THE BAPTISM AND GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

It is about ten years since I wrote my duplicated booklet on “The Baptism and Gifts of the Holy Spirit.” This edition is greatly enlarged by condensed material from some of my other books and material from other sources, and so it gives a far more comprehensive and detailed study of the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit. I realise that some things in this book will be strong meat even for mature, godly Christians, never mind Christian babes; I trust and pray that Divine grace will preserve all readers of this book from spiritual indigestion!

My qualifications for writing this book are a love for God and His Word, and over twenty years experience of His great grace and gracious gifts. Both my mother and I have had local, national, and international events revealed to us by the Lord, days, weeks, and even years before they have happened, and in my later years, I have experienced an almost daily revelation of the needs and secrets of people’s hearts. I am not trying to give the impression that I have arrived, I have still a great deal to learn and experience, and I still feel that I am a very poor reflection of our Lord's great grace and love. I am merely pointing out that this book is written out of a personal experience of spiritual gifts, as well as by observation of others who manifest spiritual gifts, and through examination of the Scriptures. I have only quoted a few personal experiences of spiritual gifts, as my aim has been to show the Scriptural authority for spiritual gifts, and the ways to receive them.

I am not a Greek scholar, though I wish that I were. I have used the comments of Greek scholars where I have felt that they are helpful and necessary. I hope that this will hinder no one and help many. I wish to acknowledge here, my gratitude and debt to my tutors at Kenley Bible College, some of whom are now with the Lord; George Newsholme, Elisha Thompson, Donald Gee, and particularly C.L. Parker. I also recommend the fine books upon spiritual gifts by H. Horton, H. Carter, Ivor Rossor, Dennis and Rita Bennet, and A Linford's fine scholarly work, all of which are extremely helpful. I hope that this book will be just as helpful and inspiring. I have not the least desire to be arrogant, dogmatic, or contentious; indeed, I welcome any criticism, comment, and correction. I have included a very liberal amount of Scripture references to confirm and illustrate what I have said; a study of these will give a good knowledge of the various subjects, to those who desire to look them up. I pray that our heavenly Father will use this book to enlighten and inspire His children, and that through it many Christians will experience the rivers of living water promised in Jn.7v37-39., by their Saviour. **W.H. Turner. Jan. 8th. 1975.**

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

More than twenty years have passed since I wrote the third edition of my book on the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Through the grace of God, I have learned many lessons during those years, some of which will be profitable to the readers of this book, and so I have written this new edition of my book with the hope that God may bless it to hungry seeking hearts.

There is still considerable controversy over the gift of tongues in the Church, and many Christians still feel that they do not need the gift that Paul valued so much in his private prayer life, when he wrote in 1Cor.14v18., "I thank my God, I speak in tongues more than you all." Many Christian leaders still preach against, oppose, and forbid the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in their churches. These leaders should remember our Lord's words in Lk.11v51,52., to the Jewish theologians of His day, when they opposed Jesus and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, and hindered other people from experiencing them; "Woe unto you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge: you entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in you hindered." Our Lord pronounced a woe upon these opponents, and warned them that such hindrances and opposition would be meticulously searched out ("ekzeteo") on judgement day. See Acts.7v51-60.

The wilful refusal of many Christian leaders and theologians to accept the testimonies of the outstanding saints, martyrs and Christian leaders of Church History, to the continuance of spiritual gifts after apostolic times, is astonishing, and fills us with concern for their spiritual state. To the honest mind, the facts these outstanding saints and martyrs give are indisputable; and prove beyond doubt that spiritual gifts were experienced throughout Church History, and were not just confined to apostolic times. John Wesley gives irrefutable proof that spiritual gifts occurred throughout Church History in his 79 page treatise, "A Letter To The Reverend Dr. Conyers Middleton." J Sidlow Baxter, in his fine book, "Divine Healing Of The Body," proves, on pages 29 to 105, that Divine healing occurred throughout the centuries. Anyone who reads "The Scots Worthies: Their Lives and Testimonies," is impressed by the many miraculous manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit that occurred in the lives of these Christians. History proves that spiritual gifts continued after apostolic times.

There is still a great deal of ignorance about the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Church, just as there was in Paul's day. The Corinthians "came behind in no spiritual gift," "charismata," but they were still ignorant about the proper use of them, and the immense blessing that they can be, particularly when they are manifested at the higher levels of power and revelation. 1Cor.1v7. 12v1. I hope and pray that this book will help to dispel some of that ignorance. I do not write as one who feels that they have arrived concerning the subject of spiritual gifts, I feel, like Paul, that we have never finished with the learning process. Paul writes in 1Cor.13v11,12., that in this life we are like babes in our knowledge and comprehension of spiritual realities, compared with the full knowledge and experience that we will enjoy in heaven. However, God has said that until we reach our home in heaven, His spiritual gifts are essential equipment for His Church. There is a great need for us to earnestly desire, seek, and find again the love, life, power and spiritual gifts that were manifested in the early Church. Let us follow after that same love, and desire those same spiritual gifts. 1Cor.14v1. The yoke of Jesus is kind, and the ministries and gifts that He gives to us take into account all we are, our talents, personality, circumstances and desires. Jesus does not painfully squeeze us into another person's yoke, He fits His gentle yoke to us, and the Holy Spirit personally adapts His gifts to us, and His manifestations through us in the way best suited to us. Let us never forget that Jesus also said that His burden is light; He will never drive, overburden, and overtax us, He is always kind, gentle and considerate. Let Jesus fit the kind and gentle yoke of His spiritual gifts to you.

I finish this preface with the inspiring account of Charles G. Finney's baptism in the Holy Spirit: -

"As I went in and shut the door after me, it seemed I met the Lord Jesus Christ face to face... it seemed to me a reality, that He stood before me, and I fell down at His feet and poured out my soul to Him... I returned to the front office, and found that the fire that I had made of large wood was nearly burned out. But as I turned and was about to take a seat by the fire, I received a mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost. Without any expectation of it, without ever having the thought in my mind that there was any such thing for me, without any recollection that I had ever heard the thing mentioned by any person in the world, the Holy Spirit descended upon me in a manner that seemed to go through me, body and soul. I could feel the impression, like a wave of electricity, going through and through me. Indeed, it seemed to come in waves and waves of liquid love; for I could not express it in any other way. It seemed like the very breath of God. I can recollect

distinctly that it seemed to fan me like immense wings. No words can express the wonderful love that was shed abroad in my heart. I wept aloud with joy and love; and I do not know but I should say, I literally bellowed out the unutterable gushings of my heart. (This could well be speaking with tongues.) These waves came over me, and over me, one after the other, until I recollect I cried out 'I shall die if these waves continue to pass over me.' I said, 'Lord, I cannot bear any more;' yet I had no fear of death....When I awoke in the morning the sun had risen, and was pouring a clear light into my room. Words cannot express the impression that this sunlight made upon me. Instantly the baptism I had received the night before, returned upon me in the same manner. I arose upon my knees in the bed and wept aloud with joy, and remained for sometime, too much overwhelmed with the baptism of the Spirit to do anything but pour out my soul to God."

May we all seek and receive a similar experience of God's wonderful love and power. **W. H. Turner. Oct. 10th. 2000.**

PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION.

I have improved some of the format, content and grammar of these studies in this edition. I have changed the fonts used in the book from Arial Narrow 10 to Arial Narrow 11, in order to make it easier for people to read. As I am now in my 74th. year I appreciate the need of this for older people, and apologise for not doing this sooner.

The world situation has become noticeably much darker, however, the ministry of Jesus through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, is a complete answer to the gross evil that is in the world today. Gifts of healing and other mercy gifts, have a mighty and powerful evangelistic appeal, and today are bringing millions of people to accept the Lord Jesus as their Saviour.

The protective and judgement gifts of God that were manifested in the lives of Moses, Elijah, and other prophets, and the New Testament apostles, are going to be indispensable in the last days of this age. The Two Witnesses of Rev.11v1-13., the last great prophets of this age, will manifest these gifts in their ministries, and stand resolute and invincible against the Antichrist and his armies for 1,260 days. They manifest the ultimate in gifts of judgement. The Christian group which is represented by the woman of Rev,12v1,2,6,14-17., experiences mighty gifts of supernatural transport, provision and protection, an army that tries to attack them suffers the same fate as the sons of Korah, the ground opens, and swallows them up. Numb.16v1-35.

It is good to know that God has given to His Church the necessary Divine equipment to restrain and bring judgement upon militant godless religious groups, and unbelieving implacable secular authorities. We read in Acts.12v1-25., that after the apostle James was executed by Herod, the earnest prayers of the Christians brought about the miraculous release of Peter, and the death of Herod, God smote Herod, and he was eaten up by worms. We also read in Acts.13v6-12., that the judgement of God on Elymas the sorcerer brought a sense of awe on the people who saw it, and caused many to accept and believe in Jesus. Acts.13v6-12. The God of Moses and Elijah will manifest Himself in great acts of judgement on the irreconcilable wicked, and mighty acts of delivering and defensive power for His Christian Church in the last days of this age.

We read in Is.28v21., that God's acts of judgement are His "strange work" and His "alien task," a God of love desires to give mercy gifts of love, blessing and healing, but in the last days, the great evil in the world and the oppression of humankind will make God's judgement gifts both necessary and indispensable. The last days will culminate with the awesome judgement of the great day of God Almighty, when in one day God cleans up, and wipes out evil from the world. Ps.2v1-12. Is.24v19-24. 42v13-21. 63v1-6. Zech.12v8-10.13v8,9. 14v1-15. 2Thes.1v5-11. Rev.6v12-17. 16v20,21. 19v11-21. 20v7-15. 21v1-8.

We read in the New King James Version of Isa.26v9. "With my soul I have desired You in the night, yes, by my spirit within me I will seek You early; for when Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." The Revised Standard Version translates Isa.26v9., "My soul yearns for thee in the night, my spirit within me earnestly seeks thee. For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness." Those who earnestly seek God can find that God's justice and judgements are dispensed in the world through their prayers, and the gifts that He has given them.

We rejoice that when our Lord Jesus returns His judgements will make the world a happy place to live in. This blissful state is recorded in Isa.32v1,16-18. "**Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.** v16. Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. v17. **And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever**. v18. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." (KJV)

In Rev .22v20. Jesus states, "Surely I am coming quickly." "Surely," is the strong affirmative "nai," "Yes indeed! verily. Jesus promises that He will return quickly, "tachu," 5035, without delay, soon, suddenly, speedily. Let us earnestly pray for that day and cry with all our hearts, like the apostle John, "Come Lord Jesus." Until that day comes, let us seek our dear Lord Jesus for His precious gifts of both mercy and judgement, for they have been purchased for us through the shedding of His precious blood, and they have a vital part to play in the life of Christ's Church in these last days.

W. H. Turner. April 27th. 2005. And November 8th. 2006.

Rev.22v7. “And behold, I come quickly. **Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book.”**
Rev.22v12-14. “Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is. v13. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. v14. **Blessed are they that wash their robes**, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city.” (ASV) See. Titus. 2v13.

PART 1. THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The Church is Christ's body and continues His ministry on earth.

When the Lord Jesus ascended to heaven, He fulfilled the promise in Is.53v10., to continue the work that He had started, and “prolong His days,” and ministry through the Church. The Church is, therefore, spoken of as “the body of Christ,” that is, the means whereby Christ acts upon earth. Eph.1v22,23. 5v29,30. 1Cor.12v27. God desires every member of the body of Christ to be baptised in the Holy Spirit and manifest His spiritual gifts. These gifts are intended to enrich and empower the whole Church of Christ, not just a part of it. We should not, therefore, seek the baptism and gifts of the Spirit, merely for personal profit, but so that the whole body of Christ can be blessed by them, through the demonstration of the power and love of God.

There are no redundant members of the body of Christ, every member is essential, and He has a work for all. God desires to manifest Himself through every member of the body of Christ, “The manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone to profit all.” 1Cor.12v7. Paul states that God often blesses the least talented and less prominent members of the local church with greater gifts than those members who seem to be more important, so that all may realise their need of each other. 1Cor.12v20-26. Eph.4v15,16. The fact that some dear souls are less prominent in the Church does not mean that they are less spiritual or godly than others who are more prominent. I have found that many of these less prominent members of the body of Christ, often have a deeper life of prayer, more love, and greater spiritual gifts, than those who take a lead in preaching and teaching. It was the Lord Jesus Himself who said that on judgement day, “Many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.” Mt.19v30. 20v16. Lk.13v30. The Lord does not count our actions, He weighs them. 1Sam.2v3. Dan.5v27. Is.26v7. It is the quality of our service that counts with God, not the quantity; and our motives for serving God, not the manifestation of His gifts through us, or our position of leadership. The fire will try every man's work to test its quality. 1Cor.3v10-15. 13v1-13.

Human plans and ideas make void God's plans for His Church.

It is common practice for almost all churches to make their plans, and then ask the Lord to bless them: this is a tragedy, for plans based on human ability and human endeavour can never meet this world's great need. This reliance on human plans frustrates our Lord's beautiful plans and desires. The solemn and appalling truth is that God seldom gets His perfect will done on earth, He is nearly always asked to bless human plans and ideas that He can take little pleasure in. Lk.19v41-48. Mt.23v37-39. The Lord still wants to do the same lovely things that He did while He was on earth, and nothing short of this will satisfy His great and loving heart. Obedience to the Holy Spirit's leadings, will enable God to get His will done on earth as it is in heaven. The Holy Spirit comes as Lord and we should obey His orders; lack of obedience to Him will cause failure, defeat, disappointment, depression and a feeling of frustration. Josh.5v14. 2Sam.5v22-25. Amos.3v3. Acts.16v6-10. 2Cor.3v17. 1Sam.13v12-14. 15v22-35. 16v14-23. 1Jn.1v5-7. The only way that we will be able to find the will of God and have the strength to perform it, is by earnestly seeking God together in prayer. Christ longs to do the most wonderful things through His Church; He is, however, limited by our spiritual desire, faith, love and lack of prayer. If we have the faith, prayer, and spiritual capacity to manifest all the gifts of the Spirit, on the higher levels of power, then the Lord Jesus can do all the lovely things that He desires. However, if there is only little desire for spiritual gifts and little faith, we can, like Israel, limit our gracious almighty Lord. Ps.78v41.

Spiritual gifts are the armoury of Divine love, and should not be used in any other way.

No church can thrive, unless it is filled with the love of God, and is subordinate to the Lordship and leadership of Christ. God is love, therefore, every manifestation and activity of the Holy Spirit will be the manifestation of Divine love. The motives of the Holy Spirit in manifesting His gifts will always be perfect, and we should make sure that our motives are the same as His. This can only take place as we abide in Christ and earnestly seek His face together in prayer. The gifts of the Spirit should never be used for financial profit, self-glory, self-pleasing, or as weapons of antagonism, animosity, or bitterness of spirit, for this can bring disaster. Numb.22v4-41. 31-8. Rev.2v14. Judges.16v1-31. 2Kings.5v10-27. 1Tim.1v18-20. 2Tim.2v16-19. 3Jn.v.9-11. Rev.2v20-23. The gifts of the Spirit are the armoury of love, and should not be used in any other than a perfectly loving spirit. 1Cor.13v1-13. The Lord Jesus has the most wonderful plans for His Church. It is up to us to earnestly seek the Lord together, to find out what they are, and then fulfil them.

We all have a lot to learn but, the Holy Spirit is our Friend and Teacher.

The Holy Spirit is certainly no stranger to us; He is responsible, with the Father and Son, for our creation and redemption, and for our human and spiritual natures. Gen.1v1,2,26-28. Is.57v16. He convicted us of our sin and brought us to know Jesus as the Lamb of God and our Saviour. Jn.1v29-34. 16v7-11. Through His gracious intervention in our lives, we are rejoicing in the glorious Trinity, and the wonderful kingdom and family to which they have called us. Rom.5v1,2. Eph.2v1-22. 2Cor.4v4-6,17,18. Our spirit that we had killed by persistent sin was “born again,” and “quickened” by the Holy Spirit, and we received the spirit of adoption, and

the right and authority to be called the sons of God and the brethren of Christ. Rom.7v9-11. James.1v15-18. Eph.2v1-9. Jn.1v12. 3v1-21. 3v6-8. Heb.2v11,12. All who accept the atoning death of the Lord Jesus, have the Holy Spirit as their very dear and close friend, and receive His blessed ministrations, even if they have not experienced His mighty baptism.

All Christians, particularly “babes in Christ,” have a great amount to learn about God and His ways; and the ministry of the Holy Spirit is by far the most important of all the ministries that the Father has set in the Church to educate and care for His family. The Holy Spirit, who brought us to Christ, is with us to teach us about spiritual realities, to illuminate God's Word, and to comfort, bless, counsel, intercede, strengthen and assist in every possible way. Eph.4v8-13. 1Cor.3v1,2. Heb.5v11-6v3. 1Pet.2v2. 1Jn.2v27. Jn.16v13. 14v26. Rom.8v26,27. All Christians experience the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit, even if they have not experienced the baptism in the Spirit. However, the Holy Spirit is not content merely to be with us, as blessed as this may be; He longs to be in us, and desires to manifest His love and power through us in an even greater way. The time when the Holy Spirit enters the body of the Christian, and permanently submerges and infuses the soul, spirit and body of the Christian, is called the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Immersion in the Spirit is a glorious reality, not just a theological exercise.

In Lk.24v49. and Acts.1v4,5., Jesus called this baptism “the promise of the Father,” and instructed His disciples to tarry until they received it. In Acts.2v38,39., Peter said that this baptism in the Spirit was promised to every Christian. The Samaritans, Paul, Cornelius and his friends, are definitely stated to have received the Holy Spirit after the initial outpouring on the day of Pentecost. Acts.2v1-16. 8v14-17. 9v17,18. 10v44-48. 19v1-6. The reception of the Holy Spirit is spoken of as a “baptism” six times in the New Testament; four times in the Gospels, by John the Baptist, and twice in Acts. Mt.3v11. Mk.1v8. Lk.3v16. Jn.1v33. Acts.1v5. 11v16. The phrases “filled with the Holy Spirit,” Acts.2v4. 9v17., “the gift of the Holy Spirit,” Acts2v38. 10v45. 5v32. Rom.5v5.; “received the Holy Spirit,” Acts.10v47. 19v2. 8v14-21. 1Cor.2v12. Gal.3v2.; “the promise of the Spirit,” Gal.3v14.; “the seal of the Spirit,” Eph.1v13. 4v30.; are all used to speak of the baptism in the Spirit. The words “anointing” and “dwell in” are also used to speak of the result of the baptism in the Spirit. 1Jn.2v20,27. 3v24. 4v13. Rom.8v9,23. 1Cor.6v19,20. Jn.14v16,17. The phrase “filled with the Holy Spirit,” is used to speak of other operations of the Holy Spirit's work, as well as the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Lk.1v15,41,67. Acts.2v4. 4v31,8. 13v9. In the Old Testament men and women of God were filled with the Holy Spirit just to fulfil a mission; however, in Jn.7v35-37., we are told that they were not baptised in the Holy Spirit, this is a New Testament experience, given to the Church by our glorified Lord. God's New Testament children receive the permanent filling of the Spirit, “He shall abide with you forever.” Jn.14v16,17.

Some think, and I feel correctly, that 1Cor.12v13., “For by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body,” is referring to water baptism and not to the baptism in the Spirit, as O. M. Norlie translates it, “And by one Spirit we have through baptism been made members of one body.” The Holy Spirit is the agent of regeneration, the baptism in water is the outward sign and ordinance of regeneration. The second part of this verse, “were made to drink into one Spirit,” clearly gives the picture of the baptism in the Spirit; for the Greek word for “drink” is “potizo,” which is used in the Septuagint in Is.43v20., to speak of a wilderness flooded by abundant waters. “Potizo,” truly conveys the thought of Is.44v3., “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and FLOODS upon the dry ground.” This Spirit-flooded life, is the Spirit-baptised life. In the Septuagint (the Greek Old Testament), “potizo” is used to speak of the abundance of water that brings abundant fruitfulness. In Gen.2v6., it is used of the heavy dew that God used to water the ground before the flood; in Gen.2v10., of the river that watered the garden of Eden into abundant fruitfulness. In Gen.13v10,11., we read that before God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, the land around them was “well watered,” and like the garden of God; Lot greedily chose this area for himself, and spiritually ruined his life. In Gen.21v19., it is used of the well of water that God provided for Hagar in the desert; and in Gen.24v14,17,18,43,45,46., of the drink that Rebekah drew from the well for Abraham's servant, Eliezer. This Spirit-flooded abundantly fruitful life, is the Spirit-baptised life.

Immersed in the transforming, sanctifying and miracle-working Holy Spirit.

The Greek word for baptism, “baptizo,” is used for both baptism in water and the baptism in the Spirit. The basic word of this Greek root, “bapto,” “to dip,” only occurs three times in the New Testament, Lk.16v24. Jn.13v26. and Rev.19v13. In Rev.19v13., “bapto” is used in its secondary sense, “to dye or stain.” It is also necessary to note both the primary and secondary meanings of “baptizo.” Though the primary meaning of “baptizo,” is “to immerse,” or “to submerge,” its secondary meaning, which is derived and developed from its primary meaning, can refer to the influence which one thing exercises over another. “Baptizo,” then, can speak, like “bapto,” not only of an immersion, but also of an impregnation and infusion of the element of immersion, as in dyeing and staining. It speaks of a bringing into complete subjection to an influence, and an imbibing of the virtues and nature of that influence. We should also note that in many cases, though not in every case, the same distinction occurs between “bapto” and “baptizo,” as between their English equivalents, “to dip” and to “immerse;” “dipping” speaking of a momentary or temporary covering, “immersion” usually implying a prolonged or permanent covering. To be baptised with the Holy Spirit and fire, should mean that our whole personality is permanently influenced by, and deliberately submitted to, and stained and dyed, by the transforming influence, presence, power, and sanctifying purity of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit comes to transfigure us into Christ's likeness, and conform us to His image, as well as to empower us. Rom.8v28,29. 12v1,2. 2Cor.3v17,18.

In the New Testament, “baptizo” is used in the sense of permanent immersion and infusion, in regard to

baptism for repentance and remission of sins, baptism in the name of Trinity, or baptism into the body of Christ, or baptism in the Holy Spirit. Mt.3v11. 28v19. Mk.1v4. Lk.3v16. 1Cor.12v13, These baptisms do not speak of a temporary dipping in an element, they speak of a permanent immersion under the influence of the thing suggested. Though “baptizo,” “to immerse,” is used in the weaker sense of “bapto,” “to dip,” in water baptism, (otherwise all who are baptised would be drowned); the actual spiritual realities connected with baptism, abide and continue. To be baptised unto repentance and remission of sins, means being brought under the power and influence of repentance and remission of sins, not for a moment, but for all time. To be baptised into Christ's death and resurrection, is to be permanently identified with Christ in His death and resurrection, not for a moment, but for ever. Rom.6v9-11. To be baptised into the body of Christ, is the permanent placing of ourselves under the influence and power of Christ and His body, the Church. To be baptised into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is not just a mere baptismal formula, it is to come under the power and influence of the Trinity, not for a moment, but eternally and permanently.

Baptism, then, is more than an outward sign of allegiance to Christ, it is the deliberate placing of oneself, under His influence and headship. The important thing is not a baptismal formula, or even the actual baptism in water; the essential thing is the total submission of our whole personality to Christ; to be imbued, stained, impregnated and influenced, abidingly and permanently, with the presence and power of our dear Lord Jesus, and to experience all the benefits of His death and resurrection life. In the same way, to be baptised with the Holy Spirit and fire, means that our whole personality is deliberately submitted to, and permanently influenced by the presence, power, and sanctifying purity of the Holy Spirit. Our personality is still our own, but the Holy Spirit comes to transfigure our lives by His presence, and to imbue us with His virtues, abilities, life and love. 2Cor.3v18. However, I do not want to give the impression that we cannot fall from a state of grace, we can, let us be careful not to grieve or resist our gracious guest. 1Thes.5v19-22. Eph.4v30.

1. WHY OUR HEAVENLY FATHER DESIRES TO GIVE US THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT.

1. Our heavenly Father loves to give.

God is love; He is perfectly unselfish and wholeheartedly generous. 1Jn.4v8-10. Our Father is the most bountiful giver, even to the ungrateful and selfish; He is full of mercy and kindness. Lk.6v35,36. Ps.103. all. 107v8,15,21,31,43. Our God of love even gave His own dear Son for our salvation, and with Him He freely gives us all things. Jn.3v16. Rom.8v31-39.

2. Our heavenly Father loves us so much.

We are so very precious to God, and He makes us the objects of His wondrous love and affection. Jn.16v24,27. Our heavenly Father is much more loving and kind than the very best earthly father. Mt.7v7-11. Lk.11v9-13. It is an amazing fact that God loves us with the same tender love that He loves His only begotten Son, Jn.17v23,26., and Jesus loves us on this same incredible level of love. Jn.15v9. cf. 13v34. God's love is always a “much more” love, it “surpasses human understanding” and longs to do “exceedingly beyond and immeasurably more than all our highest prayers or thoughts, or hopes and dreams.” Lk.11v13. Eph.3v14-21. Rejoice in His wonderful love, and claim and receive His “exceeding great and precious promises” to you. 2Pet.1v1-4.

3. Our heavenly Father desires us to know Himself and the Lord Jesus in a deeper way.

The Holy Spirit has come to reveal Christ and the Father to us. Jn.15v26. 16v12-15. Eph.1v15-23. 3v14-21. The apostles and other disciples were full of joy and praise before Pentecost, because they had a glorious fellowship with their risen Lord; however, the Saviour promised, and they experienced, a new and greater revelation of Himself to their souls, and a deeper appreciation of spiritual things, at their baptism in the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Beset as we are by the world, the flesh and the Devil, earthly armour fails, we can only overcome by God's help, the baptism in the Spirit is a Divine answer to our needs and the wickedness around us. The revelation of God to the inner depths of the soul, is the only thing that can bring spiritual victory and satisfy the deepest longings of the soul. 2Cor.3v12-18.

4. Our heavenly Father wants to manifest Himself to the Church and the World.

Though the disciples had the Lord Jesus with them, and many of them had experienced His ministry through them to a remarkable degree, He told them plainly that the baptism in the Spirit would give them a more powerful ministry for Him. Acts.1v1-8. Paul said, in 1Cor.12v7., “The manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for the common good;” “manifestation” is “phanerosis,” which means “a making visible, a shining forth, an appearing, a making known in a definite and tangible manner.” Mk.4v22. 16v14. 1Cor.2v9,10. 2Cor.4v2. The baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit are intended to bring an overwhelming sense of the presence of God. God does not intend us to apprehend spiritual things or the Holy Spirit's presence by blind faith alone, the healing of the sick, the release of Satan's captives, make it plain that God is in the midst of His people. 1Cor.14v23-25. Acts.8v5-14. Christ said that people needed the evidence of signs and wonders to help them believe. Jn.4v48. The Lord, therefore, did many signs and wonders, for the very purpose of creating faith and saving the souls of His hearers, and He sent out many preachers with miraculous ministries to do the same. Jn.5v19-25. 10v37,38. 11v15. Lk.9v1,2. 10v1-9. Mk.16v17,20. 1Cor.2v4. 2Cor.12v12. Rom.15v18,19. Even the greatest miracles will fail to reach some people, Christ said that many of Israel's religious leaders had seen and hated Himself and the Father; they had rejected His gracious words and mighty acts. Jn.15v22-26. Mt.11v20-24. Rejection of God when He is manifested in great signs and wonders, is the final act of spiritual suicide. Mk.3v22-30. This was the reason why the Lord refused to give some sensational sign to the sceptics of Mt.12v38-42.; they did not need a sign, they already had a multitude of them, they needed to genuinely repent

of their sins and accept Christ.

Spiritual decadence is always due to a lack of a vision of God and His spiritual gifts and ministries. Judg.2v7-11. Prov.29v18. History shows that as we get further away from God, we rely more and more upon what we can do, and are less able to trust God for the miraculous manifestations of His presence. When we do this, we shall find, as Israel did, that our enemies are always stronger than we are. God does not glorify unsanctified human endeavour, but He does delight to show His power to those who trust Him, particularly if the odds are stacked against us, and we are in great need. Therefore, God used Jonathan and his armour bearer, Gideon and his 300, to defeat great armies, and David the shepherd boy to defeat giant Goliath, and Christ's despised apostolic band to lay the foundation of His Church. 1Cor.1v26-31. Eph.2v19,20.

2. THE BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT TAKES PLACE AFTER THE NEW BIRTH.

The apostles were born again years before their baptism in the Spirit.

The apostles were converted before Pentecost; their names, like those of the 70, were "written in heaven," Lk.10v20.; they were "clean," Jn.15v2,3.; they were not of the world, and belonged to God, Jn.17v6,9-16,23.; they had received Christ and were believers in Him, and He owned them as His friends and brethren. Jn.1v12. 15v15. 17v8. Mt.12v48-50. At Pentecost, these already born-again believers received the baptism in the Spirit that had been promised to them. Acts.2v1-4. We know from John.7v37-39., that the Holy Spirit was not given until Jesus was glorified, and that the baptism in the Holy Spirit was not available to the Church until the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. However, the recorded outpouring of the Holy Spirit in "The book of Acts" after the day of Pentecost, show that Christians received the baptism in the Spirit after the new birth, not at the new birth.

The Samaritans were baptised in the Spirit a considerable time after their conversion.

At Samaria many accepted Philip's sign-attested ministry and became joyful believers in Jesus; it was several, even many days later, that Peter and John came to Samaria to lay hands on these born-again, and water-baptised converts, that they might receive the baptism in the Spirit. Acts.8v5-19. The Samaritans were full of faith and joy; but they were not baptised in the Spirit until Peter and John prayed for them. Joy, peace, sanctification, or love, cannot be looked upon as a claim for being baptised in the Spirit; these are the even more important "fruit of the Spirit," which are the result of abiding in Christ and being led of the Spirit. Gal.5v16-25. To be a balanced Christian we need both gifts and fruit, both "great grace and great power." Acts.4v33.

Paul experienced his baptism in the Spirit a few days after his conversion.

Paul became a Christian when he met the Lord Jesus on the Damascus road. He owned Christ as Lord, saying, "Lord, what will thou have me to do"? Ananias was able to call him, "Brother Saul," and God sent him to Paul, so that Paul might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. This was three days after Paul's conversion. Acts.9v6,9,17.

The remarkable outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Cornelius and his friends.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the house of Cornelius proves that Christians can receive the baptism in the Spirit a few seconds or minutes after believing in Christ as Saviour, and without having previously been baptised in water, and without having the laying on of hands. Acts.10v34-48. God gave Cornelius and his devout friends the sign of the gift of tongues, to prove to bigoted Jews at Jerusalem, and elsewhere, that God desired to save and forgive the despised Gentiles, and had welcomed them into His Church. Acts.11v1-18.

The Ephesians received their baptism in the Spirit some time after their conversion.

In Acts19v2., Paul asks the Ephesian Christians the question, "Having believed, did ye receive the Spirit?" "Having believed," is the aorist participle, "pisteuosantes," which speaks of an action, which takes place BEFORE the action of the leading verb, "elabete," (the aorist of "lambano"), which means, "did you receive?" Therefore, the believing took place before the receiving.

F.F. Bruce states that the term "disciples" is a term that was commonly used for Christians, and that if these disciples had been disciples of John, Luke would have said so explicitly. It does not say that they were disciples of John, who Paul had to lead to Jesus; it says they were Christians who only knew the baptism of John. The disciples at Ephesus were undoubtedly Christians whose knowledge of Christianity was in a similar defective condition to the limited knowledge of the "fervent" Apollos; before he was more accurately instructed by Priscilla and Aquila. Acts18v24-28. Apollos was a Christian who was "mighty in the Scriptures," "and was instructed in the way of the Lord;" and "spake and taught diligently the way of the Lord;" but he too only knew the baptism of John. It seems that these Christians were converted through the ministry of Apollos. This is confirmed by the fact that these two events are recorded together. Acts.18v24 to 19v6. It was, then, a considerable time after their conversion, that these Ephesian Christians received their baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Even if, as some say, these were disciples of John, who became Christians when Paul spoke to them, it still follows that they were baptised in the Spirit some time after their conversion. It is obvious that it would take some time to find a suitable place for baptism, and some time must also have elapsed between their baptism in water and the laying on of the apostle's hands for the baptism in the Spirit, even if it were only a matter of minutes or hours. Their baptism in the Spirit occurred, therefore, some time after their conversion, when the

apostle Paul laid hands on them, a point that Paul reminds the Ephesians of in Eph.1v13., “after that ye had believed, (again “pisteuosantes”) ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.”

3. THE GIFT OF TONGUES AND THE BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT.

In Acts2v4. 10v45,46. 11v17. and 19v6., when Christians received the baptism in the Spirit, they all spoke with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. With the exception of the outpouring at Ephesus, we do not read of any other manifestations of the gifts, and at Ephesus, they prophesied in addition to speaking in tongues. From humble housewives to mighty apostles, the initial and conclusive evidence of their baptism in the Spirit was speaking in tongues. The Holy Spirit did not give various gifts as the evidence of the baptism in the Spirit; He gave the gifts of tongues to all. Peter did not say that the household of Cornelius had received the Holy Spirit because they had believed the Gospel message and had accepted Christ, or were filled with joy, or were living sanctified lives, desirable and essential as all these are. Peter said that they were unmistakably filled with the Holy Spirit, because they had spoken with tongues, like the 120 on the day of Pentecost. Acts.11v17,18. There are two more instances in Acts, where it states that Christians received the baptism in the Spirit. In the case of the Samaritans in Acts.8v14-20., even commentators who are not Pentecostal agree that what Simon saw in v18, was the Samaritan Christians speaking with tongues. When we read of Paul's baptism in the Spirit in Acts.9v17.; we know from 1Cor.14v5,18., that Paul spoke in tongues, and esteemed the gift of tongues very highly in private prayer, for he thanked God that he spoke in tongues even more than the verbose Corinthians, and desired every Christian to speak in tongues, and this must have been the will of God, or Paul would not have dared to say such a thing.

The baptism in the Spirit is an overwhelming experience to the prepared heart; indeed, speaking with tongues by the Holy Spirit's direct inspiration, is the only thing that enables us to express what Charles Finney called the “unutterable gushings” of praise, adoration, and worship of God, that fill the soul when one receives a mighty baptism in the Spirit. The apostolic band did not quibble about the gift of tongues, or God's choice of it as the initial evidence of their baptism in the Spirit, they joyfully accepted it and rejoiced that the Holy Spirit had lifted them above the limitations of their own vocabulary and spiritual perception, and had given them the ability to pray and worship as they ought. Let us take these New Testament Christians as the pattern of our baptism in the Spirit, others, even the good and the best, may lead us far astray.

Always seek an encounter with God, more than His gifts.

Here I want to give a very necessary warning! Remember, that though the gift of tongues is a wonderful and lovely gift from God, when you are seeking the baptism in the Spirit, you are seeking an encounter with Jesus, not just seeking tongues. The gift of tongues is the outflow of an encounter with Christ our baptising Lord; it is the effect of the baptism in the Spirit, not the cause. We should not try to get Christians to speak in tongues at any cost, so that they can be told, “You have received your baptism.” Our whole emphasis should be on an encounter with Christ. In the New Testament, the filling of the Spirit preceded the speaking with tongues. The baptism in the Spirit does not come through physical or soulish techniques; it comes through a living communion with Christ. We should not be satisfied by how many “tongue statistics” we can quote, but in how many Christians have received a new revelation of Christ, which has come with transforming power at their baptism in the Spirit. It does not satisfy the soul of the seeker, if they speak in tongues without feeling a fullness of the Spirit, and a heightened perception of the closeness and preciousness of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

If there is an absence of soul-searching, consecration, and a thirsting after God in His Word and in prayer, Christians may well have an experience that does not reach or satisfy the deep yearnings of the inner depths of the soul, even though they may have spoken with tongues. This can cause Christians to doubt their baptism and gifts, when Satan comes to attack their experience. We should not be satisfied until Christians have received a soul-satisfying baptism in the Spirit, that brings an overwhelming experience of the nearness and preciousness of our dear Lord Jesus and our heavenly Father.

God desires the baptism in the Spirit to be the gateway to the regular manifestations of His gifts; He wants us to be the channels of Christ's life, love, knowledge and power. It is only possible to convey this life, love and power to others, when we have a deep personal experience of them through the Holy Spirit's ministrations. Even our Lord, who was “full of grace and truth,” did no public signs or miracles until He was empowered by the Holy Spirit at Jordan. Jn.1v14. 2v11. 3v34,35. 5v19,20. Lk.3v21,22. 4v1,14-23. God desires to give the baptism in the Spirit to all Christians; “the promise is unto you, and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call;” and again, “how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.” Acts.2v39. Lk.11v13.

If we are seeking the baptism in the Spirit, and are finding difficulty in receiving it, we should remember that we are God's dear children, and that He loves us with a love that passeth knowledge. We must leave our anxiety, perplexity, struggles and disappointment, in our Father's tender care, and not allow ourselves to listen to the lies of Satan and get dejected and depressed. We are safe in the arms of Jesus, and in our heavenly Father's tender care; take heart struggling Christian, you are tenderly loved by God. The Father, Son and Spirit are wholly on your side. Jn.16v26,27. N.B. v12-15.

WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS FOR RECEIVING THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The unconverted cannot receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit; He is “the Spirit of truth; whom the world

cannot receive." Jn.14v16,17. While it is true that Peter in Acts.2., used the promise of the Holy Spirit as part of his message; we must remember that the majority of his hearers were "devout men from every nation under heaven;" we have to be careful not to cast our heavenly pearls before those who cannot appreciate them. Mt.7v6. Acts.2v5,38,39. Peter clearly told these devout Jews, that repentance and faith in Christ as Saviour, were the essential pre-requisites for receiving the baptism in the Spirit. These simple conditions make it possible for all truly converted Christians to receive the baptism in the Spirit. However, we will find that real spiritual effort and earnest seeking of God are required, if we are to keep a real fullness of the Spirit and a God-glorifying life. Ps.24v1-6. 1Cor.9v24 to 10v15. The promises for retaining blessing in the Old Testament were always conditional; see Gen.17v1-8. and Deut.28v1-68.; the New Testament promises also carry with them a strong conditional "if." Jn.15v6,7,10,14. Acts.8v37. Rom.8v17. 1Cor.15v1,2. 2Tim.2v11,12. Heb.3v6,14. 4v1,7. 10v26,38. Repentance starts, and carries us along the path of spiritual safety and blessing. The careless, prayerless, and unconsecrated Christian is always in grave spiritual danger. In the final reckoning, the attitudes of heart and mind that bring spiritual victory and safety, will also bring joy and blessing, for they are sustained by exactly the same means of grace. Though we can never earn or merit blessing from God, there are attitudes of mind and heart that will preserve us from spiritual danger, and will open our hearts and lives to God, so that He can bless us more freely.

We do not have to be perfect before we can experience the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit. In Ps.68v18. and Eph.4v8., we are told that God gives gifts and ministries to rebellious imperfect people, so that they might improve us, and "that the Lord God might dwell among them." This is why the faulty Corinthians "came behind in no gift." 1Cor.1v7. No one would receive either baptism or gifts of the Holy Spirit, if we needed to be perfect before we received them. However, if a church lacks Christian love, it can, like the Corinthian church, be anything but a happy place, or a good testimony for the Lord. We should always seek the fruit of the Spirit as well as the gifts of the Spirit, and the giver more than His gifts. The balanced Christian is one who manifests both fruit and gifts of the Spirit. 1Cor.13.

HOW TO RECEIVE AND RETAIN A PENTECOSTAL FULLNESS FROM OUR LORD JESUS.

There are attitudes of heart and means of grace that will help us to receive and retain a fullness of the Holy Spirit.

1. WE MUST SEEK OUT CHRIST AND THE FATHER IN FAITH.

When we seek the baptism in the Spirit and His gifts, we must "ask in faith with no doubting," we must believe that God is "a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." We have every reason to trust our unchangeable, good and gracious "Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change," from whom, "every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift" proceeds. The Trinity love us with a love that surpasses knowledge. James.1v5-7,16,17. Eph.3v19. Heb.11v6. 6v13-20.

The strengthening grace of our Lord to us in our "faith distress."

Paul states that our faith should grow, "from faith to faith." Rom.1v17. However, our faith can at times be severely tested, as Abraham found out, when, "with no grounds for hope, Abraham sustained by hope, put faith in God." Abraham at 99 and Sarah at 90, both laughed in unbelief at the long delayed promise of God, when old age made the promise of a child seem ridiculous. They later embraced and received the promise of God through the gracious faith-building acts of God. A personal visit of the Lord caused them to be "strengthened in faith," and receive the promise of God. Gen.15v4-6. 18v11-14. Rom.4v17-20. God allows our faith to be tested, because faith grows through overcoming the trials that test it. We should also take great comfort from the fact that God not only takes great pleasure in our faith, He also delights to encourage and sustain it. Jesus was never hard on people with genuine doubts and problems; He treated Nathanael, Nicodemus, doubting Thomas, and multitudes more, with great grace and love; Jesus always met a sincere seeker's need. Jn.1v46-51. 3v1-21. 20v24-29. Mk.9v17-29. The risen Christ restored the shattered faith of His apostles, and though He chided them for their ignorance of the prophetic Scriptures, and their consequent unbelief, He was very gracious to them, and encouraged them with a benediction of peace. Jesus also restored their faith by "showing Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs;" He "appeared to them repeatedly over a period of 40 days talking with them about the affairs of the kingdom of God." Acts.1v3. Lk.24v25-29,44,45. Jn.20v1-31. 1Cor.15v3-8. We too can experience the strengthening grace of our Lord in our times of trial and "faith distress."

The difference between "genuine doubts," and "an evil heart of unbelief."

God never despises a genuine seeker who is harassed by doubts and fears. There is a great difference between a "genuine doubter" with "faith distress," and a person who has a spirit of scepticism and "an evil heart of unbelief," who does not want to believe, because of the demands that faith will make upon them. Heb.3v12-19. This is why Jesus severely censured the people who were still full of unbelief, and wilfully unrepentant, after seeing multitudes of signs and wonders from God. Mt.11v20-24. 12v31-45. The honest doubter may want to believe, but they may have real problems and difficulties that keep them from a clear faith. Genuine doubts can give us real distress, anguish and perplexity, for the very reason that faith and authentic experience are so earnestly desired. This longing "faith distress" will certainly lead to a positive and conclusive faith, and an abundant and satisfying experience of God. Every seeking heart in God's gallery of faith has known what it has meant to pray through from genuine doubts to a certainty of faith, and from barrenness to a blessed and fruitful experience. Even godly Enoch had a period of crisis before he started to walk with God. Gen.5v21-24. Heb.11v5,6. Jude.v14,15.

The Christian's fight of faith.
All Christians will experience some kind of “fight of faith,” and these trials of life and conflicts with the powers of darkness, can be particularly expected when we are seeking a deeper walk with God and a more effective ministry for God. We cannot avoid having battles of faith, and the pressures on our faith and the gloomy doubts that rise, are often not our own fault. There are the demanding pressures of life that we cannot avoid, such as financial and health problems, difficulties in our home and work circumstances, and the opposition and unbelief of the world. 1Tim.6v12. Pressure and problems can be exacerbated through false teaching and unscriptural traditions, and the lack of a Spirit-anointed fellowship, for this leaves Christians without the essential spiritual support they need, when they are attacked by the insinuations and lies of the powers of darkness. However, God understands and sympathises with us in all these pressures and difficulties, and our Saviour's intercession and ministry are totally dedicated to us. He is the author of our faith, and He will perfect and finish it; so let us cling to Him and seek Him with all our hearts. Heb.12v2. Rom.8v26-39. We can surely believe that the God, who gave His Son for us, will with Him also freely give us all things. Rom.8v32. Mt.11v27. 19v26. 21v22. 1Cor.3v21,22. Rev.21v5,7.

2. WE MUST DETERMINE TO OBEY GOD AND LIVE A HOLY LIFE.
Obedience, purity and holiness are essential companions of faith.
Wilful sin will not only hinder faith, it can end in apostasy. 1Cor.10v1-13. Lk.8v13-15. Heb.3v6 to 4v16. 6v1-12. 10v26-29. 1Tim.1v19. 1Sam15v22,23. Fellowship with God and other Christians is conditional upon us walking in love and purity; spiritual darkness envelops Christians who are sinful, disobedient and worldly. 1Jn.1v3-7. 2v3-17. 5v1-5,18,20. Careless worldly living will result in a life filled with injurious thorns and briars instead of the fruit of the Spirit, this ground is “nigh unto cursing.” Heb.6v6-9. Those who speak of easy blessing without moral effort, love, and obedience are walking down the broad way to destruction. Mt.7v12-29. Rom.6v1-23. 8v1-9. Lk.6v43-48. Jesus said that we must “dig deep,” or our spiritual house will collapse in ruins, and we will “fall away” from grace. Lk.6v46-49. 8v13. However, as we yield to the Holy Spirit a glorious harvest will grow in our lives, which will bring blessing to all who meet us. Gal.5v22,23.

God will never despise a broken and contrite heart. Ps.51v17. Is.66v2.
A feeling of need, a brokenness of spirit and heart examination, will always precede and accompany a genuine revival; however, these Christian qualities should not be confused with a state of morbid introspection, unbelieving anxious despair, or Satan inspired depression and dejection. We should remember, that though our need is great, God is immeasurably greater than our need, and He is wholly on our side. We should be honest with ourselves and God, about any deficiencies of character that we find in ourselves, but these should not drive us to despair, but to the throne of grace, where our great Saviour and High Priest has a plenitude of mercy and grace to meet our every need. Is.66v2. Mt.5v2-4. Heb.4v12-16.

The beauty of true holiness.
True holiness should not be confused with a negative morbid introspection, or a “holier than thou” attitude, which God abhors. Is.65v5. An affected devotion, or outward veneer of sanctity; is an empty and loathsome imitation of true holiness; which is a warm, tender and sacrificial quality of character.

Holiness does not merely mean, “to free from sin or evil;” nor does it just mean purity, which means, “to love righteousness and hate evil;” for though purity of life is an essential constituent of true holiness, holiness goes even further than purity, it carries the thought of service and devotion to God, as well as separation from sin. The words “holiness” and “sanctification” are translations of the same noun “hagiasmos,” which occurs ten times in the New Testament. Rom.6v19,22. 1Cor.1v30. 1Thes.4v3,4,7. 2Thes.2v13 Heb.12v14. 1Pet.1v2.. The verb “hagiazo,” “to sanctify,” and the adjective “hagios,” “holy,” occur many times in the New Testament. “Hagiazo” is used twice, in Jn.10v36. and 17v9., of our Lord being sanctified; this does not mean that Jesus needed to be purified, for He had always lived a perfect life. In Jn.10v36., we read the Father dedicated Jesus and sent Him into the world to be our Saviour, regardless of the pain that this would bring to His Father's heart. In Jn.17v19., Jesus states that He sanctified Himself, so that we might be sanctified; He is speaking of His amazing sacrificial dedication to the task of being our Saviour and our High Priest. He was constrained and driven by His great love for us, and for our salvation; to depths of physical, emotional and spiritual suffering that we cannot conceive. Wonderful love! This is true holiness.

