the twisted serpent**; and He will kill the dragon who lives in the sea.*

Isaiah gives directions to God's people in regards to their protection during this terrible time of judgment. He also speaks of the judgment of the wicked on the earth, as well as the punishment of Leviathan who is described as "the fleeing serpent" and "the twisted serpent."

The Hebrew for fleeing is *bariyach* [baw-ree'-akh]. One of the definitions is "a fugitive." A fugitive is a person convicted or accused of a crime who hides from law enforcement, fleeing to avoid arrest or punishment. They will often operate under an alias to avoid detection, afraid that their true identity will be revealed and they will be apprehended. So it is with Satan. His objective is to sneak into the church undetected, operating within the darkness of anonymity through deceived teachers and false prophets.

James 4:7 says, *Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.* He is quickly put to flight from our midst when the exposing light of God's truth is accepted and obeyed. Paul said in Ephesians 5:13 that *all things become visible when they are exposed by the light.*

The Greek for "submit" is *hupotasso* [hoop-ot-as'-so]. It is defined as "to arrange under, to subordinate, to subject oneself, to obey." Biblical submission in the kingdom of God is to obediently subject ourselves to Christ, and, therefore, one another, voluntarily giving up all rights to self. It was actually a Greek military term meaning to arrange troop divisions in a military fashion under the command of a leader. In a non-military use, it was a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden.

Hupotasso comes from a couple of words, one being *tasso* [tas'-so]. One of the meanings for it is "to arrange in an orderly manner." When we submit to the God given order He reveals in His word, the devil will flee from us, having no place of control to operate from. The light and glory of God's kingdom authority always overpowers Satan's kingdom of darkness. Staying within the ancient boundaries established by the Lord at the beginning is the way for us to rise up and dethrone the devil.

In 1 Corinthians 14:26-40 Paul gives the order of the Lord for His church in this passage, stating that there is no confusion or a state of disorder with God. Verses 33 and 40 say, *for God is not a God of confusion [disorder] but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints... But let all things be done properly [respectably] and in an orderly manner.* The Greek for "orderly manner" is *taxis* [tax'-is] which just happens to be taken from *tasso*. It means "an arrangement, order, a due or right order, an orderly condition."

This is a big issue within the Body of Christ today. Satan rules over much of our gatherings in the church because of the lack of adherence to this simple guideline. Extremes from no Spirit to wild spirits exist in our midst. We in the church cry out for our nation to remember that we are one nation "under God" while walking in rebellion towards His lordship over us. Unlike Jesus, with whom Satan had no place of control because of His obedience to the Father's will, we have given much room for

Satan to dwell in our midst because of a lack of submission to God's "orderly manner."

This same word is used in Ephesians 5:21-24 in regards to marriage. When a couple will not submit to God's order (remember the definition at the top of this page) by submitting to one another, the devil has every right to oppress them. Submission to God and His ways is for our protection. It's not a matter of control like some would say concerning, for instance, adherence to God's order for our assembling together in 1 Corinthians 14. Rather, it is to keep order, allowing the Holy Spirit the freedom to move as He desires while keeping Satan's counterfeit spirit out. Submission to God results in order, in every area of life. Rebellion through resistance to God's order opens the door for Satan, the author of confusion, resulting in chaos and disorder.

Hebrews 2:8 tells us that all things have been put in subjection under Christ's feet as a result of His obedience to suffer and die on the cross. The writer goes on to say that *In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him.*

The word "subject" is taken from our previously discussed word *hupotasso*. Through this passage we understand that even though all things have been subjected to Christ by declaration, they have not yet in experience been brought into full submission. The proof of this is our own lives, as well as the world around us.

The question is then, "How and when will this occur?" It will fully occur at the end of this age after His children have been brought into full submission. It is only as we submit that the world will be brought into submission around us. Our obedience to the authority of Christ, His lordship, allows His authority to flow into the world. We are the channel that either opens the door or closes it. As we submit to Christ, the situation around us, whatever that may be, will be brought into submission.

Further on, in Hebrews 5:7, we are told that during the days of Jesus' life on earth, *he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.* We often cry out to God to change our circumstance while being unwilling to submit our own lives first. Our stubbornness binds the authority of Christ.