Before any angels or men were created, the Trinity counted the enormous cost of our creation and salvation and were willing to pay it out of pure love for us. They have always been totally dedicated to their creation. 2Cor.8v9. Titus.1v2. Rev.13v8. The Seraphim, “Burning Ones,” in Is.6v2,3., are probably the “Living Beings” of Rev.4v6-8.; for both groups radiate Divine energy and life, have six wings, and sing the same words. For untold millenniums they have been ceaselessly crying “holy, holy, holy,” they are astonished by God's dedicated love for His creation. They do not rest, “anapausin,” from “anapauo,” “to relax,” as in Mt.11v29., from praising God. They express amazed ceaseless adoration at the totally selfless and sacrificial nature of God. Their continual, “holy, holy, holy,” does not just state the fact of the purity of God, as marvellous as this may be; but the even more amazing total sacrificial devotion of God to His creation. Is.6v3. Rev.4v8.

Sanctification starts at the Cross, and the Trinity sanctifies us.
The Trinity work together for our sanctification. The Holy Spirit regenerates us and cleans us up at the new birth, and endeavours to sanctify us. Titus.3v5. 2Thes.2v13. 1Pet.1v2. All Christians are “called to be saints,”

that is, “holy ones. Rom.1v7. 15v25,26,31. 16v2,15,16. 6v1,2. 2Cor.1v1. Eph.1v1. 3v8,18. Rev.5v8. 8v3,4. 15v3. etc. They are saints in the respect that their faith in Christ has “set them apart” from the world, and this should result in a very practical and real holiness. Sanctification begins at the cross of Jesus, when we repent of our sin and believe in Him as our Saviour. Holiness develops and deepens as we grow in grace, and as we are more and more drawn into the ways and service of God. Eph.4v15. 1Pet.1v2,14-25. 2v2. 2Pet.3v18. In Mal.3v1-3., we see Christ likened to a refiner of silver, these refiners used to sit over a pot of molten silver and draw the scum off until their faces were clearly mirrored in the silver, Christ desires to clean us up until we reflect His beauty, love, and holiness to others. If we do not let the Lord Jesus refine and beautify us now with His sacred fire, then the fire will try and burn up our works at the judgement seat of Christ. 1Cor.3v12-17. 2Cor.5v8-11. Failure to yield our lives to the purifying presence of Christ and the Holy Spirit, can result in a painful chastening from our loving heavenly Father, the aim of which is to make us partakers of His holiness, and to save us from being ashamed at Christ's coming. Heb.12v10. 1Cor.11v27-34. 1Jn.2v28. Under the New Covenant, there is a definite emphasis upon purity of life, and a heart cleansed by the fire of God, and devotion to God. Lk.3v8,16,17. Jn.1v33. Acts.2v3,4,38,39. 2Cor.3v18. 1Pet.1v13-18.

THE SUPERIORITY OF THE NEW COVENANT OVER THE OLD COVENANT.

The Old Testament prophets foretold the superiority of the New Covenant over the Old Covenant. Exod.24v8. Jer.31v33,34. Ezek.36v25-27. Heb.8v7-13. It is superior in three main ways.

a. Through the death of Christ there is perfect remission of sin.

Christ's sacrifice is complete; there is no need of any more sacrifices for sin. Through the blood of Christ, His High Priestly ministry, and the might of the eternal Spirit, there is perfect remission and cleansing from sin. The law had only a shadow of good things to come, the sacrifices of the Old Covenant were but types of Christ's mighty sacrifice, which can satisfy the worst conscience, and meet the need of any heart longing for deliverance from sin. Heb.8v7-13. 9v11-10v18. 7v22-28. This is applied to our hearts and lives by the ceaseless intercession and vigilance of our great High Priest

b. There is a new relationship under the New Covenant.

We are sons instead of servants, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, with a glorious heavenly calling in place of the earthly calling of the faithful Israelites. Rom.8v14-30. Gal.4v4-7. Heb.2v10-12. Eph.2v1-10. 1Jn.3v1-3. N.B.v3.

c. There is a deeper ministry of the Holy Spirit under the New Covenant.

Under the Old Covenant, God gave the privilege of manifesting His power to chosen men and women of God, who were given specific tasks to accomplish, and when they were completed, the power of the Spirit left them. Under the New Covenant, every Christian can receive the baptism and permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and the continual manifestation and enjoyment of “the powers of the age to come.” Jn.14v16,17. Heb.6v5. All the spiritual gifts of the Old Covenant are available for the Christian, plus the gift of tongues, and the gift of interpretation of tongues. In 2Cor.3v6-18., Paul calls the age of grace, “the ministration of the Spirit,” and states that it “exceeds in glory,” the ministration of the Law. The New Covenant enables us to live on a higher plane than was possible under the Old Covenant. The transfiguration of Christians from glory to glory, as they behold the Lord, is a definite promise of God under the New Covenant. We have the atoning covenant blood of Jesus, which carries with it greater promises, privileges and incentives than the Old Covenant; we, therefore, should respond to this great grace and live a beautiful holy life. These greater privileges bring a greater responsibility. 2Cor.3v6-18. Heb.8v6. 10v28,29. Lk.12v48.

Our Lord Jesus is our example, we see Him at Jordan “full of grace and truth,” completely consecrated to His Father, and our salvation and wellbeing, and perfectly loving and pure. He not only received the Father's “well done,” but an immeasurable fullness of the Spirit as well. When we compare Christ's matchless sinless beauty, love and dedication, with our own great need, we can only feel unworthy, pitiful and beggarly, and quite undeserving of receiving any blessing from Him. However, what is this that I hear from His lips? He tells me that He so loved me, that He died for me, and that my feeling of great need is a vital condition for receiving His blessing. Jesus declares that because I recognise my complete spiritual poverty without Him, I can claim heaven's riches with Him, and that because I hunger and thirst after righteousness, I shall be filled. Mt.5v3,6. As I abide in Christ and seek Him in prayer, I imbibe His beauty and grace; He is my wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. 1Cor.1v30. We have the victory over sin, failure and circumstances, through Jesus Christ our Lord. He is full of love and grace towards us, He never condemns the penitent seeker, it is the proud “arrived Pharisee” that He knows afar off. Rom.8v31-39. 1Cor.15v57. Rev.3v20-22. Though we may forlornly cry: -

“Oh, how shall I, whose native sphere
Is dark, whose mind is dim,
Before the Ineffable appear,
And on my naked spirit bear
The uncreated beam”?

We can sing and shout for joy:

“There is a way for man to rise
To that sublime abode:
An offering and a sacrifice,

A Holy Spirit's energies,
An advocate with God."

3. WE MUST THIRST AFTER JESUS AND OUR HEAVENLY FATHER.

A. Thirsting for God's Word. Ps.119v97,103.

The "exceeding great and precious promises" of God are the foundation of every true revival, they give us the faith to ask for and receive our Father's "good gifts." 2Pet1v4-11. Lk.11v13. The Word of God is the food of faith, and faith will increase as we read it and believe it. Jn.20v30,31. Acts.20v32. Rom.10v17. 1Pet.2v2. 2Tim.3v14-17. Meditation upon the promises of God will give us the faith to receive God's promises. If we desire a revival, we must get our pattern from God's Word, for others, even "the good and best," may lead us far astray. We should test our experience by the Scriptures, not correct or interpret the Scriptures in the light of our experience. Those who say, "Our practice is not found in the Scriptures, but we believe it is right because we experience it;" are supplanting God's Word with their tradition. We can limit both God and our experience of God, by making the standards of others our guide instead of the Scriptures. Mt.22v29.

The first sign of a cold heart and spiritual backsliding, is not a lack of prayer, important as this is, but a lack of love and respect for the Word of God, and a neglect of its study. If we desire to receive a real fullness of the Spirit, we must cast off critical unbelieving attitudes to the Scriptures, and humbly and earnestly seek God in His Word. If we do not believe what God has said regarding the miraculous and other vital Christian truths, how can we expect to receive anything from Him? An evil heart of unbelief kept Israel out of Canaan, and will keep us from experiencing God's power and gifts. Ps.95v1-11. Heb.3v12,19. 4v1-13 Jn.5v46,47. Without faith we cannot please God, faith is our capacity for God. Heb.11v5,6. Jn.10v26,27. 8v46,47. Those who have experienced the miracle of the new birth, should believe the other miracles of the Bible, it is the unconverted who look upon the things of God as "foolishness." 1Cor.1v18-25. 2v14. Failure to accept and believe the things that Jesus taught and believed, will mean that we make little or no spiritual progress. Jn.8v28-36. 17v8,13,14,17. Those who feed in faith on the Scriptures, will find that they receive an experience of God that is "exceedingly above all that we can ask or think."

B. Thirsting for God's presence in prayer.

We should not say, "If the Lord wants to give me the baptism in the Spirit, He will do so, in His own good time; I am not going to seek this blessing, God will give it to me when I am ready for it;" for it is still true that, "ye have not, because ye ask not." James.4v2,3. Jesus told us to "ask, seek and knock," to receive our Father's good gifts and the Holy Spirit. Mt.7v7-11. Lk.11v5-13. The New Testament does not teach that there has to be a long period of waiting before we can expect to receive the baptism in the Spirit, but it does say that we have to thirst after Christ and the Father. Lk.11v9-13. Jn.7v37-39. From Acts.19v2., we see that Paul believed that a Christian should receive the baptism in the Spirit as soon as possible after their conversion. However, Christians who have been taught for years that spiritual gifts were non-existent, or "not for today," often have a lot to unlearn, and it may take some time to clear away the theological rubbish that they have been taught, before they can receive the baptism and gifts of the Spirit. We should also never underestimate the satanic opposition that we will receive if we are seeking to be the channels of God's power and love. Satan will use every strategy to turn us away from the promise and purpose of God. Mt.4v1-12. Eph.6v10-20. The initial Pentecostal outpouring had a background of fervent resolute prayer, and we shall have to imitate them if we are to defeat Satan's crafty and malicious attacks. Acts.1v14.

It is a tragedy when Christians, who have received the baptism in the Spirit, stop seeking God, because they feel, or have been taught, that they have reached the goal of Christian experience. The baptism in the Spirit should not be looked upon as a goal, but rather as a gateway into the exciting possibilities of a Spirit-filled life, mighty experiences of the Holy Spirit's power and love, should follow the baptism in the Spirit. It is, in fact, essential to seek God even more after we have received the baptism in the Spirit, to keep and expand the experience that we have received, for Satan will try to rob us of the precious holy experience that God has given to us, just as he tried with the Lord Jesus. Mt.3v16. 4v1. Indeed, the greater manifestations of the gifts of power and revelation demand a close and humble walk with God, a very definite prayer life, and some Christian maturity. It is a mistake to try and lead prayerless people and immature spiritual babes into the greater manifestations of the gifts of power and revelation, for it will only result in carnal impersonations.

C. Thirsting for Christ and the Father in love and unity with other Christians.

Lack of a prayerful, loving, Spirit-anointed fellowship is almost certainly the major reason why many Christians experience difficulty in receiving the baptism in the Spirit. Even our Lord Jesus needed and desired the help of others in prayer, the twelve were appointed "to be with Him," as well as to preach and heal the sick. Mk.3v14. In times of exceptional spiritual pressure, Peter, James and John, were taken by Christ to be His special close companions. Mk.5v35-43. 13v2-4. 14v32-42. Lk.5v5-11. 9v28-36,51. If Christ needed companions who were spiritually minded in times of spiritual conflict, we certainly do. A constant day-to-day fellowship with other like-minded, spiritual Christians, puts a protective spiritual umbrella over us. The Scripture states that co-operation of faith, in the will of God, can multiply our spiritual effectiveness tenfold. Deut.32v30. Christ believed in both private and public prayer, and the early Church followed His example. Lk.3v21. 5v16. 6v12. 9v18,28. 11v1.22v39-46. Acts.1v14. 2v1,41,42. 3v1. 4v23-33. Etc. The early Church sought God with one accord, for many hours and days, and this is the reason for their spiritual effectiveness; we will not experience a revival unless we imitate them.

Before the initial Pentecostal outpouring, the 120 disciples “continued with one accord in prayer and supplication;” and after Pentecost, “the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul, -- they had all things in common.” Acts.1v14. 4v32. There is a rich blessing where “brethren (and sisters) dwell together in unity.” Ps.133v1-3. Churches that lack this unity and love can be miserable and discouraging places, and the faith and spiritual progress of the Christians in them will certainly suffer. Gal.5v13-26. 1Cor.1v5-11. 1John.4v7-16. This love and unity is the acid test of a genuine revival. John.13v34,35. The early Church unity at Jerusalem puts denominational pride, bigotry, and competition in its true light.

A New Testament church consisted of all the Christians in an area or locality, there was no external visible organisation in the form of buildings, this was forbidden by the Roman State until Constantine's “Edict of Toleration,” in A.D. 313. Christians gathered for fellowship at any place or hour that was suitable, there was liberty as to when and where they could worship, as long as they were under mature godly guidance. Mt.18v20. Jn.4v19-24. 1Tim.3v1-7. Titus.1v5-16. Compare v6 and 10.

New Testament fellowships were usually centred around homes.

Each house group was linked in love and fellowship with the other groups in that area. Rom.16v3-5,23. 1Cor.16v19. Col.4v15. Philem.v2. Acts.2v46. 5v12. 12v12. 20v7-9. 21v8-12. Paul rebuked the Corinthians when they failed to manifest this love and unity. 1Cor.1v10-14. 3v1-9. When Paul rebuked these divisions in the church at Corinth, he was not criticising the Corinthians for dividing into small groups for close fellowship; in a city of 100,000, as at Corinth, and many converts, this division into different groups for fellowship was both unavoidable and essential. Paul was condemning the lack of recognition, love, and fellowship between these groups. Paul solemnly tells us that, if we do not recognise Christians, or ministries, outside of our own particular group, and through prejudice and party spirit hinder the operation of the ministries that Christ has set in His Church, then we are carnal and immature spiritual babies. 1Cor.3v1.

Personal preferences become a sin when they cause division in the Church.

We get our word “heresies,” from the Greek “haireseis,” which literally means, “choosings” or “preferences,” and speaks of division on the grounds of doctrinal belief. If we make emphasis on certain doctrines, or the following of certain teachers, a cause for division, we are working after the flesh. Gal.5v20. Unity with blatant Christ-denying heresy, or other “damnable heresies,” is quite impossible and must of necessity produce division; but, sadly, Christians often allow trivial things to divide them and hinder fellowship. 2Pet.2v1-3. Titus.3v10,11. 1Jn.4v1-5. Unity is produced by truth, and not at the expense of truth; but if we are not careful, our blind prejudices can strain out and magnify doctrinal gnats, and swallow down and ignore camels of loveless profession and hypocrisy. Christ called the people who did this kind of thing “hypocrites.” Mt.6v2,5,16. 7v5. 15v7. 16v3. 22v18. 23v13,14,15,23,25,27,29. 24v51. Mk.7v6. Lk.6v42. 11v44. 12v56. 13v15. The word for “hypocrite,” is “hupokrites,” and it describes someone who acts or impersonates another; it speaks of those who feign and pretend, and hide their real character, motives and feelings, like the ancient actors who wore a mask to hide their true identity.

True religion is love in action, anything less is a mere pretence.

We read in 1Jn.2v7-11. and 3v10-19., that if we do not positively and practically manifest a genuine love to our brothers and sisters in Christ, we are deceiving ourselves. James.2v1-26. We should lay aside any feelings of superior spirituality and superior doctrinal enlightenment, and recognise them for what they are, manifestations of a loathsome spiritual pride. Is.65v5. If we are not careful we can strenuously affirm that we are defending the truth while we are viciously attacking the beliefs of fellow Christians. Bad temper and bigotry are often called by the names of “righteous indignation” and “zeal for the truth;” when they are really excuses for party spirit and loveless prejudices. True Christianity does not consist only of a correct doctrinal outline, for we can have knowledge of all sacred secrets, and without love be nothing. 1Cor.13v1-3. Fellowship between Christians of different traditions demands love and forbearance, and in Eph.4v13., Paul makes it quite clear that the unity of faith takes time to achieve; but he also tells us that until we reach it, we are to keep a unity of the Spirit. Eph.4v3. 1Cor.1v10. to 3v23. We rejoice that the Holy Spirit is burning up the barriers and partitions that have existed between Christians in different denominations, and they are rejoicing in their oneness in Christ. Col.3v11. Eph.2v11-22. No Christian group has a monopoly of God, and the fellowship that I have enjoyed with Christians from various traditions has been a veritable foretaste of Heaven, because Christ's love has reigned in our hearts.

Christ's love withheld truth from His disciples that they could not bear. Jn.16v12.

Christ's love forgave His faithless disciples, and patiently sustained them when they were slow to understand the truths of the New Covenant, and held on to the Old Covenant and their false man-made traditions. Lk.24v1-53. Acts.18v18. 21v23-27. 1Cor.9v19-23. Gal.2v11-21. Christ did not “shoot down” His doctrinally lacking disciples, His love and grace sustained them until they could receive and bear the truth. Jn.1v14. 16v12. Jesus veiled some of the implications of the New Covenant from His apostles, even after His forty days resurrection ministry, because they were so bound by the tradition of a restored Israel. Acts.1v6-8. It took Jesus many years to get the Church to realise that it was separate from Judaism, and this was probably the biggest internal problem that the early Church faced. Acts.15v1-31. 21v23-27. 2Cor.11v1-15. Gal.5v1-12. Etc. How we love to cling to false, but cherished traditions! We should imitate Jesus and exercise patience and kindness towards Christians whose traditions and practices are strange to us, just as they need to manifest patience and kindness towards us. Long patience and kindness are the first essential qualities of love that Paul mentions in 1Cor.13v4-7.. We should never sacrifice our personal convictions for the sake of a superficial unity,

but we should be big enough in God, to recognise and have fellowship with Christians whose background and traditions are different from our own. Love is the basis of fellowship, and it is only as the world sees genuine love and unity between Christians, that it will know that we are Christ's disciples and believe the Gospel message. Jn.13v34,35. 15v10-14. 17v23.

SOME PRACTICAL ADVICE ON PRIVATE PRAYER.

1. Use your Bible in your prayer time.

I have proved that Bible study with prayer is the best way of seeking God for hours in prayer, recorded Bible readings also have real value, and can provide valuable inspiration and aid to prayer while driving the car, but "watch and pray."

2. Use the gift of tongues that the Holy Spirit has given to you.

The gift of tongues is given primarily for prayer and worship, and if used diligently it will not only bring answers to prayer for ourselves and others, it will also build faith, love and spiritual strength in us. This gift enables us to praise and worship the Lord as He deserves, and gives us the ability to express the otherwise inexpressible love and devotion that we feel for Him. 1Cor.14v2,4,14,15,17. Acts.2v4,11. 10v44-46.

3. Do use your hymn book.

In 1Cor.14v15., Paul said we should sing and pray with the understanding as well as in tongues. Eph.5v18-20. Col.3v15-17. We can do this by reading and singing hymns that express what we feel and desire. In Acts.16v25., the literal sense is, "praying, they sang hymns." Use the great hymns of the Church; for they cover every need and circumstance, as well as every aspect of prayer and praise. Mature Christians need hymns of depth and substance, use this Divine treasury of Christian experience.

4. Use recorded sacred music.

Some recorded sacred music has a great anointing; and it can be a great blessing to listen to them in our prayer times and our tasks around the home. Sacred music is a great blessing, particularly if we are experiencing spiritual conflict, or are in physical need. Elisha used music to carry him into the presence of God; he asked for a minstrel to play while he sought God in prayer; "and it came to pass, when the minstrel played, the hand of the Lord came upon him." 2Kings3v14-16. In both Bible study and prayer, I have proved the value and divinely ordained inspiration of sacred music, it has been more blessing to me than I can ever tell. Do use this heavenly means of grace.

5. Don't be tied to one posture, or one time of prayer.

We know from Eph.3v14., that Paul knelt in prayer, but he did not limit his praying to kneeling and praying. Paul told us to "Rejoice always; never stop praying; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will in Christ Jesus for you." 1Thes.5v16-18. Paul stresses the importance of a life of prayer, not just a time of prayer. Do not just kneel and pray, sit and pray, walk and pray, work and pray, and rest and relax and pray. We can practice and enjoy prayer at any time. "Sitting." Acts.2v2. With "feet fast in stocks. Acts.16v24,25. "Lifting to heaven holy, loving and devoted hands, which are unstained by anger, disputes and dissensions." 1Tim.2v8. The most important attitude in prayer, is the posture of love and dedication to God and others.

6. Follow the pattern for prayer that Jesus gave us in, "The Lord's prayer."

Jesus tells us the attitudes of heart and mind that will bring a knowledge of God, a fullness of the Spirit and answered prayer.

a. We must realise our position in Christ, we are sons of God.

"When you pray, say, Father." In Jesus we have a new and blessed relationship with the Father; we are brethren of Christ, joint heirs with Christ, and God's own beloved children. 1Jn.3v1. Jn.15v9. 17v23. Rom.8v17. Heb.2v10-20. 6v13-20. Hallelujah!

b. We must have a continual spirit of worship.

"Hallowed, revered, and honoured, be thy name." God is seeking worshippers, not empty flattery, which God deplores. True worship recognises with sincere gratitude and deep love that we owe everything we are, have and will have to our Creator and Redeemer. Jn.4v23,24. Mt.15v7-9. Mk.7v6-9. God is worthy of all our respect, adoration, love and esteem. Rev.5v11-14.

c. We must desire to see God's kingdom and will to be manifested on earth.

"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." There is not only desire and longing; there is positive action and costly sacrifice, under God's direction, to see His kingdom extended. This is a personal matter between ourselves and God, we must always be very careful to distinguish between people who put pressure upon us to build up their personal kingdoms, or other human pressure groups, and the will of God. Jn.21v19-22. Mt.10v37-42. Acts.15v25,26.

d. We must be free from anxiety over material needs.

"Give us this day our daily bread." We must believe, as it is absolutely true, that our heavenly Father loves us intensely and will meet all our needs. Phil.4v19. Mt.6v25-34. A spirit of materialism and worldly anxiety will effectively incapacitate us from useful service for the kingdom of God. 1Jn.2v15-17. This does not mean, of course, that we have to neglect our families, those who do this "have denied the faith," and are "worse than

unbelieving heathen." 1Tim.5v8.

e. We must have a tender conscience and repentance from any known sin.
"Forgive us our sins." In Lk.11v4., Luke uses the word "hamartia," "sins;" whereas, Mt.6v12. uses "opheilemata;" a word that Paul uses in Rom.4v4. to speak of legal debts. Christ obviously used both; He taught that our sins are debts to God and others. Wilful sin closes our hearts to the blessing and love of God. Heb.10v19-39. 1Jn.1v5. to 2v6.

f. We must have a forgiving spirit towards those who have sinned against us.
We must beware of roots of bitterness and an unforgiving spirit, for Jesus warns us that we can only ask for forgiveness "in proportion as, or like as," "hos," we forgive others, a truly solemn warning, which is reiterated by Christ elsewhere. Mt.6v12,14,15. Mk.11v25,26. Jesus tells us to rebuke Christians who sin against us, and IF they repent, we must forgive them. Lk.17v3,4. Let us make every effort to achieve reconciliation and forgiveness with Christians, and make it easy for those who have offended us to repent, and exercise a forgiving spirit to them. However, Jesus said that repentance is necessary before fellowship can be restored, and failure to repent after the procedure laid down in Mt.18v15-17., means that a person looses their rights to be treated as a Christian. Let us remember that God's forgiveness is always conditional upon repentance. Mt.5v23,24. 18v20-35. Mk.11v22-26. Lk.6v37. 23v34. Eph.4v30-32. Gal.6v1-3. 1Jn.4v20,21.

Jesus certainly did not try to be reconciled with Israel's religious leaders; His attacks upon them were extremely contentious. Mt.23v13-39. Lk.11v39-54. Christ asked the Father to forgive the soldiers who were crucifying Him, they really did not know what they were doing; however, there was no such prayer for the religious leaders of Israel, who knew full well what they were doing, Jesus said they had seen God and hated Him. Lk.23v34. Jn.15v22-25. Stephen manifested a forgiving spirit to his implacable enemies, and asked God not to lay his murder to their charge; however, God could not forgive them, for He cannot forgive unrepentant sin, even though He may long to restore and pardon. Acts.7v59,60. Mt.23v37-39. Lk.19v41-44. Christians who hurt and offend others, and do not repent, face an inevitable discipline from their heavenly Father, and so do those who fail to forgive others, when those who offend them repent. We know that we have a genuine revival when Christians get right with each other and fervently love each other. Rom.12v14-21. 2Cor.13v1. Gal.6v1. Our enormous debt to God should keep us from fighting over our comparatively trifling debts to each other. Mt.18v21-35. Heb.12v14,15.

g. We must allow God to lead us from dangerous paths.
Christians should have a fear of sin, and a fear of getting out of the will of God. As someone has said, "lead us not into temptation," is an Eastern way of saying, "Father, please keep us from going out of your will, into paths that lead to spiritual danger or sin." God can, by various means, stop us from going into spiritual danger, if we are prayerful and willing to be led by Him. Ps.141v4. 1Cor.10v13. Acts.16v6-9. We should always be prepared for our heavenly Father's stops or diversions.

h. We must trust God to deliver us from evil, and the Evil One.
In the phrase, "lead us not into temptation," Jesus was speaking of dangers and temptations that can be avoided by prayerful living. See Lk.22v40. Here He speaks of conflicts with evil that we cannot avoid and must face. These conflicts demand a prayerful life and a real faith in God, for we cannot defeat Satan on our own, we must draw near to God before we can effectively resist the Devil. James.4v6-8. Persecution or opposition of some kind or other will always come against the consecrated child of God, and supernatural opposition from Satan is often channelled through his earthly friends. Mt.4v1-11. Acts.13v50-52. 2Cor.1v8-10. Eph.1v2. 6v10-20. 2Thes.3v1-3. 2Tim.2v12. 3v12. We must believe that God will deliver us, and will answer our prayers, as we follow and obey our Lord's pattern of prayer, and if our prayers accomplish anything, we must remember that His power has brought it to pass, and we must give Him all the glory.

4. WE MUST COME TO GOD WITH PRAISING HEARTS AND PRAISING LIPS. 2Chron.5v13,14.
A Pentecostal fullness is sustained by praise and worship.
Heartfelt praise to God has a very important place in receiving and keeping a Pentecostal fullness. Praise and victory are very closely linked in the Scriptures; indeed, praise is a vital part of victorious praying. Ps.61v8. 69v30,31. 40v3. 34v1-3. Phil.4v6,7. Before Pentecost the disciples "were continually in the Temple, praising and blessing God," Lk.24v53., after Pentecost the Church excelled in praise. Acts.2v47. 1Thes.5v18. Jn.4v23,24. We too should follow the advice and command of Heb.13v15., "Through Christ, then, let us offer a continual sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks and praise to His name." This "sacrifice of praise" is said to be an essential companion to paid vows, honouring God, and spiritual victory in Ps.50v14,23.; this praise is said to be more acceptable to God than any sacrifice. Ps.69v30,31. Hosea.14v2. Jesus told us that the Father is seeking for those who will worship Him "in spirit and in truth." Jn.4v23,24. It is very sad that many devout children of God have been taught that it is wrong to express emotion and praise in Christian worship, the "sacrifice of praise," is an essential partner of contemplative worship, prayer and waiting upon God.

Praise and worship bring us into our heavenly Canaan.
We read in Heb.3v7-19. and 4v1-11., that our hearts can be hardened, and we can fail to enter our heavenly Canaan if we fail to listen to God's voice. The quotation is from Psalm 95, which says that joyful praise and worship is the way to enter Canaan. The failure to express with our lips, the love that we feel in our hearts for

God, is a real cause of spiritual bondage, and a major reason why many Christians find difficulty in receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Though our reserve may guard us from the dangers of fanaticism, exhibitionism, and emotionalism; it may also cause us to quench genuine moves of the Holy Spirit. We need to break free from the traditions and reserves that hinder the free workings of the Holy Spirit, and take heed to David, who said in Ps.103v1., "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and ALL that is within me, bless His holy name." Joyful praise is a necessary prerequisite to receiving the baptism in the Spirit; however, this must not be confused with excessive noise and emotionalism. Loud praise is often best expressed in congregational singing. Ps.95v1-7. 23v2. 46v10. Lk.19v37-40. In Christian fellowship we have to endeavour to edify others, not just enjoy ourselves. 1Cor.14v12,19,39,40. Let us also learn to hear Gods voice of gentle stillness. 1Kings.19v11-13.

The beauty and value of holy emotion in praise and worship.

It is inspiring to see the devotion of loving hearts being poured out to God in praise and worship. The best things in the natural world bring emotion, and the best things in God's kingdom bring a holy emotion to the soul. Indeed, an experience of God that does not touch our emotions, cannot satisfy our longings for God, or effect us very much. The apostles did not spend the fifty days before Pentecost in introspection and mourning, because they had failed Jesus in His hour of need, and had not believed in His resurrection. Their repentance was real and deep, but it was not drawn-out, or despairing; they rejoiced in a loving, forgiving, and risen Christ. Mt.28v9. Mk.16v11-14. Lk.24v25-53. Jn.20v1-31. This gracious, forgiving Jesus is our friend and Saviour; He is with us to strengthen and sustain us, and to lift us up when we have fallen. Meditation on the great and tender mercies of God, should continually fill our hearts with joy and praise.

5. WE MUST HAVE WISE SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP.

a. We need Christian leaders who are appointed by God.

We need the guidance and inspiration of Christian leaders, who have been sent by God and have a dynamic experience of the workings of the Holy Spirit. Eph.4v7-16. 1Cor.12v28. Rom.10v13-16. Acts.8v30,31. The apostles prayed and strove to bring their converts into a rich experience of God. Eph1v15-21. 3v14-21. 1Thes.3v10. 1v2,3. Rom.1v9. Col.2v1-5. 4v12,13. Converts were upheld by prayer and practical care. Acts.6v4. Rom.10v1. Phil.2v19-30. Acts.14v21-23. Etc. The apostles had little or no ecclesiastical training, or scholastic ability, but their spiritual dynamic amazed the people of their day. Acts.4v13. Christian leaders have the responsibility of instructing their flocks in Scripture truth, and praying their charges into a rich experience of that truth. A true teaching ministry has rivers of living water flowing through it, the truth is alive with the power of God, and brings people into a rich experience of God. Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." People's hearts burned with heavenly life as Christ spoke to them; the truth He proclaimed was on fire with the power of God. Jn.6v63. Lk.24v32. Hardened soldiers said, "No man ever spoke like this man," and "the people were astonished at His teaching: for He taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes." Jn.7v46. Mt.7v28,29.

b. We need Christian leaders who are anointed by God.

Even great truth can fail to inspire us if the anointing of the Holy Spirit is lacking. It is God that makes us able ministers of the New Covenant, not oratory, rhetoric, or eloquence. 2Cor.3v5,6. There is too much "word only" preaching today; we need to preach "with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven," like the early Christians. 1Thes.1v5. Eph.3v7. 1Pet.1v12. Prevailing prayer is needed to bring and keep God's presence in our Churches. 1Sam.12v23. A true ministry does not need to scramble for position and power; it is satisfied with a ministry of Christ's love, power and truth. The Scriptures censure spiritual leaders who fail to take proper care of God's flock, and lead it in the way that He intends. Jer.23v1-6. Ezek.34v1-31. Mt.23v1-39. James.3v1. To avoid spiritual declension, we need leaders who have a real experience of God's power and greatness, and can inspire others to seek and receive the same experience. Judges.2v7-17.

c. We need leaders who are examples, not Lords.

Ecclesiastical tyranny and denominational prejudice should have no place in Christ's Church. Mt.23v8-12. Lk.22v24-27. Christ warned His apostles that they must not dominate their charges; they had the authority to exhort Christians to observe Scripture truths, but no authority to act as lords over God's heritage. 2Cor.1v24. 1Pet.5v3. Mt.20v20-28. Paul appealed in love rather than commanded 2Thes.3v4,6,11,12. 1Tim.4v11. 1Cor.13. all. 14v34. Rom.12v1. Gal.4v12. Etc. It is the constraint of love that unites Christians together, not the pressure of authority, or church mergers. When Jesus is truly Lord, Christians from different churches can experience a true unity and fellowship of the Spirit. The only thing that can hinder a sweet fellowship between truly converted Christians, is a denominational and doctrinal bigotry and pride. If we only use the Scriptures to shoot people down, we have become "as sounding brass and clashing cymbal." 1Cor.13v1.

N.B. What we must do if we are members of a spiritually cold church.

Earnest Christians should not leave a cold church unless the Lord tells them to, or forced to leave through circumstances; they should try to create a praying group within the church. Love, patience, humility, wisdom and prayer will produce a sweet fellowship, which can change the spiritual atmosphere of a church and attract other hungry hearts. Churches of all denominations have been transformed by the radiant witness of truly Spirit-filled Christians, and have become centres of evangelism, revival, healing, and blessing. Our churches can and should manifest the goodwill, the great spiritual brotherhood, and fellowship of love that God intended them to be. Informal house meeting are the best cure for spiritual lethargy in a church, as long as they are under mature Christian leadership. Here time is given to worship, prayer, testimony and Bible study, and problems are talked about and prayed over, all on an informal level. 1Cor.13v1.

6. WE MUST COME TO GOD WITH HUMILITY OF MIND AND SINCERITY OF HEART.

a. Pride in past achievement is the enemy of further progress.

We should not let pride in past achievement and past blessing from God, make us think that there is nothing more to receive from God. A feeling of arrival and attainment is the most deadly foe of spiritual progress. The unsearchable and everlasting riches of Christ were hidden from many of those who Christ preached to, because of their false feeling of spiritual attainment, and their determination not to embrace anything outside of their tradition or experience. Mt.13v15,16. Lk.19v42. Jn.9v39-41. Eph.3v8. Arrogant self-sufficiency, not only brings blindness to further revelation, it often means the death of the things that we have attained. We shall never, not even during the endless ages in heaven, come to the end of what God is, or what He has for us. There will always be a sense of amazement, overwhelming gratitude and love, as we continually and eternally learn of the greatness of our God of love, and His incredible and loving plans for us. When we consider the everlasting riches of our almighty and unlimited Lord, we can never say that we have reached the limits of our Christian experience.

b. Pride in our religious traditions can cause us to resist God. Acts.7v51-53.

It is a fact that pride in our traditional beliefs and habits of worship dies very hard, we can be bound by our traditions, and they can keep us from receiving what God has for us. It took a vision of Christ to persuade Paul that his traditional worship had been replaced by a much superior New Covenant. Let us learn, therefore, to not only treasure the precious truths and experiences that God-inspired revivals of the past have brought to us; but we must also be willing to be led by God into what may be new ways to us, but which are in reality, rediscoveries of neglected New Testament truth. It is a great tragedy when devout souls miss the answer to their prayers for revival, through preconceived ideas as to how God should work. We all need to watch that we do not limit God. Ps.78v41. It takes a genuine humility of mind for a Christian of long standing, to admit that they have been without, or blind to, some vital part of God's armoury and provision for His children. Jesus said that it is only the penniless beggars, who receive the riches of heaven, those who feel that they have "arrived," miss His blessing. Mt.5v3.

N.B. Opposition is inevitable when revival comes.

Many people love their formal church services, and like things to remain as they are, so the formation of earnest praying groups in their churches disturbs and convicts them, and can produce problems. The usual excuses for criticism of these praying groups are, "The Church is the place to pray;" "These meetings cause division;" "These Christians think that they are better than us;" or even "They are heretical." The experience of Spirit-filled Christians is sometimes resented and rejected, no matter how humbly, sincerely and graciously it is presented. Sometimes, unfortunately, as Paul directs, we are forced to "turn away" from churches and people that oppose and reject the saving power of Christ, and the moving and gifts of the Holy Spirit. 2Tim.3v1,5. In Acts.18v7., we see that Paul continued his meetings in the house of Titus Justus, next door to the synagogue, after the majority of the Jews in the synagogue had rejected his message. Acts.13v42-52. 17v1-5. 18v4-8. In such circumstances let us remember that love is still kind after it has suffered long; and let us rejoice in those churches which do not resent, but rather encourage, the earnest seeking of God, and the spiritual progress of fellow Christians.

c. Seeking honour from men, is a great spiritual danger. Jn.5v44.

One of the greatest obstacles to seeking God for His gifts, is the desire to seek honour from men; Christ said, "How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" Jn.5v44. Prov.29v25. Compromising truth in order to seek honour from men, positively destroys faith and spiritual experience; we can sell our soul to the denomination we serve, as well as to "the company store." A fear of being thought unorthodox, eccentric, fanatical, or even heretical, can deter God's dear children from seeking God's gifts, or from testifying of what God has done for them. It is sad to say that many today still "love the praise of men, more than the praise of God." Jn.2v23-25. 5v41. 12v42,43. Acts.5v29,32. We should always obey God rather than man, and if it becomes necessary, we should say like Paul, "what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them all to be mere rubbish, that I may win Christ." Phil.3v7,8,9-14. We thank God for those Christians of all persuasions and denominations, who have been prepared to stand true, and even die, for their convictions about Christian truth and experience.

d. The danger of an evil heart of unbelief over spiritual gifts. Heb.3v12,19.

Critics who use the failures of Pentecostal Christians to justify their unbelief over spiritual gifts are on dangerous ground. As we look at the New Testament Christians, we realise that we are not looking at perfect people, but rather people who God is perfecting. In their growth from spiritual infancy to maturity, the New Testament Christians, like ourselves, are seen to be guilty of mistakes and failures, in some way or other. They also had their cases of shipwreck of faith and apostasy. Some critics have said that a Pentecostal experience and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are, "Not of God," and "Of the Devil," because they have managed to find cases of failure and apostasy among Pentecostal Christians today. I would ask them, "What Christian group has had no cases of spiritual ship-wreck and failure?" Even the apostolic band could be looked upon as, "Not of God," by this method of examination; Christ was betrayed by Judas, denied by Peter, and forsaken by all the apostolic band. The Bible also tells us of many more great and good men who have failed God, but their failures have not invalidated their experience of God. Are we to throw away the accounts of the lives of Abraham, Isaac,

Jacob, and many more because of their lapses of faith and holiness? Of course not, it is quite ridiculous. Anyway, what kind of justice is it that judges the faithful, by the failures of the faithless, or the shipwrecks of the apostates? Let the tree be judged by its good fruit, not by the fruit that has gone bad. Mt.5v44-48. The Christian that is moved by the love of God, does not compile a catalogue of failures, for the vilification of fellow Christians, it sorrows over the fall of a Christian, and helps to restore them. 1Cor.13v5. Gal.6v1. I would not dare to judge anti-Pentecostal Christians to be "Of Satan," or "Not of God," because of their spiritual wrecks. We all need to be watchful and exercise discipline over ourselves. 1Cor.9v27. 1Tim.6v6-12. 1Pet.2v11. 1Thes.5v22. The lives of many remarkable and godly believers today, testify to the value of a Pentecostal experience.

7. THE DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF CHRIST'S CHURCH AT JERUSALEM.

The church at Jerusalem manifested the essential characteristics and distinguishing features that God desires in His Church.

a. They had a vital encounter with their risen Saviour.

They knew His precious blood had cleansed them from sin, and had opened the way into the presence of God the Father. 1Pet.1v19-22. Heb.10v25. Rev.12v10,11. Jesus was intensely real and precious to them; many infallible proofs confirmed their experience. Acts.1v3. 1Jn.1v1-7. The substitutionary atoning death of Christ was personally accepted and applied to the soul, this sharply divides the false prophet from the child of God. Cults manifesting demon power always reject Christ's atonement, and Christ as the only Saviour. 1Jn.4v1-6.

b. They believed God's promise of blessing for them.

They earnestly sought for the promise of the Father and the accompanying blessing; they did not try to find an excuse for not seeking the baptism and gifts of the Spirit, by twisting the Scriptures. Those who refuse to accept that spiritual gifts and spiritual ministries still function today, very often do so, because they desire to make Christianity an intellectual exercise of God's dealings in the past, they do not want a living experience of God in the present. It is certainly not honest or consistent to believe in a Christianity that has none of the New Testament love, life and power; as the body is dead without the spirit, so is an intellectual Christianity that is devoid of the manifestations and gifts of the Holy Spirit that occurred in the New Testament. James.2v26. All the promises of God are still "Yea" and "Amen" in Christ. 2Cor.1v17-20. We can experience God's love, gifts and power today, Christianity is not a doctrinal exercise, it is a vital experience of the living God. Those who refuse to seek God's power and gifts for fear of receiving some false spirit, have already been defeated by Satan, and have shown a lack of faith in God's ability to care for His children. Lk.11v9-13. Satan kept Israel out of Canaan by fear and unbelief, they could not trust God to look after them, or believe for His miraculous interventions. Indeed, the Scriptures reveal that it has always been those who have failed to seek God for His promised blessings and spiritual gifts, who have been influenced by evil spirits. See Hebrews 3 and 4. Mt.23v34-39. Jn.8v38-44.

c. They earnestly sought God in prayer.

The early Church realised that only earnest prayer could bring victory, blessing, and spiritual safety. It is God's presence, love, gifts and guidance that cause us to triumph. Exod.33v11-23. N.B. v14. The New Testament is full of promises of spiritual blessing and power, and the early Church earnestly sought God for them. Acts.1v14,24. 3v1. 4v31. 6v4,6. 8v15. 9v11,40. 10v4,9,30,31. 11v5. 12v5,12. 13v3. 14v23. 16v13,16,25. 20v36. 21v5. 22v17. 28v8. etc. (There are so many Scriptures upon this that I have just confined myself to the book of Acts.) Earnest and prolonged seeking of God is a searching test of our spirituality and love of God, and it really shows whether we own the Lordship of Christ or not. Those who have clean hands and pure hearts love to seek God, "This is the generation of them that seek Him." Ps.24v3-6. True Christians, like David, love to wait upon and seek God, their hearts pant for Him. Ps.40v1. 62v1,5. 42v1-3.

The last thing that backsliders, heretics and apostates want to do, is to feel the presence of God; but Christians who are walking in the light long for it. The early Church loved to seek God in prayer and spent hours and days doing it. There is all the difference in the world between a short prayer aimed at the hearers instead of God, and the prolonged and earnest seeking of God that took place in the early Church. Christ-rejecting false cults may say short prayers, but the prolonged seeking of God is a thing that they will not do, for the evil spirits that influence them will not allow them to do this. John informs us in 1John.4v1-5., that Christ-rejecting cults are under the influence of evil spirits; seeking God and a full recognition of Christ's deity, eternity, and redeeming blood, is diametrically opposite to seeking or pursuing evil spirits. Deut.18v9-19. Lev.19v31. 20v6. Is.8v19,20. Prolonged, earnest seeking of God is the acid test of one's source of inspiration. Heb.11v6.

The majority of the disciples in the upper room were Galileans, and it was a real sacrifice for them to obey Christ's command to tarry for the promise of the Father in the upper room at Jerusalem. Lk.24v49. Acts.2v7. 1v13,14. For a variety of reasons, at least 380 out of the 500 brethren of 1Cor.15v6. were missing, more if we count the women in the upper room. Without a doubt, many had perfectly legitimate and good reasons for not being present, such as working to provide for their families, and looking after dependants, and so on. Whatever the reasons were for not being in the upper room, they missed God's initial and most remarkable outpouring of the Holy Spirit on His Church. They missed one of God's great epochal purposes for the Church through their absence, and we miss Divine blessing if we fail to obey the command of Jesus to tarry and pray for the promise of the Father. Lk.11v9-13.

d. They manifested God's character and love in their lives.

We should follow the example the church at Jerusalem, when it was moving in its initial power and sweet first love, immediately after the outpouring on the day of Pentecost. What tender concern and love they manifested to each other! Their unity, which sprang from a common love for each other, is one of the outstanding features of the early Church. The apostles, elders and church members promptly and wisely dealt with practical matters that caused division and friction. There was a healthy fear of God and sin through God's prompt dealings with satanic infiltration and intrigue. Acts.5v1-11. 6v1-7. 15v1-35. 2v42-47. 4v31,32. In sharp contrast to this was the church at Corinth, which Paul had to rebuke for disunity and lack of love. 1Cor.15v34.

Jesus said, “By their fruits ye shall know them.” Mt.7v15-23. This does not mean the size of a church organisation, for Christianity does not consist of statistics or empty talk, but rather of consecration to God, practical holiness and a real love of people. It is true that even godly men, like David or Peter, may badly fail God under strong temptation, but undesirable and unnecessary as this is, it is totally different from the sinful wallowing in the mire spoken of in the Scriptures. 2Pet.2v1-22. Judev3-25. Rev.2v13-16. and 3v20-24. Hypocrites may have a pleasant veneer, and may pretend and play-act, but Christian love is inimitable. Christians will not only die for their brethren, but also for their enemies. 1Jn.5v1,2. 2v1-22. Mt.5v43-48. Christian love and purity cannot be truly imitated or counterfeited by Satan's children. Jn.13v34,35.

e. They believed Christ's teaching and doctrine.

The apostle John said in 1Jn.4v1-5., that those who are inspired of God accept the Lord Jesus as the Messiah of the Old Testament, whereas those who are inspired of Satan reject this. Many Scriptures state that Christ is the eternal Creator God of the Old Testament. Jn.1v1-3. Eph.3v9. Col.1v16,17. Heb.1v2,8,10. A person's source of inspiration is revealed by their attitude to Christ; they reject His deity, atonement and Scriptural teaching if Satan moves them, but accept the truth about Jesus if they are inspired of God. As soon as a person is taken over by an evil spirit, their doctrine is corrupted and bears no resemblance to New Testament truth, and in particular the truth about Christ. The personal appropriation of Christ's sacrifice for sin is always the cleavage point between Christian and Satanic doctrine. Rev.12v10-12. False cults manifesting demon power reject the Christian doctrine about sin, God's judgement upon sin, and state that personal redemption by Christ's blood is unnecessary. False cults manifesting demon power also either reject completely the idea of a personal God, or so pervert the idea of God that He is unrecognisable as the Christian's God. False prophets may pray to God and Christ, but when they deny Christ and distort His doctrine, they in reality preach “another Christ, and another Gospel.” 2Cor.11v3,4. 1Jn.2v22,23. 4v1-5,15. 5v1. A curse rests on those who distort Christ's Gospel. Gal.1v6-9. The converts at Jerusalem continued steadfastly in the doctrine that the apostles had received from Christ, and so should we. Acts.2v42. Jude.v3,4.

f. They had an evangelistic fervour.

The early Christians had to tell others about their Saviour, they even made ruthless persecution an opportunity for spreading the Gospel. Acts.8v1-8. 11v19,20. Phil.1v7,12-14. The apostles preached Christ before Pentecost, and this was their passion afterwards. Acts.2v14-41. 8v35. 9v19-22. We cannot expect great blessing and gifts, if our zeal and outlook are confined to spiritual selfishness. We experience Christ's heavenly riches in the greatest degree when we minister them to others; “Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over.” Lk.6v38. This applies to the giving of spiritual things as well as the giving of material things. Churches that are not evangelistic will die spiritually, for it is only as we obey the command of Jesus, to go into all the world to preach the Gospel, that we shall really prove the full meaning of the words, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.” Mk.16v15. Mt.28v18-20. Even when persecuted for the Gospel the apostles preached Jesus consistently and urgently as often as opportunity arose. Acts.5v41,42.

g. They answered Satan's lying wonders with God's miracles.

God inspired and empowered the evangelism of the early Church; they did not rely on human oratory or ability. It was easy for the early Church to witness and win souls, they had such proofs of a risen Christ in the signs, wonders and miracles that Jesus was doing through His Church. It is only difficult for Christians to witness effectively, when these New Testament ministries, gifts and power are missing. If we refuse to recognise the need of these mighty ministries and their accompanying spiritual gifts, we are as spiritually crippled as a man without arms and legs. Paul emphatically tells us in 1Cor.12v21., that we cannot do without any of these ministries and gifts. They are all essential today, if Christ's body is to function as He intends. Indeed, the Church cannot minister in power without them.

How illogical, inconsistent, and unscriptural it is to say that the Almighty God no longer does any miracles, and that only Satan does miracles today. God is a God that only does wonders, and the sons and daughters of God are expected and commanded to manifest His power and love. Exod.3v20. 15v11. Job.9v10. Ps.77v11,14. 136v4. Is.8v18. Acts.2v38,39. with Lk.24v49. Acts.4v22,43. Rom.4v2,3. Heb.2v4. God has promised great miracles throughout this age; it is folly to say, as some do, that God no longer does miracles and that any miracles that take place are the work of the Devil. God has promised that this age will close with the greatest show of spiritual power the world has ever seen, God's two witnesses, and probably many others have mighty spiritual gifts given to them to answer Satan's lying wonders through Antichrist and other children of the Devil. Rev.11v1-12. 2Thes.2v7-12. Acts.2v16-21. Dan.11v32,33.

None of the Old Testament or New Testament men of God vindicated God by mere talk; they had spiritual gifts and spiritual ministries. When God sent His men to answer Satan's servants, He has always given them

spiritual gifts; He never sent them in their own power. The early Church was victorious because it answered the lying wonders of men like Simon the sorcerer, and Elymas the sorcerer, with the miracles of God. Acts.8v8-24. 13v6-13. Evil occult forces operating through idolatry, sorcery, witchcraft, Spiritualism, etc., were one of the greatest obstacles to the spread of Christianity. The early Church did not defeat these powers of evil by mere intellectual argument, they out-miracled them with the power of God; see the tremendous revival at Ephesus in Acts.19v10-20.. The message of the crucified Christ was foolishness to both Jews and Greeks, but because it was confirmed by God's miracles, many were compelled to believe. 1Cor.1v23. 2v1-10. Can we hope to succeed without the equipment, which the early Church, and God, felt, was essential for the effective preaching of the Gospel? We face the same challenge of evil occult powers; we need the same equipment from God to defeat them.

h. They acted as a body under Christ's leadership.

Paul taught that all the members of Christ's body, from apostles to young converts, are intended by God to act together under the guidance of Christ the Head, as a body. 1Cor.12v11-31. Rom.12v3-5. Eph.4v7-11. Every child of God has the right to minister something from Christ, when Christ moves them. 1Cor.14v26,31. This is, of course, speaking of a Christian fellowship; pioneer evangelism should be left to the mature spiritual ministries of the Church. Paul said the Christians at Corinth had the right idea of ministering as a body; the trouble was that they all wanted to do everything and to do too much. The object of the New Testament leaders, was to produce ministries in each local church. Those who fail to do this are not fulfilling a New Testament ministry. Eph.4v8-14. In Eph.4v14., Paul speaks of immature believers who do not possess any ministry from Christ, and he says that they are at the mercy of false teachers. Heb.5v13,14. The Holy Spirit is the overall superintendent of the whole Church of Christ, His aim is to produce ministry in the Church.

The continuous prayer life of the early Church at Jerusalem, shows they realised the need of being subordinate to the lordship of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. There was a sense of eagerness in the early disciples, to see God work in His Church; if we insist on keeping to our programmes and routines, we will find that we have missed the things that the early Church experienced. Are we as willing to let the Holy Spirit forbid some of our activities and plans, or stop us preaching as Paul was in Acts.16v6-10.? Until we are, we shall only be students of the book of Acts; we shall know little or nothing of “the Acts of the Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit comes to lead us on to maturity, but unless we acknowledge His leadership and guidance we will not attain it, we may become old Christians, but we will never become mature Christians. Eph.4v12. 2Cor.3v18. Lk.6v40. Heb.5v11-14.

i. They were prepared to suffer for their Saviour.

The early Christians had to count the cost of their faith, they, like their Lord, were despised and rejected by worldly men. They were looked upon as followers of a crucified heretic, their faith meant persecution. Acts.5v40-42. 8v1-4. 1Thes.1v5,6. There were periods of rest from persecution, e.g. Acts.9v31., but Paul warned Christians that if they lived godly lives, they could expect persecution. 2Tim.2v9. 3v11,12. We are not to invite persecution; indeed, Paul told us to influence the lives and actions of political leaders, by our prayers and godly living. 1Tim.2v1-3. Christ told us to run away from those who persecute us, and try to kill us; there is no place for a false bravado in the Church of Christ. Mt.10v23. The early Christians triumphed over militant opposition because they esteemed the reproach for Christ's sake, as greater riches than all the treasures of the world. Heb.11v26. The Christians treasure is in heaven, not on earth, our eternal home is with our heavenly Father, and what a wonderful Father and home we have! Mt.7v19-34. 1Pet.1v3-9. We are pilgrims and strangers on the earth, we seek a better company and country, and we have a heavenly hope; for God is preparing for us a city. Heb.11v13-16. 1Pet.2v11.

When we seek God for the fullness of the Holy Spirit, with the same attitudes of heart and mind as the early Christians at Jerusalem, we shall have the same powerful manifestations of the Holy Spirit’s power. Nothing will be able to stand before us; multitudes will be saved, healed, and filled with the Holy Spirit. We shall be the blessing that God intended all His children to be.

PART 2. THE NINE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

a. The challenge of Satan's counterfeit signs.

The many challenging counterfeit signs of Satan that are being manifested in the world today, make it essential for the Church to manifest the mighty signs, wonders and miracles offered to it through the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These precious gifts have been bought for us through the precious blood of Christ. 1Pet.1v18-20. Many false cults have the zeal and power of Satan and they deceive many; and even as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, and Elymas withstood Paul, these evil workers challenge and withstand the experience of the Church of Christ. The Scripture warns us that we can expect further great manifestations of evil power in the near future. Mt.24v11,24. 2Thes.2v8-12. God's answer to this evil will be the greatest manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit that the world has ever seen. The anointed preaching of the Scriptures and the powerful manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, has always been God's answer to the manifestation of evil power; for intellectual argument alone has never been a sufficient answer to the powers of darkness. True Christianity has never been mere intellectual gymnastics, it has always been God's truth confirmed by spiritual dynamics.

b. The challenge of militant antichristian governments.

We have the challenge of preaching the Gospel in countries under the control of militant antichristian governments, where even open intellectual argument and evangelism are forbidden under threat of death. The need for the spiritual gifts that Christ and His apostles possessed is greater than ever, we need spiritual gifts that miraculously protect us, as well as the mercy healing gifts that confirm the Gospel message. Antichrist and his followers will ruthlessly exterminate believers in the countries under their control; the only answer in such circumstances, is the manifestation of the protective and judgement gifts of the Holy Spirit that prophets, like Moses and Elijah, manifested in their ministries. God has promised that the gifts that these great prophets manifested will be part of the equipment of the Church at the end of this age. Rev.11v5,6. Jewish history reveals that whenever God's people lacked the manifestations of God's power and knowledge through spiritual gifts, there was invariably backsliding and apostasy, and the people of God were dominated by the heathen. God has always manifested Himself in signs, wonders and miracles, when His people have followed Him with all their hearts. Holy Ghost miracles are God's best answer to both militant godless governments, and Satan's "lying signs and wonders." 2Thes.2v9.

c. The ignorance of Christian leaders about spiritual gifts.

Some Christian leaders are genuinely ignorant about spiritual gifts, but others, like the theologians of Christ's time, have deliberately and wilfully opposed the truth, and hidden the key of knowledge about spiritual gifts, by unbelieving opposition, wilful omission, false tradition, and sceptical and untrue exposition of the Scriptures. Jesus solemnly warned Israel's religious leaders, that their wilful opposition to His ministry, and their determination to stop and hinder people from entering the doorway into an experience of God, was a great sin and debt which will be "required," "ekzeteo;" that is, exhaustively searched out, demanded back, and answered for on judgement day. Lk.11v50-52.

Some modern theologians have followed the example of Christ's enemies, by saying that genuine manifestations of the Holy Spirit, and undeniable signs from God, are a manifestation of Satan's power. This is the final shameful defence of the Holy Ghost resisting sceptic, and it brings about their spiritual ruin. Mt.12v22-32. Mk.3v28-30. Acts.7v51-53. Those who hide behind a false spirituality and say, "All I need is the Scripture," should remember that the Scripture expressly commands Christians to earnestly seek for spiritual gifts, and that much of Scripture is a record of the manifestation of these gifts. Jesus told us to expect greater works than He did while He was on earth, not a total absence of miracles. Jn.14v12. Christ never intended His Church to be a tower of Babylonian humanistic endeavour, He desired it to be a body united by love and energised with the power of God. If you do away with the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures; you do away with the interventions of God in human history, for spiritual gifts are God's acts in the world. Those who say that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are not for today, are impudently affirming that God is, "The great I was," instead of, "The Great I Am."

d. Lack of spirituality is the reason for the lack of spiritual gifts after 400 A.D.

It is a fact of Church History that innumerable signs, wonders and miracles were performed by servants of Christ throughout the Roman empire in the first two or three centuries after Christ's birth. After this, miracles became less common, though they did occur right through Church history in periods of revival. John Wesley gives us, on page 204 of volume 2 of his works, the reason why spiritual gifts were not common in Church history after about 400 A.D. "The grand reason why the miraculous gifts were so soon withdrawn, was not only that faith and holiness were well nigh lost, but that dry, formal, orthodox men, began to ridicule whatever gifts they had not themselves and decry them all as madness or imposture."

Wesley also writes in his sermon "The More Excellent Way."
"It does not appear that these extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were common in the Church for more than two or three centuries. We seldom hear of them after the fatal period when the Emperor Constantine called himself a Christian; and, from a vain imagination of promoting the Christian cause thereby, heaped riches and power and honour upon the Christians in general, but in particular upon the Christian Clergy. From this time they almost totally ceased; very few instances of the kind were found. The cause of this was not, as has been vulgarly supposed, "Because there was no more occasion for them, because all the world had become Christians." This is a miserable mistake; not a twentieth part of it was then nominally Christian. The real cause was 'the love of many,' almost of all Christians, so called, was 'waxed cold.' The Christians had no more of the Spirit of Christ than the other Heathens; The Son of Man when He came to examine His Church, could hardly 'find faith upon the earth.' This was the real cause why the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were no longer to be found in the Christian Church; because the Christians were turned Heathens again, and had only a dead form left."

John Chrysostom, A.D. 346 to 407? Gave a similar answer to the question, "Why are not miracles performed still? Why are there no persons who raise the dead and cure diseases?" with the words, "That it was owing to the want of faith, and virtue, and piety in those times." Jerome said, "The Church had lost as much of its virtue, as it had gained of wealth and power."

e. Spiritual gifts will be needed until the perfect day of Christ's coming.

Spiritual ministries and their accompanying spiritual gifts are still needed in the Church today, and God still sets them in His Church when He can find people who love Him and mankind enough to desire to be channels of His power and love. 1Cor.12v28. Many Scriptures prove that it is untrue to say that spiritual gifts finished after the apostolic age. Peter confirmed Joel's prophecy, that spiritual gifts will continue right up to the great

and terrible day of the Lord, and states that the Pentecostal experience is for all Christians. Acts.2v16-21,38,39. Paul informs us that the age of grace is more glorious and more full of the Spirit's workings than the age of Law. 2Cor.3v6-18. Heb.8v10-13. All thirsty believers in Christ are promised rivers of the Holy Spirit's power and fullness. Jn.7v37-39.

The critics of a Pentecostal experience, have been unable to find any Scriptures that state that the gifts of the Holy Spirit have ceased, so they have been driven to make the quite unwarranted assumption from 1Cor.13v8-13., that, "that which is perfect," at which the gifts of the Spirit are to pass away, was the completion of the Scripture canon. Honest theologians state that there is no support in the Biblical usage of "perfect," or its cognate forms, for the suggestion that "the perfect" refers to the completion of the canon of Scripture.
Ellicott's commentary says of, "that which is perfect," "This verse shows by its emphatic 'then,' that the time when the gifts shall cease is at the end of this dispensation. The imperfect shall not cease until the perfect is brought in."

In 1Cor.13., Paul is considering love in relation to the whole of Christian experience; giving, martyrdom, and knowledge, as well as the gifts of the Holy Spirit. There is no mention of the Scripture canon as such, Paul mentions sacred truth, but it is love and God's kingdom of love that is "perfect." It is certainly not honest to say that 1Cor.13v8. teaches that spiritual gifts have passed away, and yet admit that our present partial knowledge has not been replaced by the full knowledge of God's kingdom. The time when the gifts "pass away," is when the Church on earth, exchanges its present partial knowledge and power, for the complete and perfect "face to face" experience of God. When 1Cor.13v8. is really fulfilled, the Church will be experiencing the greatest measure of spiritual power it has ever known, it will be glorified in heaven and enjoying God's glory, power, truth and love to the full. Paul illustrates the enormous difference between even his own mature Christian experience and the glorious experience of life in heaven, by comparing the very limited experience of a baby that cannot talk with the experience and mental powers of a full-grown man. Paul did not say that the gifts were soon to finish, so we need not bother with them, He gave practical teaching on the gifts and told us to seek them for our spiritual welfare. 1Cor.14v1-3,12,18,39.

f. How can critics say these gifts have ceased and yet pray for their manifestation?
Those who insist that spiritual gifts have ceased and are not for today, must, if they are to be consistent, insist that God has removed them all, and not just some of them. If they really believe that spiritual gifts are not for today, how is it that they pray for Divine healing? For this is a gift of healing. How is it that they pray for illumination upon a problem, or guidance from God? For this is a word of wisdom. How is it that they pray for ministers of the Gospel to receive the Holy Spirit's anointing? and for Satan's power to be lifted off people? and for people to be blessed? For these are the operations of the gift of faith. How is it that they pray for material needs to be met? For this is the province of the working of miracles. How is it that they pray for a revelation of God to the soul? For this is a discerning of spirits. How is it that they pray for an inspired utterance from God to help others? For this is the realm of prophecy. How is it that they pray for the Holy Spirit to inspire them in prayer? and then reject the gift of tongues, which is the Divine answer to this request. It is a fact that Christians who say that spiritual gifts have ceased to operate in the Church, actually pray for their manifestation. Those who reject spiritual gifts completely, have in reality tried to remove God's influence from His Church, and put it in the hands of men. We must accept that God has decreed that we need these gifts, and not frustrate the wise and loving reasons for their manifestation.

g. The tragic fact that movements founded by the Spirit, have become bulwarks against the Spirit.
It is a sad fact that movements and denominations, which were brought into being by Holy Ghost revivals, and have been bulwarks for the Gospel, have become bulwarks against the wonderful gifts and manifestations of the Holy Spirit. It is difficult to see how churches can claim to be founded on the New Testament, and yet oppose and forbid the miraculous things that happened in the New Testament from taking place in their churches. The truth is, the traditions of men have replaced the Word of God in our day, and men still oppose the miraculous works of the Holy Spirit, just as surely as they did in our Lord's ministry. Mt.15v2,3,6. Mk.7v9,13. Col.2v8. 1Pet.1v18. It was not the fervency of the praise and worship of the early Church that convinced people that Christ was risen, it was the acts of God's power that bore witness to the truth of the Gospel. Rom.15v18-21. Heb.2v4. It is not the fervency of our singing, but our love and the acts of God's power that flow through our love, which shows to the world that God is with us. We cannot earn God's "charismata," they are gifts of grace, but we can receive them as we earnestly seek God for them. Gideon saw the truth that God's people should expect miracles from their God, when he said, in Judges.6v13., "Oh my Lord, If the Lord be with us? why then is all this befallen us? and WHERE BE ALL HIS MIRACLES which our fathers told us of, saying did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?" After the glorious wonders of Christ and His early Church, we can confidently say, "Because the Lord is with us, we can surely expect all His miracles."

h. The fruit and gifts of the Holy Spirit complement each other.
In considering these "Nine Gifts of the Holy Spirit," 1Cor.12v7-10., we in no way forget or neglect the vital, "Nine Fruit of the Holy Spirit." Gal.5v22-24. We recognise the correct place given to both fruit and gifts in the Scripture. Love and the other fruit of the Spirit have need of God's power to fulfil the beautiful desires and plans of God; and our manifestation of God's power and knowledge gifts need the Holy Spirit's fruit of character to correctly use those gifts. The Holy Spirit comes to give us both fruits and gifts, they are part of His full ministry to us and through us; each perfectly complements the other. The life and ministry of Jesus show the perfect manifestation of both the fruits and the gifts of the Spirit. Those who love our Lord and desire to follow

Him, should desire both the gifts and the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Jn.10v27. We should accept the spiritual gifts that God gives to His Church. 1Cor.12v7. The nine spiritual gifts are the combined and co-ordinated abilities and acts of God the Father, the Lord Jesus, and the Holy Spirit given to the Church; their manifestations can be divided up in the following three ways.

THE THREE DIVISIONS OF THE NINE SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

A. Gifts of Revelation and Information. Manifesting God's omniscient love.
The Trinity give us their wisdom and knowledge through the gifts of revelation.
1) The gift of a word of wisdom. **2)** The gift of a word of knowledge. **3)** The gift of discernings of spirits.

B. Gifts of Power and Demonstration. Manifesting God's omnipotent love.
The Trinity give us their miracle working power through the power gifts.
4) The gift of faith. **5)** The gift of workings of miracles. **6)** The gift of gifts of healings.

C. Gifts of Inspiration and Encouragement. Manifesting God's omnipresent love.
The Trinity encourage us through devotional gifts that inspire, edify and comfort.
7) The gift of prophecy. **8)** The gift of various kinds of tongues. **9)** The gift of interpretation of tongues.

The headings of these three groups of gifts can apply in some measure to each other; however, they do help to show the major characteristics and uses of the gifts. We could call these three groups by the titles of, “God Informing,” “God Empowering,” and “God Inspiring and Comforting.” The important thing, of course, is not just to define the gifts, but rather to manifest them.

THE CO-ORDINATION OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS.
Paul divides the gifts of the Holy Spirit into nine gifts that can operate quite separately from each other. As we have seen these nine gifts are really the various aspects of the love, power, wisdom and knowledge of God imparted to us by the Holy Spirit as we need them. They are the interventions of God in our lives. Sometimes we may need only one gift, but at other times, we may need several gifts to meet our needs, and we can receive them in one outpouring of the love and power, and wisdom and knowledge of God. e.g. Acts.9v10-19. 12v5-11. Through His gifts God builds up the Church in love, defends it from Satan's attacks, and arms the Church, so that we, like our Lord, can bring blessing and healing to those who are oppressed of the Devil. Acts.10v38. Jn.14v12. The gifts of the Spirit reveal the great and loving heart of God to the Church and the world, and bring the beauty, love and healing power of God's kingdom to needy mankind. Lk.10v9. Paul's statement in 1Cor.12v4-31., makes it clear that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are intended to operate in the Church, through its leading ministries and various members; as the various parts of the human body operate together in perfect co-operation and co-ordination. When Christians work together in love, and the Holy Spirit's gifts operate in perfect co-operation and co-ordination through the various ministries and members of the body of Christ; as they did in the first Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Jerusalem; then God can perform all the beautiful and wonderful things that He desires to do; and His kingdom will be greatly extended.

THE THREE GIFTS OF REVELATION AND INFORMATION.

1. THE GIFT OF A WORD OF WISDOM. "Logos sophias"
A word of wisdom is a fragment of God's wisdom imparted to us; it is a supernatural revelation of the will and purposes of God. This is the first gift mentioned in the list in 1Cor.12v8-10., and it is the most important, because out of the knowledge of the will and purposes of God flows the manifestation of the other gifts. Following God's directive wisdom is the source of real spiritual power. Failure to obey God's words of wisdom has always ended in disaster; obedience has always resulted in blessing and victory. 2Chron.36v15-21. Lk.19v41-44. 2Chron.20v20. Much confusion has arisen from a purely human explanation of a word of wisdom, so let us consider:

WHAT A WORD OF WISDOM IS NOT.

1. It is not natural wisdom sanctified to the service of God.
No more than speaking with tongues is the consecration of linguistic ability to God, or the gifts of healings are the sanctified ministrations of the Christian doctor. It is a fragment of Divine wisdom.

2. It is not the ability to rightly interpret or preach the Scriptures.
A word of wisdom is not a result of intellectual process or consecrated study, nor is it anointed preaching and teaching, or the exposition of truth under Divine blessing. These are God-given ministries, but they are not within the sphere of the word of wisdom; which is a supernatural revelation of the purposes of God, operating in the realm of Divine direction and prediction, and not in the realm of preaching, teaching and exposition. In 1Sam.9v15,27. 10v1., “the Word of God” to Saul from Samuel, was not an exposition of Scripture; it was a revelation of the will and purpose of God, for Saul to be king over Israel. The Holy Spirit guides all Christians into truth as they read the Scriptures, but this is not the sphere of the word of wisdom, which is a direct personal revelation to us of the will, plans and purposes of God. Jn.16v13.

3. It is not the ability to guide and counsel people wisely.
A word of wisdom is not mature Christian guidance, which on occasions is absolutely necessary in the Christian life. It is Divine direction and guidance. Usually the guidance for everyday affairs needs common sense and

Christian wisdom. Ps.32v8-10. If we need a word of wisdom from God, He can break into our lives and routines, just as He has done so often with His children in the past.

4. It is not a good administrative ability.
It is not the ability to lead or guide large meetings or conferences, etc.; though sometimes such leaders may experience a real word of wisdom from God, just as James did in Acts.15v12-22,28.. Deacons probably fulfil the two administrative ministries spoken of as "helps" and "governments" in 1Cor.12v28..

5. The word of wisdom must not be confused with the normal gift of prophecy.
The simple gift of prophecy edifies, exhorts and comforts; whereas the word of wisdom directs, predicts, and reveals the purposes of God. 1Cor.14v3,23,25. Prophetic ministries will REGULARLY manifest the word of wisdom and the other gifts of revelation; whereas Christians with the simple gift of prophecy, may OCCASIONALLY manifest the gifts of revelation; and usually seldom on the highest levels of spiritual revelation. Daniel's predictive revelation ministry was exceptional, even among the greater prophets of the Old Testament. Eph.4v8-11. 1Cor.12v28. Acts.9v15,16. It appears only Agabus was told, in about A.D. 43, of the dangerous famine which started about a year later, and lasted from about A.D. 44 to 47, and caused the death by starvation of many in Judea. Acts.11v27-30. See 21v10,11.

6. The word of wisdom is not now intended to add to the Scripture.
All the truth that we need for this age is revealed to us in the Scriptures. Christ and His apostles and prophets have given us the only foundation upon which we can build as Christians. God has revealed His new purposes for each age as the new age has begun. When God gives words of wisdom to Christians today, it is usually to meet local circumstances or personal needs; it is NOT to add to the truth of Scripture. Those who claim that they have a new revelation of truth that replaces, or adds to the Holy Scriptures, should be rejected. Eph.2v20. 3v5. Rev.22v19. There are many false teachers today who claim a new organisation, a new order and authority, a new apostleship, and new doctrines, and they deny Christ's deity, death and doctrines. Paul warns us that they are motivated by another spirit, and are "deceitful workers", and "Satan's ministers;" who falsely claim to be messengers of light and ministers of righteousness. 2Cor.11v3,4,13-15. Beware of such teachers. Col.2v8,9. God has revealed His eternal truths and purposes to us in the Scriptures.

A DEFINITION OF A WORD OF WISDOM.
A word of wisdom is a fragment of God's Divine wisdom imparted to us; it is a supernatural revelation given by the Holy Spirit of the mind and purposes of God. It is God's will, plans and purposes revealed to us by the Holy Spirit. Through this gift the Holy Spirit has revealed in the past, Divine truth that has been received as "the oracles of God" and Holy Scripture; though this revelation of new truth ceased after the start of this age, God can still reveal His plans and purposes for individuals, communities, churches and nations, through this gift.

SOME EXAMPLES AND USES OF THE WORD OF WISDOM.
1. To reveal the vital spiritual truths, eternal counsels and sovereign purposes of God.
All the Divine revelations in Scripture of the purposes of God came through this gift. The Scriptures are "God-breathed," and this is why Jesus said that they could not be broken, they are "the oracles of God." 2Tim.3v14-17. Jn.10v35. Acts.7v38. Rom.3v2. Heb.5v12. The Bible proves its claim to inspiration. "The oracles of God" can be divided into two main groups.

a. Truths and principles, and general commands for living by. The aim of the Law and Christ's teaching was to get people to live holy lives, to put love into action. Christ came to save us from sin. Mt.1v21.
b. God's hidden purposes, and His plan of the ages. Eph.1v21. 2v7. 3v11. Certain plans of God are not dependent upon men's reactions, they are God's eternal purposes and sovereign plans for His creation. These plans of God are called "mysteries," "musteria," which does not mean "mysterious things," but rather "hidden purposes." God has revealed His Divine secrets, and hidden purposes to His children. Eph.1v9,10. 3v3-11. Some of these wonderful purposes of God had been kept hidden since the foundation of the world, until they were revealed at the start of this age. Mt.13v11,17-35. Lk.10v21-24. Rom.16v25,26. 1Cor.15v51-53. Col.1v26. Titus.1v2.

God had an incredibly complex and wise plan of all the ages before He started His creation. We read in Eph.3v11., of God's "eternal purpose," "prothesin ton aionon," His "design concerning the ages," or His, "plan of the ages." Every age up to the Great White Throne judgement has been a preparation for the ages of ages after that judgement. During these preparatory ages, God has been recording the reactions of the free wills of His creatures. At the Great White Throne Judgement, God will make known the works of every creature; and every mouth will be stopped. Rom.3v19. God will show the perfect justice and wisdom of His dealings, and will prove by past history, that without His loving rule, and communal "agape" love, happiness in community life is quite impossible. The whole of God's great plan of the ages depended upon redemption in Christ, without which no creation would have been possible. Christ's death was foreknown and planned before the foundation of the world. Rom.16v25,26. Eph.3v10,11. Titus.1v2. Rev.13v8. We are also told, as children of God, of Satan's purposes and plans. 2Thes.2v7-12. Rev.2v13,24. Is.14v12-14. etc. Satan's plan to corrupt and destroy the earth, and by brute force and violence make the inhabitants of the earth worship him, is clearly told to us in the Scriptures. Rev.11v18. 13v1-18. N.B. v3,4.

God has revealed His secret plans and purposes to His children, but has hidden them from the worldling.

Mt.13v9-17. Enoch had Christ's second coming revealed to him. Jude.v14. Abraham rejoiced over Christ's coming. Jn.8v56. Daniel had the revelation of future world empires, the first and second comings of Christ, the last judgement and eternal kingdom of God. Dan.7v1-16. 9v20-27. The apostles John and Paul received equally astounding revelations of the plans and purposes of God. These are but a few of those who have experienced the revelation of God's sovereign plans and purposes. The wonderful thing is that we still have a part in their fulfilment, and will enjoy during the endless ages of ages, the wonderful plans of our heavenly Father and the unsearchable riches of our Lord Jesus Christ. Eph.2v4-7. 3v8,14-21. Hallelujah!

2. To warn of future Divine judgement.
God warned Noah of the flood, Gen.6v18-22.; and Abraham of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the other cities of the plain. Gen.18v17-33. 19v12,13. Elijah and Micaiah foretold Ahab's death. 1Kings.21v17-27. 11v1-39. 2Chron.18v1-34. God told many prophets of His purpose to judge Israel and Judah by captivity. 2Chron.36v15-21. Ezek.9v1-11. Is.10v5-27. Christ prophesied Jerusalem's destruction at the hands of Titus and the last great Antichrist. Lk.19v41-44. 21v20-24. Mt.23v29-39. Rev.17v15-18. Lk.17v20-37.

3. To give Divine direction before, or during natural catastrophe or national disaster.
Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dreams and averted international disaster. Gen.41v1-44. God rewarded the faithful great woman of Shunem by preserving her in famine. 2Kings4v8-17. 8v1-8. Christians were prepared for famine by the prophesy of Agabus and took the appropriate action. Acts.11v27-30. Paul was warned of a storm and directed in it by words of wisdom. Acts.27v9-11,21-25,30-34,44.

4. To give Divine direction and deliverance in the time of persecution and danger.
David was protected from Saul. 1Sam.25v5,6. The three kings were delivered from sure defeat when fighting Moab. 2Kings3v4-27. The wise men, and Joseph and Mary, were warned of Herod's intentions. Mt.2v12,13,19,20. God told Jesus to delay His visit to Jerusalem, obviously to escape arrest. Jn.7v1-10,44-53. Paul was warned to flee from Jerusalem just after his conversion. Acts.22v17-21. Jeremiah's guidance from God was rejected, the result was death for all. Jer.42 and 43.

5. To give Divine defence in trial or persecution for Christ's sake.
Jesus tells us in Lk.12v11,12. and 21v12-15., that if we are persecuted and put on trial for our faith, we must not premeditate what to answer, for God will impart His Divine wisdom, and guide us what to say in that hour. Jesus warned us not to rely on oratory or clever answers, but on Divine illumination, He certainly had this experience when His foes asked Him the source of His authority in Mt.21v23-27.; and the lawfulness of offering tribute to Caesar in Mt.22v15-22.. The Divine wisdom and authority imparted to Peter and John gave them a boldness and assurance that amazed the Sanhedrin, they could only threaten them, they could not answer or silence them. Acts.4v8-22. 5v17-42. The writer has had the experience of saying things that were not in his mind and outside his knowledge. This promise gives us immense assurance in facing the unknown future; we know that we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

God may also inspire us to give our testimony as Paul did in Acts.22v1-24. and 26v1-32.; or tell us to take advantage of a division among our persecutors as in Acts.23v6-10.. God may inspire us to answer our foes with Scripture truth, as Christ did in Mt.22v23-33,41-46.; and Paul did in Acts.24v24-27.. See Col.4v6. 1Pet.3v13-18.. The Jews could not refute the divinely inspired irresistible Scriptural logic of Stephen; they had to kill him to silence him. Acts.6v8-10. and 7v1-60. If we have to die for our faith and divinely inspired truth, like Christ, Stephen, Paul, and almost all the apostles, we know that grace will be given to us to overcome. God can deliver us, but if He does not, He is still with us, and if our foes kill us, they only send us home to our heavenly Father, our Saviour, and heaven all the sooner. In Phil.1v21-24., Paul tells us that death to the Christian is gain, life with Christ in heaven is far, far, far better than here. Dan.3v16-18. Heb.11v32-39. A.T. Robertson says of Phil.1v23., "'Very far better,' ('polloi mallon kreisson'). Double comparative (Lightfoot calls it triple because of 'polloi') like Isocrates and the 'Koine' often. See 2Cor.7v13. for 'perissoteros mallon.' 'Polloi' is the instrumental case of measure (by much)." End of quote.

6. To give Divine direction in the work of God.
a. It can reveal and confirm a call from God to work for Him.
The call of Moses. Exod.3v1-13. Gideon. Judges.7v1-11. Isaiah. Is.6v8. Jeremiah. Jer.1v1-9. Paul. Acts.9v10-17. 13v1,2.

b. It can reveal a God-appointed leader.
Saul. 1Sam.9v16. David. 1Sam.16v6-13. The twelve apostles. Lk.6v12-19. Paul. Acts.9v15,16.

c. It can reveal God's strategic plans.
Jesus, Joshua and Jericho. Joshua.5v13 to 6v5. Elijah. 1Kings.17v1. 18v46. Philip. Acts.8v26-29. Peter. Acts.10v1-48. Paul. Acts.13v2. 16v6-10. Three thousand converts become missionaries. Acts.2v5,41. When the man born lame was healed there were many converts. Acts.4v4. Christ's ministry was strategically directed by His Father. Jn.5v19,20,30.

d. It can reveal the solution to a church problem. Acts.15v13-29.
In the council at Jerusalem, discussion was not ruled out, they said, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and us." Acts.15v28.

e. To judge or correct sin, or a wrong attitude so that God's work can prosper.
Peter's sectarian views were corrected by a revelation of God's purposes for the Gentiles. Acts.10v9-22,30-48. Ananias and Sapphira are exposed and judged by God for their sin. Acts.5v1-11. Christ corrects the seven churches in Revelation 1 to 3.

f. To reveal promises of blessings that are to come.
Abraham. Gen.12v1-7. 17v1-8. Jacob, Gen.25v23. 28v15. The promise of the Holy Spirit. Acts.2v16-21. with Joel.2v28-32.

g. To comfort and assure troubled saints.
God comforts us by revealing His eternal purposes for us. Josh.1v1-9. Jer.1v4-10. Acts.23v11. 27v22-24. Rev.1v9-18.

h. To give directions that will meet our material needs.
God loves to meet our needs for Divine direction and guidance in home, family life, work or business; this is as much a part of sacred service, and God's work as Church matters and worship. 1Kings.17v2-16. 2Kings.4v1-7. Lk.5v1-11. Mt.17v24-27.

SOME STRONG WORDS OF WARNING, AND SPECIAL POINTS TO WATCH.
1. Directive revelations should be carefully examined, and often rejected.
Paul tells us to test all prophecies in the fire, and reject all revelations that contradict or add to Scripture. 1Thes.5v20,21. We already have the foundation of Christian doctrine for this age. Eph.2v20. 3v5. Rev.22v19. 2Cor.11v3,4,13-15.

a. Don't let others direct you by supposed prophetic revelation.
This warning is necessary because arrogant false prophets have given false revelations that have ruined many people's lives, and directed them out of God's will. The Old Testament prophets enquired of God for people, and directed them; however, under the New Covenant this aspect of prophetic ministry has changed. Paul said in Rom.8v14.; that God's sons can all be personally led by God, and so we should seek guidance for ourselves. We read in Heb.8v8-13., that under the New Covenant, "they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest." Heb.10v19-22.

b. God-given guidance through others will confirm, not direct.
We should NEVER submit to guidance from others about which God has not already given us definite and well-confirmed guidance personally. Jn.14v16-26. 16v7-15. 21v20-22. Heb.4v12-16. 1Thes.5v20,21. We must consider thoughtfully, and at length, any revelations that are given to us; and beware of strong personalities who would interpret revelation in the light of their opinion, and counsel us into their decisions. A word of wisdom can show us personally how to serve God, but this gift is not given to us to direct another person's walk with God, as Peter found out, when Christ corrected him for trying to get guidance for John. Jn.21v20-22. Confirmation of guidance, can and may occur through others. In Acts.13v2. a word of wisdom confirmed what God had already told Paul and Barnabus, they received specific guidance direct from God, and others confirmed it in a general and vague way. Take time to consider prophecies, and NEVER make instant decisions on them. Put them in the fire and test them. In 1Thes.5v21., "Prove all things," is "panta," which means, "all things;" and dokimazete," the present active imperative of "dokimazo," to approve after testing; it is used of the testing of metals, and money, make sure absolutely sure that any guidance that is given you is genuine and from God, and not counterfeit. The present tense shows the necessity of a continual testing of every prophetic revelation. Continual testing, not meek acceptance, is God's command.

God continually tests the ministries He has put in the Church. In 1Thes.2v4., Paul states "we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the Gospel;" "we have been approved," is "dedokimasmetha," the perfect passive indicative of "dokimazo;" the perfect tense shows a completed state, and so means tested and proved with the lasting approval of God. Paul finishes the verse by again using "dokimazo;" he writes, "so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, who tests our hearts." Here Paul uses "dokimazonti," the present active participle; to reveal that God tests, and continually scrutinises, all the thoughts and intents of the hearts, and inner lives of his apostles and ministers; pleasing Him is far more important than pleasing men. Paul reminds them of his pure motives and gentle care in looking after them as young converts. 1Thes.2v5-11.

c. Warnings in emergency through well-proven ministries should be heeded.
In emergencies, God can use trustworthy prophets, like Agabus; or spiritual Christians, like those at Tyre; to give specific direction from danger, or warnings of danger, by words of wisdom. Acts.20v22,23. 21v4,10-14. Many Christians, in many different locations, gave Paul the same warnings from God even though hundreds of miles separated them, and there was no possibility of contact or collusion between them. Through them God gave Paul a strong warning not to go to Jerusalem, which he ignored; and as a result his ministry was greatly restricted, and the Church was badly damaged by the Judaizers. Agabus warned of an approaching famine in Acts.11v27-30., this occurred from A.D. 44 to 48, and during it many people died in Judea of starvation, the church had about three years warning of the famine, and prepared for it.

2. Don't expect even genuine words of wisdom to always happen immediately.

a. Don't forget the time factor in prediction.

Remember the experience of the prophets in 1Pet.1v10-12.. You may think a prediction or promise from God may happen quickly, when it may take years to come to pass, and be fulfilled, and this can be a great trial of our faith. Satan tries to take advantage of the delay between a revelation and its fulfilment; He even cast doubt on our Lord's future ministry, and taunted Him to prove His ministry by doing the miraculous. Lk.4v1-13. N.B. v3,9,10. Eph.6v10-20. Heb.6v12. 10v32-39. Even great prophets have been tried by delays in the understanding and fulfilment of their prophecies. 1Pet.1v10-12. Ps.105.v17-19. Dan.7v15,16,28. 8v15,16,26,27.

b. Don't let circumstances overwhelm you, hold fast in faith.

There is sometimes a great discrepancy between circumstances as they appear and God's words of wisdom; hold on in faith. Lk.4v1-13. Eph.6v10-20. Heb.6v12. 10v32-39. Remember how God's Word tried Joseph's faith until it was fulfilled, but the Word of the Lord came to pass over 20 years later. Ps.105v17-22.

c. Don't try to force prophecies to come to pass, wait for God to fulfil His Word.

Do not try to bring a word of wisdom to pass, unless God tells you to do so; wait until God fulfils His Word. In Ps.34v7., "Rest in the Lord," is in the Hebrew, "Be silent to the Lord." In Ps.62v1., "Waiteth," means, "is silent." See Ps.40v1-4. 42v1-11.

3. Don't forget that God's purposes can be altered by repentance or rebellion.

A prophecy of judgement may not come to pass because people repent and put things right with God or man. Jonah.3v9,10. God may also withhold promised blessing because of sin and sloth. Ps.95v8-11. Ezek.18v20-32. 2Cor.6v16 to 7v1. Repentance and a new consecration can change circumstances or stop the judgement of God. Ps.95v8-11. Numb.14v354,35. Ezek.18v20-32. 2Cor.6v16 to 7v1. Jonah.3v9,10. Is.38v1-22. God postponed Hezekiah's death, because of his new consecration and prevailing prayer. Is.38v1-22.

4. Don't forget that abiding in Christ is the key to obtaining prophetic revelation. Jn.15v1-17. 16v12-14.

God never intended us to divorce the manifestation of spiritual gifts from abiding in Christ, obeying God's Word, and prayerful communion with God, and this applies particularly to the word of wisdom. We have to walk with God to have His important ways, will, and purposes revealed to us before they happen. "God made His ways known unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel." Ps.103v7. Abiding in Jesus is the key to a profitable manifestation of the predictive prophetic gifts of the Holy Spirit.

2. THE GIFT OF A WORD OF KNOWLEDGE. "Logos gnoseos."

This is the second gift in the list in 1Cor.12v8-10., and it comes close behind the word of wisdom in importance. Let us consider some important facts about a word of knowledge, "logos gnoseos." See "logion" 1Pet.4v11. Acts.7v38.

WHAT A WORD OF KNOWLEDGE IS NOT.

1. A word of knowledge is not any kind of natural ability or knowledge.

A word of knowledge is the miraculous impartation of a small part of God's awesome omniscience. It is a fact that is supernaturally given by the Holy Spirit of which the recipient usually has no previous knowledge; however, it will occasionally confirm as a fact something we may have been told, felt, or feared, as when David asked God if the men of Keilah would deliver him to Saul, God told David they would. 1Sam.23v1-12. Reliance upon human ability hinders the manifestation of this gift; God does not glorify human pride or ability. Lk.10v21,22. Acts.4v13. 1Cor.1v26-31. Paul learned to glory in his limitations, not his abilities, so that Christ's power could rest upon him. 1Cor.2v1-5. 2Cor.12v5-10. God places no premium on ignorance; He resists pride in the ignorant and the intellectual. Ps.138v6. James.4v6.

2. A word of knowledge is not even a good knowledge of the Scriptures.

It is not the accumulation of Scripture facts by study, it is a spiritual revelation from God of some fact that we need to know. It is not any kind of preaching or teaching ministry, it is a revelation designed to show God's omniscience, care, and love.

3. A word of knowledge is not given to pry into people's lives.

It is not the gift of being a critical person or busybody; like all the gifts, it is intended to be manifested by the longsuffering and kind. Indeed, a Christian can only manifest this gift when God wants them to. When God reveals some great need in a person's life, it is seldom for the purpose of publicly challenging them; it may be to warn you, but usually it is so that you can pray for them, and help them. Many revelations should never be told to others, they are to reveal a matter for earnest prayer.

A DEFINITION OF A WORD OF KNOWLEDGE.

A word of knowledge is a supernatural revelation given by God, which reveals to us facts, which we could not know other than by Divine revelation. It can tell us of events and things in the past, present, or future. It is totally miraculous, being a part of God's awesome omniscience. Sometimes Christians can receive a word of knowledge without realising it, Peter did not know that his statement that Christ was the Son of the living God, was a Divine revelation, until Jesus told him. Mt.16v16,17.

SOME EXAMPLES AND USES OF THE WORD OF KNOWLEDGE.

Sometimes we need a word of knowledge to make sense of a word of wisdom, or a word of wisdom to deal with the situation a word of knowledge reveals. Sometimes we only need common sense to act on the revelation of a word of knowledge, at other times we may need a word of God's wisdom. The close link between these two gifts is seen in the following examples.

1. To warn of dangers ahead.

This gift is a manifestation of the amazing omniscience and foreknowledge of God, and one of the major uses of this gift is to warn people of danger. God revealed Benhadad's secret plans to Elisha and saved Israel from his armies. 2Kings6v8-12. God warned the wise men, Mary and Joseph of Herod's evil intentions through dreams. Mt.2v12,13. Paul was warned of danger at Jerusalem, and the storm. Acts.21v10-12. 27v10,11,21-26. Sometimes we cannot avoid the circumstances and dangers ahead, they are in the path of duty, but God can graciously prepare us for them through this gift. If we refuse to listen to God's warnings through this gift, we can expect real trouble and spiritual defeat. God continually warned Israel of the intentions of surrounding nations, but they refused to listen, and would not make the spiritual preparations that would have given them victory. The apostles refused to accept Christ's revelations about His sufferings and death, and were defeated as a result. Mt.16v21-24. 17v22,23. 20v17-19. with Mt.26v55,56. Mk.16v9-14. Peter refused to accept the possibility of his fall, and so he fell. Jn.13v36-38. 18v25-27. Lk.22v31-34,54-62. Peter believed the prophecy of Jesus that he would be an old man before he died, and so he slept in prison, secure in the knowledge that God would deliver him, when there was unbelieving anxiety in the rest of the Christians. Jn.21v18,19. 2Pet.1v13,14. with Acts.12v5-7,13-17. God not only reveals great trials to us, sometimes, in His great wisdom, He hides them from us. 2Kings.4v27. We rejoice that our lives are in the hands of our heavenly Father, whose love and wisdom are absolutely perfect.

2. God can reveal a person's character and thoughts when necessary. 1Cor.14v24,25.

a. God can reveal trustworthy and beautiful souls He has called to His work.

Nathanael, Andrew, Peter and John. Jn.1v37,40-42,46-51. The apostles. Lk.6v12-16. Paul. Acts.9v17-25. 13v2. God also confirmed calls to those who He knew would fail Him badly. Saul. 1Sam.9v19. 10v16. Jeroboam. 1Kings.11v28-34. 13v1-34.

b. God can save us from being deceived by devious and sly people with respected veneers, and good-looking faces.

We can often be wrong when we judge a person's character by human discernment, for they can hide from us what they are really like. Even the mature and wise Samuel was deceived by the fine looks of David's brothers, until God revealed their hearts to him. God's choice, the youngest son David, was excluded by Jesse from meeting the prophet Samuel, and was left outside to care for the sheep, even though Samuel had asked for all the sons to be present. 1Sam.16v5-13. The deceit of Jeroboam's wife was revealed to the blind prophet Ahijah. 1Kings.14v5,6. The slander of Judas was revealed to Jesus, Jn.6v70,71.; as were Simon's critical thoughts, Lk.7v36-40.; and the intentions of the Pharisees to trap Jesus in His speech. Lk.5v22. 14v1-6. Mk.2v5-8. Mt.22v15-22. N.B. v18.

c. God can deliver God's people from false prophets, etc. by means of this gift.

Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's foes. Jer.23v16. Ezek.13v2. Micaiah's enemies. Ahab and his false prophets. 1Chron.18v1-34.

d. God can expose the sinner's heart, and often bring them to repentance.

Paul tells us that when the secrets of the hearts of unbelievers are revealed, they will fall down on their face and say that God is in the midst. 1Cor.14v24,25. David. 2Sam.12v1-9. Jesus manifested this gift with the woman at the well. Jn.4v16-19,29. This kind of revelation is nearly always accompanied by the forgiving mercy of God, however, occasionally; God has brought judgement upon those who have committed gross and deliberate unrepentant sin, as in the case of Gehazi, 2Kings.5v20-27.; and Ananias and Sapphira. Acts.5v1-11. Achan was judged, because 36 men died because of his sin. Joshua.7v1-26. The Jezebel of Rev.3v20-23., died for her sin. We must remember that God will never reveal sin that has been confessed and forgiven, and is under the blood, He will only reveal unconfessed sin. Is.44v22. Acts.3v19. Heb.8v10-12.

3. God can reveal the facts about people to inspire them to seek and trust God.

a. It can reveal a seeking heart and its need and so that need can be met.

The woman at the well believed in Jesus through one outstanding word of knowledge, and inspired others to believe through her testimony to that word of knowledge. Jn.4v1-42. N.B. v18,29. Ananias was told that Paul, the leading opponent of the Church, had become a praying Christian and was given his address and told to visit Paul and pray for him. God told Paul that Ananias was going to visit him, pray for him, and restore his sight. Acts.9v10-19. Cornelius was told the name and address of Peter and was instructed to send for him, the result was a remarkable revival, and many seeking hearts found Jesus. Acts.10v1-48.

b. It can greatly encourage discouraged saints.