The Lord's children are the ones who determine whether or not His authority flows, bringing all of creation into submission.

Moving The Ancient Boundary

The opposite of too much control is too much freedom. Too much freedom, outside the order of God, opens the door for demons to freely move in our midst. If you allow for too much freedom you will have a hard time getting the proper order back. Those in the church who have been raised up in this type of excess will falsely accuse you of trying to put them back under the law. Their hard hearts rebel against the correction of the Lord (see Psalm 50:17).

Proverbs 23:10 says, *Do not move the ancient boundary*. The spiritual leadership that permits this false freedom has moved the ancient boundary established by the Lord.

Two definitions for the Hebrew word interpreted as “ancient” are “everlasting” and “perpetual.” God’s boundary has never changed since He introduced it to mankind. Like Him, it is the same as it was “yesterday, today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). Over the years man has foolishly moved what God established at the beginning of creation.

In Luke 8:43-48 we are told the story of the woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years and could not be healed by anyone. As soon as she touched the fringe, the border of Jesus’ garment she was instantly healed. The Greek for “touched is *haptomai* [hap'-tom-ahee]. It means “to attach oneself to, to adhere to.” She sought after Jesus, the Truth, adhering to the *border* (boundary) of His garment, His covering. Adherence to Jesus’ boundary, His word of truth, stops the flow of our *issues*. It stops the bleeding, so to speak, within His people. This is when His healing power comes forth.

James 4:8 says *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you*. This is the exact opposite of those in 1 Timothy 4:1 who fall away from Christ by “adhering to,” or paying attention to *deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons*.

While Moses was up on Mount Sinai talking with God, Aaron let God’s people get out of control, out of order (Exodus 32:25). The Hebrew for out of control is *para* [paw-rah']. It is interpreted

as “to let go, to be let loose, to be loosened of restraint, to expose.” By definition, they were loosened of all Godly restraint, allowing the devil free reign in their midst.

Interestingly, the KJV interprets Exodus 32:25 as, *And when Moses saw that the people were naked; (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies)*... When Christians walk outside of God's boundaries, without restraint, we become spiritually naked, losing our covering in Christ. This should make us run back to the Lord in shame. We become similar to the king in the children's book, “The Emperor's New Clothes.” He had been tricked into thinking he was wearing something really nice when in reality he was shamefully riding around totally exposed.

It took a child to publicly declare the obvious. For those with ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to the church, the child is speaking again, in our day.

Whenever God's people loosen themselves from the Lord's established boundaries, the enemies of Christ laugh in contempt and scorn, as if we were standing there naked. Ridicule from the lost is the result of a lack of respect due to our foolish behavior. We, and therefore Christ, become a laughingstock to them. Because of this, there is no fear of God in their hearts.

The indictment of the Lord against His people in Hosea 4:1-2 was, *There is no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgment of God in the land. There is only cursing, lying and murder, stealing and adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed.* They broke out of, or made a breach in, the boundaries of the Lord.

This sounds very similar to Jeremiah 14:10 where the Lord's people were also accused of not restraining themselves. They did not keep themselves in check, but practiced wickedness in great excess.

In Exodus 19:10-12 the Lord said to Moses, *Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments; and let them be ready for the third day, for on the third day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. And you shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, “Beware that you do not go up on the mountain or touch the border of it; whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death.”*

The “bounds” the Lord spoke of were not to be taken lightly. This was a border of holiness and purity that still exists today. The boundary of consecration and sanctification must be reestablished before the return of Christ lest people “brake through to the Lord and gaze” and perish because of an unclean, unconsecrated condition within their hearts.

Psalm 24:3-6 says, *Who may ascend the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false. He will receive blessing from the LORD and vindication from God his Savior. Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek your face, O God of Jacob. Selah*

Once again, to cross the border of God's holy mountain in an unholy condition is not permissible. It is only when we, working together with the Holy Spirit, obediently submit to Christ that His blood covers our sinful nature, granting us access into the presence of God.