Elijah was told of the faithful 7,000, who had not bowed the knee to Baal. 1Kings.19v14-18. Angels tell the women of the risen Christ. Mt.28v6. Jesus told Paul that He had many people in wicked Corinth, without this knowledge Paul might have felt the position was hopeless; he was greatly encouraged by this revelation and

won a great victory for God. Acts.18v6-11. Josiah and Cyrus were greatly encouraged to perform God's will by the revelation of their names and work about 200 years before they fulfilled the prophecies spoken about them. 1Kings.13v2. 2Kings.21v24. to 23v25. Is.45v1-4.

c. Christ can reveal and heal broken hearts, wounded spirits and scarred memories.
The wounds of sin, heartbreak from bereavement, great domestic problems, indeed emotional injuries, scars and hurts of any kind can be revealed and healed by the Christ who came to send forth the crushed in liberty. Is.61v1-3. Lk.4v18,19. Jn.4v16-19,29. This is one of the most precious uses of this lovely gift of the Holy Spirit.

d. To inspire faith for salvation or healing. Jn.1v48,49. 4v48.
Jesus revealed to Nathanael that he had been sitting under a fig tree, and was praying and thinking about Jacob's stairway to heaven; it inspired him to believe that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Jesus still inspires faith in the same way today, I have seen God save and heal people as a result of this kind of revelation. Lk.13v12-16. Hindrances to healing can be revealed and removed; for example, a husband's ill treatment of their wife or children, or a bitter spirit of unforgiveness. Mt.18v5-7,35. 1Pet.3v7.

4. God can reveal real needs for prayer through words of knowledge.
This is the gift of the prayer warrior. Christ prayed earnestly for Peter **before** his fall, and Peter came through in spite of his sin and failure. Mk.14v27-31,37,38,50. Paul prayed for Christians who he had never met personally by revelation through words of knowledge. Col.2v1-5. 1Cor.5v3. So did the apostle John in Rev.2. and 3.. The Holy Spirit has given many Christians a revelation of a prayer need, and they have later found that those who they were praying for were in great need. By revealing needs for prayer, a word of knowledge can carry the directive force of a word of wisdom, and show us the need for prayer, action and faith.

5. God can reveal how material needs in His work can be met through this gift.
The place to hold the Passover feast, and a Christian meeting. Mk.14v12-16. The coin in the mouth of the fish. Mt.17v24,25. Transport into Jerusalem. Zech.9v9. with Mk.11v1-7. See 1Sam.10v1-8. 30v1-8,18,19.

The word of knowledge has an important place as a sign and wonder.
A word of knowledge can have a tremendous effect upon people as we can see from Daniel's revelation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, it shook an empire. Dan.2v21-26. It was an important part of the Old Testament prophet's armoury, and has an equally important part to play in this age. A word of knowledge from God's all knowledge, can make all the difference between defeat and victory, and even if the revealed knowledge is only a small thing like the revelation of a persons dream or thoughts, or a coin in the mouth of a fish, or a person sitting under a fig tree, it can bring real blessing and meet very real needs, and greatly glorify the Lord Jesus. This gift is one of the bright colours in the rainbow of God's infinite abilities and fullness. We may consider this gift separately from the others, but it is really part of God's indivisible fullness and ability, as are all the other gifts. Let us earnestly desire this greater gift from our heavenly Father.

A FURTHER EXAMINATION OF A WORD OF WISDOM AND A WORD OF KNOWLEDGE.
What do the Greek words "logos sophias" and "logos gnoseos" convey?

a. The Greek word "logos."
"Logos" is used for a personal title of our dear Lord Jesus. Jn.1v1-18. However, in the context of "a manifestation of the Spirit," 1Cor.12v7., it can have but two possibilities. It can convey the thought of divinely inspired Christian doctrine, Titus.1v3,9. Heb.2v2. 6v1.; or Divine revelation of a prophetic nature. 2Thes.2v2. Indeed, the cognate word, "logion" is used exclusively in the New Testament to speak of revelation from God, it is translated as "oracles" in the Authorised Version in Acts.7v38. Rom.3v2. Heb.5v12, and 1Pet.4v11., and this is also the meaning of the word in classical literature. "Logos sophias" and "logos gnoseos" do not necessarily speak of human utterance; this is the sphere of the gift of prophecy. They may, or may not, be spoken out; they can be for our personal instruction, as in the case of Paul in 2Cor.12v1-4., who heard "unspeakable words," "arreta remata," which it was not lawful, "ouk exon," for him to utter.

Trench in considering the difference between "phone" and "logos," states on page 334 and 335 of his "Synonyms of the New Testament," that utterance is not an essential characteristic of "logos," and need not refer to a spoken word. "But 'logos,' a word, saying, or rational utterance of the 'nous,' (mind), whether spoken or unspoken, being as it is the correlative of reason, can only be predicted of men, of angels, or of God. ---- Augustine traces with a singular subtlety the manifold and profound fitness, which lie in them for the setting forth of those relations. A word, he observes, is something even without a voice, for a word in the heart is as truly a word as after it is outspoken; while a voice is nothing, a mere unmeaning sound an empty cry, unless it be also the vehicle of a word." End of quote.

b. The Greek word for wisdom is "sophias."
"Wisdom," "sophias," is used of "devilish wisdom." James.3v15. Of natural human wisdom. Mt.16v1-3. However, in the context of "a manifestation of the Spirit;" 1Cor.12v7.; it speaks of a Divine wisdom imparted by the Holy Spirit.

Robinson says on page 761 of his Lexicon of "sophias." "In respect to Divine things, wisdom, i.e. knowledge, insight, deep understanding, represented everywhere as a Divine gift, and including the idea of practical application; thus distinguished from "gnosis" or theoretical knowledge;...It is specially used of insight imparted from God in respect to the Divine counsels."

A word of wisdom communicates a fragment of Divine knowledge and wisdom; it is not a result of human reasoning.

c. The Greek word for knowledge is "gnoseos."
"Gnoseos," is used in the New Testament to speak of all kinds of spiritual knowledge, doctrinal knowledge, as well as revelation knowledge. Lk.1v77. 11v52. Rom.2v20. 11v33. 15v14. 1Cor.13v2,8. 14v6. Eph.3v19. Phil.3v8. Col.2v3. 2Pet.3v18. However, when it is used in the context of "a manifestation of the Spirit;" it speaks of a divine communication of knowledge and truth, not a product of human thought. 1Cor.12v7. It is clear from these facts, that words of wisdom and knowledge have been the means of conveying to us eternal Divine doctrinal truth, that are part of the Scriptures, as well as ordinary prophetic truth for a temporary and local situation. However, the foundation for Scripture truth has been laid for this age, and we are forbidden to add to or take away from it. Gal.1v6-9. Eph.2v20. 3v5. Jude.v3,4. Rev.22v19. In our present day, the manifestations of these two gifts, are to meet current needs, not to convey new truth.

Words of Wisdom and Words of Knowledge do not make a person a Bible Teacher.
a. A teacher's gift is of a more permanent and continuous nature.
Both "logos sophias" and "logos gnoseos" lack the definite article, and so the indefinite article "a" should be placed before them; "a" word of wisdom and knowledge, which implies they are speaking of something which is fragmentary. A teacher's ministry is a permanent divinely given faculty, not a sporadic spiritual gift. Paul taught all night by ministry gift; he also experienced Divine illumination and guidance through spiritual gifts. Acts.16v6-11. 18v9-11. Compare Acts.20v6-12. Paul was a teacher who also had a revelation ministry. Acts.13v1.

Where does the faculty to expound the Scripture and to reveal the deeper knowledge and fundamental doctrines of Christianity come from? It is obviously a permanent faculty and gift deposited in the mind and spirit by God. Eph.4v11. That there can be an extension of both natural and spiritual faculties by Divine anointing is a fact of Scripture. Moses prayer for Joshua imparted an anointing, wisdom and spiritual insight. Deut.34v9. Jesus revealed experimental truth to babes and sucklings that was hidden from the wise and prudent. Mt.11v25-27. Lk.10v17-24. N.B. v 21. Paul prayed that God would give the Christians at Ephesus, "a spirit of wisdom and revelation," so that they could fully perceive vital spiritual truth, and fully perceive the love of Christ. Eph.1v15-19. 3v14-20. This anointing can give the ability to perceive already revealed truth as well as manifest spiritual gifts. A spiritual gift is a temporary gift from the Holy Spirit to a person; a teaching ministry is a permanent and continuous ministry of doctrine through a person. The revelation gifts are given to us through the operation of the Holy Spirit upon our spirit; a teaching ministry comes through the disciplined use of our mind under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. A Bible teacher's source of material is the Scripture, not revelation gifts; he may receive illumination upon known truth by Divine revelation, and incorporate it into his

teaching; but his main source of teaching material is the Scriptures.

b. A teacher expounds known Scripture truth, not reveals unknown facts.
"Logos sophias" and "logos gnoseos" both speak of Divine revelation, and not of the accumulation of facts by intellectual process, which is the work of a Christian teacher, who has to "labour in the word and doctrine." 1Tim.5v17. A teacher consecrates the talent of a good and keen mind to God and is enabled to discern truth by the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit guides all Christians into Scriptural truth, but all do not manifest the spiritual gifts of words of wisdom and knowledge. These two gifts give knowledge that can only be obtained by Divine revelation, and speak of knowledge outside of that revealed in the Scripture, which is open to all to read and understand. These two gifts operate in the sphere of direction, prediction, and revelation, and not in the realm of continuous teaching and Scriptural exposition. Some Christians have a remarkable teaching ministry from God, even though they have little or no prophetic or revelation ministry. Obviously such Scriptures as 1Cor.2v9-16. Eph.1v17,18. and Jn.16v13-15.; can include both revelation via spiritual gifts and by Scriptural truth. Both teaching ministries and spiritual gifts have a vital part to play in building up Christ's Church.

3. THE GIFT OF DISCERNINGS OF SPIRITS. "Diakriseis pneumaton."
This is the third of the three gifts of revelation, though it is seventh in the list in 1Cor.12v8-10.. It is spoken of in the plural, "diakriseis," means "discernings;" probably because its operation usually reveals the activities of both good and evil spirits.

WHAT THE DISCERNING OF SPIRITS IS NOT.
1. It is not a critical spirit, or the ability to find fault in others.
This gift discerns spiritual beings, not human faults, for the Scriptures condemn derogatory faultfinding. Mt.7v1. Rom.2v1-4.

***2.* It is not Christian discernment, or natural discernment.**
Though Christ warned us against having a critical spirit, He also told us to use a loving Christian discernment; we are not to believe or swallow everything we are told or taught; Jesus told us to test people by the fruit of their lives. Mt.7v5-23. 10v16. 1Thes.5v21. Mature Christians may possess great ability to wisely discern the characters of human beings; however, this is not the gift of discerning of spirits, which is concerned with the revelation of the activities of spiritual beings. The gift of discerning of spirits has also nothing to do with psychology, or psychiatry; it is the discerning of spirits, not minds.

Discernings of spirits is not the discernment that every Christian has as a result of having a born again spirit. John.3v3-7. Eph.2v1. 1Cor.2v9-16. As our spirit grows stronger, we are more and more able to discern spiritual things, and to receive the revelations of the Holy Spirit. Lk.1v80. 2v42,52. Heb.5v13,14. The new birth enables every Christian to possess, in some measure, the ability to discern Satanic inspiration. However, the spiritual capacity to receive the gift of discerning of spirits, is not the gift itself, it is not the exercise of our own spirit, it is a revelation of the Holy Spirit. The apostle John tells us that we can discern truth from error by the inner witness of the Holy Spirit, and most Christians can, if they are spiritually mature enough, sense the presence of good or evil powers. 1Jn.2v26,27. However, the discernings of Spirits is a far more enlightening revelation than ordinary Christian discernment, and has a far wider sphere of operation. A Christian may see the activities of good or evil powers in open, pictorial, or mental vision, in the past, present and future. Exod.24v9-18. Our Lord saw all the details of Satan's future sifting of Peter. Lk.22v31-34. Both Christian discernment and the gift of discerning of spirits have an important place in the protection of Christians from Satan's wiles. We should exercise Christian discernment all the time, and expect the Holy Spirit manifest His gift of discerning of spirits, when He feels that it is necessary.

3. It is not to take the place of Scriptural tests of character or inspiration.
We are to test people by the fruit of their lives, their love for people and God, their doctrine; particularly about Christ, and by their love of prayer and God's word. Mt.7v15-23. 1Cor.12v3. Is.8v19.20. 1Jn.4v1-5. Jn.13v34,35. Ps.24v6. 1v1-6. Lk.24v53. All Christians can, and should, test people's doctrine and fruit, but not all Christians have the gift of discerning of spirits.

4. It is not communication with spirits as in Spiritualism, etc..
The visit of Moses and Elijah at the glorious transfiguration of Jesus in Lk.9v28-36., must not be confused with Spiritualism and similar evil occult manifestations, such as divination, astral projection, sorcery, black magic, fortune telling, astrology, and witchcraft, which are repeatedly condemned in the Scriptures. Lev.19v31. 20v6,27. Deut.18v8-20. 2King.21v2,6. Ex.22v18. with 1Sam.28v6,7. Is.8v18-20. 1Chron.10v13,14. Is.19v3. 47v13. Mal.3v.5. Acts.13v1-11. 16v16-18. 19v19. 1Cor.10v20,21. Gal.5v19,21. 1Jn.4v1-5. Rev.21v8. 22v15. (We must remember that Elijah had never died, and, from Jude.v9, it appears that Moses had a special resurrection to appear in "The Holy Mount. 2Pet.1v16-21.) When supposed communications with the dead occur, they are really familiar spirits who impersonate the dead. God does not allow the living to contact dead relatives. 2Sam.12v22,23. Eccles.9v5-10. Job.7v7-10,21. 20v5-9. Lk.16v19-31. Evil spirits are familiar with the lives of the people they imitate; they give correct information and a clever imitation of people who are dead. By such deceptions Satan attempts to destroy the souls of men, He is a master of illusion, lies and deception. The dead cannot be contacted, for if they have been wicked, they are in Hades; and if righteous, in Heaven. Jesus has the keys of death and Hades, and the souls of the dead are in His care. Rev.1v18.

Spiritualists and other false cults deny Christ's deity, atonement and resurrection, and His doctrine about Heaven, Hell, and eternal judgement, as well as other vital truths; we can have no part with them. As Christians, we can seek and receive the genuine gift of discerning of spirits, from Christ our Lamb, and the Holy Spirit our comforting gentle dove.

4. It is not to be confused with the word of knowledge.
The revelations of people's hearts and minds is in the province of the word of knowledge, the vision of the influence of good or evil spirits upon a person's mind is in the province of the discerning of spirits.

A DEFINITION OF THE DISCERNINGS OF SPIRITS.
It is a supernatural ability given by the Holy Spirit to temporarily see into the spirit world. It can reveal a fragment, or a wide range of activity in the spirit world, in the past, present, or future. It brings the revelation of either good or evil spirits.

SOME EXAMPLES AND USES OF THE GIFT OF DISCERNING OF SPIRITS.
1. This gift can reveal if demon power is the cause of sickness.
The Scriptures inform us that the primary cause of sickness is sin, which resulted in the taking away of the tree of life through Adam's sin. Gen.2v9-17. 3v1-24. Ez.47v7-12. Rom.5v12-14. Rev.2v7. 22v7. The Bible also tells us that some sickness is caused by demons. Mt.4v23,24. 8v28-34. 9v32-34. 12v22-24. 15v21-28. 17v14-21. with Mk.9v23. Christ came to deliver mankind from Satan's power and malice, and destroy his evil works. Acts.10v38. Jn.8v36. 1Jn.3v8. Lk.4v17-21. 13v10-17. Heb.13v8. However, all sickness should not be attributed to Satan. Sickness can also be due to natural causes, such as ageing, neglect of the body, heredity, accident, war, poisoning, infection, virus and germs, etc.. The Scriptures clearly distinguish between ordinary sickness and lunacy and epilepsy through natural causes, and lunacy and sickness due to demon possession. Mt.4v23,24. 17v15-18. This gift can reveal if sickness is due to demon oppression or demon possession.

N.B. No Christian can be possessed by demons.
Even godly children of God have been ill as a result of Satan's attacks, but there is no record of them being sick as a result of demon possession. Indeed, Jesus promised that Christians cannot be possessed by Satan. Lk.11v9-13. 1Jn.5v18. A Christian may fail God, and say, or do, something wrong; but this should never be confused with demon possession. Mt.16v13-27. 26v69-75. Only Christians who have apostatised from Jesus get possessed. Mt.12v22-32,43-45. Mk.3v22-30. Do not suffer from "demonitis," and blame everything on demons. It is foolish and harmful to pretend that we have this gift and pretend to cast out demons from everybody, including good Christians. Those who hurt people by saying that they have a demon, when they have not, will experience severe discipline from God.

If a Christian has the gifts of the Holy Spirit, they will be able to deal with a demon who is oppressing a person, without anybody knowing about it. The revelation of a demon's influence, by discerning of spirits, and the removal of that influence by the gift of faith, can take place by the operation of the power of God, through silent prayer and a command in the mind and spirit of the Christian praying for the person, without any other person knowing it, or anyone being hurt or disturbed. Demon possession occurs rarely, and then only among people who are not Christians. Sometimes demons will openly manifest themselves in public in unbelievers; and so they have to be openly dealt with. To deal with some powerful evil spirits needs real faith and much prayer. Mk.9v14-18. Jesus never demanded faith from a person who was mentally sick, or out of their minds because of the oppression or possession of demons, the onus is upon the person praying for them. Jesus cast out demons with His word, not by the laying on of hands, this was perhaps because demons can be very violent..

2. It can safeguard the spiritual life of a Christian or a church.
a. It can reveal a Satanic oppression of the mind.
Even Jesus was viciously attacked by Satan in His thoughts, Satan nagged and derided Him, and tried to destroy His faith and character, and divert Him from His mission. Mt.4v1-11. Lk.4v1-14. Satan attacks us in the same way, and tries to discourage and divert us. This gift exposes his attacks on Christians and set them free from fear and stress. 2Cor.10v4,5.

b. It can reveal a servant of Satan and the power behind Satanic miracles.
As we have seen, false prophets can be tested by their lives and doctrine, Mt.7v15-23. 1Jn.4v1-9., but we may need to know the spirit moving a person before we can know their lives or doctrine. False prophets craftily hide their true doctrine, but God can reveal the evil spirit that is with them, and so protect us from them. Acts.8v9-23. 13v6-12. 16v16-18. 19v17-20.

c. It can reveal Satan's attempts to corrupt and hinder God's work.
Satan tries to corrupt, seduce, divide, and infiltrate churches. 1Cor.1v10-17. 3v1-7. Acts.5v3,4. 2Cor.11v3,4,13-15. Eph.6v11. We need to take great care in these last days. 1Tim.4v1-7. 2Pet.2v1-4. This gift can reveal the spirit moving fanatics, occultists, Spiritualists, and false prophets, or even carnal Christians out to oppose the Pentecostal experience. Satan puts carnal people in control of churches to hinder God's work. We need to know when and how Satan is trying to seduce Christians, this knowledge can deliver them from evil, temptation and trial. Peter had a revelation from God, then, shortly after he had one from Satan; Jesus perceived the source of both. Mt.16v22,23.

d. It can reveal the power behind persecution, blasphemy and slander.
Paul's thorn was an angel of Satan who stirred up persecution wherever he went. Gal.6v17. 2Cor.11v23 to 12v12. People stirred up by Satan persecuted Christ. Mk.3v22-30. Jn.8v44.

e. It can stop us from failing to discern a genuine move of the Holy Spirit.
Revivals have often been greatly hindered by ministers and others, who have strongly objected to the emotional effects of the movings of the Holy Spirit, they have criticised fervent praise and worship as "emotionalism" and "hysteria." John Wesley writes in his journal on Dec. 24th 1739: "Towards morning, one of them was overwhelmed with joy and love, and could not help showing it by strong cries and tears. At this, another was much displeased, saying, 'It was only nature, imagination, and animal spirits.' O thou jealous God, lay not this sin to her charge; and let us not be wise above what is written."

Those who are critical of a Pentecostal revival must not only be prepared to give a full Scriptural reason for their unbelief, but also to show us their personal spiritual credentials for making that judgement. We have to be very careful lest we resist the Holy Spirit by our unscriptural traditions, prejudice, unbelief, fear of the supernatural, and a determination to run to time, or the plan or order that we have arranged. We need above all things to discern the plans and movings of the Holy Spirit.

f. It can deliver from deadly persecution, and bring people to Christ.
Paul was converted by a vision of Jesus, this achieved what even miracles could not do. This is an unusual way for people to be converted, but it is certainly the most powerful way that God can speak to men. Acts.10v1-8. Compare Rev.19v11-21.

3. The discerning of spirits can be the ultimate encouragement to the Christian.
God can give us visions of Himself, the Lord Jesus, and good angels, that can transform us, indeed, it was these visions that made the prophets and apostles what they were, and gave them the strength to fulfil their missions. Exod.3v1-6. Numb.22v22-32. Judges.13v3,8-21. 1Kings.22v19. 2Kings.6v17. Is.6v1-13. Ezek.1v1-28. Lk.1v10-8. Mt.28v2-7. 2Pet.1v16-21. Rev.1v1-20. Acts.12v7-10. etc. Visions like these are absolutely indispensable in difficult circumstances, and murderous persecution, such a vision upheld the martyr Stephen at his death. Acts.7v55. Paul had several visions of Christ and angels, and of the glory of Heaven, these gave him the strength to perform his mission. Acts.9v3-6. 22v17-21 18v9-11. 2Cor.12v1-4. Acts.17v23-25. Jesus needed this help, because of the pressure of his ministry and his humanity; the Father gave Him a glorious revelation in the Holy Mount at His transfiguration. Lk.9v28-36. 22v23-26. 2Pet.1v16-18. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the sufferings of death, crowned with glory and honour: that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Heb.2v9. The gift of discerning of spirits varies from a simple revelation of a demon, to the ultimate beatific vision of God. We need the manifestation of this gift today; it is one of God's great gifts to His Church.

THE THREE GIFTS OF POWER AND DEMONSTRATION.

The gifts of power and demonstration consist of the gift of faith, gifts of healings, and workings of miracles. The gifts of action and power rely on the gifts of revelation for information, the gifts of revelation rely on the gifts of power for action, and the gifts of inspiration build up character and love, and spiritual strength for the manifestation of the other gifts. The three gifts of power give the Church the authority to fulfil its commission, they are gifts that deliver people from sin, sickness and Satan, and meet material and spiritual needs.

Those who have closed-shop religious attitudes, usually resist the workings of the Holy Ghost; just as the tradition-bound persecutors of Christ and the prophets did. The last revival movement is often the most outspoken opponent of a new revival, because they will not admit that they have lost God's power. Religious leaders often refuse to believe that God has passed them by, and has chosen someone else to manifest His power through, just as the Jewish religious leaders refused to recognise the ministries of Christ and His apostles, and attributed their miracles to the Devil. Jesus warned those who attributed His works to Satan; that they were committing the most serious sin possible, the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Mk.3v22-30. Mt.12v22-32,43-45. It is a staggering fact that demons said that Christ's authority and power were from God; whereas, most of Israel's religious leaders said they were from Satan; and wilfully and determinedly went on to eternal judgement. Jn.15v18-25. 8v24. Some people scoff, ridicule, oppose and blunder on, where even wicked angels fear to tread. Worldly power-hungry religious structures, have brought disgrace on the Gospel, not the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

THE THREE SPHERES OF OPERATION OF THE POWER GIFTS.
The gifts of revelation fall into easily recognisable departments, and their spheres of operation are easily distinguishable from each other; however, the areas of operation of the power gifts need more careful thought. The important thing is to have the gifts of power in operation, for possession of the gifts is far more important than a correct definition of them. However, as a correct definition of the gifts helps us to experience them, we will now consider the areas of operation of the power gifts.

1. The three power gifts operate in three different spheres of authority.
The gifts of revelation give us the knowledge that we need to possess of the spiritual, physical and material

world; the gifts of power give us authority and power, as we need them, in these same areas. A gift of healing obviously only deals with the healing of the body, and physical well being, so the other two power gifts cover all the other needs for the power of God, that a Christian requires in the other areas of his life and ministry. If we say that the workings of miracles produces miracles in the unseen spiritual world as well as the material world, we are left with no reason for the gift of faith, as its area of operation would be covered by the workings of miracles. I suggest that the workings of miracles operates directly upon man's environment, that is, upon material things and nature. I suggest the following reasons why Paul calls the gift of faith by this name.

a. Because the gift of faith deals with the spiritual realm and spiritual things.
This is the area where only faith can see and minister. Man being a creature with a spirit and capable of having faith and communing with God, is in a different category and sphere of authority than animals, vegetables and material substances.

b. Because faith describes both the nature, and the area of operation, of the gift of faith.
It trusts God to manifest His power in us, for us, and on our behalf, rather than through us in miracles visible for all to see, as in the workings of miracles and gifts of healings. The gift of faith in the areas of protection and provision causes God's power to act on our behalf, rather than as an open demonstration of power through us. The gift of faith will protect a child of God by clothing them with supernatural power, but does not change material things or alter natural law; the workings of miracles protects by altering material things and influencing nature. The gift of faith provides for a child of God by dealing directly with men or angels, the working of miracles provides by directly affecting nature, by either creation, alteration, or direction. I am not dogmatic over these areas of operation of the power gifts, but after many years of study and consultation with godly teachers, I feel that these arguments are reasonable and Scriptural.

2. Christians vary considerably in the authority they manifest through the power gifts.
Paul's list of ministries in 1Cor.12v28., informs us of the order of spiritual authority in the Christ's Church. Christian authority, “exousia”, is proved in the New Testament by power, “dunamis,” and the miracles that God's power performs. The authority given to the apostles to bind and loose in Heaven and Earth, definitely goes beyond the authority given to the seventy evangelists, who were given “power over all the power of the enemy.” Mt.16v18,19. 18v15-19. Jn.20v21-23. Lk.10v19. Both groups had the authority in the spiritual realm over evil spirits, but the apostles had the additional authority to raise the dead and execute judgement, which the seventy did not have. Mt.9v1,2. 10v1,7,8. with Lk.10v1,9,17. Acts.5v1-11. 13v6-12. 1Tim.1v20. This authority to discipline, which was given to apostles as individuals, could only be manifested in the local church by Christians acting as a body. Mt.18v15-19. with 1Cor.5v1-7. Indeed, the higher ministries of the Church have the greater gifts operating through them at a greater level of power through one person, than the local church will manifest as a body. It is one thing to have a prophecy, a revelation, or even a miraculous provision of one's needs, it is quite another thing to raise the dead, or to judge a nation by God's power as the two witnesses will in Rev.11v3-6.. We see from 1Cor.12v28. and other Scriptures, that a Christian may have the authority from God to have a regular ministry of one gift, but no authority to have a regular ministry of another gift. Christian authority can only be kept by fervent prayer and abiding in Christ, as the apostles found to their shame and sorrow. Lk.9v1,2,40. with Mk.8v28,29. Jn.15v7.

3. The three power gifts are all acts of power that produce miracles.
All three power gifts could be called “energemata dunameon,” that is “acts of power;” however, it is the sphere of operation of the power of God that decides what name each particular operation of power is called by. All three power gifts can be manifested on one occasion in one burst and display of God's power. However, Paul tells us that they can be looked upon as separate gifts operating in different spheres of authority, and producing totally different effects.

4**. The three power gifts are all manifested through a divinely increased faith.**
With all the gifts, and particularly the gifts of power, there is a deepening and impartation of faith through the anointing of the Holy Spirit. In Mk.11v22., “Have faith in God,” is “echete pistin theou;” “echete,” the present imperative of “echo,” “to have, possess, be furnished with.” It is the objective genitive, as in Rom.3v22. “By faith of Jesus Christ.” And Gal.2v20., “the faith of the Son of God.” And Gal.3v22., “by faith of Jesus Christ.” This would make Mk.11v22., read, “Have the faith of God,” and interpret it as speaking of a divinely imparted faith, given to us through God's presence and indwelling. In Gal.2v20., Paul states that he lived the life he did through the faith that Jesus imparted to him. God's faith is an imparted faith that is nourished by a life of prayer and love. God wants us to operate on the same principle, by which He made creation, He said, and it was done; however, this demands a life of communion with God, and a divinely imparted authority, and a special filling of the Holy Spirit to manifest His gifts. Exod.28v3. 31v3. 35v31,35. Lk.1v41,67. Acts.2v4. 13v9,52. 4v8,31.

To summarise, then, we can say; that the gift of faith, believes, commands and directs in the unseen spiritual realm, and deals directly with men and angels. The workings of miracles, believes, commands and directs in the material realm, it deals directly with mans environment. The gifts of healings, believe and command in the physical realm, and deal directly with illness, disease, infirmity and sickness.

THE CLOSE CO-ORDINATION OF THE GIFTS OF POWER ON SOME OCCASIONS.
God’s Word reveals many cases of several gifts of the Holy Spirit being manifested in one burst and display of

God's power.

1. The gift of faith and the workings of miracles often gave Israel victory in war.
On many occasions the power of God protected the Israelites and worked miracles to defeat their foes. The operation of the power gifts through Moses was greater than Israel's military might. Ex.17v11-13. Joshua conquered Jericho through the power gifts. Josh.6v20. Samuel's power gifts frightened the Philistines more than Saul's picked army. 1Sam.7v4-14. with 13v1-23. Elisha's power gifts and God's compassion delivered Jehoahaz and Israel when they did not deserve it. 2Kings.13v1-6. Time would fail us to tell of Abraham, Gideon, Samson, Jonathan, David, Asa, Jehoshaphat, and many others, who defeated "invincible" foes through the grace, power and gifts of God. Gen.14v1-17. Judges.7v16-25. 15v7-20. 1Sam.14v1-14. 17v11-58. 2Chron.14v9-13. 15v6. 17v3. 20v1-25.

2. The gift of faith and gifts of healings may be manifested in one burst of God's power.
A person who is sick and demon oppressed or possessed can be delivered physically and spiritually, by what we could call two gifts, in one burst of God's power. Paul's aprons. Acts.19v11,12. Elisha's bones. "Kings.13v20,21. Lk.4v17-19.

3. In deliverance from danger or death.
When the apostles were delivered from prison by angels, we could say that there were two gifts of power and three gifts of revelation in operation, but it was really one display of God's power and ability. Acts.5v16-24. 12v1-17. The resurrection of the dead operates at least two of the power gifts. The return of the spirit and soul to the body, and the healing, or recreation of the body can take place in one burst of God's power. 1Kings.17v17-24. 2Kings.4v32-37. Lk.7v11 Mk.5v22. Lk.8v41. Jn.11v41,47. Mt.28v1-10. with Mt.27v51-53. Acts.9v36-42. 20v9-12. 14v19,20. N.B. Acts.26v8. and Lk.16v19-31. Even this great miracle will fail to win some people to God, for if people don't want to believe, nothing will make them believe, some people fight God to the bitter end. Jn.12v37-41. 15v22-25. Rev.19v19,20.

4. THE GIFT OF FAITH. "Pistis."
This is third in the list in 1Cor.12v8-10.. It is both the greatest and the most frequently manifested power gift, because it is automatically brought into operation when we pray in love for God's blessing on people. It deals with spiritual forces and realities and man's spiritual condition. The greatest operations of God's power take place through the operation of the gift of faith, because it operates in the unseen spiritual world, and releases heavens armies on our behalf, and restrains satanic opposition. Like all the power gifts, the gift of faith can be brought into operation by the invocation of the Divine names. Faith is the only thing that is mentioned in both the fruit and gifts of the Spirit. There are several different kinds of faith.

1. We must distinguish the gift of faith from other kinds of faith.
a. It is not the faith of a Heathen.
The Heathen have the faith to live a normal life; for example, to sow seed, conduct work and business, etc., they know there is a God and a judgement day, Rom.1v18-32., but this is not Christian faith. 2Thes.3v2.

b. It is obviously not a demon's faith.
James tells us that demons believe in God and tremble, but they resist God's power, purposes and ministries. They tell men to doubt what they firmly believe. James.2v19.

c. It is not saving faith.
Saving faith is miraculous in its effect on the human personality, but it is not in the sphere of the gift of faith. Saving faith is personal faith in Jesus as Saviour; it brings us salvation and forgiveness. Jesus told us to rejoice more over saving faith than over miracle working faith. Lk.10v17-20. All the gifts and blessings that come to us, are the result of this primary gift of salvation in Jesus. Eph.2v8. Rom.6v23. 8v32. 1Cor.8v9. 9v15. The gift of faith is limited to the area of supernatural miraculous power, it is a temporary faith given to produce a specific miracle; whereas, saving faith is a continuous faith, and if we are faithful, an eternal faith, which like God's kingdom, endures forever.

d. The gift of faith is not the fruit of faith.
The fruit of faith is the natural growth of the seed of saving faith; it is the extension of our faith in Christ's death, to faith in God in all the other areas of our lives. 1Pet.1v23. Rom.1v17. The fruit of faith mentioned in Gal.5v22., is speaking of both passive and active Christian faith; whereas the gift of faith is speaking only of a special area of active faith, it is an occasional and temporary impartation of the Holy Spirit's faith and power to us, to fulfil a specific purpose of God.

The gift of faith needs the fruit of faith and Christian character to sustain it. 1Cor.13v2. The gift of faith, which is an act of spiritual power, needs the basis of the fruit of faith, which is a quality of character. Great spiritual power inevitably brings great stresses and spiritual conflict into a Christian's life, and this demands some measure of Christian fruit and maturity. The more of the fruit of faith you have, the easier it is to manifest the gift of faith and the other gifts.

The fruit of faith is an attitude of mind that trusts God daily in every area of life, and this spiritual frame of mind is essential for a powerful exercise of the gift of faith. Certain manifestations of the gift of faith can only

take place through a prayerful, consecrated Christian who is at the peak of spiritual power through prolonged prayer, Bible study and abiding in Christ. Jn.15v7. 14v12-14. Mk.9v20-29. Paul declares in 1Cor.13., that we cannot divorce character from spiritual power without tragic consequences for ourselves and others; those who do so, end up with a shallow ministry of the gifts, or even in complete spiritual shipwreck; like Judas, Balaam, Demas, and some of the Corinthians.

e. The gift of faith is not the prayer of faith.
The prayer of faith is a manifestation of the fruit of faith, and the prayer of faith often precedes the operation of the gift of faith, and the other gifts of power. The fruit of faith, the prayer of faith, and the gifts of power, are all vital partners in Christian experience. Elijah's earnest prayers of faith brought into operation the power gifts. We read that Elijah prayed “seven times,” before the rain came in answer to his prayers. 1King.18v41-46. Elders should pray through for the sick, oppressed and depressed, like Elijah prayed for rain. Jam.5v14-18.

f. The difference between personal faith and a faith to minister to others.
The Centurion and the Syrophenician woman of Mt.8v10-12. & 15v21-28., both had a great personal faith in Christ, indeed, Christ describes their faith as “great.” Both had a desperation of faith because of a deep concern for one they loved. Both had great faith and great love, but they were not able to meet the needs of their loved ones, it took Christ's faith and the gifts of the Spirit that were manifested through Him to meet their need. It is one thing to believe that God will meet your needs, or other's needs, but another thing to have the spiritual ability or faith to take or receive from God, the power to meet those needs. It takes even more faith, and a Divine call, to believe that God will give you the regular exercise of His power and love to meet other's needs. In Heb.11., we have a catalogue of the three kinds of godly faith; saving faith, the fruit of faith, and the gift of faith, it speaks of faith in general, and shows us the three kinds of faith that please God. Heb.11v6.

2. The gift of faith is not to be confused with the workings of miracles.
The gift of faith deals with the spiritual realm and areas where faith is necessary to see, it gives authority and power in the spiritual realm. Workings of miracles give authority and power over our material environment and material things.

3. The gift of faith does not remove a Christian from spiritual conflict.
When Jesus received the authority to manifest the gifts of power, Satan made a violent attack upon Him. Mt.4v1-11. While the power gifts operate, we are full of God's faith through the anointing of the Holy Spirit, but as soon as this anointing has gone we can have a great spiritual conflict. The supernatural extension of faith that comes with the power gifts is usually of a temporary nature, and we are not immune from fear, failure or doubt, after even the greatest manifestations of God's power, as the stories of Elijah and Peter demonstrate. 1Kings.18v37-46. 19v1-18. We always need the grace of God and the fellowship of other Christians. Acts.28v14,15. 1Cor.12v12-25.

4. The gift of faith often works in co-ordination with the gifts of revelation.
The gift of faith and a discerning of spirits often operate together, for both deal with the spiritual world. The gift of faith is often needed to bring to pass the purposes of God revealed by a word of wisdom, or the needs revealed by a word of knowledge.

5. The gift of faith is certainly not a ceremony, ritual, or mere pretension.
We can go through all the motions, and say all the right words or prayers, when praying for a person and impart absolutely nothing to them, and as a result diminishes their faith in God and His promise. In the same way a person can be excommunicated in the name of God, when God has had nothing to do with it, and has in fact considered the excommunication a sin. Jn.9v32-41. 16v1-4. Gen.12v3.

A DEFINITION OF THE GIFT OF FAITH.
The gift of faith is not natural faith, saving faith, the fruit of faith, or even the prayer of faith; it is an act of Divine power. It is a supernatural confidence and power imparted by the Holy Spirit to meet a specific need. It is the operation of God's power in the spiritual realm, upon angels and men. It is not my faith struggling, it is God's faith and power working through me; it is an outshining of the indwelling Holy Spirit's faith and power. It is God's faith poured into our souls. It is the pure mustard seed fruit of faith impregnated with Divine miracle faith and power. It can bestow blessing and healing comfort to the souls and spirits of needy men and women. It can occasionally be the means of judgement upon determined enemies of God, who harm the children of God. It can enable a child of God to be protected when in danger, and provide for them when in need. It gives a Christian the power to cast out, restrain, and constrain evil spirits. It can defend us from evil angelic foes, and direct good angelic powers to our aid to meet our needs. This gift can enable us to overcome all natural and evil powers that come against us, by delivering us out of, or from, great trials; or by giving us a supernatural faith, strength and comfort, which can overcome all trial, persecution and physical pain. On its higher levels of power and authority, it is the greatest of the power gifts.

SOME EXAMPLES AND USES OF THE GIFT OF FAITH.
1. The gift of faith can give Divine protection in danger and persecution.
The gift of faith in the areas of protection and provision causes God's power to act on our behalf, rather than as an open demonstration of power through us. The gift of faith will protect a child of God by clothing them with supernatural power, but does not change material things or alter natural law; the workings of miracles protects

by altering material things and nature.

The enveloping protecting power of God would seem to come within the sphere of the gift of faith. God's power protected Moses from Pharaoh's wrath, Exod.3v10. 7v10. 14v19,20.; Jonah in the whale's stomach, Jonah.3v4,9.; Samson, and many others, from swords and spears, etc., Judges.15v9-20. 16v1-21. N.B. v20.; Daniel from the lions, and his friends from the fiery furnace, Dan.6v16-23. 3v17,18,25.; Christ from the angry mob from His own town, and from others who tried to kill and arrest Him. Lk.4v29,30. Jn.7v44-46. 10v39. 11v8-10. In Jn.8v58,59., when the Jews tried to stone Jesus, we read, "Jesus **hid Himself**, and went out of the temple, **going through the midst of them,** and so passed by." God either made Jesus invisible, or took Him outside of time; these operations come within the scope of the gift of faith. Gen.19v11. When the apostles were set free from prison by an angel, what we would call several gifts were operated through the one angel. Remember, it is the operation, and not mere definition of the gifts, that is of prime importance. Acts.5v17-26. 12v1-11.

2. The gift of faith can give Divine comfort, strength and peace in persecution and need.
In Heb.11v35-39., we read of those who were miraculously upheld by God in times of persecution, trial and need. God does not always deliver us from trials, but He always upholds us in them by His power and grace, as He did Stephen. Acts.6v15. 7v54-60. James reminds us of the patience in sufferings of the prophets, Job, and the Lord Jesus, God upheld them all. James.5v10,11. Lk.9v27-36. 22v42-44.

3. The gift of faith can meet our material needs.
Some think that Elijah being fed by the ravens was a gift of faith; I feel that as God's power operated directly upon the ravens it was a working of miracles. I feel for the same reason that the feeding of Israel by the quails, and the coin in the mouth of the fish, were also workings of miracles. I think that miracles of provision met by human and angelic channels come within the scope of the gift of faith, as in Ps.78v24,25. Lk.8v1-3. and 1Kings19v4-8., and George Muller's orphanages. However, it is foolish to be dogmatic over this, the gifts do fringe upon one another in certain areas, and make definition difficult; the important thing is to enjoy God's miracles of provision, not just define them correctly.

4. The gift of faith can bestow spiritual blessing and comfort.
The gift of faith is often manifested in the ministry of the laying on of hands, and in the ministry of the prayer warrior. It can remove wounds, hurts and scars, and bless and change the personality for good. 1Sam.10v6,11. 16v12,13. Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. Gen.17v27-41. Heb.11v20. Jacob. Gen.47v31. 48v8-28. Heb.11v21. Christ blessed children. Mk.10v13-16. Moses blessed Joshua and the 70 elders. Numb.11v24-29. 27v18-23. Deut.34v9. Exod.18v25. Christ imparted power and authority to the twelve apostles and seventy disciples. Mt.10v1-8. Lk.10v1-24. Acts.13v1-4. 2Kings2v9-14. Even the baptism and gifts of the Spirit can be imparted by the laying on of hands. Acts.14v19. 9v17. 19v1-6. A revival outpouring. Acts.4v23-31. 10v44-48.

5. The gift of faith can bring curses or judgement upon people.
This occurred in the Scriptures on a large scale on several occasions, the death of Egypt's first-born, and the boils upon the Egyptians. Ex.9v8-12. 11v1 to 12v36. Elijah bringing fire from Heaven upon men. 2Kings.1v8-16. Gehazi. 2Kings.5v25-27. The New Testament has several cases of judgement through this gift. Acts.5v1-11. 12v1-5,21-24. 13v6-12. 1Cor.5v5. 1Tim.1v20. This gift was only used in judgement at the express command of God, for He loves to restore and bless, not judge. 2Cor.2v1-8. The ministry of Jesus appears to have consisted entirely of mercy gifts; for He came to save and bless, not to judge or to condemn, and so the manifestation of any gift in judgement in this age of grace has been rare. God's emphasis is upon blessing not cursing. Mt.5v44. Rom.12v14. 1Cor.4v12. Judgement is God's "strange act," Is.28v21.; however, this age will close with a widespread manifestation of gifts in judgement. Rev.11v5,6. 14v16. Christians never need fear Satanic cursing. There is no enchantment against God's people. Numb.23v23. Gen.12v3.

6. The gift of faith casts out, and restrains evil spirits.
It is difficult to put the casting out of demons under any other gift than the gift of faith, for though Mk.9v38,39., tells us that the casting out of a demon is "an act of power," every power gift is "an act of power," it is the area of operation that decides which gift it is. The gift of faith certainly describes best the operation of God's power in the unseen spiritual realm against demons. Jesus sometimes forced demons to give details about themselves, on another occasion He asked details of a relative. Lk.8v30. Mk.9v20-22. We read that some of these demons had caused various sicknesses, such as deafness, blindness, dumbness, madness, and epilepsy. Mt.4v23,24. 8v28-34. 9v32-34. 12v22-24. 15v21-28. 17v14-21. with Mk.9v23. However, demons are NOT the cause of the vast majority of these sicknesses. God puts a hedge about His children so they cannot be possessed by demons. Job.1v9,10. Some Christians are deluded into thinking that they can exorcise evil spirits from a Christian; however, the evil spirits are imaginary. We have to live close to God to exorcise real evil spirits, as even the apostles found out. Lk.9v1,2,37-42. with Mk.9v14-29. Acts.19v11-17.t is often more difficult to set people free from demon inspired doctrines, than it is to deliver them from demons; for people can only be delivered from false doctrine, when they desire to know and follow the truth. Jn.8v32-44. Israel's religious leaders did not want to be delivered from the doctrines that Satan used to captivate their minds.

N.B. The gift of faith operates God's unlimited power against the powers of darkness.

We read in 2Kings.13v14-19., that Elisha, while on his death bed, subdued the powers of darkness that aided the Syrians for several years, by a remarkable single operation of the gift of faith, when king Joash shot, at Elisha's command, “The arrow of the Lord's deliverance.” Just as Elisha with God took hold of the bow of Joash, so the Holy Spirit takes hold with us against, not only our limitations, but also against the powers of darkness, and as we humble ourselves under God, and take His armoury, and resist the Devil with God's power and gifts, Satan flees from us. Rom.8v26,27. James.4v5-7. The faith and power gifts of Moses took away the evil spiritual defences of the Canaanites, as faithful Caleb said, “they are bread for us, their defence is departed from them.” Numb.14v9. This is why the unseen prayer warrior is usually the real cause of revival.

The major attack of the powers of darkness is upon the minds of Christians, but all these attacks can all be dealt with by the fruit and gift of faith, and the Word of God. Christians who have the gift of faith can fight for others, who are too weak to fight for themselves against Satan's lies and power. 2Cor.10v1-5. Let us all earnestly desire this greatest of the gifts of power.

5. THE GIFT OF WORKINGS OF MIRACLES. “Energemata dunameon.”

The workings of miracles comes fifth in the list in 1Cor.12v8-12., just after the gifts of healings, however, being a work of greater spiritual power and authority than gifts of healings, it is put before them in the list in 1Cor.12v28.

1. The gift of workings of miracles should not be confused with the other power gifts.

The words “workings of miracles” are a translation of “energemata dunameon,” both words are in the plural. Robinson says this means, “operations of miracles, i.e. put for miraculous effects, the gift of working miracles.” Arndt and Gingrich say it means, “activities that call forth miracles.” “Dunameon” is the plural of “dunamis,” which is usually translated as “power,” as in Acts.1v8.. “Workings of powers,” could obviously refer to the operation of all the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit, but this gift works in a specialised area of miracles. It is not in the realm of knowledge, edifying gifts, physical healing or the gift of faith. The gift of workings of miracles is an operation of God's power that changes natural law and material things, and produces seen miraculous effects. It produces miracles in man's material environment.

2. The workings of miracles is the least common of the gifts of power, for the following reasons.

It is placed on a higher level of authority than gifts of healings in 1Cor.12v28., so it will not be manifested as regularly. It demands a very close walk with God; and human sin and failure have hindered God's plans and desires. Christ's miracles of protection and provision show God's will and desires, not the many centuries of Old Testament backsliding when all the power gifts were lacking because of mankind's sin and failure. People seldom need a power miracle to deal with their environment, whereas people often need gifts of healing, and the gift of faith to bless and help them in their spiritual conflicts. Most of people's material needs can be met by human resources, it is only in severe emergency that miracles of provision become necessary. The Lord Jesus sent His Church to deal primarily with people's need for spiritual and physical healing; however, Jesus did care for the poor and needy both naturally and supernaturally. Jn.12v4-8. 6v1-13.

In the Old Testament the working of miracles was often used in judgement, however, in this age of grace, it has been almost totally used in blessing. The emphasis is upon forgiveness of sin and healing of the body. Mt.10v8. Lk.9v1,2. 10v1,9,17. Mk.16v17-20. It is not until the end of the age that working of miracles is used regularly in judgement. Rev.11v5,6.

A DEFINITION OF THE GIFT OF WORKINGS OF MIRACLES.

The gift of workings of miracles is a supernatural ability given by the Holy Spirit, to interrupt, suspend, or control the laws of nature. It is the operation of the power of God upon material things; it operates upon man's environment, as a sign and wonder. God usually manifests this gift in blessing, but sometimes also in judgement.

SOME EXAMPLES AND USES OF THE GIFT OF WORKINGS OF MIRACLES.

1. As a sign. John.14v9-12.

a. To cause people to see the might and majesty of God.

All spiritual gifts are intended to reveal the majesty and glory of God, but miracles that effect nature have a particularly profound effect on people. The magicians of Egypt were empowered by evil spirits to create serpents, and do other striking miracles, and they withstood the gifts of the Holy Spirit through Moses. Ex.7v10-12,20-22. 8v6,7,16-19. 2Tim.3v8,9. However, even Egypt's Satan inspired magicians were terrified at God’s acts through Moses, and had to admit, “This is the finger of God.” Exod.6v6,7. 8v19. 9v16. God hardened Pharaoh's heart by letting him off, and by allowing a lying spirit to deceive him. 2Chron.18v20-22. and Rom.2v2-6. with Exod.7v13,14,22. 8v15,19,32. 9v7,12,34,35. 10v1,20,27. 11v10. 14v8. 4v21. 7v3. 14v4,7. These signs were also for the benefit of surrounding nations. Exod.15v11-16. Deut.4v34. 5v15. Joshua. 2v9-11. 5v1. The working of miracles was often used by God to confirm His message to a nation through a prophet. The prophet in 1Kings.13v1-10.. Samuel. 1Sam.12v16-25. Elijah’s remarkable sign at Carmel. 1Kings.18v36-39.

b. To confirm God's word and call to a person.

Gideon. Judges.6v1-40. 7v9-14. Hezekiah. 2Kings.20v1-11. Aaron's rod. Exod.7v10. Numb.17v8. Elisha. 2Kings.2v13-15. Christ's future apostles were convinced to help Jesus by a miraculous catch of fish. Lk.5v1-11.

Sometimes angels gave miraculous signs to confirm the truth of their words. Lk.1v20-23,63,64. 2v10-12,34. Heb.2v3,4.

c. To establish faith and confirm the preaching of the Gospel. Mk.16v15-18.
Miracles in Jn.2v1-11,23. Multitudes fed. Jn.6v1-14,26,27. Mt.15v32-39. Walking on water. Mt.14v22-36. Jn.5v19,20,36,44.

2. To provide for those in need.
There are many cases of miraculous provision in the Scriptures. Water. Exod.17v1-7. Manna and Quails. Exod.16v13,15-35. Numb.11v31. Elisha's miracles. Kings.2v19-22. 4v1-7. 38v44. 6v1-7. 2v13-15. Our Lord's miracles. Mk.6v32-44,48. 8v1-9. Lk.5v1-11. Jn.21v3-11. Mt.17v24-27. Supernatural transport could be under this gift, and the gift of faith. Elijah, Ezekiel, the apostolic band, and Philip experienced this supernatural transport. 1Kings.18v11,12. 2Kings.2v16-18. Exek.3v12-15. 8v3. Acts.8v39,40. Jn.6v20,21.This still happens today, David Duplessis records an instance of it in his life, and I have heard of others. This is a gift for the last days. N.B. Rev.12v14.

3. To deliver from danger.
Pharaoh's chariot wheels. Exod.14v16,21. 15v23-25. Samson's lion. Judges.14v5,6. 16v1-3. Goliath. 1Sam.17v37,45-50. Storms stilled. Lk.8v22-25. Mt.14v24-33. 6v18-21. Earthquake freed Paul and Silas. Acts.16v25-34. Harmless snake poison. Acts.28v1-6. with Mk.16v18.

4. To bring judgement.
Most of the plagues of Egypt came through the gift of workings of miracles. Exod.8v1 to 10v29. The sons of Korah. Numb.16v19-35. Joshua's long day. Joshua.10v6-14. Elijah's famine. 1Kings17v1. 18v1,42-46. James.5v14-20. The cursed fig tree. Mk.11v12-14,20-24. As we have said before, the emphasis during this age of grace is upon God's love and mercy, and not upon judgement. However, at the end of this age the Two Witnesses will have authority and power given to them to bring judgement upon their evil foes. Rev.11v1-8. This kind of power will be absolutely essential to deal with the wickedness in the world due to Antichrist and his followers.

6. THE GIFT OF GIFTS OF HEALINGS. "Charismata iamaton."
This is fourth in the list in 1Cor.12v8-10.; and is in the plural, “gifts of healings,” or “grace gifts of healings.”

1. Gifts of healings should not be confused with medical care.
However, Christians should be the very last to disparage the work of doctors and nurses, who are dedicated to the relief of suffering. There is a definite place for natural healing, indeed, God Himself gave the Israelites sound medical advice.

2. Gifts of healing must not be confused with healing through Spiritualists.
We must not confuse gifts of healings from God with Spiritualism, or Christian Science, etc.. These as we have seen, are forbidden by God. Lev.19v31. 20v6,27. Deut.18v8-20. 2Kings.21v2,6. Exod.22v18. with 1Sam.28v6,7. and 1Chron.10v13,14. Is.8v18-20. 19v3. 47v13. Mt.3v5. Acts.13.v1-11. 16v16-18. 19v19. 1Cor.10v20,21. Gal.5v19-21. 1Jn.4v1-5. Rev.21v8. 22v15. They oppose and deny vital Christian doctrine and experience, and the Scriptures state that those who go to them for healing are in the most serious spiritual danger.

3. In this age it is the most common sign given through the gifts of power.
In this present age, signs manifested by gifts of healings are more common than signs through the other power gifts. The gift of faith is operated more in private prayer, but nowhere near as much as a public sign and wonder. Divine love longs to meet the needs of suffering humanity, and this is probably why gifts of healings are placed before workings of miracles in 1Cor.12v28., even though Paul states in 1Cor.12v28., that workings of miracles is an act of greater spiritual authority.

4. Gifts of healings should not be confused with the other gifts of power.
All miracles of healing come within the scope of gifts of healings, whether they are simple healings, or the removal of cancer, or even the recreation of organs that have been removed by surgery or injury, or even missing at birth.

5, Gifts of healings do not enable a Christian to heal everybody who is sick.
At the floodtide of our Lord's and the early Church's ministry, everybody who was prayed for was healed, and Mt.8v16-18. tells us that this is the extent of God's promise. However, Christ only healed one out of a multitude at the pool of Bethesda, which shows that many did not come to Christ for healing, and also that Christ could not heal at will. Jn.5v1-14.

WHY HEALING FROM CHRIST MAY NOT OCCUR, OR MAY BE DELAYED.
a. Because some preachers boldly state that Divine healing is not for today.
Many congregations believe their unbelieving preachers, and so they pray to God with doubts, fear and despair instead of faith. 1Jn.5v14,15. Many today, like the multitude at the Pool of Bethesda, are persuaded by their religious leaders, that healing from Jesus is not safe or desirable. Jn.5v1-24. Such preachers can expect severe

judgement from God. James.3v1.

c. Because of an unwillingness to earnestly seek God.
Some people will not make any kind of spiritual preparation and yet they expect a miracle of healing. God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Heb.11v6. Scriptural teaching is also vital. However, if the sick are not healed under our ministry, we should first of all check our faith and ministry, not the faith of the sick one. Mk.9v14-29.

d. Because a sick person is not prepared to get right with God.
There is a definite connection between forgiveness and healing. Exod.23v25. Mk.2v1-12. Jn.5v1-9,14. Ps.66v18. Prov.28v13. A person who is not a Christian may be healed by God in order to appeal to them to become a Christian; a failure by them to repent after their healing, can result in Satan giving them an even worse affliction, and also in eternal damnation. Jn.5v14. Acts.10v38. Mt.11v20-24. Fellowship with God brings and keeps healing. Rom.8v11. Exod.15v26. Before some people can be healed, they have to repent of sins of the flesh and spirit; bitterness, backbiting, and an unforgiving spirit can hinder healing just as much as moral failure, dishonesty, lying, stealing or unpaid bills. Ps.34v12-22. Prov.6v16,17. Mt.6v14,15. 18v21-25. Col.3v12-16. James.3v1-18. Multitudes were baptised showing their repentance and faith in Christ, they spent days listening to Christ's words and watching His works, it is no wonder that all that He prayed for were healed. Mk.6v35-56. Jn.4v1,2. Christ's preaching kept away those who did not want to get right with God, there were some who preferred their traditional approach, because it made no spiritual demands upon them. Jn.5v1-15. Sometimes people who are under the discipline of God, like Gehazi, come into meetings for prayer and expect to be healed, we must remember that there is Divine sickness as well as Divine healing; the purpose of this discipline is reformation of character. Ps.73 all. 119v67,71-75. 1Cor.11v28-32. It is the unrepentant, world-surfeited heart that finds it difficult to believe in the light of signs, wonders and miracles. Jn.5v44. 12v42,43. 15v22-25. Faith is a natural thing in a repentant heart that is controlled by God's love.

e. Because God will not enable us to avoid the consequences of intemperate living.
God will not give us the strength to break the laws of rest that He has laid down. Many Christians make themselves ill by putting too much stress on their bodies with overwork, lack of rest and sleep, and foolish diet. The Bible tells us that we have to take care of our bodies or reap the consequences. Ps.127v2. 107v17-21. Phil.12v25-30. We read in Ps.103v3,5. that God expects us to eat good food to renew our health, as well as to look to God for healing. Finney said that one of the things that could bring a revival to a halt was Christians placing too great a strain on their bodies. Sometimes God may heal us when we have been foolish, at other times He may allow natural healing to take its course. Col.2v27. 1Cor.6v20. Eph.5v29.

f. Because of a wrong attitude to the person who is praying for the sick.
This can take two forms. A sick person may come for prayer with no real respect for the person praying for them; and may have real doubts and criticisms about them, and come to them as a last resort. Our Lord experienced this at Nazareth. Mk.6v1-6. The opposite is also true, the sick person may put the person praying for them on a pedestal, and look to them for healing instead of the Lord; and God will not give His glory to another. Is.42v8. 48v11,12. 44v6. with Rev.1v8,17. 22v13. Acts3v12. 1Cor.1v26-31. with Jer.9v24.

g. Because God may desire to try or improve a Christian's character.
There may be nothing wrong with a Christian's life at all, as in the case of Job. Job.2v4-10. Some Christians have suffered great trials of physical sickness, even when large numbers of people were being healed through their ministries. Is it to make people realise that God is the healer? Sometimes only God knows if a sickness is a natural thing, a trial of faith or a spiritual discipline? We know He disciplines those who do well, as well as those who do badly. Heb.12v4-12. Prov.3v11,12.

h. Because of the shocking spiritual state of some churches.
In many churches Christians are at sixes and sevens and have a bitter spirit towards each other. These problems should not be allowed to fester, Jesus commanded us to put them right. Mt.18v15-35. Mk.11v22-26. Jn.13v34,35. 15v12-14. 1Cor.3v1-3. Sometimes there may be not only sin in the sick person's life, but also sin in the elders, or even some great sin, like Achan's sin, which has never been put right. Joshua.7v1-26. 8v1. Very often churches are too spiritually lazy and too worldly to defeat Satan, the elders certainly do not follow the command of James to pray through for the sick, and they merely go through an undemanding form. James.5v13-18. Elders praying for the sick are instructed to follow the example of Elijah. Often the untimely premature death of a Christian is not "God's will" at all; it is often due to spiritual laziness, spiritual failure and worldliness. We thank God that it is always "gain" for a Christian to die, even if they die prematurely because of the lack of power and faith in Christian elders Jn.17v24. 2Cor.5v6-10. Phil.1v20-25. This brings us to our next point.

i. Because a person's allotted span of life is reached.
We read in 2Kings.13v14,20,21., that Elisha fell sick and died, even though he was so full of the power of God, that a dead man could be raised to life by touching his bones, Elisha was not healed, his time had come to die. We read in Ps.90v10,12., that we can normally expect to live 70 years, it also states that the infirmity and weakness of old age can be a burden; few have had the experience of Caleb and Moses of physical vigour and strength in old age. Deut.34v7. Joshua.14v7-15. N.B. v10,11. Doubtless this was due to their deep communion with God and their obedience to His law. Exod.23v24-26. 15v26. Even a youthful healthy body is frail and liable

to problems, and can cause us to groan and long for a heavenly glorified body, like that of our Lord Jesus. Is.40v29-31. Phil.3v20,21. Prayer can, and does, stop people dying in agony, who would normally suffer greatly because of the nature of their disease. Sickness is primarily due to the loss of the tree of life through Adam's sin, sickness and death will not finally cease until the tree of life is again restored. Gen.2v9. 3v22-24. Ezek.47v6-12. Rev.22v2,14,15. We read in Is.57v1,2., that God allows the young to die to save them from evil to come. 1Kings.14v11-13.

j. Because God desires us to be healed by natural or medical means.
We read in Ps.103v3,5., that healing can come through correct diet as well as by Divine miracle. Those who neglect rest and a good food will certainly suffer for it, as even godly Epaphroditus found out. Phil.2v25-30. Ps.107v17-19. 127v2. Those who despise doctors and medicine, and say that they are trusting the Lord for healing, will find that will have need of both doctors and medicine, to cure them of their spiritual pride, as well as their sickness. Let us remember that a medicine, like a happy disposition, promotes healing, and medicines are even used in the heavenly kingdom. Prov.17v22. Ezek.47v12. Rev.22v2.

A DEFINITION OF GIFTS OF HEALINGS.
Gifts of healings are the supernatural workings of the Holy Spirit, by which the sick are healed of ailments of every kind, from reasonably mild general and occasional sickness, "malakian," to severe, dangerous and chronic disease, "nosos." God longs to heal all bad cases, "tous kakos echontas," and those compressed and straightened by severe sickness or tormenting malady, "poikilais nosois basanois sunechomenous," and mental and physical disorder. See Mt.4v23,24., where these words occur. Creative healings take place through this gift, e.g., the maimed, "kullos," Mt.15v30,31.; the blind from birth. Jn.9v1-41.

1. THE SCRIPTURES REVEAL GOD'S DESIRE FOR OUR HEALING AND GOOD HEALTH.
Sickness may be due to heredity, Satan, sin, neglect, overwork, natural ageing of the body, worry, the pressures of life, emotional stress, infection and disease, industrial poisoning, injury, accident or war, etc. The Scriptures reveal.

a. The original creation shows God's desire for mankind to enjoy perfect health.
The fall and sin of Adam made creation subject to sickness, death and unreality, "mataiotes." Gen.2v9. 3v22-24. Rom.5v12. 8v19-22. God not only made the human body self-healing, He also gave the tree of life to preserve perfect health. Adam's sin deprived mankind of the tree of life and physical well being, and by breaking God's moral and health laws, mankind has suffered further physical deterioration. Deut.28v15-29,45-48,58-68. Prov.13v2,15. Gal.6v7. Jesus came to redeem us from the curse of a broken law, and by accepting Him as our Saviour; we can be saved and healed. Gal.3v13,14. When God's kingdom of love comes to earth, all God's redeemed creation will enjoy perfect health forever. Rev.21v3-5. 22v2.

b. God looks upon sickness and death as enemies of mankind and His perfect will.
Sickness, like any other trial, may produce spiritual strength in us, when we overcome it by God's grace, but it is still an evil thing. 1Cor.15v26. 1Thes.5v23. 3Jn.v2. God speaks of sickness as an oppression of Satan, a curse, and a bondage and captivity, from which Jesus has come to deliver us. Lk.4v17-21. 13v10-17. Acts.10v38. 1Jn.3v8. Job.2v7-13. 42v10.

c. God gave the Israelites sound medical advice to preserve their health.
God desired the Israelites to enjoy good health, so as well as the moral Law; He gave them laws containing sound medical advice on rest, food, hygiene, sanitation and quarantine, to preserve their health. Prov.4v20-22. Lev.23v1-44. 25v1-24. Mk.2v23-28.; Lev.11v32,39,40. 15v1-33. Deut.23v12,13. Lev.13v1-59. Numb.5v1-4. Lev.11v1-47. God also promised them Divine healing. Ex.15v26. Ps.103v3. 105v37.

If physical neglect or overwork has made you ill, then you need to observe the practical medical advice given in God's Law, and give your body the correct food, rest, and sleep it needs. Ps.103v3,5. 127v2. 107v4-6,8,17-21. Phil.2v25-30. The Old Testament prophets were told that one of the outstanding activities of the promised Messiah was going to be His ministry of healing. Is.53v4. with Mt.8v16,17. Is.35v5,6., and His manifestation of God's healing and saving power. Is.61v1,2. with Lk.4v14-21,40,41. Deut.18v15-19. Ps.45v6,7. Heb.1v8,9.

d. The character and love of God assure us that God earnestly desires to heal us.
It is the healing of sickness, not sickness, that glorifies God and shows His perfectly loving desires, will and character. Sickness is Satan's will for God's creation. Ps.103v1-22. 146v5-10. Mt.6v25-34. Jn.1v14. Acts.10v38. Divine healing causes people to love and glorify God, it makes them realise God's sacrificial love and care for His creation. Mk.2v12. Lk.13v10-17. Mt.15v31. Jn.11v4,40,45. 1Jn.4v8. Rev.4v8.

e. The cross of Christ shows how earnestly God desires to save and heal us.
We can claim healing for soul and body through Christ's atonement. Exod.15v26. Is.53v4. Mt.8v16,17. Numb.21v5-9. Jn.3v14-16. 1Pet.2v24. God desires to deliver us from sin and sickness and to give us His good gifts. Mt.7v11. Lk.11v9-13.

f. Christ spent a large part of His time ministering to those who were ill.
"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil; for God was with Him." Jesus gave the same commission to His early

Church. Acts.10v38. Mt.10v8. Mk.16v15-20. He revealed His Father's willingness to heal, by healing all that came to Him and His apostles did the same. Mt.8v16,17. 14v13,14. Acts.5v12-16. Christ is alive and He desires to do the same miracles today, through His Church, that He did while He was on earth. Heb.13v8.

2. THE DIFFERENT WAYS THAT WE CAN RECEIVE A GIFT OF HEALING FROM GOD.
a. Through personal prayer. Is.38v1-22. Jn.14v11-15. 15v4-14.

b. Through any believer who is full of faith and power. Mk.16v18. Acts.9v17,18.
Any believer who really believes, and is full of the Holy Ghost, can lay hands on the sick and see them recover. Acts.6v8. However, if we try to bring healing to people when we are spiritually powerless, and have nothing to give, we shall badly discourage both the sick person and ourselves as well. To know ourselves is a very necessary task, when we are dealing with the sick. We need God's power to deliver the sick, a formulae or form will not do. 2.Cor.13v5. James.1v22. The greater miracles come through the greater ministries. Acts.5v12.

c. Through church elders praying a prayer for the sick. James.5v13-16.
One of the essential qualifications for a Church elder, is the ability to pray for the sick and see them healed. Elders should manifest faith and spiritual power as well as godly character. Acts.20v17,28. 1Tim.3v1-7. Titus.1v5-9. 1Pet.5v1-8. James tells us that pastor-elders should be full of the Holy Ghost like Elijah, and pray through with great patience and faith, for those who are sick. The word for “sick” in James.5v15., is “kamno,” it is translated as “wearied” in Heb.12v3., and “fainted” in Rev.2v3., the only other two places where it occurs in the New Testament, it speaks of a person being “worn out” by sickness, and does not necessarily mean that they are confined to bed.

Some say that Mk.6v13. gives us no warrant to anoint unbelievers as this was for Israel, who could claim “the children's bread” of healing. Mt.15v26. However, we need to remember that these same Israelites were looked upon in Mt.10v6., as “the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” who needed Christ's salvation, so I see no reason why we should not anoint unbelievers with oil. The anointing with oil signifies the healing power of the Holy Spirit, who comes upon both unbelievers and believers to heal them. The important thing is to have the power of God, not just the type of that power. If there is failure to bring healing to the sick in a church, the whole church should seek God until this defect is put right, and the sick are healed. Leaders should see the sick healed or question their ministry, an empty claim to the ministry of pastor-elder, will have to be answered for before the great throne of God. 1Pet.5v1-4. Eph.4v8-11. Jer.23v1-6. Ezek.34v1-34. Mt.23v13-39.

d. Through the other greater ministries of the Church. 1Cor.12v28. Eph.4v8-11.
All the New Testament ministries were usually entrusted with the great manifestations of gifts of healings. Mk.16v15-20. Lk.9v1,2. 10v1-9. Rom.15v18-20. 2Cor.12v12. These ministries had a continual rather than an occasional ministry to the sick. Each gift of healing is a separate gift, if ten people are healed; ten gifts of healings have been ministered. A gift of healing can be ministered by the laying on of hands, Mk.6v5,6.; by a touch, Mt.8v13-17. 9v24,25,29,30.; by a word of commanding faith, Mt.8v8. Acts.3v6.; by someone praying for someone even a great distance away, Mt.8v5-13. Jn.4v46-54.; by a “prayer cloth” sent to the sick, Acts.19v11,12. Mt.14v35,36. 2Kings.13v20.; by reconsecration and obedience to God. Mk.7v32-37. Lk.17v12-19. Jn.9v1-15. Numb.21v5-9. Is.38v1-8.

3. THE SCRIPTURAL ADVICE FOR THOSE SEEKING HEALING FROM GOD.
a. Call for those with a proven ministry of healing to pray for you. James.5v13-18.
Do not be prayed for by Christians whose ministry is a proven failure, they will only depress your faith. Go to Christians who have positive faith, and if possible to those elders, or other ministries, who have a proven ministry of healing.

b. Repent of all known sin and come in sincere repentance to Christ.
Accept Christ as your Saviour, if you do not know Him as Saviour. Mk.1v15. Acts.3v19. 13v38,39. Jn.1v12. 3v16. 6v37. Heb.7v25. Jesus emphasised the supreme importance of getting right with God and being “born again,” He told us that there is a vital connection between repentance, forgiveness, and healing. Mk.2v5,9,10. Jn.5v1-9,14. Rom.12v1,2. 1Jn.3v21-24. 1Cor.11v27-32. If you have any bitterness or enmity against other people, you must put it right; otherwise it could hinder or stop you receiving your healing. Mt.6v12,14,15. 18v35. Mk.11v22-26. Lk.17v1-17. Get right with God and man, and come to God in full assurance of faith for healing, through Christ's shed blood, your sin can be forgiven and your body healed. Mt.5v22-24. Lk.24v47. Rom.8v32. 1Pet.2v24. 1Jn.1v9. Heb.10v19-22.

c. Be absolutely positive in your faith in Christ and the Father.
See Heb.11v5,6. Mk.5v25-34. 6v56. Praise and thank God for His promise to heal you. Mk.11v20-24. 2Cor.1v19,20. Don't go to God with doubting hope; go to Him with positive faith. Don't wait for thrills, feelings and sight, before you will believe; trust God's word and resist Satan's lies, and God will meet with you. God wants you to be well, so reject false teaching that says that God likes you to be sick. 1Pet.5v6-11. James.4v7. 3Jn.v2. Let your confession of faith be as positive as the Word of God. Jn.20v27-29. 2Cor.4v18. 5v7. Rom.4v20. God is faithful, and is able and willing to heal all those who truly repent and come to Him in full assurance of faith; no matter what Satan, church tradition, or circumstances may say. 1Jn.5v9-15. Mk.9v22,23.

d. Continue to trust Christ for a miracle even when healing is not immediate.
Expect an instant miracle of healing, Mk.1v31,41. 2v12. 5v29,42. 7v35. 10v32. Acts.3v7. 9v34., but do not limit healing to an instant miracle; sometimes healing is delayed or is gradual. Jn.4v52. Remember that Jesus promised that real faith never goes unrewarded. Mk.11v20-25. Imitate the persistent faith and prayer of the woman of Mt.15v21-28.; the Shunammite woman of Kings.4v18-37.; The sick woman of Mk.5v25-34.; the blind men of Lk.18v35-43.; the friends of the palsied man of Mk.2v1-12.. Remember, even God's servant Job experienced a delay in healing, and that Paul's friend Epaphroditus was not healed immediately, even though Paul prayed for him. Job.42v10. Phil.2v25-30. Lk.17v11-19. Even Jesus prayed for one person twice, and other people received their healings some time after they were prayed for. Mk.8v22-26. Lk.17v12-19. Jn.9v1-15. Remember to direct your faith to God, and not to the person who prays for you, and give God ALL the glory. Acts.3v11-13. 14v7-21. Realise that God is trying to make a change in you as well as your body. Remember the Lord Jesus never refused either salvation or healing to those who came to Him, and a delay in healing never means denial.

The major hindrances in our churches that stop God from fulfilling His Word to heal us.
(This section is a quote from page 30 of my study, "By His stripes we are healed.) In Ps.90v10., Moses informs us that natural aging of the body cannot be avoided. Old age can be a burden to the godliest soul, however, God can heal us in our old age; God healed me of a tumour on the brain and blindness when I was 71. God can, and does, heal every kind of sickness, including simple sickness. Ps.103v3. But God often allows minor sickness, to be healed by the natural healing processes of the body. Simple sickness can be cured by common sense, simple remedy, correct diet and sufficient sleep. Ps.103v5. 127v2. However, severe sickness is another matter altogether, and this is what I am considering here.

1. The lack of full New Testament apostolic, prophetic and evangelistic ministry.
We read in Mt.9v35,36. that in His third tour of Galilee, Jesus was moved with compassion, when He saw the pitiable state of the multitudes. "Moved with compassion," is "esplangchnisthe," the aorist passive indicative of "splagchnizomai" 4697, to have the bowels yearn, so, to be moved with compassion, sympathy and pity. Jesus was, and is, deeply moved with compassion. Mt.14v14. 15v32. 20v34. Mk.1v41. 6v34. 8v2. Lk.7v13. 15v20. Jesus was deeply moved and grieved over the totally deprived and wretched state of the multitudes. They were "distressed," "eskulmenoi," the perfect passive participle of "skullo" 4660, to flay, to lacerate; they were flayed, rent and mangled as if by wild animals. "Scattered" is "errimmenoi," the perfect passive participle of "rhipto" 4496, to throw or cast down. The perfect tenses show this was their normal state and abiding condition, the multitudes were in a permanent state of mental and spiritual dejection. They were cast down, dejected, bewildered, harassed, wounded and prostrated by their religious teachers, who laid heavy burdens on them, and hindered them from entering into an experience of truth, and God's kingdom. Mt.23v3,13. Lk.11v45-54. N.B. 52. They were sheep without a caring shepherd, until Jesus came. **Jesus asked the apostles to pray for apostolic labourers, as the answer to this great need, and this is how we should pray, for when these ministries exist, the Church is revitalised, great needs are met, and great miracles occur.**

2. Lack of healings in a church is often due to lack of spiritual power or faith in the elders.
However, even if the poor spiritual condition of the elders stops them from being a channel of salvation and healing and blessing, it is still God's will to heal, as we can clearly see from the healing of the demoniac in Mk.9v14-29. Sin in the elders will also hinder and stop people from being healed. The list of sins can be long and range from immorality to prayerlessness.

James, in James.5v13-20., makes it quite clear that elders have the responsibility to pray the sick through, in the same manner that Elijah prayed for rain. This is not a two-minute prayer, but prolonged compassionate and dedicated praying. When the famous missionary William Burton was staying in our home, I asked him how they prayed for the severe sick in Congo. Willie told me, that if the sick were not healed on the first and second day, they would pray for a third day, until the person was healed, or they had a word from God. This is James 5v13-20., praying, you pray until you have a positive answer from God.

3. Lack of healing is very often due to the fact that the church is too spiritually lazy, or too worldly to defeat Satan.
The prayerlessness of the elders can often infect the rest of the church, and the church expects no miracles. When people are prayed for week after week, and nothing happens, the faith of everybody almost completely disappears; the people expect defeat, not victory. Their faith in the power of the Name of Jesus is badly affected.

4. Serious unrepentant sin, or a sin like Achan's can stop people being healed. Josh.7v1-26. 8v1
Until Achan's sin was dealt with all the people of God were in defeat. In the Corinthian Church many were sick and many had died because they failed to examine their lives, and clean them up before they partook of the Lord's Supper. 1Cor.11v27-32. Paul told them in v30. "For this reason **many** "polus" 4183, are weak ("astheneis" 772) and sick ("arrostoi" 732), among you, and **many** ("hikanos" 2425) sleep. NKJ) Many Corinthians lost their health and lives by divine judgement through sickness.

5. Christians can be at sixes and sevens and have a bitter spirit towards one another.
Wrongs should not be allowed to fester. Christ commanded us to put right any things that were wrong. If we want to move mountains we have to walk in forgiveness. N.B. Mt.18v15-35. Mk.11v22-26. Jn.13v34,35.

15v12-14. 1Cor.3v1-3. Very often the premature death of a Christian through sickness is not “God's will” at all, it is often due to the sin and spiritual poverty of Christ's Church. The phrase, “If it be thy will”, is often quoted in direct contradiction to the clearly revealed will of God in the Scriptures. “If it be thy will”, is very often used as a declaration of unbelief, and as a God limiting and faith destroying statement, instead of the positive affirmation and testimony that it is God's will to heal us if we will put our lives right with God. The phrase, “If it be thy will” has its place in prayer, but let us make sure that we use it within the confines of the Word of God. Doubtless, when a Christian dies because of the spiritual failure of the elders, or their own lack of faith, it is always “gain” for them, when they go to be with the Saviour they love. Jn.17v24. 2Cor.5v6-10. Phil.1v20-25. Thank God for His wonderful grace, power, love and wisdom, and for the immortality brought to us by our dear Lord Jesus. 2Tim.1v10. God is forever the same, and His promises are Yea and Amen in Christ. **See my book, “God Heals,” on** **www.thesecretofeternallife.com**

4. PAUL'S "THORN IN THE FLESH."

Paul tells us that when he was in danger of getting over-elated through the abundance of spiritual revelations that he received, God's cure for this was “a thorn in the flesh, a messenger, “angelos,” of Satan to buffet me.” One cannot see how Paul could have accomplished his missionary journeys if he had been continually sick and ill as some say he was. Paul certainly knew what it was to suffer physically, for no one could suffer eight beatings and a stoning, without suffering some physical pain and after effects. Paul said, “I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus,” and a thousand scars on his body testified to the truth of that statement. Gal.6v17. with 2 Cor.11v23 to 12v12. Thorns in the flesh in the Old Testament, were personalities or people that were used by God to discipline His children. Numb.33v55. Joshua.23v12,13. I believe Paul's thorn in the flesh was persecution, not sickness. An angel of Satan certainly stirred up tremendous persecution against Paul; he suffered weariness and painfulness, perils of various kinds, necessities, persecutions, distresses, imprisonment, beatings, a stoning, and many other trials as a result of the hatred of Satan-inspired men. God uses various means to test and discipline His children, and sickness was certainly used by God to discipline the wayward Christians at Corinth. If Paul's thorn was sickness the Christians at Corinth had every right to ask Paul if he had been examining himself at the Lord's Table. 1Cor.11v30. The idea that Paul was continually sick from one disease after another, is quite without any scriptural foundation, Paul preached and experienced healing. Acts.9v17-19. 28v3-6. Rom.8v11. 15v18-20. 2Cor.4v11.

Paul tells us that people are blinded by Satan and need signs and wonders to see what God is like. 2Cor.4v3-7. The healing of disease and infirmity make a powerful appeal to people to return to such a wonderful and loving God. Mk.3v3-12. Acts.4v21. Paul states that gifts of healings compel unbelievers, not only to listen to the Gospel message, but also to believe it. Rom.15v17-20. They show that Jesus is alive and that the tremendous truths that He told us about Heaven and Hell, and sin and judgement are true. Acts.3v13-26. The gifts of healings certainly turn people to God and really inspire the people of God with a holy boldness to preach the Gospel. Acts.8v5-13. 9v32v35. 4v29-31. Paul did not go around saying that we should patiently bear sickness, he went around preaching deliverance from it, and he looked upon this as one of the proofs of his apostolic ministry. 2Cor.12v12. It made all the difference between defeat and victory in his ministry. We need gifts of healings today, for they meet the needs of suffering humanity, and display the wonderful compassion, character and grace of God, and confirm the Gospel message and bring many souls to Christ.

Albert Hibbert, on pages 42 to 44, of his book, “Smith Wigglesworth; The Secret of His Power;” relates how God instantly replaced the two artificial legs of an Anglican Curate with two normal legs. The curate, at Wigglesworth's direction, went to buy some shoes, and requested a pair of size 8 black shoes. When the Curate put one stump of his artificial leg into one of the shoes, a foot and leg instantly formed. Then the same thing happened with the other artificial leg. The Curate walked out of the shop with a new pair of shoes on a new pair of legs. Wigglesworth was not at all surprised at this result; it was what he had expected to happen; he had often said that as far as God is concerned, there is no difference between forming a new limb, and healing a broken bone. We need more of this kind of miracle today.

5. THIS IS A VERY SPIRITUALLY AND PHYSICALLY DEMANDING MINISTRY.

We read in Lk.6v18,19. of power going out of Jesus to heal the multitudes. This meant that the Lord Jesus had to restore His vital spiritual and nervous energies through communion with God the Father. This is one reason for His tremendous prayer-life. Lk.3v21. 5v16. 9v18,28,29. 11v1. 22v40-46. Christians who pray for people in deep need understand what Jesus meant when He said in Lk.8v46., “I perceived that power had gone forth out of me.” This kind of spiritual loss has to be experienced to be appreciated. In manifesting the gift of faith in casting out of demons, or healing wounded spirits, etc., and gifts of healings for the body, we have very definitely got to know our limitations. If we do not draw near to God and other mature Christians, we can experience both physical and spiritual breakdown. To maintain a ministry to the sick demands real consecration, and deep communion with God. We should not be satisfied until we see this lovely gift of healing manifested continuously and powerfully in our churches, so let us earnestly desire this precious manifestation of God's forgiving and compassionate love.

THE THREE GIFTS OF INSPIRATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT.

7. THE GIFT OF PROPHECY. “Propheteia.”

The gift of prophecy is sixth in the list in 1Cor.12v8-10.. Paul tells us to earnestly desire to operate this gift in our Christian gatherings, because through it we can greatly edify, encourage, and comfort our fellow

Christians. 1Cor.14v1-3. However:

1. THE GIFT OF PROPHECY MUST BE DISTINGUISHED FROM THE PROPHETIC OFFICE.

a. All Christians may prophesy, but very few Christians have a prophetic ministry.

Most of the Christians who prophesy, do not possess a prophetic office and ministry, which is second only to apostolic ministry. 1Cor.14v5,24,31. 12v28. Eph.4v11. The person with a simple gift of prophecy has a local ministry; the person with a prophetic office can have a wider ministry outside of his locality. There is a considerable difference between the prophetic ministry of Agabus, and the prophetic gifts of Philip's four daughters in Acts.21v9,10. Some have no authority or ministry to predict like Agabus, and must not try. Rom.12v6. The predictive prophecies of the Old Testament, were manifestations of words of wisdom, and words of knowledge. The simple gift of prophecy does not hold the pre-eminent place in the gifts; it is prophecy that contains the mind, purposes and knowledge of God that is of supreme importance. This is seen in its most perfect operation in our Lord's messages to the seven churches in Revelation.

b. All Christians may prophesy, but not many regularly manifest gifts of revelation.

The simple gift of prophecy builds up, exhorts, and comforts; whereas, the gifts of revelation, direct, predict and reveal. The person with a simple gift of prophecy may sometimes manifest gifts of revelation, but that does not give them a prophetic office. It is the regular manifestation of revelation gifts on a high level of authority that proves a person has the office of a prophet. The prophetic office also manifests power gifts, which are well outside the sphere of the simple gift of prophecy. The “seer” and “prophet” of the Old Testament, and the New Testament “prophet” spoken of in Eph.4v11. and 1Cor.12v28., speak of a similar office; they both speak of a regular ministry of the gifts of revelation, and some manifestation of the power gifts.

c. Prophetic ministries vary a great deal in content, power and authority.

Prophets can vary a great deal in the level of power of their manifestation of spiritual gifts, some have much greater authority than others. Numb.12v6-15. The prophetic ministries of Moses and Elijah were quite exceptional in their power and authority, and were recognised as such. God even likens the ministry of Jesus to the ministry of Moses, “The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, LIKE UNTO ME; unto him ye shall hearken.” Deut.18v15,18,19. Prophets vary greatly in the content and type of their ministries, as well as in the power of their ministries, and the importance of their prophecies. This can be clearly seen when we compare the detailed prophetic revelations of Daniel with David's psalms, which consisted mainly of psalms of praise, worship and instruction; but also including a few remarkable and important predictive prophecies. Acts.2v25-36. There can be great variety in prophetic ministry.

d. Prophets should develop spiritual gifts and ministries in their local Church.

Prophetic ministry has an important place in the reception of spiritual gifts and the development of spiritual ministries. Deut.34v9. 1Kings.19v16,19-21. 2Kings.2v9. Lk.9v1,2. 10v1-9. Acts.19v1-6. Rom.1v10,11. Christians are not led into an experience of spiritual gifts, or ministries, through just listening to doctrine. It is not pretty sermons, but spiritual power ministered in love that counts with God. A pulpit can be a means of real self-deception; it is only as we minister to people's needs that our spiritual resources are revealed. Christ ministered to those in need, and so should we. A pulpit ministry that never directly ministers to people's needs is an unscriptural delusion, and sheer escapism from Christian responsibility.

2. ALL KINDS OF PROPHECY MUST BE DISTINGUISHED FROM PREACHING AND TEACHING.

a. The Old Testament distinguishes a prophet from a teacher or preacher.

The Old Testament prophet was a “nabi,” or if a prophetess, a “nebiah;” the prophet was one who allowed God to “flow forth” His thoughts through them; “naba” means “flow forth.” Sometimes these words were good tidings; at other times they were words of warning or judgement. The true prophet was not afraid to proclaim what God had told them. If a prophet had visions they were also called a seer, a “chozeh,” or a “roeh.” Gen.20v7. Ezra.5v1. Exod.15v20. 2Sam.24v11. 30v10. Amos.7v12. In 1Chron.29v29. all three words are found; “the book of Samuel the seer ('roeh'), the book of Nathan the prophet ('nabi'), and in the book of Gad the seer ('chozeh').” Gesenius says a seer was, “one who sees, i.e., who is taught by visions.” In 1Sam.9v9. we read, “Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he spoke thus: 'Come let us go to the seer;' for he who is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer. See Appendix 4. The Hebrew Words For Prophets And Seers.

Genuine Old Testament prophets prophesied the mind and purposes of God. The anger of God came against those who pretended to prophesy, when they gave their own thoughts and imaginations, instead of God's thoughts. 2Chron.18v11. Jer.14v14. 23v21,25,26,32. 27v10,14. The Old Testament prophet was someone who allowed God's thoughts “to bubble up, flow forth, or pour forth,” “naba,” from them; their heavenly words distilled and dropped like dew and gentle rain, “nataph.” There is a great difference between the prophet who told God's thoughts, and the preacher, “a qoheleth,” like Solomon, who proclaims wisdom. “ Eccles.1v1,2,12. 7v27. 12v8,9,10.

b. The New Testament also distinguishes between a prophet and a teacher or preacher.

The verb “propheteuo,” “to prophesy,” is never translated as “preach” or “teach” in the Authorised Version, or any other accurate translation. See 1Pet.1v10. Mt.7v22. 11v13. 15v7. 26v68. Mk.7v6. 14v65. Lk.1v67. 22v64. Jn.11v51. Acts.2v17,18. 19v6. 21v9. 1Cor.11v4,5. 13v9. 14v1,3,4,5,24,31,39. Jude.v14. Rev.10v11. 11v3..

The noun “propheteia,” “prophecy,” is never translated as “preaching;” and “prophetes,” “prophet,” is never translated as “preacher,” or “teacher.”

The following Greek words for “teach” and “preach are not used to speak of a person prophesying, they clearly speak of the telling forth of truth out of the mind, by process of thought. “Didasko.” “To teach, to instruct.” “Katangello.” “To report down,” “proclaim.” “Diangello.” “To announce through,” so “to declare fully.” “Dialegomai.” “To dialogue,” “to say thoroughly, to converse, discuss, dispute, reason, dialogue.” “Suzeeteo.” “to reason.” “Euangelizo,-omai.” “To tell good news, or good tidings.” “Kerusso.” “To cry or proclaim as a herald,” “Laleo.” “To talk, say, speak, tell, preach,” it can speak of a conversational style of preaching. So we see that “prophecy” and “preaching,” are looked upon as two quite distinct ministries. Those who teach and preach expound God's revealed Word; those who prophesy speak the mind of God under His direct influence. The following Greek scholars confirm this fact.

Grimm and Thayer. State on page 553 and 554 in their Lexicon on “propheteuo,” to prophesy, and “prophetes,” prophet.
“c. To utter forth, declare, a thing which can only be known by Divine revelation:-- d. To break forth under sudden impulse in lofty discourse or in praise of the Divine counsels. f. The prophets that appeared in the apostolic age among the Christians: ---and in the religious assemblies of the Christians, being suddenly seized by the Spirit, whose promptings, however, do not impair their self-government, 1Cor.14v32., give utterance in glowing and exalted but intelligible language to those things which the Holy Spirit teaches them, and which have power to instruct, comfort, encourage, rebuke, convict, stimulate their hearers.”

Bishop Ellicott. In his Critical and Grammatical Commentary on 1 and 2 Thessalonians, points out on 1Thes.5v20., that prophecies were: “varied declarations of the Divine counsels and expositions of God's oracles, immediately inspired by and emanating from the Holy Spirit. --- The difference between ordinary 'didache' and 'propheteia' consisted in this, that the latter was due to the immediate influence of the Spirit, the former to an 'exoikeias dialegesthai' (speaking out of one's own mind).”

Robinson's Lexicon. On page 723 and 724, shows the difference between prophets and teachers.
“In Septuagint and New Testament, “prophetes” corresponds to Hebrew “nabi,” one who speaks from a Divine influence, under inspiration, whether as foretelling future events, or as exhorting, reproving, threatening individuals or nations, that is, as the ambassador of God and the interpreter of His will to men;--- With the Jewish use of “nabi” and “prophetes” was connected the idea, that the prophet spoke not his own thoughts, but what he received from God, retaining however his own consciousness and self-possession. They seem to have differed from the “didaskaloi” (teachers) in this, that while the latter spoke in a calm, collected, didactic discourse, adapted to instruct and enlighten the hearers, the prophet spoke more from the impulse of sudden inspiration, from the light of a sudden revelation at the moment, (apokalupsis” 1Cor.14v30.), and his discourse was probably more adapted by means of powerful exhortations to awaken the feelings and conscience of the hearers, the idea of speaking from an immediate revelation seems here to be fundamental, as relating either to future events or to the mind of the Spirit in general; cp. Acts.11v27. 21v10. So Acts.13v1. 1Cor.12v28,29. 14v29,32,37. Eph.2v20. 3v5. 4v11.”

The Greek words for preaching or teaching are never used for prophecy or prophesying. A prophetic ministry is certainly quite different from a teaching and preaching ministry. A prophet, through the revelation gifts, reveals the will and knowledge of God, the teacher expounds known truth under Divine anointing. The prophetic ministry also includes some ability to teach and preach; both Judas and Silas taught as well as had a prophetic ministry. Acts.15v32. The prophetic ministry also contains a measure of a teaching ministry, but a teaching ministry does not contain a prophetic ministry. Paul, it appears, had the essential qualities and attributes of apostolic, prophetic and teaching ministries. 1Tim.2v7. 2Tim.1v11. 4v3. 1Cor.15v51-53. 2Cor.12v1-4.

We see, then, that both prophet and preacher proclaim; however, a prophet's message is directly from God; the source of the preacher's message is the working of his mind upon known truth. Ps.40v9. Is.61v1. Neh.6v7. Jonah.3v2. Both have an important place in the Church. From James.5v13-20., we see that God expects the elders of the Church, that is the pastors, bishops, and teachers, to be men of prayer, who manifest the gifts of the spirit and bring healing to the sick. They can also receive prophecies and gifts of revelation, even if they do not have a prophetic ministry, which involves a regular ministry of the gifts of revelation.

3. ALL KINDS OF PROPHECY MUST BE PROPERLY REGULATED.

a. We must not surrender our right to judge prophetic utterances.

We have the right and duty to judge prophetic utterances. 1Cor.14v29-33. We have to “Prove all things, and hold fast to that which is good and beautiful.” In 1Thes.5v21. the word for “prove” is “dokimazo,” which is used for the testing of metals; it speaks of a test with the expectation of approval. In 1Cor.14v29. the word for “judge” is “diakrino,” and that means to discern, discriminate and judge. We should not only decide which part of a prophetic message applies to ourselves, we have the right to judge if a prophecy is from the Lord; and we should reject anything that comes from the human mind, or from evil spirits. Jer.23v16,25-34. Even Ahab knew that only Micaiah was telling the truth. 1Kings.22v19-30. The Holy Spirit will always witness to the truth.

messages to the seven churches in Revelation clearly reveals. Rev.2 & 3. Even Paul got into trouble by ignoring the prophetic warnings of the Christians at Tyre, and Agabus the prophet. Acts.21v4,10-13. Acts.20v22-24. 22v17,18,21. 26v29. It is no good saying, "How lovely," or "How true," if we promptly forget and ignore what God has said. James.1v22-27. God is looking for Christians who will tremble at His Word and obey it, whether it comes though His written Word, or the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but, alas, this is rare. Ps.2v11. Ezra.9v4. 10v3. Is.66v2,5. Phil.2v12. The revival at Jerusalem shows what God can accomplish through humble, contrite Christians, who are determined to obey God.

f. We must be careful not to misconstrue and misinterpret prophecy.

The statement in 2Pet.1v20,21., "that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation;" almost certainly means that prophecy springs from a Divine origin, not from a prophet's private will or desire. It should not read "is," for it is not "estin," but "ginetai," that is, "comes" or "springs out of private disclosure," "genetai idias epiluseos." "Epilusis," means "releasing, loosing, solving explaining, disclosing;" it does not occur anywhere else in the New Testament; but, the verb "epiluo" occurs twice in the New Testament, once in Mk.4v34., where it translated as "expounded" or "explained;" and in Acts.19v39., where it is translated as "determined," "decided" or "settled." Peter makes the point clear, when in the next verse he states that prophecy "came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Peter uses "pheromenoi," the present passive participle of "phero," which in Acts.27v15,17., is used of a ship being carried along before a very strong gale. The prophets spoke as they were blown along in the gale of the Spirit. See. 2Tim.3v16. To interpret the Scriptures correctly, we need to be blown along in the gale of the Spirit, then God will give us insights that are hidden from the wise and prudent. Mt.11v25-27. Lk.10v20-24. Eph.1v13-23. 3v16-21. In Heb.6v1., we read that we are to allow ourselves to be borne along and carried to maturity; "pherometha," the present passive subjunctive of "phero," "to carry;" passive, "to be carried;" the passive shows the need of our personal surrender to God, as well as God being the agent and author of our maturity.

We should not interpret either Scriptural truth, or prophetic utterance, by our preconceived ideas or desires, we must search the Scriptures, and seek God for His interpretation, or we can go badly astray. We can put a construction on a genuine prophecy and revelation that is wholly unwarranted. The apostle John had to correct the false interpretation of Christ's words; "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" Jn.21v22,23. On some occasions we may not understand a prophecy or a revelation, however, those for whom it is intended will usually understand.