To be out of God's holy order by moving the established boundary defined within the Scriptures will cost many their lives. Falsehood is the enemy's ploy to destroy God's people. He knows where the border of the Lord exists because he has been eternally restrained by it. He cannot touch those who dwell on the other side. His only hope is to entice them through rebellion to God's order, causing them to step over in disobedience.

The Railing Of Truth

Because this truth applies to this conversation, I will repeat it, even though I discussed it earlier in chapter 10. This is a major issue presently within the church. For clarity sake, and for reemphasis, it is worth repeating in part.

Per God's order, a responsibility of anyone building a new home was to place a railing, a protective boundary around the roof to protect people from falling off. If you didn't, you would be guilty of innocent bloodshed when someone fell.

You may say that's not fair, but this reinforces that we are our brother's keeper. In God's eyes you are guilty if you are not watching out for your brother by doing what God commands,

making it harder for them to harm themselves. This is the law of God.

Deuteronomy 22:8 says, *When you build a new house, make a parapet around your roof so that you may not bring the guilt of bloodshed on your house if someone falls from the roof.* According to Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, a *parapet* was "a railing, wall, or latticework around the edge of the flat roofs of Palestinian houses, required by Mosaic law as a protection against accidents."

As previously stated, this is an important building code for God's spiritual house today. We need a "railing of truth" around the dangerous edge so that if someone gets too close they will be warned so as not to fall away and die. It is our responsibility within His house to build as told.

By now it should be very obvious why Satan works so hard at removing this barrier which, I believe, is the fear of the Lord and his judgments. His desire is to cause Christians to become complacent, not fearing God enough to keep restrained from willful sin. If there is no railing of truth established within your heart and mind concerning salvation, you will continue on a path that leads to destruction.

To their demise, many in the church have already gone this route of presuming on the goodness of God to catch them when they fall, and perished. Remember, this was Satan's temptation to Jesus in the wilderness (Luke 4:9-12); "Throw yourself down from this high point of the temple. God will command the angels to guard you carefully. It won't harm you. He will save you" Jesus replied, "It is said 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" False teachers sell the lie that testing God by willfully falling will not harm your salvation in any way. It's all a lie from the devil to get you and me into hell. May the Lord rebuke him!

In warning the Christians in the city of Corinth, Paul said, *By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds.* (1 Corinthians 3:10/NIV)

When Moses was about to erect the tabernacle in the wilderness he was warned by God to make it according to the pattern revealed to him (Hebrews 8:5). What do you think would have happened if he would have chosen not to, adding his own ideas on the building? It would have resulted in God not coming to fill the holy

of holies with His presence. The same thing applies to the temple of His Body. It must be built per His orderly requirements or He will not come to inhabit it, or should I say, us.

The parapet around the edge is the restraining factor God wants us to set up. Church discipline is the final restraining factor to keep His children from falling away in a state of apostasy to their death. In our present condition, it is rarely enforced. If we truly loved one another in truth, we would confront those who are drifting away from their first love in Christ. The blood of those who fall away will be upon the church leaders who refuse to put up the boundary God has prescribed. They do this because they are non-confrontational man pleasers instead of God pleasers.

Establishing A Solid Front

In Colossians 2:5 Paul says, *For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is.* The word for “orderly” is, once again, our word *taxis*.

Interestingly, the word interpreted as “firm” is defined as “something established, confirmation, steadfastness, what has been made firm, a fortified place.” Metaphorically, in a military sense, it refers to a solid front. Submission to the order of God results in a firm foundation in Christ and the establishment of a solid front against the attacks of the enemy, whether it be individually or corporately.

James 3:13-16 discusses the origin of disorder in the Body of Christ. He says, *Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic [which means “resembling or proceeding from an evil spirit, demon-like”]. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.*

Paul urges the church in 1 Thessalonians 5:14 to warn, or reprove gently, the disorderly within her. He said, *And we urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all men.* The Greek for “unruly” is

ataktos [at'-ak-tos]. It means “disorderly, out of ranks, deviating from the prescribed order or rule.”

There will always be a time when someone within the Body of Christ will get out of line, deviating from the prescribed order of the Lord. This is where we need to lovingly check the offender, while remembering the unruliness of our own heart. May the zeal of the Lord fill our hearts for the Father's house (John 2:17).