Sometimes it may need the passage of time, and new circumstances, to disclose what a prophecy or revelation means. Some prophecies may foretell something far ahead in time, and we should not try to give them a present application. Even great Old Testament prophets were puzzled by some prophecies, until God told them that they were in the distant future. 1Pet.1v10-12. If there is any doubt over the interpretation of a prophecy or revelation, it is best to be silent and prayerful, and let God reveal its true import at the correct time. Let us not jump to hasty conclusions. We must remember that one prophecy can speak to many people, and different parts of the same prophecy can speak to different people. We should never say that a prophecy is just for a certain person, for it may also apply to others. God knows what is in people's hearts and He is a discreet and wise gentleman, He prefers to meet people's needs by general rather than specific prophecy, to save them from embarrassment. Never forget that people have always the right to judge and reject prophetic revelations. 1Thes.5v20,21.

A DEFINITION OF PROPHECY.

Prophecy is a supernatural utterance given by the Holy Spirit that can take the form of exhortation, encouragement, prayer or song. It is a revelation from God whose purpose is to edify and encourage the Church. There may be prediction channelled through this gift on occasions, when the prophecy contains words of wisdom and knowledge. Prophecy enables God to meet hidden needs in the Church. A prophecy may contain something that the prophet already knows, which God desires to be spoken to help others, or it may contain some revelation that the prophet was previously unaware of. A true prophecy will be endued with Divine life and power. The word "prophet" describes someone who is the mouthpiece of God. 1Cor.14v2. There is a spirit of expectancy where this gift is powerfully manifested, for when the Holy Spirit speaks words of tender comfort through a loving heart, the very peace of Heaven is ministered

THE IMPORTANCE AND USE OF PROPHECY.

1. It enables God to edify, exhort, and comfort His Church. 1Cor.14v3-5.

a. It edifies. The noun "oikodome," means the act of building, from "oikos," a home, and "demo," to build, and it is used figuratively in the New Testament of spiritual edification. Prophecy builds faith, character, love and knowledge. 1Cor.14v31. If the Divine Architect is to build up His Church as He desires, this gift must be in operation, for without it the Church cannot be built up as it should be. Mt.16v16,18. Eph.2v21,22. Rev.2v7,11,17,29. 3v6,13,22. Prophecy that fails to build up Christians, and harms them, is certainly not of God; Christians always benefit from genuine Holy Ghost inspired prophecy.

b. It exhorts. The Greek word "paraklesis," means "a calling to one's side, a calling near, an invitation." Its kindred word "parakletos," means "Comforter" in Jn.14v16,26. 15v26. 16v7., and "advocate" in 1Jn.2v1.. Both of these words speak of a care, comfort, and consolation that is most precious. The English word "comfort" means more than its popular idea of soothing; it is derived from the Latin "comfortare," which means "to make

strong." This is why Wycliffe translated Lk.1v80., "the child waxed and was **comforted** in spirit," and Tyndale translated Lk.22v43., "there appeared an angel from heaven **comforting** him." Prophecy should, strengthen, cheer, brace and encourage. The Holy Spirit does not comfort and strengthen merely by saying nice things to us; sometimes He may convict us of sin. Jesus gave a strong rebuke to the Laodiceans in Rev.3v15-20., He said they were "wretched, miserable, naked, blind, and spiritually poor, and told them to repent. Christ said, "As many as I love ('phileo,' a warm feeling of love), I rebuke and discipline." His rebuke was given out of a gentle spirit and a deep warm love and affection for them, even though their state was critical and their witness was a disgrace, to them and Him.

Judgement can be foretold by the word of wisdom, Rev.2v5,15,16,20-23., but this will be the exception, not the rule, those who are always thundering judgement or criticism, are manifesting their own bitterness of spirit instead of the Comforter's strengthening gentleness. Heb.12v11-15. 2Cor.13v14. Jonah.4v1-11. Christ's strengthening comfort corrects as well as consoles us, but with His people His gentle humanity and tenderness, and inviting mercy and grace are always apparent. Mt.11v28-30. Heb.12v5. God's aim in prophecy is to encourage us, not discourage us, the Holy Spirit is called to our side to help us, not to condemn us, let us rejoice in His strengthening comfort and gentleness. See Acts.9v31. Rom.15v4,5. 2Cor.1v3,4,5,6,7. Phil.2v1. Heb.6v18. "Paraklesis" occurs in all these verses.

c. It comforts. The noun "paramuthia," which means "to speak near or close to anyone, with soothing and consoling words," carries an even greater degree of tenderness than the word "paraklesis," it only occurs here in the New Testament. The noun "paramuthion," occurs in Phil.2v1., and is translated as "comfort" in the Authorised Version; some say that "paramuthia," stresses the process of comfort, whereas "paramuthion" stresses the instrument of comfort. God is gentle and kind, and speaks words of gracious persuasion, tender incentive, and healing comfort to the people of God. Prophecy from our gracious Lord is not critical or harsh; there may sometimes be rebuke, as in Rev.3v16,17., but Jesus is merciful and kind with His own, even in His disciplines. Christians can come into Church gatherings with hidden needs and conflicts, which no one knows, however, through prophecy, the Holy Spirit, can meet these needs and build up, encourage and comfort these needy Christians. We can all "learn" and all be "comforted," by the use of this gift. 1Cor.14v31. Through prophetic encouragement we can fight a good fight against the powers of darkness. 1Tim.1v18. "Precious promises." 2Pet.1v4.

2. Prophecy can be a channel of the gifts of revelation.

A prophetic utterance can on occasions be used in winning the lost, for it can contain a word of knowledge, which reveals the secrets of people's hearts, our Lord brought salvation to the woman at the well by this means. Jn.4v15-42. 1Cor.14v24,25. This has a powerful evangelistic appeal. A prophecy may contain revelation gifts, and predict and warn of future events. Prophecy is spoken of as "a light in a dark place," and it can prepare us for either great blessing or great trouble. 1Pet.1v19. In fact prophecy can contain all the various ministries that can come to us through the gifts of revelation.

3. Prophecy can be valuable in prayer, praise, worship and song.

David's Psalm's contain both prophetic prayer and prophetic praise; others followed his example and prophesied with lyres, harps and cymbals. 1Chron.25v1. In 1Cor.14v15., Paul is speaking of prophetic hymns and songs, as well as ordinary hymns and songs, just as in Eph.5v19. and Col.3v16. One of the most moving events of my life was to hear a young girl of nine sing a beautiful prophetic prayer, several verses long to the tune of, "When morning gilds the skies, my heart awaking cries, may Jesus Christ be praised." It was in perfect rhyme and metre, a wonderful prayer for the conversion of my father. The little girl's face was transfigured, and shone with a visible light; she was oblivious to all around her as she worshipped the Lord. I was still attending school, and had just been turned out of home by my father for being a Christian, so this was a real sign from God to me. The little girl's earnest prayers, and the prayers of many others, were answered; my father became a Christian, when the Lord gave him a vision of the Abyss. For other prophetic prayers, see, 1Sam.2v1-10. Lk.1v39-80.. Prophecy is a wonderful gift, it is no wonder that Paul uses the word "zeloute" to describe how intensely we should desire this lovely gift of God. "Make love your quest, and be eager for spiritual gifts, but chiefly for prophecy." Weymouth, 1Cor.14v39. This gift has made the difference between victory and defeat on innumerable occasions in the history of God's people.

8. THE GIFT OF TONGUES. "Glossais."

This is spoken of in the New Testament as "new tongues," "other tongues," "divers kinds of tongues," and even as "the tongues of men and angels." Mk.16v17. Acts.2v4. 1Cor.12v10,28. 13v1. Many Christians do not realise either the purpose of this gift, or the blessing that it can bring. This has often been caused by preachers, who are opposed to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We will, therefore, start by clearing up the misconceptions that have arisen concerning the gift of tongues, and then show why every Christian should desire and can profit, from this precious gift of God.

A DEFINITION OF THE GIFT OF TONGUES.

The gift of tongues is the supernatural ability given by the Holy Spirit to speak in a tongue that is unknown to the speaker. It is a miracle of divinely inspired language. The primary purpose of this gift is devotional, it is intended to be a Divine aid to the prayer life. The person who speaks in an unknown tongue almost always, "Speaketh not to men, but to God; for no man understands him." 1Cor.14v2. This gift can on rare occasions be used by God to speak to people in their own language, and when interpreted it can speak to a church.

1. THE GIFT OF TONGUES WAS NOT GIVEN FOR PREACHING THE GOSPEL.

The Greek “koine,” that is, colloquial Greek, was understood throughout almost all of the Roman Empire, and was the common language of the nations around the Mediterranean. This made preaching in tongues quite unnecessary. On the day of Pentecost the 120 disciples did not preach in tongues, their praise to God in tongues was a sign to the hearers to prepare them for Peter's preaching in his own tongue. Only a small number of those who spoke on the day of Pentecost were commissioned by Christ to go and preach the Gospel to every creature. Mt.28v16-20. The gift of tongues was often manifested in the early Church when no foreigners were present, indeed, if there was no one with a gift of interpretation in a Christian gathering, there was to be no public utterance of tongues for interpretation. 1Cor.14v28.

2. THE GIFT OF TONGUES IS CERTAINLY NOT GIBBERISH.

To say that speaking with tongues by a blood-washed, spirit-filled Christian is “gibberish,” or “of the Devil,” is to come very close to blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. There can be no more serious sin than ascribing the works of the Holy Spirit to Satan. It is true that Mk.3v28-30., is speaking of wilful unrepentant opposition to the movings of the Holy Spirit, and rejection of Christ; however, rebellious criticism of God's gifts is a very serious matter. 1Sam.15v22,23. It is an offence against the Holy Spirit to disparage, censure and malign His gift of tongues. Eph.4v30.

a. The gift of tongues is genuine articulate language.

There is no Scriptural, etymological or exigetical reason for supposing that speaking with tongues is an ecstatic language or utterance without meaning. The articulate understandable genuine languages of Acts.2v4. are no different than the tongues of Acts.10v6. 19v6. 1Cor.12v10,28. 13v1,8. 14v2,5,6,13,18,22,23,26,27,39. They are “the like gift,” “ten isen dorean.” Acts.11v17. The only difference is, that in Acts.2v4. some of the hearers happened to understand them. It was the hearers of tongues who were “beside themselves,” “amazed,” and “ecstatic,” according to the writer of Acts, for the word “existemi” is used to describe their reactions in Acts.2v7,12. and 10v45.. (For “ekstasis” see Acts.3v10. 10v10. 11v5. 22v17. Mk.5v42. 16v8. Lk.5v26.) It is true that the Christians who spoke in tongues experienced transports of joy and praise, but they did not talk nonsense, they praised God in genuine articulate language.

The two Greek words that are used to describe tongues both indicate a genuine language. The first “dialektos,” means “a (mode of) conversation or discourse,” from “dialegomai,” “to dialogue, reason, or discuss,” it came to signify the language or dialect of a district or a country. The reason why the hearers on the day of Pentecost were so amazed, was that they heard Galileans, speaking their native dialects, as only a native could, and they knew that this was, naturally speaking, quite impossible. We are told that the Medes and Elamites (Persians), spoke the same language, but with different dialects. These Pentecostal believers were mainly illiterate people of limited linguistic ability; yet the Holy Spirit enabled them to speak perfectly, not only in different languages, but also in different dialects of the same language. “Dialektos,” only occurs in the New Testament in Acts.1v19. 2v6,8. 21v40. 22v2. 26v14..

The second Greek word is “glossa,” which means, “tongue,” is used to speak of the organ of the body known as the tongue, the tongues of fire, and different nationalities, as well as different languages. Mk.7v33,35. 16v17. Acts.2v3,4,11,26. 10v46. 19v6. 1Cor.12v10,28,30. 13v1,8. 14v2,4,5,6,9,13,18,19,22,23,26,27,39. Rev.7v9. “Glossai,” that is, “tongues,” or “glossolalia,” “speaking with tongues,” is certainly nothing like the incoherent, unmeaning, broken ramblings of some wild false religions. In 1Cor.14v2., Paul tells us that it is the intelligent speaking of God's mysteries, “musteria,” God's hidden and glorious secrets and purposes. The disciples at Pentecost spoke fluently and powerfully of God's wonderful works, it was only those who did not know or understand the languages, who said that it was drunken gibberish; those who did know the languages, said that it was perfect inspired language and were converted as a result. The Scriptures speak of the gift of tongues as “an edifying gift,” not as “vain babblings,” Greek “kenophonias.” 1Cor.14v4,14-18. 1Tim.6v20. 2Tim.2v16.

“Utterance” in Acts.2v4., is “apophtheggesthai,” the present passive infinitive of “apophtheggomai;” which Baxter's Lexicon, says means, “to speak out, declare, particularly solemn, weighty, or pithy sayings.” Vincent writes, “Literally, 'to utter.' A peculiar word, and purposely chosen to denote the clear, loud utterance under miraculous impulse. It is used by later Greek writers of the utterances of oracles or seers. So in the Sept. of prophesying. See 1Chron.25v1. Deut.32v2. Zech.10v2. Ezek.13v19.” Robertson writes; “It is used of eager, elevated, impassioned utterance. In the New Testament only here, Acts.2v4., and 2v14. and 26v25. 'Apophthegm' is from this verb.” The word “apophtheggesthai,” shows the fluency and forcefulness of speaking with tongues under the Holy Spirit's influence, it conveys well the impression of earnest, exalted, passionate utterance and divinely inspired discourse. Indeed, it is not used in the Septuagint of ordinary conversation, it is used for prophetic utterance. The gift of tongues is the very opposite of “gibberish;” it is the utterance of exalted and divinely inspired articulate language.

b. The modern experience of recognised tongues proves them to be genuine articulate languages.

The gift of tongues is anything but gibberish, it is a lovely and precious manifestation of God the Holy Spirit. Those who have been able to understand the languages that Christians have spoken while speaking in tongues, have said that they are perfect. A ten-year-old girl named Irene Piper was enabled by the Holy Spirit to speak to a Chinese man in his own language. He was told to come to church and accept salvation. The Chinese man

said that her accent was perfect, and her forms of speech were so exact that ten years of study would not give the average Western person such knowledge of the language.

In an article in “The Pentecostal Evangel, Crusade Issue,” Robert L. Brandt, gave several instances where the gift of tongues was recognised and understood. In one he tells how three educated Hindus became Christians when a Christian spoke their language perfectly under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. They said that they never heard a foreigner speak their language so perfectly. He also gives another case of a young man named Paul Goodwin speaking in perfect Italian, there were several Italians in the service, one of them, Leo Pilla, said that he knew Paul Goodwin and knew that he did not know Italian, and yet he had spoken perfect Italian, like a graduate from an Italian college. The message in tongues had been interpreted; this was also confirmed as a perfect interpretation.

We have to be very careful in judging utterances in tongues that seem repetitive and sound peculiar. We read on page 32 and 33 of W. F. P. Burton's fine book “Signs following,” how a godly Pastor thought that the repetitive “Kalombooo Vidye” of a Christian lady was nonsense, until Mr. Burton told him that this lady was repeating the exact words in the same repetitive way that the natives of Lubaland did when they showed their highest respect and reverence to their chiefs during sessions of court. The repetitive “Kalombooo Vidye” was used by the Holy Spirit to express this dear Christian woman's love for God. The language of praise is of necessity repetitive, so we should not think that it strange that this kind of repetition takes place when we speak in tongues. In English, or for that matter any language, the vocabulary of praise that is used by most Christians is limited to a small number of words, such as, “Praise the Lord;” “Glory to God!” Wonderful Jesus!” “Precious Lord!” “Blessed Lord!” In fact the simple Hebrew “Hallelujah” has taken its place in the language of worship of probably every Christian group on earth. The “stammering lips” spoken of in Is.28v11., and quoted in 1Cor.14v21., could well speak of the repetitive words of praise given by the Holy Spirit as we speak in tongues. The gift of tongues is of course not limited to repetition of a few words, it can also be manifested as a fluent articulate utterance.

We need to remember that many genuine languages sound so primitive, that even the most intelligent person might doubt the genuineness of what is in reality a complicated, beautiful, and meaningful language. The greatest linguist knows but a fraction of the world's languages. “World Digest” informs us that there have existed at least 6,760 languages, 4,464 of these are dead languages, and only 2,296 are still spoken. A Christian can speak in these languages of earth, or the many tongues of angels, as Paul speaks of them in the plural. It is a fact that children of God have spoken by the Holy Spirit's inspiration, in both ancient and modern languages, and linguists have understood them. However, we need to remember that God does not cast His pearls before those who cannot appreciate them; these manifestations are usually for sincere and seeking hearts.

3. THE GIFT OF TONGUES IS A COMPANION OF LOVE, NOT AN OPPONENT OF LOVE.

Paul certainly does not say in 1Cor.13v1., that the gift of tongues does not profit the Church. The “more excellent way” of 1Cor.12v31., is not the way of love separate and distinct from all other gifts, attributes and talents; it is love as the guiding principle of these lovely and desirable things. Paul never suggests that we should follow after love and despise spiritual gifts. he exhorts us to seek spiritual gifts out of love for God and others. It is foolish and unscriptural to say, “You can seek for gifts, but I am going to seek for love.” Those who seek for love from the God of love will also seek His gifts. The fact that a Christian lacks spiritual gifts does not mean that they possess love, indeed, it may mean the very opposite, for it is impossible to follow after love, and despise or criticise our heavenly Father's spiritual gifts. If we really desire and follow after love, we shall desire, follow after, and encourage His gifts. We are not glorifying God by extolling love at the expense of the gifts that He has given. Paul does not say in 1Cor.13v1-3., that the gifts are “nothing” without love, for they are given by the God of love and are wonderful; it is the loveless possessor who is “nothing.” Gifts manifested in love profit both the recipient of the gifts, and those who are ministered to through those gifts. It must be remembered that it is not only spiritual gifts that do not profit us without love; knowledge of all sacred secrets and Divine truths, the giving of all we have to the needy, and even martyrdom for Christ's sake are profitless to us without love. Though spiritual gifts lose some of their value without love, love is helpless without them. Love needs God's power to meet the needs of the broken in heart, the sick in body and the oppressed, and in the ministry of Jesus we see the lovely coordination of Divine power and love meeting the needs of needy humanity.

In Heb.6v5., the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit are called, “the powers of the age to come;” they are a temporary and partial use of the powers of God’s eternal kingdom. In 1Cor.13v8-10., Paul is saying that the temporary manifestations of the Holy Spirit, and the partial manifestations and revelations of God, are swallowed up in the continuous and eternal enjoyment of His supernatural powers and blessing. The part is swallowed up in the whole. In the same way, our present knowledge will come to nought, or vanish away, in the sense that our limited knowledge will be swallowed up in the infinite knowledge of the kingdom of God. The temporary and occasional manifestations of Divine power and knowledge through the gifts will only become inoperative, “katargethesontai,” and cease, “pausontai,” when they are superseded and swallowed up in the continual, permanent and eternal manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

Paul tells us, then, that we need gifts as well as love until Jesus returns and sets up His kingdom on earth. Paul does not say that the gift of tongues and the other spiritual gifts are of little consequence because they are

temporary, for the temporary gifts help to produce eternal love, and then they give way to the eternal, permanent, and complete manifestations of Divine love, power and wisdom. The gift of tongues is important, Paul says that God gives it to us to "edify" us, that is, to produce love and faith in us; it is only like “roaring brass and clashing cymbal,” when it is used in a selfish way by an unconsecrated and loveless Christian. The diligent use of the gift of tongues in private prayer will do wonders for our spiritual life, it will help to produce Christ's character and love in us, it is a God-ordained companion of love. 1Cor.14v2,4. Mt.6v5,6.

4. PAUL DID NOT DESPISE TONGUES, HE USED IT EVEN MORE THAN THE CORINTHIANS.

When Paul speaks in 1Cor.12v31. of prophecy and other gifts as being “greater gifts” than the gift of tongues, he is speaking in the context of public meetings of Christians; for Paul makes it quite clear that the greatest gift in the devotional and prayer life of the believer, is the gift of tongues. 1Cor.14v2,4. Paul spoke in tongues more than the Corinthians, and obviously looked upon it as absolutely indispensable for his spiritual welfare. 1Cor.14v18. Paul criticised the Corinthians selfish and noisy misuse of the gift of tongues in their public meetings, and not the gift of tongues, and told them to use the gift in the correct way. Paul informs us in 1Cor.14v19., that “in the church” five words of prophecy are better for edifying Christians than 10,000 words in a tongue. Paul states in 1Cor.14v2,4,15,18., that speaking in tongues has pride of place in private prayer and praise, and in v19, he tells us that prophecy has pride of place in Christian gatherings. In church meetings we should seek to edify others, in private prayer we must edify ourselves. The diligent devotional and loving use of the gift of tongues in the secret place will result in the other gifts being manifested in public. 1Cor.14v2,4,18. with 2Cor.12v12.

Paul states that he spoke in tongues more than any of the verbose Corinthians, he used this gift diligently in private prayer, and quietly, “to himself and God” in public prayer. 1Cor.14v2,4,15-18,27,28. Paul edified himself by using the gift of tongues so that he could edify other Christians; this was one of the secrets of Paul's spiritual power and strength. From his own experience Paul tells us that the gift of tongues will build love, faith and spiritual strength in the possessor of the gift if it is used diligently and devotionally. Indeed, Paul states that it is the one gift whose primary aim is the spiritual well being of the possessor. We cannot manifest the other gifts of the Spirit when we desire, and when they are manifested, they are nearly always for the benefit of others, but we can speak in tongues when we desire, and be spiritually edified as a result. This is why Paul said, “I offer thanksgiving to God in private, speaking in tongues... more than any of you.” 1Cor.14v18. W. J. Conybeare. Let us follow the example of Paul and use this gift of God for our personal spiritual edification and profit.

5. WHY SOME CHRISTIANS DESPISE AND BELITTLE THE GIFT OF TONGUES.

Why do some Christians refuse to accept and follow Paul's experience of the gift of tongues?

a. Some Christians have a fear of the supernatural.

Some Christians are frightened of manifesting spiritual gifts, they cannot trust God to give them “good gifts,” or to preserve them from the dangers in spiritual warfare, and so they stop in the wilderness instead of conquering their spiritual Canaan. Jesus said that this is due to a lack of faith in our heavenly Father's love and power. Lk.11v9-13. Mt.7v7-11. Eph.6v10-20. Heb.3 and 4. We have all missed our heavenly Father's richest blessings, through fear, failure, and slothfulness.

b. Some Christians love the praise of men more than the praise of God. Jn.12v42,43.

The Scriptures say it is difficult to believe if we prefer to receive glory from men instead of God. Jn.5v44. Some are tempted to “keep in” with their denomination or group, and count the cost of losing friends who reject the Pentecostal experience, so they reject God's lovely gift of tongues. Two young men who had dictated to the Lord, “We want the baptism in the Holy Spirit without speaking in tongues,” were asked why they prayed in this manner, they replied that it was because speaking in tongues was unpopular. Many Christians still choose to please men more than God, so they criticise and condemn this good gift of their heavenly Father. Acts.2v4,33. Lk.11v9-13.

c. Some Christians are genuinely ignorant of the great blessing that this gift can bring.

Some Christians say, “What is the good of speaking with tongues? It is the least of the gifts.” They feel it is of no real benefit. Those who say this show their ignorance of both the Scriptures, and the use of this gift as revealed in the New Testament. Christians should not question the wisdom of God in giving the gift of tongues, they should say, “My heavenly Father only gives good and perfect gifts, so there must be some good reason for this gift, and some profitable results of its manifestation.” James.1v17. The gift of tongues may be the least important gift as regards to public ministry, but it is the greatest gift in relation to the devotional life and prayer life, which is the source of an anointed public ministry. There is nothing little about the gift of tongues, it is one of our heavenly Father's good and great gifts.

d. Some Christians have been put off by noisy, Corinthian-type Pentecostals.

Many of the Corinthians were misusing the gift of tongues, and some were even living bad lives, Paul told them this state of affairs was to cease, and that Jesus had personally disciplined many of them. Many Christians have been put off by noisy undisciplined use of the gift of tongues. There are, of course, many mature Christians, whose use of the gift of tongues is everything that the apostle Paul would have desired, and they follow His teaching on the correct use of the gift of tongues.

6. PAUL INSTRUCTS US NOT TO MISUSE THE GIFT OF TONGUES.

a. We should not monopolise church meetings with speaking in tongues.
The aim in a church fellowship should be public and not personal edification; therefore, we should curtail noisy or excessive speaking in tongues and seek God for a prophecy. 1Cor.14v5,18,19. We can use the gift of tongues in the church, but Paul says that we should usually speak quietly to ourselves and God. 1Cor.14v28,40. Though the whole church may on occasions burst out in praise and worship and sing and speak in tongues; in a church meeting, speaking with tongues should not dominate our Christian fellowships. A Scriptural order will result in a greater measure of blessing in our churches.

b. We should exercise special restraint when the unconverted or unlearned are present.
Paul states that when the unconverted or unlearned in spiritual gifts come into a meeting the believers must act wisely and restrain themselves; otherwise the visitor will say that everybody is mad. In 1Cor.14v23., "unlearned," is "idiotes," which means unlearned, unskilled, or uninitiated, it only occurs in Acts.4v13. 1Cor.14v16,23,24. 2Cor.11v6. Any public manifestation of the gift of tongues in such circumstances should be by tongues and interpretation. Paul informs us in 1Cor.14v24,25., that prophecy is by far the best gift to manifest under such circumstances. The noisy use of the gift of tongues will almost invariably produce consternation and criticism, whereas, prophecy containing words of knowledge, can often result in the conviction and conversion of the "outsider." The gift of tongues is a sign to the unbeliever when he can understand the language.

c. We should set a definite limit to the number of tongues for interpretation.
Though it is wrong to forbid speaking with tongues, 1Cor.14v39., utterances in a tongue that are for interpretation in the church, should be limited to three utterances. If there is no interpreter in the church, there must be no public utterances, the person must speak quietly to themselves and God. 1Cor.14v27,28. Aaron Linford informs us that the words "By two, or at the most three," "kata duo e to pleiston treis," is speaking of three persons, not three utterances, for the words "two" and "three" are in the masculine gender, and therefore, must refer to persons, not things. It would also seem from 1Cor.14v26., "everyone hath A TONGUE," that Paul said that one person should only give one tongue, as in v29 Paul indicates that each prophet should only give one prophecy in each church meeting; it is certainly a good thing to share the ministry of spiritual gifts. We should not speak an utterance for interpretation at all unless the Holy Spirit moves us in a very definite way, those who insist on speaking with tongues without the Holy Spirit's direction, will find that there is a very limited blessing on it.

Paul had good reasons for limiting tongues for interpretation to three utterances. He did not want the Corinthians to have an excessive emphasis upon utterances in tongues; he desired them to have a correct and sensible balance, and to seek after the gifts which have a greater public ministry, and in particular prophecy. Paul knew that three tongues for interpretation was as much as most Christians could remember, weigh and profit from, particularly if there were also going to be manifestations of the gift of prophecy as well. Paul's limitation upon tongues is very sensible and if we observe it, we will be preserved from fanaticism, selfishness and disorder, and we will enjoy a profitable manifestation of speaking with tongues.

d. We must not confuse devotional tongues with tongues for interpretation.
It is obvious from a comparison of 1Cor.12v30., "Do all speak with tongues?" with 1Cor.14v5., "I would that ye all spake with tongues," and Acts.2v4., "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues," that though all Christians may experience the devotional use of tongues, not all Christians possess a ministry of tongues for interpretation. It is a fact that only a small percentage of Christians who speak in tongues, speak out in a tongue that is interpreted in the Church. It is in the context of ministries to the Church that Paul asks in 1Cor.12v30., "Do all speak with tongues?" Many have failed to distinguish between tongues that are for private edification, and tongues that are to be interpreted as a ministry to the churches. Indeed, many critics of a Pentecostal experience have seized on 1Cor.12v30., as an excuse for not desiring to speak with tongues. If all Christians do not need to speak in tongues, as these critics say, why did all the Christians at Pentecost, the house of Cornelius, and Ephesus, speak in tongues? Acts.2v4. 10v44-48. Acts.19v6.

In 1Cor.12v27-31. Paul is speaking of ministries that God has set in the Church, to build up the Church, Christians with God-given gifts for public ministry, and the ministry of speaking in tongues for interpretation is mentioned amongst them. There are Christians who have been given outstanding ministries of speaking with tongues, whose utterances in tongues are of such great beauty and carry such a Divine benediction, that one feels that they are upon holy ground, even before there is an interpretation. The gift of tongues that is interpreted and ministers to the needs of a church, is an enlargement of the ability to speak in a tongue, or tongues, that a Christian receives when they receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit. However, all Christians are not given this ministry, some, quite properly, only use their tongue for private prayer and devotion, while others have in addition to this a ministry to the church.

How may we know that we have to speak a message in tongues for the church? The Holy Spirit can inform us of this by a sudden powerful impulse and anointing from Him. However, we do need to distinguish this direction and anointing from a surge of emotion and love for God. A surge of emotion, and a genuine anointing and blessing of the Holy Spirit, does not necessarily mean that we should speak out in tongues to the church; it may be a blessing to uplift us, or to help us to pray, or to enable us to praise or worship the Lord as we ought to. Once a Christian has had the experience of receiving a message in tongues for the church, they will be able to tell the difference between an impulse of the Holy Spirit to speak in a tongue for an interpretation, and the

normal blessing of the Holy Spirit. This gift can be a real blessing to the church, and if Christians would pray much in private, they would find that God would often use them to lift meetings into real blessing by an anointed ministry of tongues for interpretation.

THE VALUE AND USE OF THE GIFT OF TONGUES.

1. DILIGENTLY USED THE GIFT OF TONGUES TRANSFORMS OUR ABILITY TO WORSHIP.

Speaking in tongues brings into play the highest faculty of the Christian, the spirit that God has given to each redeemed child of God. This born-again spirit is the means of our communion with God, and when we speak in tongues it enables us to give God the spiritual worship that He desires. Speaking with tongues enables us to have direct and intimate communion with God and give Him acceptable worship. Christ said that we must worship God with our spirit if we are to worship Him acceptably, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Jn.4v23,24. The most elaborate and highly organised worship is only a dead form if this spiritual worship that Christ spoke of is missing. However, by the simple act of speaking with tongues, we are enabled by the Holy Spirit to worship God on the very highest level, it is truly acceptable worship if we let love for God and others direct our lives.

When the Holy Spirit enables us to magnify and bless God, and give Him the worship and love of our hearts through the gift of speaking with tongues, He enables us to perform the greatest act a Christian can do, for worship of God is the greatest act of the creature. Acts.10v46. Mt.22v35-40. Mk.12v28-34. The use of the gift of tongues lifts the Christian into a new realm of worship, it enables us to worship God to the limit of our capacity, and beyond our capacity, by the help of the Holy Spirit. Eph.4v18. Rom.8v26,27. The Holy Spirit can inspire us to pray with our spirit, "If I pray in an unknown tongue my spirit prays." 1Cor.14v14. He can cause us to sing with the spirit, "I will sing with the spirit". 1Cor.14v15. He can enable us to bless with the spirit, "Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit". 1Cor.14v16. The gift of tongues enables the Christian to reach the highest levels of spiritual worship, it enables us to worship God in spirit and truth, the most important act of the Christian life; how, then, can some despise it and call it, "The least of the gifts?" Jn.4v23,24.

In 1Cor.13v1. Paul implies that the Holy Spirit may cause us to speak in the tongues of angels. If an angelic tongue can express the praise of a great angelic being living in the eternal and uncreated glory and splendour of Gods majestic presence, it can surely express the praise of the redeemed children of God living in this dark and sinful world. How wonderful it is to be freed from the limits of our own small vocabulary and limited eloquence, into the excellence and eloquence of earthly and even heavenly languages, by the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The gift of tongues does for us what no other gift can do, it enables us to exalt, worship and praise God, in a way that we cannot without it, this is one reason why the apostle Paul used it so much. 1Cor.14v18. It is one of God's great and precious gifts.

2. DILIGENTLY USED THE GIFT OF TONGUES TRANSFORMS OUR ABILITY TO PRAY.

The gift of tongues brings into the personal prayer life, the ability of the Holy Spirit. When you speak in tongues you are not limited by your own ability, God the Holy Spirit takes our needs, prayer, praise and desires, and the needs of other people and brings them to God the Father. The gift of tongues enables Christians to utter and fully express the otherwise indescribable longings of their soul and their great and unspeakable feelings of love for God. It gives the Christian the ability to pray to God and worship Him as we ought, it frees us from the limits of human speech and knowledge, for the Holy Spirit Himself gives us the vocabulary and blessing to fully express the needs, feelings and desires of the soul. The gift of tongues enables the Christian to pray on a new level of prayer, for it is God praying through us to perform things exceeding more abundantly than we can ask or think. Eph.3v18-20. In Rom.8v26,27., Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit is always available to takes hold with us against our limitations and problems; he uses "sunantilambanetai," the present indicative middle of "sunantilambanomai," "to lend a hand together with, at the same time with one;" only here and in Lk.10v40., of Martha's request for help. When we pray in tongues we release the power gifts, and pray for the saints according to the will of God.

A diligent use of the gift of tongues in the private prayer life will result in a very blessed and fluent use of this gift. On occasions a completely new language will be given by the Holy Spirit, which possesses all the phonetics and rhythm of a perfect and complete language. However, whether the Holy Spirit gives us many or few words to express our praise or prayer, the exercise of the gift of tongues will bring great blessing and mighty power in prayer. When we use the gift of tongues in our devotional life, we pray or praise as the Holy Spirit directs and in the way that He thinks best; whereas in our own tongue we can pray selfishly, ignorantly, incorrectly, and even with unsanctified ambition and denominational pride. When a Christian prays in tongues, it is prayer and worship on the very highest level; it is God directing the devotional life. The balanced prayer life demands praying and singing in tongues, as well as prayer and singing in one's own language; this was Paul's practice, and we would do well to follow his example.

3. DILIGENTLY USED THE GIFT OF TONGUES TRANSFORMS OUR CHARACTER.

The gift of tongues is given to build faith and love in the soul, and edify, bless and transform the personality, character and life of the believer, as Paul writes in 1Cor.14v4., the Christian who speaks in tongues "edifies himself." It has the same effect in the prayer life and devotional life, that prophecy has in the Church. The gift of tongues does not only bless the soul and spirit, it can also have the most beneficial effect on the body, and can calm conscious and subconscious worries. It can relax and refresh a tired body and mind as well as bless the soul. Is.28v11,12. with 1Cor.14v21. and Rom.8v11. The gift of tongues gives us a defence against spiritual

foes, and gives us the victory over them, for through this gift the Holy Spirit Himself operates in power against the powers of darkness. The gifts of tongues also edifies the soul in love, and makes it strong, a gift that builds love in the character should never be described as “little,” “least,” or be despised and neglected.

4. DILIGENTLY USED THE GIFT OF TONGUES TRANSFORMS OUR SPIRITUAL MINISTRY.

Prayer and praise in tongues build up the spiritual life of the Christian to the place where they are able to manifest the other gifts of the Holy Spirit. The greater a Christian's ministry is, the more they need to speak in other tongues. One well-known evangelist found that mira

“nothing,” “outhen,” at absolute zero spiritually. Mighty inspiration without love still leaves us a complete failure; it is a tragedy when the gift that is designed to edify the Church, fails to edify the possessor of the gift.. With love, prophecy conveys the comfort and strengthening love of God into the Church. Even the gifts of the Holy Spirit do not profit us if we do not possess love.

We can have the gifts of power and demonstration and yet be nothing.
Signs and wonders can be a sign of the approval of God, Acts.2v22., and can bring tremendous blessing to needy people, however we can manifest these gifts and yet be a complete failure in God's eyes, if we do not love people.

b. We can have a profound Scriptural and spiritual knowledge and yet be nothing.
Paul tells us that it is possible to know “all mysteries,” “musteria,” that is, God's secret purposes and plans, and “all knowledge,” and yet be devoid of love to people. We can have a mind full of Divine truth and yet have an empty soul. Satan is the perfect example of this. Ezek.28v12-20. Is.14v12,13. Rev.12v10-12. Knowledge without love produces pride and arrogance, and contempt for people of less ability, privilege and gift. Compare Jn.8v3. with Lk.6v20. Divine truth can deliver the soul, feed the mind and spirit, and establish and sanctify the Christian; it is absolutely vital; but we need love to make it profitable to us.

c. We can give most sacrificially but without love it does not profit us.
Our most sacrificial giving is profitless to us unless love is our motive for giving. We can give away all our earthly treasure, and yet not lay up any treasure in heaven. We can give away all that we have, like the widow of Lk.21v1-3., and yet, unlike her, it will profit us nothing, if we have no love for people or God. Mt.6v1-4. Mk.12v41-44. 2Cor.8v1. to 9v15. Gal.6v2,5-10. Acts.2v44,45. 1Tim.5v16. Christian giving in love is wonderful, it blesses the giver more than the recipient of the gift.

d. We can even die a martyr's death, but without love it profits us nothing.
We are told by our Lord, Himself a martyr, not to court persecution or death. Mt.10v23. The needless sacrifice of our life out of a sense of bravado or pride will bring us no eternal reward or benefit. It is only unavoidable martyrdom in the will of God, and in the path of Christian duty, and out of love for Christ, that brings a heavenly reward. It is not only spiritual gifts that do us no good, or bring us no reward, if we are lacking in “agape” love; a profound spiritual knowledge, sacrificial giving, and a martyr's death do not benefit us either.

2. THE ATTRIBUTES OF LOVE. 1Cor.13v4-7.
1. Love suffers long, love is patient. "Makrothumeo," literally, "long passion."
Paul uses “makrothumei,” the present active indicative of “makrothumeo,” to emphasise the continual habit of controlling the mind and passions for a long time. Paul showed this patience in speaking as he did to the unruly Corinthian Christians. “Makrothumeo,” occurs in the New Testament in the following places. Rom.2v4. 9v22. 2Cor.6v6. Gal.5v22. Eph.4v2. Col.1v11. 3v12. 1Tim.1v16. 2Tim.3v10. 4v2. Heb.6v12. Jam.es.5v10. 1Pet.3v20. 2Pet.3v15. It speaks of Divine patience, as well as patience with people and with circumstances. It signifies the very opposite of the attitude of the worldling, who look upon short patience, retaliation, spite and vengeance as virtues. With the Greeks “megalopsuchia,” was a virtue; it was the desire for vengeance and the refusal to tolerate and accept any injury. These attitudes should have no place in God's family; God has been very longsuffering with us; let us imitate our longsuffering Lord, and show patience with others.

2. Love is Kind. "Chresteuetai."
“Chresteuetai,” is the present middle of “chresteuomai,” to be gentle, benign, and kind in behaviour and service to others; from “chrestos,” useful, kind, gracious, gentle (like Christ's yoke in Mt.11v30.). Origen says it means, “Sweet to all.” Though “chrestos” occurs elsewhere, (Mt.11v30. Lk.5v39. 6v35. Rom.2v4. 1Cor.15v33. Eph.4v32. 1Pet.2v3.), “chresteuomai” only appears here in the New Testament; it speaks of a gracious, kind and gentle behaviour. Love not only suffers long with people who are a trial to its patience, it is kind to them and does them good in a positive manner. The present tense again shows the continuous nature and habit of this constructive kindness.

3. Love is not envious. "Ou zeloi."
“Zeloi” is the present active indicative of “zeloo,” from “zeo,” to boil. Paul here warns us that love does not boil with envy or jealousy. The present tense shows the permanent lack of envy and jealousy in the soul of the Christian who is motivated by “agape” love. The noun “zelos” is used in a good sense of the noble aspiration, and godly zeal and ardour of our Lord in Jn.2v17.. The verb “zeloo” is also used in a good sense in 1Cor.12v31., where Paul exhorts us to covet spiritual gifts, but he does not want us to manifest the envious begrudging spirit that is part and parcel of worldly covetousness. Love recognises the various ministries of Christ's Church, it is not jealous of what God gives to others. 1Cor.12v4-6. Rom.12v4. Gal.5v19-21. Acts.13v44,45. Love never boils with jealousy.

4. Love does not vaunt itself, it does not brag, or display itself.
“Vaunteth not itself,” is “ou perpereuetai,” the present middle of “perpereuomai,” to brag, to boast ostentatiously; from “perperos,” braggart.” Paul is speaking of a loud talking, presumptuous, ostentatious, arrogant braggart. Paul said, “What hast thou that thou hast not received.” 1Cor.4v7. Every good gift, ability, achievement, spiritual blessing, and conquest; arises from God, and “agape” love, humbly and contritely recognises this. The present tense shows that “agape” love always refuses to brag and boast. This vaunting

pride destroyed Lucifer, the light bringer, and turned him into Satan, the prince of darkness; it will also destroy us if we allow it into our beings. Is.14v12-20. Ezek.28v12-20. This vaunting spirit is the spirit of the powers of darkness. Acts.8v9. It has no place among the children of God. If God gives us peacock's feathers, let us be humble and give God all the glory. Love is never anxious to impress others with its gifts and achievements.

5. Love is not puffed up. "Ou phusioutai."
"Phusioutai," is the present middle indicative of "phusioo," to puff oneself up like a pair of bellows. It is only used by Paul in the New Testament, in 1Cor.4v6,18,19. 5v2. 8v1. 13v4. and Col.2v18., the Corinthians suffered a great deal from this spiritual disease, from the number of times that Paul mentions it. Our dear Lord Jesus is "meek and lowly in heart." Mt.11v29. He knows the proud afar off, but dwells with the contrite in heart. Ps.138v6. Is.66v2. Love is not conceited, or blown up, like a pair of bellows, with a sense of its own importance. This is the inward cause of the previous outward manifestation. The greater our "puffage" is, the greater our spiritual "shrinkage" will be, and the more certain it will be that the Lord will deflate us. The present tense shows that the truly loving Christian always refuses to have conceited and inflated ideas about themselves, or get puffed up about their successes, achievements, or spirituality.

6. Love does not behave itself rudely, unbecomingly. or disgracefully.
Love never behaves indecently, or unbecomingly. "Aschemonei," is the present active indicative of "askemoneo," to behave in an unbecoming, indecent, or shameful manner that is open to censure. It is only used here and in 1Cor.7v36., where it speaks of a virgin being shamefully hindered from marriage by a father or prospective husband. The adverb for "decently," is "euschemonos," Paul uses it to state that all should be done decently and in order ("taxis") in the Church. 1Cor.14v40. The present tense shows that Christians who have "agape" love always refuse to act in a disorderly and unbecoming manner.

Christians can experience strong workings of the Holy Spirit and be in perfect order in God's eyes, when men are critical of their response to God's power. Acts.2v13-16. Lk.19v37-40. See also. Heb.5v7. Neh.12v43. 8v6,12. Ps.47v1. 98v4. 126v2. 149v3. 150.v4. Dan.8v18-26. 10v8,11,15,17. Rev.1v7. etc. However, we must realise that what is "seemly conduct" in the secret place of prayer, can be "unseemly conduct" in a meeting of Christians, or when the unconverted are present. Paul informs us in 1Cor.14v17-25., that continual and loud speaking in tongues is undesirable even in gatherings which are composed entirely of believers; and is completely wrong when the unconverted and unlearned are present. We should show restraint in speaking in tongues, shaking, laughing, and anything else that causes consternation in people. We make some allowance for immaturity in young Christians or young converts, but "unruly" Christians are to be gently but firmly warned and controlled. 1Thes.5v14. 2Tim.4v2. Titus.2v15. However, let us beware of any "unseemly discipline," for by being harsh and graceless we can permanently injure people, destroy Christian fellowship, and bring churches into spiritual bondage.

The Holy Spirit is a perfect Gentleman, He will not cause us to get into a frenzy, or act in a way that produces concern, fear, friction, stress and distraction in the saints, and disgust in the outsider. Sadly, every revival always brings its quota of excess and fanaticism. However, the dangers of a powerless, sub-normal, formal Christianity are far worse. Wise leadership, good teaching, and mature example can lead Christians from "unseemly conduct," into the green pastures of a fruitful manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

7. Love seeketh not her own, and does not insist upon her rights. "Ou zetei ta heautes."
Love does not seek its own interests. This follows on from the last quality of love; it is the cure for disorderly conduct and other misuses of the gifts. Love does not think of its own profit or interests. it considers how it may best profit others. The present tense shows us that the permanent guiding principle of a heart of love, is service, not self-seeking. Jn.13 all. Mt.20v20-28. Rom.15v1-6. N.B. v3. 1Cor.10v23,24.

8. Love is not provoked or irritable, it does not fly into a temper.
"Provoked," is "paroxunetai," the present passive of "paroxuno," to sharpen, provoke, or stir up, it only occurs here and Acts.17v16., where it says that Paul's spirit was stirred within him when he saw the city of Athens wholly given to idolatry. There are times when it is a sin not to be angry, but a person who can't control their temper, is no use in the service of God, for they can hurt and injure many people. Lk.16v14,15. Mt.23v1-39. 1Tim.3v3. 2Tim.2v24,25. Eph.4v15. Gal.13v26. When the Corinthians misused their spiritual gifts, Paul gave them sound teaching and advice, not an exhibition of bad temper.

Love never gets angry and forbids spiritual gifts, nor does it call this bad temper and unbelief by the name of righteous indignation. For the noun "paroxusmos," see Acts.15v39., where Paul and Barnabus both failed to manifest "agape" love, and had a most unchristian angry dispute. See Heb.10v24., where "paroxusmos" is used in a good sense, "And let us thoughtfully consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works." Here Paul uses "katanoomen," the present active subjunctive of "katanoeo," to put the mind down upon, to thoughtfully consider; and he uses the present tense to show that "agape" love always thoughtfully considers how to provoke to love and good works, and is never provoked to fly into a temper.

9. Love thinks no evil, is not mindful of wrongs.
"Logizetai," is the present middle passive indicative of "logizomai," to count, to set down as a matter of account, as in a ledger. Love does not keep an account of wrongs done to it, or scores to be paid back. Love does not have outbursts of anger, or keep that anger burning, by cherishing real or imaginary records of the

failures and sins of fellow Christians. Christians with “agape love will love their enemies, even if they do not like them or their ways; and prays with genuine concern for those that despitefully use it. Mt.5v43-48. Lk.6v26-28. 23v33,34. Acts.8v51-60. Love does not compile or settle accounts with people. It finds no sense of superiority or satisfaction in the faults of others. Those who harbour a bitter unforgiving spirit can expect severe discipline from God. Mt.5v21-26. 18v21-35. Mk.11v25,26.

Injuries and emotional wounds caused by hurtful words and actions should be dealt with immediately and not allowed to fester, and where there is repentance there must be whole-hearted forgiveness. Mt.5v23,24. Lk.17v3,4. If the Church fails to follow Christ's procedure of discipline laid down in Mt.18v15-22., then the Lord Jesus personally disciplines His loved ones. 1Cor.11v27-32. It is better to put matters right now than to have to do it at Christ's judgement seat. Rom.14v10-13. The injured party should be humble and perform positive acts of kindness to the person who has injured them, so that repentance and reconciliation is made much easier. Gal.6v1. Rom.12v14-21. 1Cor.1v10. Phil.2v3. Eph.3v8. 1Tim.1v15. Severe judgement awaits those who have compiled cases of “Pentecostal failures,” in order to deny Christ's spiritual gifts to His Church. Love longs that they would change their unchristian attitudes and be blessed.