The Twisted Serpent

The Hebrew for “twisted” in Isaiah 27:1 is *aqallathown* [ak-al-law-thone'] which means “tortuous, crooked.” It is taken from *aqall* [aw-kal'] which means “to wrest, to be distorted, to bend, to twist.” This is the perfect description of how Satan operates. As previously discussed in chapter six, he twists the truths of God, distorting and confusing what God said in order to sweep us away through acceptance of his polluted river of lies and deception (Revelation 12:15).

In 2 Peter 3:16 Peter refers to Paul's writings *in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort*, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. The word “distort” is taken from a word that means “to twist, to wrench.” Metaphorically, it is “to pervert, used of one who wrests or tortures language in a false sense.”

As we said before, in verse 17 Peter warns the church, saying, *You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men* [“lawless men”], *you fall from your own steadfastness*. These lawless, deceived servants twist words of truth like their master, the twisted serpent, who is Satan.

Their definition of no longer being under the law means they do not have to be concerned with its demands of obedience to Christ, that He is doing everything now within us, regardless of our actions. They are his ambassadors that come disguised as messengers of light. Acceptance of their lies will cause a disciple of Christ to fall away.

Their doctrines do not agree with *sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness* (1 Timothy 6:3). The Greek for “sound words” is *hugiaino* [hoog-

ee-ah'-ee-no]. It is defined as “to be sound, to be well, to be in good health; to be uncorrupt, true in doctrine.” Therefore, when the Body of Christ is walking in truth, it will be healthy.

Proverbs 3:7-8 says, *Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your body and refreshment to your bones.* When the church is revived, turning away from sin to God, the dry bones will be refreshed and live (Ezekiel 37:1-14).

The spiritual sickness within the church body today in America is a result of unsound, unhealthy doctrines that have resulted in the practicing of much evil with no fear of God. According to Titus 1:1, the knowledge of the truth leads to godliness. Conversely, the acknowledgement of false teaching (as truth) leads to ungodliness.

In his farewell to the church in Ephesus, Paul warned them in Acts 20:29-30 of *savage wolves* who would rise up from among them, speaking *perverse things* to draw away disciples of Christ to themselves. The Greek for “perverse” is *diastrepho* [dee-as-tref'-o]. It is defined as “to distort, misinterpret, to turn aside from the right path, to pervert, to corrupt.” The devil is constantly wooing God's people to leave the narrow path of truth that leads to life.

Later, in Titus 3:10-11, Paul says that we are to *reject a factious* [“divisive” in other versions] *man after a first and second warning, knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned.* The Greek for “perverted” in this passage is *ekstrepho* [ek-stref'-o]. It is defined as “to turn or twist out, to tear up; to turn inside out, to invert; to change for the worse, to pervert, to corrupt.”

Like the “savage wolves” Paul warns of in Acts 20, the divisive, factious person draws away disciples from devotion to Christ through “twisted” falsehood. By definition, they cause a tear in the Body of Christ. This is why we must warn them as commanded by God, confronting and refusing this evil presence access within our midst before it gains a foothold in the hearts of the unsuspecting.

David cried out to the Lord in Psalm 56 concerning his enemies who were trying to take his life. He said in verses 1-5, *Be merciful to me, O God, for men hotly pursue me; all day long they press their attack. My slanderers pursue me all day long; many are attacking me in their pride. When I am afraid, I will trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid.*

Satan's Fall

*What can mortal man do to me? All day long **they twist my words;** they are always plotting to harm me.*

The Hebrew for “twist” in this Psalm is *atsab* [aw-tsab'] which is defined as “to carve, fabricate or fashion, to shape, to form, to wrest.” The enemies of Christ constantly twist words of truth. Through a fabricated word they justify their position of falsehood. Satan has filled their minds with twisted, distorted lies through his deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons which they pass on to those lacking discernment. The Lord will soon deal swiftly with their pride, destroying both the father of lies, and his children.

Chapter 15

The Prescribed Order Of The Lord

Judges 6 describes the call of God to Gideon to deliver Israel from the Midianites. Because Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, He gave them into the hands of Midian for 7 years. Verses 25-26 say that the Lord said to him, *Take your father's bull and a second bull seven years old, and pull down the altar of Baal which belongs to your father, and cut down the Asherah that is beside it; and build an altar to the LORD your God on the top of this stronghold in an orderly manner, and take a second bull and offer a burnt offering with the wood of the Asherah which you shall cut down.*

Gideon was to destroy the altars of the false god of Baal his father worshipped, building an altar to God right on top of it. The Lord specifically stated in verse 26 that he was to do this in an “orderly manner.” The Hebrew for this word refers to a military array, a battle line, which is very similar to the definition for “orderly” in Colossians 2:5 discussed in the previous chapter. The lack of following God’s order in His word has caused much confusion and disorder in the church resulting in the establishment of our enemy’s false altar right in our midst.

In Judges 6 the altar of God among His people was the first thing to be re-established before there would be deliverance from their enemies through Gideon. The church in America must do the

same. The enemy has established his altar within our hearts while we have slept in spiritual apathy. Baal worship now reigns in the majority of our congregations. The Gideon's of God being raised up today are facing the same issue. Our spiritual fathers have been unknowingly seduced by the devil into the worship of false gods.

The altar of God is now within us. The problem is an internal one. We too have been strongly influenced by the false gods within our land because of the church's rebellion against God. They have drawn our devotion away from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ (2 Corinthians 11:3).

Elijah was called by God to do something similar to Gideon in 1 Kings 18. Once again the Israelites were guilty of Baal worship, neglecting the altar of God through a divided heart. Verse 30 tells us that Elijah told all the people to come near him. He then proceeded to repair the altar of God which had been torn down.

Again, the Lord is saying the same thing to His people in this nation; "Draw near to Me, and I will draw near to you." The Lord has initiated this invitation to return to Him out of mercy. It is for our cleansing and protection in the judgments that are soon coming.

The perfecting of the saints is about to be fulfilled in the Body of Christ. If I believe this, I will act in faith and prepare my heart through repentance for the final infilling of the Holy Spirit, the "best wine" that has been saved for last (John 2:1-11).

As we draw near to the end of this age there is a summons from the Lord to draw near to Him. The wise virgins will hear the call for the return of the Bridegroom from heaven, getting the necessary oil before it's too late.

1 Chronicles 13-15 deals with the issues David encountered while trying to move the ark back to Jerusalem. In chapter 13 he did not go about it in the right manner. Instead, they used the means of the world around them which is represented by the "new cart" in verse 7. It was just like the one the Philistines had sent it back to them on.

The two men that drove this cart, this new movement, were men by the name of Uzza and Ahio. Their names mean "strength" and "brotherly." On the outside this sounds like a wonderful movement of unity in brotherly strength. Knowing the heart of all

men, the Lord was about to expose and deal with the arrogant irreverence behind it all.

God is presently doing a new thing that Satan is mimicking. Nehemiah 13:4-9 reveals a false restoration, represented by Eliashib the priest and Tobiah who were related. Eliashib's name means "God will restore." Like Uzza and Ahio, it sounds good on the outside while being filled with wickedness on the inside.

While Nehemiah was gone for a period of time, the enemy of the Lord's people, Tobiah, slithered his way into the "house of God," much like our enemy Satan has, initiating the movement. It's interesting to note that he sat in the place where the offerings to God were brought. False prophets always take unto themselves that which is meant for God.

Tobiah's name means "God is good." I have heard this phrase spoken from some pulpits in our day, with the congregation responding in unison "all the time." It sounds great, but, like what happened in Nehemiah during the period of rebuilding, underneath it is often filled with the destructive deception of the devil.

There is a "kinship" in heart between the Eliashib's (religious leaders; heads) and the Tobiah's (false prophets; tails), the deceived and the deceivers. They sound like the beast and the false prophet in Revelation. Like Nehemiah, we too must throw their goods out. They, like Tobiah, through a "fine-sounding argument" (Colossians 2:4), have gained the confidence of God's people, gaining a deceptive foothold in our congregations.