10. Love rejoices not in iniquity, it is not glad when others go wrong.
Love does not rejoice, “ou chairei,” over evil, sin and failure; this is what the wicked do. Rom.1v32. Love does not enjoy evil, nor does it find pleasure in finding out the faults of others and making them known. 1Jn.2v15-17. There is no triumph in knowing we were right about another's failings, a heart of love is sorrowful, prayerful, and broken over the fall or faults of another. We are in real trouble with God if we use a revelation of the Holy Spirit to expose and condemn, when God wanted us to use it to convert, help and strengthen a person, and as a directive to pray earnestly for them. See how prayerfully and kindly our Lord dealt with Peter and the woman at the well. Lk.22v31-34. Jn.4v16-18. Love wants to help the fallen, not condemn them. Love never gloats over, or finds satisfaction in, other people's failures.

11. Love rejoices with the truth, it rejoices when the truth prevails.
After a succession of powerful negative aspects of love, Paul turns again to the positive aspects of love. “Love rejoices in the truth,” “sunchairei de tei aletheiai;” it sides with the truth, and rejoices when truth sanctifies the lives of Christians. Jn.17v17. Truth, as well as love, is here personified and powerfully compared with unrighteousness. 2Thes.2v12. Instead of finding pleasure in compiling and gloating over a person's faults, the loving Christian rejoices in their spiritual victories and attainments, and will do all they can to promote further spiritual well being. It may be difficult to rejoice in truth when it shows us our deficiencies, but it is essential if we are to make spiritual progress. Jn.8v32. 7v17. 14v21. 2Tim.3v8.

12. Love bears all things, it bears up under everything. "Panta stegei."
“Stegei,” is the present active indicative of “stego,” to cover, to hold off, to hold out against; it comes from “stege,” a roof, a flat roof of a house. It means to protect by covering, and has the thought of enduring, sustaining, uplifting and protecting. Love can bear and endure the faults and hatred of others, it delights to sustain and uplift struggling souls; and where it is consistent with Church purity and discipline, it covers with silence and conceals the faults of people. Love secretly mends and prays over the faults of others, no disappointment, abuse, injury or ridicule, can stop the healing ministrations of the loving heart. Peter knew that Christ's “agape” love “covered his multitude of sins.” In 1Pet.4v8., Peter uses “kaluptei,” the present active indicative of “kalupto,” to throw a veil over, to cover, hide, and conceal. The noun, “kalumma,” is used in 2Cor.3v13-16., of a veil. Where possible, love bears up, covers and veils the sins and failures of people.

13. Love believeth all things; it has no limit to its faith and trust, "Panta pisteuei."
Love is not gullible, but it does not give people up as hopeless when the evidence is heavily against them. Prov.14v15. 1Thes.5v12. Even when there are dark signs in a person's life, the loving Christian attempts to pray through for them, and trusts God to bring them through. Love also has a perfect trust in the Word, love and provision of God. Phil.1v6. Faith based on love is a present tense reality, and it is an infectious faith that encourages others to trust in God. Heb.3v13.

14. Love hopes all things; it is full of hope in all circumstances, "Panta elpizei."
Hope looks at the character of God as the grounds of its expectation. The victory of hope can be as great as the victory of faith, as can be seen in the case of Abraham, “Who against hope believed in hope.” Abraham was strengthened by Divine grace, and a spirit of praise and worship. Gen.18v1-15. Rom.4v17-23. No opposition, temptation, or distress can destroy the hope that is ours in Christ Jesus. There is a dead hope as there is a dead faith, and there is a living hope as well as a living faith. James.2v14-26. with 1Pet.1v3. Prov.10v28. 11v7,23. Rom.5v4,25. 15v4,13. Phil.1v19,20. Col.1v5,23,27. Titus.1v2. 2v13. Heb.3v6. 6v11,18,19. 1Pet.1v21. 3v15,16. 1Jn.3v2,3. 1Thes.5v8. When love has very little grounds for faith in a person, because of real dark appearances of sin in their life, love never ceases to hope that the person will get back on the right way, and that truth and goodness will triumph. Christian hope springs out of faith in the character, love and truth of God, and is a present tense reality.

15. Love endures all things with triumphant fortitude, "Panta hupomenei."
Love endures when it can no longer believe or hope. It endures without limit for the sake of others. The word for “endure,” is, “hupomenei,” the present indicative active of “hupomeno,” which means, “to bear up courageously with triumphant fortitude.” The same word is used in Heb.12v2., to describe how Jesus endured

the cross with triumphant fortitude. Love does not allow trials to break or mar their spirit; it goes through trials with perfect confidence in God. Love endures all things so that the God of love may manifest His power and love through the lovely gifts that He has given. Indeed, one may have to suffer the most determined vicious persecution from unbelieving worldly and religious people for the sake of Christ's spiritual gifts. Acts.14v19-22. 13v50-62. 1Cor.4v11-13. 2Tim.2v10-13. James.1v12. God's love imparted to us by the Holy Spirit, enables Christians to always face life's problems and evil people with triumphant fortitude. Rom.5v1-5.

3. THE ETERNAL NATURE OF LOVE, AND OUR GIFTS AND KNOWLEDGE. 1Cor.13v8-13.

a. Paul tells us that our temporary gifts and knowledge are a partial experience of Heaven.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are a temporary and partial use of "the powers of the age to come." Heb.6v5. The gifts of the Spirit do not cease in the sense that there will never again be any miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit; it means that the temporary and limited manifestations of the Holy Spirit and partial revelations of God, are swallowed up in the continuous, complete and eternal enjoyment of the supernatural power and Divine nature of God. The part is swallowed up in the whole. In the same way our present knowledge will come to nought, or vanish away, in the sense that our limited knowledge will be swallowed up in, and superseded by, the infinite knowledge of the kingdom of God. Our present Scriptures are but a minute fragment of God's unlimited all-knowledge and Divine truth; its moral truths will never pass away, but it is only a very small partial revelation of God's eternal plans. The gifts of the Spirit, which are a partial and limited use of "the powers of the age to come," will continue, like our present limited knowledge, until our dear Lord Jesus comes again.

b. God uses spiritual gifts, and our experiences of life, to produce love in us.

God uses life, with all its trials and difficulties, mixed with His grace and gifts, to conform us to the image of Christ and form love in us. Rom.8v14-18,28-39. Our experience of life and the proper use of our temporary spiritual gifts and partial knowledge produce eternal "agape" love in us, and prepare us for the permanent, unlimited, and eternal manifestations of the knowledge and powers of the heavenly kingdom, so they are vitally important.

c. Our present Christian experience compared with life in God's kingdom of love.

Paul compares a baby with a full-grown man.

Paul tells us that our knowledge and most wonderful Christian experiences in this world, when compared with the knowledge and glory of God's heavenly kingdom, are like the first broken and hardly intelligible words and thought of a child, compared with the greater knowledge and speech of a keen and well-informed man. Oh the glory and immensity of God's kingdom! Oh the glory of His presence! Press on struggling Christian to the glorious life that awaits you in heaven.

Paul compares a shadowy image through an obscure mirror with face-to-face vision.

"Darkly" means literally "an enigma, or riddle," and then, "an obscure intimation." The revelations that we receive are sometimes very trying and puzzling until they come to pass. 1Pet.1v10-12. Even the Scriptures can only give us a limited idea of the glory of God's heavenly kingdom, for no language can describe or convey an experience that is so sublime and glorious. Rev.21 and 22. 2Cor.12v1-4. Compare 2Pet.1v19. with Mal.4v2. 2Cor.4v17. 1Jn.2v27,28.

d. The perfect day and kingdom of love for which God is preparing us. "to telion."v10.

God's aim in Christian service is to produce love in us, as well as to meet people's needs. The quality, not quantity, of our Christian work is the thing that matters in God's eyes. 1 Cor.3v11-17. God is trying to conform us to the image of His Son; He is trying to get us ready to rule with Christ. Heavenly powers demand heavenly love. Rom.8v29. Eph.1v5,6,17-23. 2v6,7.

When Christ comes we shall be known perfectly, and know others perfectly.

We shall "fully know as we are fully known." "Fully know," is "epiginosko," which speaks of full knowledge. Our abilities and personality will no longer hide the secret state of our heart. We shall see and know each other as He knows us, nothing will be hidden, and everything about us will be made known. For the pure in heart this will be a day of great joy, for others it can be a day of shame. Mal.1v1-3. 1Jn.2v28.

When God's kingdom comes we shall know God perfectly.

We shall see our heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus face to face, we shall see how glorious and wonderful they are and experience the most wonderful communion with them and rejoice in their plans for us. Even if our works have been "burned up," at His "kind but searching" examination of our lives at His judgement throne, we will enjoy His blessing and salvation, and eternal kingdom. 1Cor.3v13-15.

Love faith and hope will abide eternally in the kingdom of God.

There is one thing that is supreme in heaven and earth, a heart that is full of love, and this love with faith and hope will eternally abide. God is love and love is the supreme quality of character, it is love that makes heaven, heaven. In heaven faith and hope will never be disappointed, heaven will be a place of eternal expansion, joy peace and variety, because of universal rule of love and infinite kindness, love and affection of the lovely God of love. Until that perfect day and kingdom come, let us obey the command of God that Paul gave to us, let us pursue and follow after love, and earnestly desire and be full of zeal for the manifestation of the Holy Spirit's lovely gifts. 1Cor.14v1.

2. THE RELATION BETWEEN OUR BORN-AGAIN SPIRIT AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

It is essential to realise what the Scriptures say about the make-up of the human personality. The Bible states that we are a soul that possesses a body and spirit; the body puts us in contact with earth, and the spirit puts us in contact with heaven. Vincent argues, and I believe correctly, “That the soul is the principle of individuality, while the spirit is the point of contact with God.” The soul, our individual personality, uses our body to contact earth, and our spirit to contact heaven. 1Thes.5v23. Heb.4v12. Rev.1v10. 4v2. 17v3. 21v10. We have to remember that “God is a spirit,” Jn.4v24., and His good angels are spirits, Heb.1v13,14., and everybody, as well as Christians, have a spiritual organ called a spirit. The Bible condemns the seeking of evil spirits via Spiritualism, Witchcraft and the like, but it encourages us to earnestly seek God for His power and “good gifts.” Lk.11v9-13. There is a real relationship between the growth and maturity of a Christian's born-again spirit, and the reception both of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the ministry gifts spoken of in

3. THE RECEPTION OF THE GIFTS OF REVELATION AND INSPIRATION.

People often ask, how does the Holy Spirit communicate His gifts to us? How can we tell that the revelation we have received is from the Holy Spirit? The following thoughts will help to give an answer to these questions. There are “diversities of operations,” that is, there are various ways by which the Holy Spirit communicates His gifts to us.

A. BY A VOICE. This can be communicated in two ways.

By a voice in our spirit and mind.

This is what happened to Philip in Acts.8v26,29., and to Peter in Acts.10v19,20.. This is also a way that we can receive a prophecy, or an interpretation of a tongue, and it is a common means of revelation from God. It can be spoken to the ear, 1Sam.9v15., at other times it may steal into the mind bit by bit. Obviously, not every thought that comes into our mind is from God, they can arise from our own intellect, or even from Satan. However, mature Christians have senses that are exercised to discern whether a revelation is from a good or evil source. Heb.5v10-14. The anointing of the Holy Spirit and the witness of the other members of the body of Christ will confirm the truth, or otherwise, of a revelation. We read in the Scriptures that the Spirit of God came upon people and they prophesied, and we need to have the same authority. 2Chron.15v1,2. 20v14-19.

By an audible voice.

On rare occasions a person may hear an audible voice speak to them. God spoke to young Samuel and gave him a message of tremendous importance. 1Sam.3v4-21. Jesus spoke to Paul with an audible voice. Acts.9v4-7. Peter Marshall's life was saved by a warning voice calling to him just as he was about to walk over the edge of a deep quarry at night.

B. THROUGH THE BURDEN OF THE LORD. Is.13v1. 15v1. Jer.23v33. etc..

God can place a burden upon our hearts as we wait upon Him, which grips the mind and weighs upon the spirit. The power and presence of God confirm that this is His word. On other occasions the burden can come through a vision and revelation. However, no matter how the burden comes, it is something that we can't escape, and the prophecy, or prayer burden, is always solemn and serious and of deep importance, and weighs heavily upon us. Those who experience the burden of the Lord, share a very small part of the incredible pain and burden that God experiences every day in His care of His creation, and his great concern over people's needs and problems.

The burden of the Lord is not given to the unspiritual; indeed, all profitable revelation will come out of a close relationship with God, and will have a depth, meaning and anointing that is satisfying to the minds and spirits of the hearers. Jeremiah criticised the lightness in the false prophets of his day. Jer.23v31. A revelation from God says something that is worth saying, and it is powerful; “Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?” Jer.23v29-40. This was God's prophetic word to Israel, and God's prophetic word to us will also have the same heavenly unction, power and blessing, even when it is so sad that we hesitate to give the message. 1Sam.3v15. Rev.3v15-22. etc.

C. BY VISION.

A vision is an accepted New Testament experience. “Horasis,” speaks of the sense of sight, is used of visions in Acts.2v17. and Rev.9v17.. “Horama,” that which is seen, (“horao), is used to speak of visions, in Mt.17v9. Acts.7v31. 9v10,12. 10v3,17,19. 11v5. 12v9. 16v9,10. and 18v9.. “Optasia,” speaks of the act of seeing, from “optano,” to see, is used to speak of a vision in Lk.1v22. 24v23. Acts.26v19. and 2Cor.12v1.. Supernatural sight is a reality. During some of the more important visions, God can cause Christians to become oblivious to their surroundings; this is the thought in Acts.10v10. 11v5. and 22v17.; where the Authorised Version states that both Peter and Paul experienced a “trance;” an “ekstasis.” “Ekstasis,” literally means, “a standing out,” and so it means a transportation out of a person's normal condition or state of mind. It is used of people being carried out of themselves with extreme astonishment and amazement in Mk.5v42. 16v8. Lk.5v26. and Acts.3v10.. God even spoke to the sorcerer Balaam in a trance. Numb.24v4,16. “Ekstasis,” speaks of an elevated consciousness during which God suspends ordinary perceptions and the awareness of natural surroundings, and the person is only conscious of the vision imparted by God. On rare occasions children of God have become quite unconscious to their surroundings, and have been transported out of the natural world to behold the supernatural and spiritual. Paul said that on one occasion, when he was having visions of heaven, he did not know if he was in or out of the body. 2Cor.12v1-4. This does not mean, of course, that the intellectual powers of Paul were suspended, they were enlightened and carried to the greater heights of spiritual revelation. This is in direct contrast to the experience of mediums, who completely lose consciousness when they go into a trance. Raphael Gasson, in his book, “The Challenging Counterfeit;” tells us from his own pre-Christian experience as medium, that he lost consciousness when he went into a trance, and had to be told what had taken place during a seance.

The great majority of Old Testament prophets received their revelations by vision. Is.1v1. Jer.1v11. Ezek.1v1. Dan.1v17. Amos.1v1. Zech.1v8. etc. The prophets were called “seers,” Hebrew “chozeh,” and “roeh,” because God taught them by visions. 1Sam.9v9,15-20. Vision was the highest form of revelation in both the Old Testament and New Testament; however, visions can vary a great deal in importance in both their method of communication and their content. Let us now consider the various ways in which we can receive a vision from God; we will begin with the more common and simple vision revelations, and consider the sublime beatific

vision last.

1. Visions in dreams. Gen.46v2. Acts.2v17,18. Dan.7v1. 2v19.
Visions can be given in dreams, and angels as well as the Holy Spirit can take part in this ministry. Mt.1v20. 2v12,13,19,20,22. God can reveal future events, warn of people's attitudes, or give guidance through this means. These God-given dreams can never be confused with cheese-supper nightmares. There is a vividness and anointing with dreams from God, that has to be experienced to be appreciated; even Nebuchadnezzar knew that he had received a mighty revelation from God in a dream, and he was desperate to know the correct interpretation of it. Dan.2..

It seems from Acts.16v9,10., that Paul was directed by a vision in a dream to go to Macedonia. God can reveal needs for prayer in this way, as well as things of vital significance. Gen.41v1-6,25. Dan.7v1. If we have a spiritual dream more than once, we should take particular note of it, for "it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass." Gen.41v32. We need to remember that the dreams of Joseph recorded in Gen.37v4-11., took about twenty years to come to pass, and Pharaoh's dream took at least fourteen years to be fulfilled. Gen.41v1-8. Don't expect revelations to come to pass immediately. Some of Daniel's visions in dreams have not even yet come to pass; the vision of Dan.7v1-28., is surely one of the greatest revelations that any servant of God has ever had, and it appears to have been revealed in a dream.

2. Pictorial Visions. These visions can be of two kinds.
Pictorial visions as real as life.
Some visions can be indistinguishable from real life. Peter was used to having this kind of vision, for when the angel came to deliver him from prison; he thought he saw a vision. It was only when the angel was gone, and he found himself outside of the prison that he knew that it was not a vision. Acts.12v7-11. This shows how real this kind of vision can be. The child of God is taken by the Holy Spirit into a living vision, that conveys to them what He desires them to know. Jer.1v11-13. Zech.1v18-21. 2v1,2. 3v1-7. 4v1-7. 5v1,2. 6v1-8. Acts.10v9-16.

Mental visions that are pictorial.
This is a mental vision that can be given to us even when we are actively engaged in normal life; however, it usually takes place when we are seeking God. The Lord will give these revelations as we, or others, need them; if we are in the right place with God. Suddenly, sometimes unasked and unsought, a mental picture appears revealing various things that we need to know, this revelation can take the form of a quite simple prophecy, or even an extended revelation of actual events in the past, present and future. We may not immediately understand what the revelation given to us may mean; sometimes circumstances may need to change, and considerable prayer and earnest seeking of God for His illumination, before we can understand some revelations from God. Dan.7v15,28. 8v27. Acts.10v17-22. 1Pet.1v10-12. 2Pet.1v19-21. The anointing of the Holy Spirit will confirm a revelation that is from Himself, and very often His revelations may surprise us, for they can reveal a situation that is the very opposite to what we think or desire. Ezek.8v1-18. Until we have grown in grace and got used to the movings of the Holy Spirit, we are not in a position to manifest the greater revelations of the Holy Spirit. It is one thing to have a simple prophetic vision, but quite another thing to have detailed and extended revelations of people's lives and God's purposes, covering the past, present and future.

The Scriptures state that some false prophets prophesied visions out of their own mind and imaginations. They decided that they were going to see something, and they saw what they desired to see; we should not make the same mistake. Jer.14v14. 23v16. It is absolute nonsense to say that Ps.81v10., "Open your mouth wide and the Lord will fill it," means that we should prophesy in faith and start speaking before we receive a revelation, and God will give us a revelation. The word of the Lord "came" from God to the prophets BEFORE they started speaking. To flog an empty mind into a false carnal imitation of true inspiration, is nothing but folly. We should never allow a good desire for spiritual gifts to degenerate into something that is false and unreal. A lusting after signs and wonders for reasons of self-exaltation like Simon the sorcerer in Acts.8v17-24., can get us into real trouble. If we seek spiritual gifts out of love for God and people, we will have an authentic manifestation of spiritual gifts. God will never fail the honest and loving heart that waits for His word.

"Prophesy according to your faith," Rom.12v6., does not mean, "prophesy what you hope God will do," it means that we prophesy the revelation that God has given us and we don't go beyond it. Some of the things that God reveals to us take real faith to accept, believe, and see through; so our faith and spiritual authority will decide the depth of revelation that we can receive. There is a real difference between hope and faith. Some revelations the prophets received needed great faith and mature spiritual authority to believe and see through; even though they came through a mighty revelation and vision. When God promised Elijah that fire would come down from heaven and bring the people to repentance at Carmel, it took real spiritual maturity, great faith, and much prayer and pain until the promise came to pass. It was quite different from sitting in a church of believers and giving simple words of edification, exhortation and comfort. God told one notable prophet, "You can't teach Pentecostal babes supernatural things, you will cause carnal impersonations." So Christian teachers must be careful who they try to lead into the greater manifestations of spiritual gifts, or they will find themselves plagued with carnal impersonations.

3. Visions of angels.
The Scriptures tell of many cases of angelic visitation, but it is not a common experience, and it usually has to do with things of great importance, and to meet very definite needs. Christians continually enjoy the ministry

of angels even though we may not always feel their presence, however, on rare occasions we may not only feel their presence, we may also have our eyes opened to see them, and they may have something to say to us. 2Kings.6v13-17. The Bible tells us that the number of angels is innumerable; there are untold millions of them. Dan.7v9-11. Heb.12v22. Rev.5v11,12. These are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Heb.1v13,14. These angels of God can be sent to deliver us as in the case of Peter in Acts.12v5-11.; they can also instruct, warn or inform us as well. Lk.1v11-38. 2v8-15. Acts.10v3-6. 8v26. 27v23,24. Angels can also appear to us for the purpose of ministering spiritual strength and blessing. Mt.4v11. Lk.22v42-44. God can communicate important revelations through angelic ministry. Dan.9v20-27. 10v21. This occurs more often in dreams than in open angelic visitation. Mt.1v20. 2v13,19,20. Most of us are so busy when we are awake, that the only time that God can speak to us, is when we are asleep. Angels have an important place in bringing to pass the purposes of God. Gen.19v1,12-17. 21v17-21. 22v11-18. 31v11-13. Ex.3v2. Numb.22v21-35. Judg.2v1-5. 6v11-24. 13v2-25. 2Kings.19v35. 1Chron.21v1-30. Dan.4v9-37. N.B. v13,17,23. 1Kings.19v5-7. Is.37v36. Mt.13v41,42,49,50. 24v31,36. 25v31. 26v53. 28v2-7. Lk.12v8. 15v10. 16v22. Acts.1v8-11. 7v53. Gal.3v19. Col.1v15-17. Heb.1v4-14. 2v2. Rev.20v1,2. Job.38v4-7. etc. Contrast the activities of wicked angels. Eph.6v10-20. Rev.12v7-12.

4. Visions of God. **Ezek.1v1.**
The prophets and some children of God have had visions of God, and have even spoken face to face with the Lord; this is not a common experience. Exod.24v9-18. 2Chron.18-27. Is.6v1-13. Ezek.1v26-28. Human flesh cannot stand the unveiled glory of God, so He has had to veil His presence and glory. Ex.33v20. 1Tim.6v14-16. We can behold God's glorious character, but not His unveiled glory and power. Jn.14v8-11. 1v14. Ex.34v5-8. 1Jn.1v2. 1Pet.1v16-18. The most overwhelming spiritual experience that we can have reveals to us only a little of the eternal majesty and glory of God's character and power. However, though the human body cannot enter or appreciate the full blinding glory of that kingdom, God has allowed some of His children to enter into heaven in spirit and have had visions of God, that are "not lawful for man to utter." 2Cor.12v1-4. Paul looks upon this as one of the greatest ministries of the Holy Spirit. The greater ministries of the Church need this kind of vision to sustain them. Moses spoke face to face with the Lord and received His commission, and exceeding great and precious promises from Him. Exod.33v9-11. A disciple named Ananias had a vision of Jesus. Acts.9v10-16. The vision of Jesus on the Damascus Road, saved Paul's soul; a vision of Jesus at Jerusalem, saved his life and directed his ministry. Acts.22v17,18. Paul's vision of Jesus at Corinth, strengthened and guided him, the result was a great revival. Acts.18v8-11. 2Cor.12v12. We need this kind of experience, for when there is "no open vision" and the word of the Lord is "rare," the Church is backslidden. 1Sam.3v1. This is the most important kind of vision, we must have this kind of vision to save people from perishing. Prov.29v18.

N.B. THE COMMUNICATION OF THE GIFTS OF REVELATION AND INSPIRATION.
1. Our temperament, talents and vocabulary are imprinted on our prophecies.
Our spirit is the means by which God conveys a revelation to our minds; our intellect and vocabulary is called into play in conveying that revelation to others. Obviously, a revelation from God has to come into the mind of a Christian, whether it is received by vision, dream, voice or burden; and it is just as obvious that the mind and personality of the Christian have the part to play in the giving of a revelation. The intellectual ability, language and personality of a person are imprinted upon the speaking of a prophetic message. Amos the farmer, Ezekiel the priest, and Isaiah, obviously vary in the delivery of the word that God gave to them. Even though the Holy Spirit can carry a Christian far beyond their normal intellectual ability and limitations, an Oxford Don and an illiterate person will obviously express the same word of God in different language. I have known the same interpretation of a tongue, come to one as a voice in the spirit, and to another as a vision, which they have described, the theme was the same but the vocabulary was different.

2. God can give us a prophecy a long time before He desires us to manifest it in public.
A prophecy, vision, or revelation can be received minutes, hours, days or even weeks before it is spoken out. Most prophets received their revelations in private, and pondered them in their minds for a while before they gave them out in public. Jeremiah said, "His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones." Jer.20v9. See v7-12. Jeremiah just had to speak God's Word out; it was burning in his heart. You can muse upon a prophecy or vision for days, and it can bless you a great deal, the more you think upon it, the more it will burn, and it will have a great impact upon both the prophet and the people, David said, "While I was musing the fire burned." Ps.39v3. It is quite wrong to think that we have to be in a meeting before we can expect to receive a revelation from God. We can receive them at home or work, while talking, walking, resting, and even sleeping. Jeremiah got one of the most important prophecies for Israel at the potter's house. Jer.18v1. to 19v13.

3. The difference between a brainwave and a prophecy
If we have been thinking about a subject, or something in a meeting has set our mind working, we must not confuse this with a spiritual revelation. If under such circumstances we feel that we have a prophecy, we should make sure that it is from God. If we have preached upon a subject, and God desires to confirm that word by prophecy, He will usually do it through someone else. If we cannot tell the difference between a brainwave and a prophecy, then we are either spiritual babes, or in a poor spiritual condition, and are at the mercy of false prophecy and the guile of men. Eph.4v14-16. Brainwaves occur when you are thinking upon a subject, a revelation comes into the mind unasked and unsought, and as in the case of Jonah and Peter, it can be a complete surprise, and be against our feelings and desires. Jonah.4v1-5. Acts.10v9-16,44-48. A prophecy can contain facts that are new to us as well as truth that we know, which God desires to be repeated for the

benefit of others.

4. Our authority is in the anointing, not in our oratory.
If we have a visitation from Christ or a holy angel and hold a conversation with them, it will be obvious that it is of God. Paul certainly knew that he had met with God on the Damascus Road. Mighty revelations like these are their own authority. However, if God desires us to give a message to a church through prophecy, the anointing of the Holy Spirit will rest upon us, and this will give us the authority to speak. If a person interprets and prophesies without an anointing of the Holy Spirit, and the listeners feel no anointing, we have the right to question that revelation. If we are not quite sure that God has told us something, we should say, "I feel God may have shown me this, and that it may be profitable," and then give out our "revelation." In this way, we will not make any false claims, and yet we can still be a blessing to others. Obviously Divine revelation has to come into the mind before it can be spoken out, it is the content of the revelation and the anointing of the Holy Spirit that enables us to distinguish between natural thoughts and supernatural revelation.

The vocabulary and intellectual abilities of a person are not the only things that come through a manifestation of the Spirit, the Christian's personality, character, and spiritual qualities come through as well. The same message can be shallow or deep, and cold or appealing, according to whether a Christian is shallow or deep, or cold or loving. The writer has heard a message in tongues, which has been given with tremendous anointing, warmth and love; interpreted correctly, but in such a cold and formal way that it left one feeling very disappointed. One longed that the interpreter had the same loving disposition, holy emotion, and spiritual depth and anointing that the person who had spoken in tongues had. Without love, not only the speaker in tongues, but the prophet as well is "as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." 1Cor.13v1-3.

We can say, then, that however a Christian receives the gifts of inspiration and revelation, there is one common feature, the Spirit of God will be upon them. This must not be confused with a person getting emotional and full of praise, even though a genuine revelation can be given with great emotion and feeling. See Hosea.11 all. A person who is unfamiliar with the movings of the Holy Spirit, can mistake oratory and emotion for the movings of the Holy Spirit, and their strong desires and feelings as the message of the Lord. We can have strong feelings and emotion in genuine inspiration, but it is the anointing of the Holy Spirit that gives us our authority. Some have described this anointing as warm rain dropping upon them, others have explained it as like electricity, others as fire, and still others as a cool and gentle breeze flowing through their being. The point is that you know that God is anointing and filling you. Acts.4v8. with Mk.13v11. Acts.13v9. Lk.1v67. There will always be an anointing of varying magnitude when the Holy Spirit is manifesting His gifts through us, whether they are gifts of power, revelation, or inspiration. At times this anointing can be so strong as to quite overcome the body, it took Daniel several days to physically recover after his great spiritual revelation in Dan.8v1-27.. Daniel's revelations brought him the burden of the Word of the Lord, and a puzzle to solve. Numb.12v6-8. Dan.7v15,18. 1Pet.1v10-12. The operation of God's power and revelation gifts usually bring spiritual release, rather than a burden. God only gives these burdens to those who have the spiritual maturity and intercessory ability to bear such burdens; and they are usually given in the deep experiences of private prayer. Paul tells us to covet the gift of prophecy, for when we have got used to the workings of the Spirit in the simple gift of prophecy, we shall be able to recognise and receive the other gifts of revelation.

4. THE RECEPTION OF THE GIFTS OF POWER AND DEMONSTRATION.

1. Abiding in Jesus is the key to a powerful manifestation of the power gifts.
As we have seen, the gifts of power and demonstration are, workings of miracles, gifts of healings, and the gift of faith. These power gifts, like all the gifts, are given through Divine grace and are not received on merit. Ps.68v18. However, we have to walk with God for these gifts to operate as God desires, on the higher levels of power. "Greater Works," are promised to those who abide in Christ, and have a life of constant communion with God. Jn.14v12-14. 15v1-8. N.B. v7. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." It is abiding in Christ, and living contact with Christ in our spirit, that brings about the reception of these gifts in power; not just the saying of a prayer with our lips. The Christian co-works with the Holy Spirit to meet needs in the spiritual, material and physical realms. It usually operates in these three realms in blessing, but it can operate in judgement upon men or angels. In 1Cor.14v14-18., Paul gives us the secret of his own powerful manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit; Paul thanked God that he prayed in tongues more than the verbose Corinthians; He edified himself spiritually with tongues, and this enabled him to powerfully manifest the other gifts of the Holy Spirit.

2. The greater manifestations of the power gifts will be directed by words of wisdom.
God's directive words of wisdom will often precede the greater operations of the power gifts; our Lord Jesus said that He followed through the directions that the Father gave Him in visions. Jn.5v19,20,30. In other words, Jesus manifested gifts of demonstration under the guidance of His Father's words of revelation. This did not mean, of course that He had to have a revelation every time He prayed for the sick, but it did mean that God showed Christ the most strategic miracles He desired to perform in advance, as in the case of the resurrection of Lazarus. The possession of a gift of healing will bring results; however, as with Jesus at Nazareth; unbelief can hinder or positively stop healing. Mk.6v4-6. Gifts of revelation can sometimes help in situations like this, they can raise the faith of a person, so that gifts of healings can operate. The operation of the power gifts often demands the previous operation of the gifts of revelation, particularly in the greater operations of the power gifts.

3. The need for mature supervision, and a Divine commission as well as "agape" love.
Paul tells us that when we walk on “the more excellent way” and pray with “agape” love and faith, the gifts of the Holy Spirit automatically operate. 1Cor.12v31. However, this does not mean that we will possess the greater manifestations of the power gifts. You have to have an apostolic authority and commission from Christ, as well as real faith and love, to have the comprehensive and powerful manifestation of all the power gifts. All Christians do not have a ministry of healing to the sick, or work miracles on nature; nor do all Christians receive a commission to cast out devils, or be used in the renewal and healing of wounded personalities; these are specialised ministries from Christ. The apostles manifested these gifts because they had received power and authority from Christ to do so, and were under His guidance and supervision. The manifestation of these gifts demands mature supervision; otherwise, Christians will certainly be in grave danger of going astray into fanaticism, and carnal imitations of the real thing. The satanic onslaughts that come against those who genuinely have these gifts has to be experienced to be appreciated, so they need to be exercised under mature guidance. Lk.4v1-11.

4. The apostles and the seventy were given authority to use the name of Jesus.
Under His guidance and supervision, our Lord gave His twelve apostles, and the seventy evangelists, authority to act in His name and work mighty miracles. The initial surprise of the seventy at the miracles happening through them in the name of Jesus is clearly seen. Lk.10v17. It is clear that our Lord carefully chose those who were to have this authority, for he spent a night in prayer before he chose His apostles. Mt.10v1-8. Mk.3v13-19. Lk.6v12-19. Paul tells us in 1Cor.12v28., that it is God who has set the ministries in the Church, not men; and in Eph.4v7-16., he also states that Christians are given ministries, “to the measure of the gift of Christ.” Authority in Christ's Church comes from Heaven and not from men. Church history indicates that this authority from Heaven is almost inevitably looked upon as a threat to those whose authority is derived from men, and the religious kingdoms that men have built out of God's past revivals.

The ministry of intercession and the invocation of the names of God have an important part to play in the manifestation of the power gifts; we will consider these later in the Appendix. Let us now go on to consider the ministry of the laying on of hands, for it too has an important part to place in the impartation and manifestation of the power gifts.

5. THE MINISTRY OF THE LAYING ON OF HANDS.

All through the ages, God has laid His hand upon men; for service and blessing, Exek.3v22. 8v1. Ps.139v5.; for deliverance, Is.41v11.; and even for judgement, 1Sam.5v6. To His faithful people “the hand of the Lord” has imparted every spiritual and natural blessing that was necessary to meet their needs. The power that came upon some of God's children was so great that they were quite overwhelmed by it. Neh.12v43. 8v6,12. Dan.8v18-26. 10v8,11,15,17. Job.8v21. Ps.126v2. Acts.2v13-16. Rev.1v7. 4v10. 19v6. The truth that God lays His hand upon us and imparts His blessing to us may seem very obvious; but we should also realise that God desires His dear children to be co-workers and co-partners with Him, and that as we lay hands upon people they should feel God’s power and love and be blest. 2Cor.6v1. Mt.5v43-48. 1Cor.3v3. 1Jn.3v1,2.

Some Christians look upon the laying on of hands as merely, “An outward and appropriate symbol of the act of intercessory prayer.” However, it is so important, that it is included among the foundation truths of the Christian faith; repentance from dead works, saving faith, baptism in water, the baptism in the Spirit, resurrection of the dead and eternal judgement. Heb.6v1-3. The doctrine of the laying on of hands is a vital truth that we cannot afford to neglect, for failure to put this truth into practice results in a very real spiritual loss. The Scriptures show that God's power and blessing can be imparted by the laying on of hands.

A. THERE CAN BE A DIVINE ORDINATION THROUGH THE LAYING ON OF HANDS.
Joshua. “Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay thine hand upon him - and give him a charge in their sight.” Numb.27v18-23. This was no empty ordinance, a heavenly unction and a spirit of wisdom was imparted, for the Scripture says, “And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, **for Moses had laid his hands upon him."** Deut.34v9. Through Moses, God gave Joshua what he needed to lead His people. The reason why Moses could impart this blessing is shown in Deut.34v10., “There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.” Moses imparted the glory that he received through communion with God; the glory of God that made the face of Moses shine, was imparted to Joshua and it changed him. In Exod.33v9-22. we see the glorious friendship and fellowship with God that Moses experienced. “The Lord talked with Moses...The Lord spoke with Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. I know thee by name and thou hast found grace in my sight.” Moses knew God, and those who want real results in this ministry must rise to great heights of communion with God, and receive something from Him. Acts.3v6.

The seven deacons of Acts.6v3-10.. These were seven men of good report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, they were brought before the apostles, and the apostles prayed for them and laid hands upon them. Something was definitely imparted by the laying on of the apostle's hands, for within a short time Stephen and Philip were doing great miracles in Christ’s name. Acts.6v8. 8v6. It must have been a remarkable experience to have hands laid on you by apostles who had walked and talked with Christ for forty days after His resurrection, and were mightily filled with the Holy Spirit. Acts.1v1-5. 4v33. 5v12-16.

Paul and Barnabus. Acts.13v1-5. They were prophets and teachers in the Church, but they still needed the ministry of the laying on of hands. The other leaders at Antioch earnestly sought God in worship, prayers and fasting before they laid hands on them, they had to receive something from God before they could give it. Paul and Barnabus certainly needed something from God for the task ahead of them, and they received a benediction from God through these prayerful leaders, that helped them to fulfil the will of God, and overcome all the great difficulties they were to meet. 2Cor.11v23-33.

Timothy. In 1Tim.5v22., Paul said Timothy received something from God when Christian leaders laid hands on him, it was much more than a recognition of his ministry by these leaders. Ministries are given directly from the Father and Son, but this does not exclude the reception of spiritual blessings from God through mature Christian leaders. 1Cor.12v28. Eph.4v8-11.

B. THERE CAN BE DIVINE HEALING THROUGH THE LAYING ON OF HANDS.

Healing in Christ's ministry.

Outstanding miracles of healing occurred in both Elijah's and Elisha's ministries. 1Kings.17v17-24. 2Kings.4v32-35. 5v1-19. 13v20,21. However, it is only as we come to the ministry of Jesus that we see this ministry in full power. There are many references to the ministry of the laying on of hands in the ministry of Jesus. At Capernaum, “all they that had any sick with different diseases brought them unto Him and He laid His hands on everyone and healed them.” Lk.4v40. The blind man at Bethesda, Mk.8v22-26.; and the woman with the infirmity, Lk.13v10-13.; and even some of the people at Nazareth, Mk.6v5.; were healed through this ministry. The anointing on Jesus was so great that people were healed when He just said a word, or touched them with His hand. A leper, Mt.8v2-4.; Peter's mother in law, Mt.8v15.; the high priest's servant, Lk.22v50,51.; the deaf and dumb man, Mt.7v32-37.; the two blind men, Mt.20v30-34.; and many others, received Christ's healing touch. People knew that if Jesus laid His hands on them, or touched them, they would be healed, and so they asked Jesus to lay hands on them, or their sick friends or relatives. Mk.5v23,41. 7v32-37. 8v22-25. On many occasions the sick crowded round Jesus in order to touch Him, knowing that even touching His garments would cause them to receive power that would heal them; “the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for there went virtue out of Him and healed them ALL.” Lk.6v19. Mt.9v20,21. 14v35,36. Mk.3v10. 6v55,56. This was physically dangerous, and Jesus and His disciples were in real danger of being crushed by the crowds. Jesus ministered to people until He was totally exhausted, so much so that even a storm and the waves coming into the boat did not wake Him up. Such totally dedicated selfless care for others reveals His glory more than the stilling of the storm. Mt.8v23-25. The Greek word for “virtue” in the Authorised Version of Lk.6v19., is “dunamis,” which is elsewhere translated as “power.” Mk.5v30. with Lk.8v46. Acts.1v8. 4v33. 6v8. etc. Jesus not only felt the power in Him, He felt it leave Him, with the consequent drain upon His nervous and spiritual resources.

Healings in the ministries of Christ's disciples.

Without doubt, the apostles followed their Master's example and laid hands on the sick. Mk.16v18. Paul received his sight and the baptism in the Spirit when Ananias laid hands upon him. Acts.9v12,17,18. Publius was healed by the laying on of hands. Acts.28v8,9. In James.5v14-18., the healing of the sick is said to be part of the ministry of godly elders.

C. CHILDREN AND ADULTS CAN BE BLESSED BY THE LAYING ON OF HANDS.

“By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of a staff.” Heb.11v20,21. Jacob laid his right hand on the younger son of Joseph and his left hand on the older son of Joseph; Joseph protested, but Jacob said that Ephraim, the younger son, was to be the greater of the two brothers. There was a particular blessing for both of them, and when Jacob laid his hands upon them, something was very definitely imparted to them to aid them in their future lives. Gen.48v13-20. Christ laid His hands on the little children and blessed them, and Divine blessing operated upon their lives for good. Mk.10v13-16. An old Negro prayed for W.F.P. Burton, and asked God to send him to his people, this happened when he was but a child, many years later God did send Mr. Burton to do a work for Him in the Congo.

D. THE BAPTISM AND GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT CAN BE IMPARTED BY THE LAYING ON OF HANDS.

Out of the five cases in the Acts where we are told that Christians were baptised in the Holy Spirit, in three cases the baptism was received through the laying on of hands. Acts.8v17,18. 9v17. 19v6,7. In the other two cases, God ministered the baptism in the Spirit Himself, and it is easy to see why. In the initial outpouring on the day of Pentecost, it was such an overwhelming outpouring that no human ministry was needed, nor was there anyone who had received this blessing, and could minister it. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the people gathered with Cornelius, was necessary to prove that the Gentiles were “granted repentance unto life,” and the prejudiced Jews would certainly not have laid hands on these Gentiles for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Acts.10v44-48. 11v11-18. Our Lord may still personally baptise Christians in the Spirit without the ministry of the laying on of hands, whenever He feels that it is necessary.

The laying on of hands can also be the means of imparting spiritual gifts; the Ephesian Christians received the gift of prophecy when Paul laid his hands upon them. Acts.19v6. 2Tim.1v6. Paul tells us in Rom.1v10,11., that he desired to visit the Church at Rome in order to impart some spiritual gift to them, which he obviously could not do by teaching in a letter. This was quite likely, as at Ephesus, through the laying on of hands. Many

people can testify today that they have received something from God when godly men and women have laid hands on them. This is one of the ways that God keeps us humble and makes us feel our need of each other. Let us now consider the spiritual qualifications that are necessary to have a fruitful and blessed ministry of the laying on of hands.

a. We need to be full and keep full of the Holy Spirit.

We can only impart what we have received from God. However, the faith of the person who is being prayed for can enable them to receive a blessing from God even though the person laying hands on them may have little or nothing to give. Jesus could feel this power of the Spirit in Him, and He felt it leave Him, He said, “Someone did touch me; for I perceived that power had gone forth from me.” Lk.8v46. This should be the case with the Spirit-filled Christian, we will know, or should know, that we have received something from God for those we are praying for. Sometimes we may lay hands on people and feel a tremendous flow of spiritual power and yet nothing appears to happen. On such occasions we should prayerfully leave matters with God, it is quite likely that a real spiritual need has been met. It is a Christian leader's privilege to impart blessing and power to members of the Church who have battled with the world, flesh, and Devil, and feel battle-scarred and spiritually exhausted as a result. Through the laying on of hands, the defeated and discouraged can be lifted into a place of blessing. However, the person who practices the laying on of hands will have to “refill” again, by prayer and meditation, as even our dear Lord Jesus had to do; “and great multitudes crowded in to hear Him and to be cured of their diseases; but Jesus Himself constantly withdrew into the desert and there prayed.” Lk.5v15,16. Jesus did not withdraw into the desert to avoid the crowds; He went into the desert to seek His Fathers will, grace and power, so that He could meet the needs of the multitudes. In Mk.1v35. we read that Christ rose very early in the morning to pray, after healing the sick until the early hours of that morning; He had to seek His Father's plan and power for the new day. Jesus was the greatest prayer warrior there has ever been.

b. We need to know God and God's will.

God intends the ministry of the laying on of hands and the gifts of the Holy Spirit to be used by Christians who are living in close touch with Himself. We have to go to the fountainhead of blessing before we can bless others. A spiritual sweetness and graciousness can only come from communion with our lovely and gracious Lord. May the Lord deliver us from ministering His power in a hard or graceless way, may the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us and make our service and characters attractive. Ps.27v4. Ps.90v17. Jn.15v13-15. It is only as we draw near to God that we find the strength and grace to discern and perform the will of God; otherwise, caution and spiritual opposition can overwhelm us. We need to empty ourselves of our ideas and find out what the Head of the Church has planned for us, a close communion with God will preserve us from the dangers of going our own way, and from fanaticism and folly.

c. We will need faith and courage. Joshua.1v1-18.

There can be no doubt that it takes real faith and courage to enter the heavenly Canaan and “destroy the works of the Devil.” 1Jn.3v9. It took real faith and courage for Jesus to fight Satan on his own ground. God loves courage, for it is the co-partner of faith; and without faith, it is impossible to please Him. Heb.11v6. True faith moves mountains and believes that God can do the impossible. Mt.17v20,21. 19v26. Lk.1v37. 18v27. Our faith and courage are based on the fact that, “the Lord our God is with us withersoever we go,” and that He promises, “I will never fail thee or forsake thee.” Joshua.1v5,9. Mt.28v20. Heb.13v5-8. Our Almighty God and His glory cloud towers over the giants in the land, and dwarfs them into insignificance, and with Caleb, we shout for joy, “They are bread for us.” Numb.14v7-12.

This confidence in God does not do away with the battle that must take place if we are to possess our heavenly Canaan. The benefits for the Church and mankind are tremendous, but the conflict is great. The more powerful you get in God, the greater will be the upset and the opposition from the powers of darkness. God says, “I will kill the giants through you,” but this needs real courage and faith to believe and accomplish. Every gift that we receive has to be kept by prayer and faith. Once we have entered our spiritual Canaan we will have to be watchful, or we can lose what we have gained. Judges.2v10-19. In the spiritual Canaan that we enter, there are a multitude of wicked spirits that keep the souls of men in darkness. These evil powers will attack us in mind and spirit, and they will use worldly men, religious men, and numerous other means to try to keep us from entering and conquering their territory. See Hebrews 3 and 4. Matt.10v16-23. Eph.6v10-20. Let us follow the example of our Lord Jesus, and be a minister of God's power and love to this needy world. Let none of us “play for safety” like the Israelites of old in Numb.13v1 to 14v45., only failure and disgrace can be the result of this attitude of mind.

d. We need to be good Christians, and not merely full of the Holy Ghost and faith.

1v10-17. 3v1-16.

The Means by which Satan Corrupts and Replaces Truth by Counterfeit Doctrine.
a. By symbolic interpretation of literal truth, and by ridiculous typology. Jer.28v10-17.

b. By redefining and replacing the Christian fundamental truths. Gal.1v6-9.

c. By taking away from the Scriptures, or by adding "new revelations" to the Scriptures. Gal.1v8,9. Rev.22v18,19.

d. By taking Scripture texts out of their context. Mt.4v5-7. Lk.4v9-13.

e. By superimposing a twisted interpretation on the Scriptures. 2Pet.3v15,16.

f. By rejecting and distorting the original Scriptures. 2Tim.3v5-16.

g. By making void God's truth with men's traditions. Mt.15v1-9. Mk.7v1-13.

h. By making experience the basis of truth, instead of the Scriptures. Acts.20v25-32.

i. By accepting the authority and doctrine of spiritual "superiors" without question. Acts.17v10,11. 18v4-6.

j. By force and fear. Jn.9v21,22,34. Acts.8v3,4. 9v1,2,13. 12v1-25. 1Tim.1v11-17.

k. By lying wonders. Deut.13v1-5. Mt.24v23-25. 2Thes.2v8-12.