Satan's desire is to distract and stop the true workers from building in God's kingdom. Instead of accepting and preparing a place for the false prophets, we should be, like David, preparing a place for the Lord by His prescribed order.

When David, and all of Israel, arrived at the threshing floor of a man named Chidon on their journey back to Jerusalem, Uzza reached out his hand to hold the ark of God when the oxen carrying it nearly caused it to fall off. Within the Scriptures, threshing floors represent places of judgment. It's a place of separating the good from the bad.

1 Chronicles 13:10 says, *And the anger of the Lord burned against Uzza, so He struck him down because he put out his hand to the ark; and he died there before God.* He represents the strength of man operating independently from God's will. This

will always brings the judgment of God. The good thing was it placed the *proper fear* of God in David's heart that would eventually lead him to the *proper way* of God.

Afterwards, David sought God's word and discovered the "prescribed way," as the NIV states. They had a good desire, and were even headed in the right direction, but were using the wrong means. The church in America is guilty of the same sin. There is an awful lot of frivolity and foolishness in the Body of Christ today in regards to the way we approach God. We are attempting to usher in the presence of God to His rightful place using the means and methods of the world and the devil. Like Uzza, it will cost the lives of some leaders who are presently driving this movement within the church in America. God's righteous judgments on our nation will deal with this issue.

Ecclesiastes 8:4-5 says *Since the word of the king is authoritative, who will say to him, "What are you doing?" He who keeps a royal command experiences no trouble, for a wise heart knows the proper time and procedure.* This is the humble attitude necessary for Christians to be wise and discerning. We are to seek out the ways of our King, especially as it pertains to the proper procedure at the end of this age. Obeying His authoritative word, even when it goes against the natural world around us, will keep us safe in the extreme time of trouble coming upon the earth.

As the kingdom of Saul began to shift toward David, many supporters gathered at Hebron until there was a great army. 1 Chronicles 12:32 says that among these were the men of Issachar, men *who understood the times and knew what Israel should do.* These same types of men with godly wisdom and insight are beginning to gain this understanding in our time as well. They will be numbered in the army of the Lord presently being assembled for the final assault of their Lord and Master against our arch enemy.

The Temple of the Lord, which is His Body, the place of his intended residence, must be established according to the *prescribed way*, in order for Him to come and fill it with His glorious Presence. It represents a place prepared by His people for Him to come and inhabit forever. The Spirit is now revealing this way for us because it is time.

Satan's Fall

John saw the completion of the Lord's temple. He said, *And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them."* (Revelation 21:3)

Everything is being made ready now within the hearts of those who hear what the Spirit is saying to the church, and then do it. We must work together with the Holy Spirit, and each other, to prepare the way of the Lord through consecration.

I hear the midnight shout in my spirit; "Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet Him." The Lord declares, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen. Come Lord Jesus!

Chapter 16

Submission And The Sting Of Death

I began to see an order of events as the Lord led me through this study in regards to submission to Christ, our rising up in Him, and the subsequent fall of Satan from his place in the heavens. In a nutshell it looked like this;

- grabbing the serpent by the tail (Exodus 4:4)
- power is in their tail which can sting (Revelation 9:10, 19)
- the sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law (1 Corinthians 15:51-58)

Let me attempt to explain.

In Exodus 4 we saw the Lord granting his deliverer, Moses, powers of authority before he is sent to Egypt. He is told to throw his staff to the ground where it becomes a serpent. The Lord then tells him to grasp the serpent by the tail. The Bible says he stretched out his hand and “caught it.” This refers to the authority of God over the devil. We cast him down as we walk in obedience to God. It is Christ’s authority working through His submitted servants that destroys the works of the devil.

Revelation 9, in describing God’s judgment upon the earth at the end of this age, speaks of “locusts” that were given power to hurt men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. John says their power to sting and hurt is in their tail. In fact, verses 5-6 state they will be given this authority to hurt men for five months. It

will be so bad that people will long to die, but death will *flee* from them.

Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15:51-58, depicts what he refers to as a mystery of God. He speaks of this perishable putting on the imperishable, and this mortal putting on immortality. Again, as we discussed earlier, this is when the Body of Christ rises up in what Paul refers to in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 as the great “catching up.” We will be changed into the image of Christ, gaining His glory and, therefore, His full authority, dethroning Satan from his place in the “air.”

Paul goes on to say *then will come about the saying that is written, “Death is swallowed up in victory [remember Aaron’s staff that swallowed up the staff of Pharaoh’s magicians]. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” **The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law;** but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.*”

When we are released from the power and control of the law through willing submission to God (James 4:7), sin loses its power over us. When sin loses its power over us, we will no longer be affected by its “sting” of death. The power of death over fallen mankind is in Satan’s hand, in his authority.

Hebrews 2:14-15 says, *since the children share in flesh and blood, He [Jesus] Himself likewise also partook of the same, that **through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,** and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all of their lives.* Through Jesus death and resurrection, the sting of death in Satan’s “tail” is made powerless. This beautiful string of events occurs through continued submission to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

In discussing His death with the disciples, Jesus said in John 14:30, *I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in me [NIV- He has no hold on me].* Satan, the temporary ruler of this world, had no place of rule within Jesus because He was sinless. There was no evil condition present within Jesus that would give Satan the

opportunity to attach himself to Him. There was no opportunity to take up residence, no open door to establish a stronghold.

Speaking to the believers in Ephesus concerning the need for purity and holiness in their Christian walks, Paul says in Ephesians 4 that we are to lay aside our old ways and be renewed in the spirit of our mind. He says in verse 27 that we do these things so as not to “give the devil an opportunity,” or a place of control within us. Rebellion against God is what empowers Satan’s kingdom of darkness. When we submit to Christ’s rule in our lives, Satan must also submit, losing his place of authority over us.

1 Peter 5:8-10 says, *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him [again, like James 4:7], standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.*

The Greek for “prowls around” is *peripateo* [per-ee-pat-eh'-o]. It is defined as “to tread all around, to walk, *to make due use of opportunities.*” We are called to resist his attacks, knowing that we are not the only ones going through these sufferings at his hands. The reason the Lord allows this to occur in His children’s lives is to make us stronger.

Knowing why this is happening helps us to stand firm during the difficult times. We can be confident, knowing the Lord is watching over all of this with the divine purpose of creating a steadfast spirit within us.

At the end of this age we will finally gain the glory of God, becoming conformed to His image. We, the Body of Christ, will enter our “fullness,” the place of completed Christ-likeness where we will no longer be under any power of sin.

When Satan has no place of authority within us we will have the authority of Jesus Christ over him to grab him by the tail, so to speak, and cast him to the ground, out of his “place” in heaven (Revelation 12:7-9). The authority of Christ in this last day’s group of “overcomers” will dethrone him. I believe Michael and his angels wait with eager expectation for this green light to fight the devil and his angels.

Satan's Fall

Satan keeps his place of authority in the heavenly realm as long as he has a place of control within our hearts. The good news is that he will soon lose that place “in the air” once and for all. We will soon rise up, as our Lord did, and he will fall down (Revelation 12:1-6). The appointed time of the Lord draws near.

The guarantee of this is our Forerunner, Jesus Christ, who has already defeated Satan through submission to the will of the Father, even unto death. We too will gain the complete victory of our Lord as we submit to God and resist the devil, putting him to flight.

The day draws near when *the Lord will be King over all the earth; in that day the Lord will be the only one, and His name the only one.* (Zechariah 14:9) Church, prepare your hearts. Your King is coming. Amen!



What is the truth concerning Satan's creation?

This question pestered me for, literally, years. I believe if we are deceived in regards to his origin, we will also be deceived in regards to the events surrounding his demise.

Some would question why it matters if we believe Satan is a fallen angel who was at his creation pure and innocent, or that he was actually created by God as an evil being. As you read this you will see that acceptance of any of his lies makes you susceptible to other lies. He systematically builds his stronghold of deception within the hearts of mankind.

The purpose of this revelation is to set us free through the truth. The divinely appointed time for the Body of Christ to rise up into our Head, Jesus Christ, has come. As we rise up, Satan will fall down... Hallelujah!

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