Satan even attacked our Lord with a perversion of Scripture truth, so let us be watchful and never feel that it cannot happen to us. It is sad to say that some Christians still justify their practice and doctrine with the statement; "You will never understand this doctrine by studying the Scriptures; it comes by revelation, and out of our experience." Such an attitude is extremely dangerous and scripturally totally untenable. We should reject out of hand any "new revelation," or "new practice," that does not have its foundation in the Word of God. We have all the truth that we need for this age clearly revealed in the Scriptures. Eph.2v20. 3v5. 1Cor.3v10,11. 1Jn.4v1-5. Rev.22v18,19. Is.8v19,20.

2. The Test of Spiritual Witness and the Anointing of the Holy Spirit.
a. The anointing on the prophet.
There will always be an anointing of the Holy Spirit on revelations from God, and on important matters, this can be very great. This anointing is not to be confused with oratory, noise or emotion. A spiritual and mature Christian will discern an anointing, or lack of anointing without any difficulty; or discern whether it is evil or good. Ezek.3v22. 8v1. 1Jn.2v26,27.

b. The confirmation and witness by other prophets and personal revelations.
Even on matters of relatively small importance, the other prophets in a church will have the witness to the truth of a prophetic utterance. Important revelations will always be confirmed by independent revelations from other prophets, even as the Old Testament prophets confirmed each others words; for example, Amos and Hosea; Isaiah and Micah; Haggai and Zechariah. Important decisions should not be made on one unconfirmed prophetic utterance; for God will confirm important prophecies in a variety of ways, and through proven ministries. Every revelation will be confirmed by the spiritual witness in other prophets. 1Cor.14v29. Never act on any prophetic revelation until God has confirmed His word to you personally, directly and clearly; do not take other people's word for it. However, when many good Christian people tell us the same thing, we should prayerfully consider their words, for it is often God speaking to us through them.

3. The Test of Spiritual Profitability. 1Cor.12v7.
Revelation from God is profitable, and edifies, exhorts and comforts the people of God. It exalts God, and recognises and extols the essential divinity, true humanity, and redeeming blood of Christ. 1Jn.4v1-5. Ps.68v18. with Eph.4v8-11.

4. The Test of Spiritual Gentleness.
A gentleness of spirit will always characterise the genuine prophet of God. Hos.11v1-8. Mt.11v28-30. 1Thes.1v6-8,11,12. James.3v13-18. The prophets, were very strong in their denunciations of religious hypocrites, but were kindness itself to the genuine people of God. Mt.3v7-12. 23v1-39. Lk.12v32. The prophets rebuked sin with great power, but they gave great promises to the restored. God never leaves anyone in a hole without a way out. Rev.3v15-22. The attitude of Jesus is perfectly loving towards His people, prophecy will nearly always be full of mercy, comfort, tenderness and gentleness. Ps.18v35. 51v17. 55v22. 56v8,9. 59v16,17. 62v1,2. 103v1-17. 146v5-10. Jn.15v9. 17v23. If you are feeling discouraged, prayerfully read these Scriptures aloud, and always remember that God is wholly on your side when you love Him. Rom.8v31-39. God went to great pains to correct the bitterness of spirit in the prophet Jonah. Jonah.4v1-11.

5. The Test of Spiritual Fearlessness and Longsuffering.

Fearlessness and longsuffering do go together. The revelations of genuine prophets are sure to bring opposition, but they will patiently suffer anything that comes to them, as a result of doing the will of God. James.5v10. Only prophets with a great prophetic ministry will be called upon to suffer like some of the Old Testament prophets; however, every Christian who takes a stand for truth will face some opposition, and suffer for their faith. 1King.18v25-41. 22v6-28. 2Chron.16v10. Mt.5v11,12. 23v29-39. Lk.6v22-26. Mk.6v1-29. Gal.4v16. 2Pet.1v20,21. with 2v1. Acts.14v21,22. Rev.11v3-12. False prophets seldom get into trouble for their message, they usually only say nice things to the careless sinful worldling, and appeal to the desire for earthly comfort and blessing. Jer.6v14. 8v11. Mt.24v24. Lk.6v22-26. 2Tim.4v1-4.

N.B. Do not judge prophets by outward appearance.

Some of God's holiest and greatest prophets had a very unkempt appearance and eccentric characteristics, which would certainly offend many people today. God does not judge people by outside appearance, but by inner holiness. Elijah certainly had no attractive outward appearance or ministerial veneer; he was dressed in a leather animal skin. 2Kings.1v8. Amos was also a farmer, who prophesied with quaint rough language. Amos.1v1. John Baptist had a garment made out of camel’s hair. Mt.3v4. Lk.7v24-27. In contrast, some bad people can look very good on the outside, even the prophet Samuel thought that Eliab was God's choice until God showed Samuel his heart. 1Sam.16v6-13. N.B. v7.

6. The Test of Godly Character and Spiritual Purity.
In Mt.7v1-5., Jesus warns us against carping criticism and unjust judgement of others. However, in Mt.7v15-29., Jesus tells us that it is absolutely essential to exercise true judgement, to avoid being deceived by false prophets, who can make themselves look like sheep, when inwardly they are ravenous wolves. Jesus informs us that both genuine and false prophets are known by the fruits of their lives and doctrines; these will show the value of their revelations. The integrity of God's prophets is in sharp contrast to the bad living false prophets of Is.28v7. Jer.23v9-40. and 29v21-23. etc. Contrast Daniel's integrity with Balaam the Sorcerer's greed, evil life and end. Dan.1v4,8,17. 10v11,19. Numb.31v8,16. When prophets backslide and prophesy lies for financial gain and worldly influence, like Shemaiah, Noadiah and the other prophets, who were hired to prophesy lies to and against Nehemiah, their evil motivations and bad lives soon become obvious to all discerning children of God. Neh.6v10-14.

Not everyone who says "Lord, Lord!" is right with God.
The, "I never knew you," of Mt.7v23. We read in Mt.7v21-24., v21. "Not everyone who keeps on saying to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, **but he who keeps on doing the will of My Father in heaven.** v22. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy **in Your Name**, and cast out demons **in Your Name**, and **in Your Name** perform many miracles? v23. And then I will declare in a public announcement to them, 'I never came to know you experimentally; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness! v24. **Therefore whoever habitually hears these sayings of Mine, and habitually does them**, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rocky cliff."

The New American Standard and New King James, both translate Mt.7v23., "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness." Jesus says that He will fully and plainly tell them, "homologeso" 3670, "I never knew you." Our Lord uses "ergazomenoi," the present participle of "ergazomai," "to work, to practice," to show that these miracle workers have lived a life of continual evil and lawlessness. Jesus says that these people have rejected the will and way of God, and have lived a present tense continuous evil life. This is the key to the understanding of this verse. Compare 1Jn.3v9. and 1Jn.5v18., which tells us that a true Christian lives a present tense continuous victorious life over evil.

Our Lord reveals that on judgement day many will falsely claim that Jesus is their Lord, and that they have done many wonderful works in His name. Jesus says that they will be told to depart from Him, because He has never known them. "Depart from me." What terrible words! "Depart," is "apochoreite," the present active imperative, of "apochoreo," "to depart, to go away." "Known" is "egnon," the aorist active indicative of "ginosko," which speaks of an experimental knowledge and relationship. Jesus is speaking of an experimental knowledge and living relationship with Himself. Our Lord states that He had never, at any point of time, been in this kind of relationship with them. In my previous editions, I said that "I never knew you," seemed to rule out bad and apostate Christians, because these people profess to have known Jesus at some point of time in the past. However, I now think that this is incorrect, because Mt.24v44-51. 25v1-13. and John's first epistle, say that an evil life excludes fellowship with Jesus, and show that, "I never knew you," can apply to Christians. We will later study these Scriptures in detail.

It is true that, "I never knew you," certainly includes unconverted preachers who live bad lives, and occultists and Spiritualists, and unrepentant Jewish occultists, all of whom either invoke the names of God in prayer, or use God's Names in their magic circles. Satan deceives these people into thinking that they have been working for God, when they have been actually serving and invoking the powers of darkness. Simon the sorcerer professed to be a Christian, but he was still, "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bondage of iniquity." Acts.8v13,20-24. Jesus warns us that it is only as we do the will of God and obey His truth that we build on rock, if we fail to obey and live by the truth of God, we build on sand. Mt.7v21-29. Walking and talking with Jesus, and obeying Him, is the prime essential, and the supreme joy of the Christian.

The apostle John also uses "egno," the aorist active indicative of "ginosko," "experimental relationship and knowledge," when he states in 1Jn.4v8., "He that loveth not knoweth not God: for God is love." Experimental knowledge of God comes through love, not intellectual knowledge. Paul said our Christian work could be burned up, but we could be "saved; yet so as by fire." 1Cor.3v10-15. There will be a great difference between Christians, and their rewards, at the judgement. 1Cor.15v41,42.

Our Lord does not recognise Christians who do not walk in love.
The beloved apostle John writes in 1Jn.2v4-11. "He who says, "I know Him experientially," and does not habitually keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth does not exist in him. v5. But whoever habitually keeps His word with attentive care, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we have an experiential knowledge that we are in Him. v6. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked. v7. Brethren, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning. v8. Again, a new commandment (new in quality) I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true (genuine) light is already shining. v9. **He who says that he is in the light, and is habitually hating his brother, is in darkness until now.** v10. He who is habitually loving his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. v11. But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes."

John also states in 1Jn.3v4-11,14-16. "Everyone who habitually doeth sin, also habitually doeth lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and sin does not exist in Him. v6. **Everyone who constantly abides in Him does not habitually sin. Everyone who constantly sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.** v7.Little children, let no one deceive you and lead you astray. He who habitually practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. v8. **The one who is habitually keeping on doing sin (lives an evil life) is of the devil,** because the Devil has been sinning from the beginning. **For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy and bring to naught** ("luo" 3089, to loosen, annul, overthrow, demolish, destroy etc. See Heb.2v14. "destroy," "katargeo" 2673, to render powerless, to abolish, to terminate, etc.) **the works of the devil.** v9. **Everyone who has been born out of God does not habitually sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot habitually go on sinning, because he has been born out of God.** v10. In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: **Everyone who does not habitually practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not habitually love his brother.** v11. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. v14. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. **He who does not love his brother abides in death. v15. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.** v16. By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

John states in 1Jn.1v6., "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth." John writes in 1Jn.3v4., "Whoever doeth sin ("hamartia" 266) also doeth lawlessness ("anomia" 458), and sin is lawlessness. "Doeth" the present active participle, "poion", is used to describe the habit and life of sin. In 1Jn.2v29., "poion" is used to speak of a Christian habitually living a righteous life. Fellowship with God the Father and Jesus demands love and purity of life.

We read in 1Jn.3v9., "Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God." (NKJ) "His seed," is "sperma" 4690, "autou" 846. God's seed, "the divine principle of life" (Vincent).

In 1Jn.3v9., "does not sin," the linear present active indicative, "poiei" 4160, it is used to show that a true child of God is not dominated by continual sin. Scholars say that the phrase, "and he cannot sin," is a faulty translation of, "kai" 2532, "ou" 3756, "dunatai" 1410, "hamartanein" 264; for, to the English mind, it gives the idea, "and he cannot commit sin." But the present active infinitive "hamartanein" 264, can only mean, "and he cannot go on sinning," i.e., he cannot live a life of continual sin.

We read in 1Jn.3v6., that the one who "keeps on abiding", the linear present "menon," "does not keep on sinning," "hamartanei" 264. This is in sharp contrast to the unrepentant sinner in 1Jn.3v6. where the linear present participle and "hamartanon" 264, speak of, "the one who keeps on sinning," and speaks of a life of continual sin, not single occasional acts of sin, which would require the aorist tenses, for which there is forgiveness and cleansing through the blood of Jesus. 1Jn.1v7-9. "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. v8. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. v9. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." See Rom.6v1,2,15., and contrast the present continuous, "shall we continue in sin;" with the aorist in Rom.6v15., "shall we commit a sin."

This same thought is repeated in 1Jn.5v18., "We know ("oidamen" 1492) that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him. (NKJ) "Does not sin," is "ouch" 3756, "hamartanei" 264, again the continuous present active indicative, "does not keep on sinning," i.e. "does not live a life of sin." There are two variant readings of "he who has been born of God, one has the Christian taking care to keep himself from sin, the other reading has Jesus keeping the Christian from sin, "He that was begotten of God," referring to Christ. Both readings state truth. The Evil One, "Ho Poneros," cannot grasp a born again pure and obedient child of God. "Touch" is "haptetai" 680, the present middle indicative of "hapto" 681, which means, to grasp, or lay hold of, to cling to; and it is only used by John in 1Jn.5v18. and Jn.20v17., where it is used to describe how Mary grasped and clung to her risen Lord. "Hapto" does not speak of just a touch, which would be indicated by "thiggano" 2345. (Both words are used in Col.2v21.) John states in 1Jn.5v18., that the Devil cannot grasp, possess, or snatch from God, those who truly believe in and follow Jesus. Jn.10v27-30.

God is love, and love is the distinguishing feature of a true Christian, and a genuine prophet.

We also read in 1Jn.4v7,8,16. v7. "Beloved, let us be habitually loving one another, for love is of God; **and everyone who loves is born of God and experimentally knows God.** v8. **He who does not habitually love, does not know God, for God is love.** v16. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. **God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him."**

The scandal of extortionate demands for money in the name of God.

Christians awake and beware! There are many wolves loose in the Church, who by their plausible appeals, and a twisted and dishonest exposition of the Scriptures, are extorting money from Christians in the name of God. Some causes, which they put forward, seem to be almost essential, until you compare them with the practice and example of Jesus and His early Church. Some preachers have such huge financial needs, through putting

into operation every idea that comes into their minds, that they cannot minister to small Christian groups. Their financial needs direct them, not God, and some extort money from Christians to finance their organisations. Their insatiable demand for finances has hindered ministry to the poor, and has depleted the finances of good churches, and other worthy causes. It is very sad that some who have had genuine ministries have ignored our Lord's command, "Freely you have received, freely give," Mt.10v8., and have become financial wolves, and the resulting deterioration of their characters and ministries has become obvious to all discerning Christians.

Jesus said the Scribes and Pharisees were full of extortion ("harpage," robbery) and unbridled greed, and pronounced repeated woes upon them. Mt.23v14,25,27,28. Woe to those who follow their example, for Jesus warned that judgement and Hell await religious robbers who make merchandise of people in God's name. Jn.2v16. Mt.21v12,13. 23v4,14,23,33. The name of God and the Gospel are blasphemed among worldly people by such financial extortion and wickedness. Rom.2v4. Jesus said people can work miracles, but if they live an evil life and consistently practice iniquity, He will bear legal witness against them on judgement day, and publicly proclaim ("homologeso," see Mt.10v32.), "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness." "Knew," is "egnon," the aorist of "ginosko," to know by experience and relationship, so Jesus was saying, "I never at any point of time have been in any relationship with you, or recognised or approved you as my servants." Mt.7v21-23. To use God's gifts and twist God's Word, to dishonestly fleece people of their money is a very serious sin. Jesus warns us that we have to do God's will and obey His Word, and bear genuine fruits of character to stand on the day of judgement. These fruits include the weightier matters of the Law, which are, judgement, mercy, faith, love of people and God. Mt.7v16,21,24. 23v23. Lk.11v39-44.

We should not be surprised that there are ravenous wolves in God's Church, for our Lord, Paul and Peter have warned us about them. Mt.7v15-20. Acts.20v28-30. In 2Pet.2v1-3,15-17., Peter warns us that there are plausible false prophets and teachers in the Church, "who motivated by covetousness and greed for money; will, with forged words and cunning false arguments, exploit and make merchandise of you: for whom their long pronounced sentence and judgement does not linger, and their destruction is awake and ready to seize them.-to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever."

The UBS Translator Handbook Series translates 2Pet.2v3. "Because these false teachers want a lot of money, they will take advantage of you by telling you made-up stories. For a long time now, God their Judge and Destroyer has been ready and wide awake to punish them." They follow the evil example of Balaam in 2Pet.2v15., whose greed for gain drove him to attempt to morally corrupt the Israelites. In 2Tim.4v10., Paul states, "Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world." (NKJ)

Another telling translation reads, "In their greed these teachers will tell you anything to get hold of your money. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping, and is waiting to devour them."

Note well. In 2Pet.2v1-3., "apoleia" 684, which means "destruction," occurs three times. Divine judgement and destruction is hurrying on its way, and will soon overtake these evil doers.

We read in Ezek.18v24., "But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? **All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered;** because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die." (NKJ) God says that He will not remember the former righteous acts of an apostate believer.

In 1Pet.5v1-4., Peter exhorts Christian leaders, "Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by constraint, but willingly, not from the motive of fondness for dishonest gain, but eagerly and willingly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock." Some methods of extorting money from Christians are positively evil. Peter's warning about correct financial motivation in Christian service needs to be heeded.

Unreasonable demands for money usually spring out of personal kingdom building.

Some Christians have been put under extreme financial pressure because their leaders have had big plans for building and expansion, and have claimed divine inspiration for these plans. These leaders feel that to have influence, they have to imitate the building programmes ands evangelistic methods of other denominations. They forget that our Lord, His apostles, and Paul, never built any church buildings, they used the synagogues of their day, and other hired buildings.

In Acts.20v33-35., Paul said that he had never coveted other people's gold or silver; indeed, coveting and using other people's money and resources to put our plans into operation is a sin. God hated the grievous yoke and servitude that Solomon put on his subjects with his harsh levies, and his cruel decree that they should work one month out of three for him. 2Chron.10v4. God also hates the pressure that is put upon Christians through excessive building plans; the real motives for these building plans will be manifested on judgement day. How often people claim that they are building for the glory of God, when, in reality, they are only building a kingdom for themselves, and a monument to their pride.

Our Lord was very angry with Israel's religious leaders, because they devoured widow's houses, neglected the poor, and turned God's Temple into a “den of robbers,” and He warned them that they were bound for Hell because of it. Mt.21v12,13. 23v13-39. N.B. v14,33. Lk.20v46,47. In Deut.14v28,29.16v11-14. 24v19-22. and 26v12-14., we read that God gave the Law on tithing to Moses out of a concern for the poor, we read that the tithe was not only for the Levite, but also for “the stranger and the fatherless and the widow.” Even before the Law Job practiced this. Job.31v16-22. Our Lord castigated the Jews for their arrogant pride and self-deception over their tithing, and pointed out that it availed them nothing when they omitted and neglected the weightier matters of the Law, judgement, mercy, faith, and love of God. The judgement and mercy mentioned here is undoubtedly the ministry to the poor mentioned in the Scriptures. Mt.23v23. Lk.11v39-44. 14v12-14. James.1v27.

We read in Acts.20v28-31., that Paul warned the Ephesians with tears for three years, that after his departure fierce wolves in would enter in and ferociously attack the flock, but, unfortunately, they did not heed his warnings. False teachers appear to have succeeded in turning all the churches in Asia against Paul. 2Tim.1v15. Paul also warned the Ephesians that some from among them would want a personal following, and would draw disciples after themselves. A great deal of church evangelism, denominational enlargement, and disruptive local church division, is tainted with this doubtful motivation of kingdom building. Two people can preach exactly the same truth, but with totally different motives, one can preach to build a kingdom for men, or themselves; another can preach out of love for God, purely to bless people and build God's kingdom.

Jesus knew that most of the people who believed in Him were not trustworthy.

We read in John.2v23., “Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed, in His name when they saw the signs which He did.”(NKJ) “Believed,” is “episteusan” 4100. Then we read in Jn.2v24., "But Jesus himself kept on refusing (negative imperfect) to trust (“episteuen” 4100) Himself to them." “Pisteuo” 4100, “to believe or trust,” is used to describe the people’s trust in Jesus, and His lack of trust in them, because He knew their hearts, and their unreliability. But, (“de” 1161) there was Nicodemus, a Pharisee who Jesus opened His heart to. Jn.3v1. In Acts.8v13., Simon Magus "believed," (“episteusen” 4100) and was baptized, but was unrepentant. It seems he merely believed to obtain the power that Philip had.

Paul was deeply concerned at the lack of experience of God of some of the Corinthian Christians.

Paul states in 1Cor.15v34. “Awake (“eknepsate” 1594, only here in the New Testament. It means to awake from a drunken stupor) to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.” “No knowledge of God,” is “agnosian” 56, “Theou” 2316, it only occurs here and in Rom10v3., where it speaks of the wilful ignorance of unbelieving Jews, and in 1Pet.2v15., of the wilful ignorance of unbelievers in general. The noun “agnosia” 56, is derived from the noun “gnosis” 1108, with the negative; both are derived from the verb “ginosko,” which speaks of a real knowledge and relationship. “Agnosia” 56, signifies "ignorance" as directly opposite to “gnosis,” "knowledge" obtained by observation and experience. Scholars say that the Greek of, “some do not have the knowledge of God,” is very emphatic, and that it is stronger than, “are ignorant of God,” it is an habitual wilful ignorance, positive error, not merely negative, they are believers and yet they do not acknowledge God. (In 2Cor.7v11., Paul commends the Corinthians for their repentance and zeal in putting their lives right before God.

N.B. THE HUGE DANGER OF WRONG TEACHING ABOUT THE TIMING OF OUR LORD’S SECOND COMING.

The, "I know you not," of Mt.25v12. “Ouk” 3756, “oida” 1492, “humas” 5209. Read Mt.24v44 to 25v13.

We read in Mt.24v45-51. “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? v46.Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. v47. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. v48. But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' v49. and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, v50. the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, v51. and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. See Mt.25v41., "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.”

In Mt.24.v45-51., our Lord is speaking of Christian leaders who are directed to give “food in due season” to the Church of God, that is, teaching appropriate for the time, for the close of the age. The good servant does his work well. The evil servant does badly, because he fails to prepare himself and others for his Lord’s coming. His expectation of the timing of his Lord’s coming is completely wrong, he feels that the Lord is delaying His coming, and this results in himself and others being ill equipped for events prior to Christ’s return. The evil servant loses faith when his Lord appears to delay His coming, and as a result starts to live a bad life. The evil servant does not question and reject his own doctrine; he blames God, and says that God has changed His mind, “My Lord delays His coming.” **Jesus is here warning us about the effects that the pretribulation rapture theory will have on many Christians, when our Lord does not come before the great tribulation**. **These apostates are “cut asunder” and their portion is appointed with the hypocrites, and there is “weeping and gnashing of teeth.”**

In Mt.25., our Lord changes the picture to one of ten virgins, however, He is still speaking of the failure to adequately prepare for His return. The result is again rejection by Christ. In a parallel passage in Lk.13v25-28., people are said to have gone out and in with Him on familiar terms. Jesus says that the five foolish virgins will be told by the bridegroom, "I know you not." Mt.25v12. "Know," is "oida," 1492, the "defective perfect with present meaning;" (Rienecker) The foolish virgins could be influenced by the teaching of the evil servant of Mt.24v48-51., and believe that Jesus has delayed His coming, for Lord says, "**THEN** shall the kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten virgins. Mt.25v1. These foolish virgins are not spiritually or doctrinally prepared for the great tribulation. and "fall away." Lk.8v13. **Woe to the teachers who cause this!**

7. The Test of Fulfilled Prediction.

If there is a prediction given by a prophet, it will be fulfilled. Deut.18v20-22. Jer.28v1-17. Is.44v7. 46v9,10. However, remember that some prophecies can have a time lag of months or years, and even genuine revelations from God can be very trying in this respect. Ps.105v17-19. Joseph went into slavery and prison before his revelations were fulfilled, and a great many years passed by before they were fulfilled. Blessing promised by God may not come to pass because of sin. The Lord told Joshua that he was not going to fulfil His promise until Achan's sin was put right. Joshua.7v1-26. Repentance can also stay a definite prophecy of judgement. Jonah.3v7-10. When predictions or signs come to pass from satanic sources, it will be clearly seen as from an evil source, for they will lead away from God and Scripture truth. Deut.13v1-5. Rev.13v12-15. 2Thes.2v8-12.

MANKIND'S SPIRITUAL DEPRAVITY HAS OPENED THEM TO SATANIC DECEPTION.

A. Mankind has suppressed the truth about God because of their love for evil. Rom.1v18.

Paul states that mankind has wilfully chosen to "hold down" the truth about God. "Hold down," is "katechonton," the present participle of "katecho," "to hold down fast and firmly, to restrain, to suppress, to hinder." They permanently and continuously suppress the truth. "Truth" is "aletheia," which is derived from the negative "a," and "letho," or "lanthano," "to conceal." The truth about God has been revealed, but as A.T. Robertson says, "Truth is out in the open, but wicked men, so to speak, put it in a box and sit on the lid and 'hold it down in unrighteousness.' Their evil deeds conceal the open truth from men."

B. Mankind's intellectual dishonesty and resistance to God have led to a foolish darkened mind.

a. The intellectual but foolish, worthless mind.

Mankind has resisted God, and even hated God. In Rom.1v21,22. Paul writes of fallen mankind, "they became vain, futile and worthless in their reasoning, and their undiscerning senseless hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." "Vain," is "emataiothesan," the aorist passive of "mataioo," "to render vain, worthless, and futile." The passive gives the sense of, "to be given over to worthlessness, to think about worthless things, to be foolish." This produces a distorted set of values that corrupts the whole of society.

b. The darkened, damaged, foolish mind.

Paul tells us that because of a love for evil, mankind has been intellectually dishonest, and their minds have become darkened ("eskotisthe," the first aorist passive of "skotizo," "to darken") and undiscerning; ("asunetos," a verbal adjective derived from "suniemi," "to put together," and the negative "a"). They cannot put two and two together and make four on spiritual issues; and are without spiritual insight. Through rejection of God, mankind has damaged their minds and have lost the ability to correctly weigh the facts, or put together the evidence about God. Men arrogantly and continually claim and profess their wisdom, "phaskontes," the present active participle of "phasko," "to claim, to affirm, to assert." However, the most intelligent of men become fools and morons when they deny the existence of God. "Fools," is "emoranthesan," the aorist passive of "moraino," "to be a fool," from "moros," "a fool."

N.B. Men have wilfully exchanged light for darkness and God for idols.

Paul writes that people have exchanged the glory of the incorruptible ("apthartos") God for their own corruptible ("phthartos") man-made idols, and have given themselves over to persistent sensual idolatry, he states, "Therefore God gave them up in the lust of their hearts to impurity." "Gave them up," is "paredoken," the aorist of "paradidomai," "to deliver over, to hand over." God handed them over to lust, "epithumia," and uncleanness, "akatharsia:" men welcome these as friends, but they are really the most terrible enemies of mankind, and they bring about their eternal damnation. Lust for money and power is the worst kind of lust; covetousness is idolatry. Col.3v5. The tax collectors and harlots were in far less spiritual danger than the covetous and power hungry religious leaders of Israel. Mt.21v32. Lk.16v14,15. People rejected Christ's ministry, because they loved darkness more than the light. Jn.3v19-21. They desired to be dominated by the works of the flesh. Gal.5v19-21.

c. Even the minds of Christ's apostles were darkened by sin and false tradition.

Christ's apostles found it difficult to accept some of the truths and prophecies that Jesus told them; for they had a damaged spiritual insight as a result of their past sins, and the brainwashing "leaven" they had received from the religious teachers of Israel. Mt.16v6-12. Mk.8v15-21,31-33. Jesus told His apostles in Jn.16v12., that there were still **many things**, which He was unable to tell them, because they could not bear it. Even after our Lord's resurrection, His apostles still wanted Him to restore Israel's kingdom. Acts.1v6. They were loathe to part with their cherished traditions, and in AD 58 persuaded Paul to take part in temple rituals to show that he was a good Jew and kept the law. Acts.21v22-24. Paul obliged, even though God had revealed to Paul that the

Church age had replaced Judaism and the Law. Eph.3v1-11. The result of this expediency was disastrous.

Paul tells us that people who are bound by unscriptural traditions and heretical doctrines are “perverted and sin and are self-condemned.” Titus.3v10,11. (“Heretic,” is the adjective “hairetikon,” from “hairesis,” a choosing of a sect, party, or opinion; it is used of the Sadducees in Acts.5v17., the Pharisees in Acts.15v5. and 26v5; and of Christians in Acts.24v5,14. 28v22..) “Perverted,” is “exestraptai,” the perfect passive indicative of “ekstrepho,” to turn inside out, to twist, to pervert; the perfect shows a twisted abiding state of soul. “Sin,” is the present active indicative “hamartanei,” and shows a life of continual sin.

d. The journey from darkness into light and truth.
Sin has put mankind into gross darkness and destroyed their spiritual insight. By repentance and faith in Jesus, people come into the light, and start the journey to full light and truth. This journey has been rendered more difficult by the false prophets that Satan has sent into the Church; and by prayerless false teachers who have formulated doctrine out of their experience and out of a mind dominated by men's ideas and the old flesh life. There is an evil spiritual power behind heresy, the powers of darkness try to close people's minds to God, and hold them captive in fortresses of satanic lies. 2Cor.4v4. 1Tim.4v1-3.

e. The Divine guarantee of truth for sincere seekers.
However, in spite of all these obstacles Jesus has guaranteed that those who want the truth, and follow Him, will surely find it. Jn.1v4-9. 3v19-21. 8v12. 9v5. 12v35,36,46. 14v6. 1Jn.1v5,6. 2v9,11. If we are willing to do God's will we shall have God's truth revealed to us, as our Lord said in Jn.7v16,17., “If anyone is desiring to be doing His will, he shall know experientially concerning the teaching, whether it is out of God as a source or whether I am speaking from myself as a source.” Wuest.

WHY DO SOME CHRISTIANS GIVE FALSE PROPHECIES?
a. Through ignorance and stupidity.
There is a difference between evil false prophets and ignorant and stupid prophets. However, false prophecies can gravely disappoint and disillusion people who are looking for an answer to their problems. Sometimes Christians desire to encourage the person who has come to them for prayer, and foolishly feel that if they prophesy something, that this will obligate God to fulfil the thing that they have prophesied. They look upon “prophesying in faith,” as a means of forcing God to do what they desire. Others prophesy in hope, and hope that God will stand by their declaration, and the thing prophesied will happen. This can be done with a genuine concern for the person that comes to them for help, and with real desire to help them. However, this is a total distortion of the truth about prophecy, and can do much harm.

b. Through rebellion and stubbornness.
We see in Ps.68v18., that God even gives His gifts to rebels. However, rebellious and stubborn people can produce false prophecy; and this can be as serious a sin as idolatry and witchcraft. 1Sam.15v22,23. False revelation can occur through a bias to evil in unstable souls, and do much harm; and Paul and Peter warn us that it can result in dangerous doctrinal error, and moral depravity. 2Tim.2v16-18. 3v5-10. 2Pet.2v1-3. Jude.v8-25. Jezebel in Rev.2v20-25. False revelation can also arise from stupidity and ignorance of God’s Word and spiritual gifts. We have to cast down every thought that raises itself against the knowledge of God. 2Cor.10v4,5.

c. Through false prophecy arising from human desire.
People can prophesy out of their mind and their strong desires, and then hope that God will make it so. False prophecy can arise from human ideas arising from the dominance of the carnal mind, as well as from evil angelic inspiration. Jer.23v16. Ezek.13v2,3. The false prophets who opposed Jeremiah, were motivated by a nationalistic spirit and their own strong desires for victory over the Babylonians; they prophesied out of their own hearts, and said that their own and the people's desires were the word of God. This is the reason why the modern doctrine of the pre-tribulation rapture of the Church has been so widely accepted. Many Christians today, like the Jews of Jeremiah's day, prefer a false hope to the unpleasant truth that many Christians are going to suffer and die for the Lord in the great tribulation, in the countries that are under Antichrist's control. Rev.6v9-11,15-17. 7v9,14. 11v7-12,18. 12v4,11,13,17. 13v7,10,15. 14v9-13. 15v2,3. 16v6,15. 17v6. 18v24. 20v4-6.

d. Through insisting on an instant answer from God.
Some people, who come for guidance and prayer, often want an immediate answer from God, and some preachers feel that they must accommodate these people and so they prophesy beyond what they have received. Sometimes people are not willing to wait for God's guidance, and are not willing to receive it when it arrives. The people earnestly asked Jeremiah to seek God if they should go down to Egypt, and said that they would do what Jeremiah told them. Jeremiah prayed for ten days to get God’s guidance for the people, and told them that death awaited them in Egypt, but it was not what they wanted to hear, and they rejected it, they went to Egypt and were killed just as God warned that they would be. Jer.42v1-7,16. 43v2. We read in James.5v14-18.; that prolonged persevering prayer is often necessary to bring healing to some people. Instant answers are often not possible.

e. Through trying to encourage bad living Christians who are under Divine discipline.
Some people, like Israel, may be under discipline for bad living, so God cannot encourage them under these

circumstances. In Jer.15v1-6., God said that he would not even listen to the intercessions of Moses and Samuel on the behalf of the Jews; and that the sword, famine, captivity and death were coming upon them, because their lives were so evil. Jer.15v1-6. Paul tells us that Christians can also be under discipline, because of careless and bad living. 1Cor.11v28-32. God disciplines those He loves in order to improve their character. Heb.12v12-15. Repentance and reconsecration are necessary before sinful Christians can have communications restored with Heaven.

f. Through insisting on saying why good Christians are under a Divine trial.

At the time of Job's trial, it was impossible to find out why he was being tried, or to release Job from his great trial until it was over. Job was not under attack because of a lack of faith, but rather because of His great love for God and remarkable faith. God proved that Satan was a liar, when he said that Job served God because God had made him prosperous. The trials Job endured proved that he loved God for His character, goodness and truth. God proved the validity of His Divine principles to the whole of Heaven through the response of Job to his terrible trials. In such circumstances as these, an impenetrable spiritual veil is drawn over the person concerned. Those who imitate Job's three friends and insist on trying to get to the cause of people's problem, and contend that their imagined reasons are the answer, will find that most of what they say is wrong and untrue, and God will correct them for it. Job.1v1-22. 2v1-13. 42v7-10. It is a privilege and a delight to know the great souls who have passed through such terrible trials, and have kept their integrity and love for God; they grow even greater and sweeter in God. Our Lord Jesus is the greatest victor of all; He overcame Satan in every area of personality, under every circumstance and trial of life, and under the greatest opposition. Praise His holy Name!

8. SATAN'S TEST OF OUR CHARACTER AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS. Mt.4v1-11.

Like our Lord, we will find that temptation and spiritual conflict are inevitable after the baptism in the Spirit and the reception of spiritual gifts. God will allow Satan to test and try our experience, character and use of spiritual gifts. Lk.4v1. Heb.2v14-18. 4v14-5v2. 2Cor.1v3-7. 1Pet.1v6,7. James.1v12. Let us consider how Jesus defeated Satan, and how we can defeat him too.

1. SATAN WILL TRY TO ROB US OF THE POWER OF GOD BY AN ATTACK ON OUR FAITH.

a. Satan will try to cast doubt upon our most holy and blessed experiences.

John testified that Jesus was God's Lamb and only begotten Son, and Israel's promised Messiah. Jn.1v15-19,29-36. John said he had seen the Holy Spirit as a dove rest upon Jesus in unlimited power. Jn.3v27-36. The Father's voice confirmed John's witness, for all to hear, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Mt.3v11-17. Yet Satan had the audacity to challenge the witness of God the Father and God the Spirit, and cast doubt on Christ's blessed and holy experiences. What evil affrontery! Satan will try to challenge and cast doubt on our lovely God-given experiences and gifts; we must resist him and rejoice in what God has given to us, for God's word and promises to us are always true and reliable.

b. Satan will try to cast doubt upon God's Word.

"Hath God said," still comes from the serpent's lips. Gen.3v6. with Rev.12v9. Satan still challenges the reliability of the Word of God and the reality of the promises that God has given, including the promise of the baptism in the Spirit, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Christ's experience was based upon the Holy Scriptures, and we see that these same Scriptures confirm that the Pentecostal experience and gifts of the Holy Spirit are for today and the heritage of the children of God. Acts.2v38,39.

c. Satan will try to cast doubt on our love and devotion to God.

Christ had lived a life of perfect holiness and purity for 30 years, and Satan knew it; yet he dismisses and casts doubt on Christ's beautiful life of perfect love and devotion to His Father, with his lying and sarcastic, "If." Satan tried to bring Christ to a place of dejection and despair by his evil insinuations, and he will try to give us feelings of guilt and despair by casting aspersions on our character and work for God. Satan will try to dismiss all our acts of love and devotion to God by his evil insinuations; however, the Scriptures assure us that "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love." Heb.6v10. Nagging, condemning, destructive attacks upon our minds, come from the accuser Satan, not from God. Rev.12v9-12. Do not accept Satan's lies about yourself; only recognise and confess what the Scriptures say you are in Christ. Mt.7v7-11. Lk.11v9-13. Jn.3v16. 15v9. 17v23. Eph.1v3. Jesus understands and cares, and even His disciplines spring out of His great love for us. Heb.4v14-16. Christ is made unto us all we need; His strengthening grace is more than sufficient for us. 1Cor.1v30,31. Phil.4v13,19. Let praise and worship take the place of your heaviness and despair, draw near to God in praise and prayer, resist Satan and he will flee from you. James.4v7-9. God is love; He appreciates our love and work for Him.

d. Satan will try to attack our sonship.

Jesus created Satan, and he knew it, yet he tried, by lies and insinuations, to destroy Christ's faith in His sonship. If he attacked Christ's sonship, he will certainly attack ours. Do not give place to him for an instant, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." 1Jn.3v1,2. Do not let Satan take away your assurance of your position in Christ; we are joint heirs with Jesus, His own dear beloved brethren. Rom.8v17.

e. Satan will try to attack our faith in God's provision for us.

Satan was in effect saying to Christ, "You say that you acted on the revealed will of God, and look where it got you, into a wilderness with no provision, what a good God you serve." Satan loves to imply that God has failed

us, or does not love us, because God has not miraculously intervened in our circumstances; but it is a lie, we are always upon our Father's heart. God may allow our faith to be tried by difficult circumstances, temptation, and trials; but He will never leave us or forsake us. Heb.13v5,6,8. 1Pet.1v3-9. How much more reliable than the closest of earthly ties is the abundant affection, unceasing care, and unfailing love of our heavenly Father.

f. Satan will try to cast doubts on the reality of our spiritual gifts.
Satan taunted Christ, "You have not had one miracle. What, you God's Son? What an imagination you have. Where is the evidence of your experience? Where are the miracles, if you have been baptised in the Spirit? If you have received the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts, why are you having such a terrible time?" The Lord Jesus knew that God's power and gifts are manifested under the guidance of God's wisdom and in God's time and will. We cannot demand great manifestations of God's power at our will; it is "severally as He will." 1Cor.12v11. The lack of great spiritual gifts after our baptism in the Spirit can be a major temptation, but great gifts of revelation and demonstration, are given to mature Christians, and in particular to the leading ministries of Christ's Church. Jn.5v19,30. Satan will try us as he did the Lord Jesus, and we answer as the Lord Jesus did. The Lord Jesus quoted from Deut.8v3., and through this Scripture He told Satan that God always allows His children to be tried by adversity, but He is always with us in our trials. The Lord Jesus knew that the God who looked after the Israelites in the wilderness for forty years would look after Him, and we know that He will look after us. Let us answer Satan with, "It is written," God's truth stands forever sure; our God will never fail us.

2. SATAN WILL TRY TO GET US TO USE OUR GIFTS IN THE WRONG WAY. Mt.4v5-7
Satan again attacked the faith of Christ and His sonship, but we will not dwell on this, as we have already covered this point.

a. The temptation to self-will, presumption and fanaticism.
Satan will tempt us to pride manifesting itself in self-will, presumption and fanaticism. When Satan quoted Ps.91v11,12., he omitted some very important words, as can be seen by a comparison with Lk.4v10,11. and Mt.4v6.. Satan omitted the words "in all thy ways," that is, the ways of Christ directed by God. Satan misquotes Ps.91v11,12., doubtless one of Christ's favourite portions of Scripture, and suggests that Christ had a Scriptural authority for a daring act of faith.

Satan was in effect saying, "This is one of the Scriptures that you particularly love and rest your faith on; this is one of the words out of the mouth of God, why not put it to the test? If you are God's Son and He has given you authority and power, then, prove it to me and everybody." Christ completely rejected the temptation to misinterpret the Scripture, and to put His Father to the test by going ahead on His own, He knew the promises of God must be used in the context in which they are quoted, and in conjunction with the whole tenor of Christian truth. Great manifestations of spiritual gifts can only be expected in the will and purpose of God. Jn.5v19,30. Jesus quoted from Deut.6v16., "Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God, as ye tempted Him in Massah," from the incident in Exod.17v1-7., where Israel put God to the Test. Our Lord inferred that those who embark upon presumptuous enterprises without the guidance of God, put God to the test; to doubt the guiding and providing hand of God is to repeat the sin of the children of Israel at Massah and Meribah. Those who usurp the Holy Spirit's position in the Church, and run it as they feel, have committed this sin of pride, self-will, and presumption.

Satan will try to incite us to start us upon presumptuous and fanatical enterprises, and try to get us to misuse spiritual gifts; he still comes to us "with a Bible under his arm, and a text in his mouth." Satan attacks every revival with misinterpretations and perversions of the Scriptures; we have to make sure that our manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit are according to the Scriptural pattern. If we want to pervert or dodge the truth, Satan will certainly find us a Scripture to back us up, but this will involve misinterpreting the Scriptures, or wresting a text out of its context, and wilfully ignoring and neglecting other Scriptures upon the subject. The perils of pride, self-will, presumption and fanaticism are very great and lead to "great transgression," let us follow the example of Jesus and resist Satan's attacks upon us and dependence upon God. Ps.19v13.

b. The temptation to love the spectacular, and the praise of people.
Satan will tempt us to use spiritual gifts in a spectacular way to win the support, praise and admiration of the people. Satan fell through the sins of pride, covetousness and love of praise and position; he tries to make His creator fall into the same sins that had caused his own downfall and doom. Ezek.28v17. Is.14v12-14. Satan challenged Christ to do an outstanding sign before the people. Jesus resisted this appeal to pride and love of praise; He had come to die, not to lead Israel to victory over Rome. He had come to save people from their sins, not to receive empty adulation. If Christ had followed Satan's suggestion, it would have been a complete denial of His mission, and would have been a rejection of His Father's Word, love, provision and guidance. Satan will tempt us to use the power of God and His spiritual gifts in a proud and spectacular manner. There can be a desire to show people that God has called us and used us, and this is wrong. We can tell people what God has accomplished through us, if we do it in humility to God's glory, and in order to help people's faith, as Paul and Barnabus did in Acts.14v27.. Satan's servants, like Simon the sorcerer, may boast that they are a great one, but servants of the meek and lowly Christ must be genuinely humble. "Let another man praise thee and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips." Prov.27v2. Satan puffs up his servants; God humbles His, and measures their greatness by their humility. Mt.18v1-5.

c. The temptation to seek position and prestige in men's religious power structures.
Satan will tempt us to use spiritual gifts in a spectacular way to win position and prestige in Christ's Church and denominational structures. God has not given His spiritual gifts to us to increase our prestige and position, He has given them to us to increase His kingdom and glorify His name. Jesus entirely resisted the temptation to use the power of God in a way that would win over the influential over to His side, and win a position amongst them. Satan was in effect saying to Christ, "Cast yourself down at the Temple before the elders of Israel. Seek the help and patronage of the influential. To do the work that you want to do, you need the people with money, power and authority behind you." Many have compromised truth and experience by throwing themselves down at the Temple of worldly and religious prestige, and in trying to win the praise of men, or by fighting for position in their church or denomination, have offended God and lost the power of God. Those who seek the praise of men, inevitably find that they compromise the truth because of the fear of man. Jn.12v42,43. Christ fearlessly preached against traditions that made void the Word of God, and exposed hypocrisy and sham. It cost Him His life, but He pleased the Father. These religious leaders opposed Christ and in the end murdered Him. He threatened their power structure and they could not tolerate this. The test of the spiritual greatness of any Christian leader, is their willingness to step down from position and humbly serve others. Jn.13v1-17. Mt.20v20-28. Phil.2v1-11. Christ humbled the religious leaders of His day by showing His preference for the prayerful, spiritual, consecrated, and sincere ordinary working men, as leaders in His work; He can and does do the same today, when religious leaders lack spirituality and sincerity.

3. SATAN WILL TEMPT US TO EXCHANGE GOD'S BLESSING FOR EARTHLY GLORY.
a. Satan will tempt us to seek worldly wealth, prestige, and glory.
Satan showed Jesus all the beauty and glory of every nation and said, "Why fight me? Why have a battle? You can have the entire world without a fight if you will go my way, accept my standards, and worship me. Don't take up your cross; exchange your path of consecration and dedication for the world's pleasures, power and wealth." The temptation to fill our lives with worldly things, and to judge our lives by worldly standards will come to every Christian. We need to realise, like our Lord Jesus did, that God owns all things, and that our allegiance should be His alone. Deut.6v13-15. A curse, not glory, comes upon all those who forsake God for the broad and easy way. Mt.7v13,14. with Deut.28v15-68. Satan's offer of his corrupted kingdoms was certainly no bargain, particularly as Christ already owned the world. There was a strong implication from Satan, that if Jesus did not follow his advice, He would experience the most sustained and vicious opposition from these kingdoms, for they were under Satan's control. Indeed, Jesus had to face the most ruthless slander, hatred, envy, malice and persecution from the children of Satan, and we will experience the same if we are going to do the will of God, and glorify God through the manifestation of His spiritual gifts. When we think that materialism, worldly standards and compromise have more to offer us than serving God, we are getting very close to bowing down, serving and worshipping Satan. Let us follow the example of our dear Lord Jesus, He refused to sell His heavenly anointing and call for the things of the world, or compromise because of the fear of the hatred and opposition of the kingdoms of men. Nothing deterred Him from the mission that the Father had sent Him to do.

b. Satan will tempt us to supplement the power of God with the glory of the world.
Jesus refused to use the glory of the world to supplement or replace the power of God; He chose people who had no worldly power or influence to be the leaders of His Church. 1Cor.1v26-31. The further we get away from God, the more we rely upon human resources. However, culture, music, art and literature, cannot replace dependence upon God and His power. We are in real spiritual danger when we rely upon what we can do, and feel that we can manage on our own. We praise God for Christian scholars, and we would be lost without them, but our first need is for men with truly apostolic ministry. Mt.9v35-38. Paul was an outstanding scholar, but he gloried in his limitations, not his abilities, so that the power of Christ would rest upon him. In 2Cor.12v9., "rest," is "episkenose," the aorist subjunctive of "episkenoo," "to dwell, to abide, to take up residence, to pitch upon him like a tent," like the Shechinah over the Tabernacle. 1Cor.2v1-8. 2Cor.12v9-12. Acts17v15-34. 18v1-18. N.B. v10.

Even aggressive evangelism can be based upon faith in human oratory, and this can be looked upon as a substitute for the power and miracles of the early Church. Churches that allow worldly glory and human ability to replace God's power, become empty husks that disillusion those who are broken in heart, weary, sick and sinful, who are seeking and longing for a loving fellowship, where they can find God, peace and spiritual reality. Only the power of God can meet people's needs, human endeavour and worldly glory will always fail.

c. Satan will tempt us to build on earthly empire around ourselves.
Christ refused to build an earthly empire around His ministry, His kingdom was not of this world, He lived just to glorify the Father and perform His will. Jn.4v34. 5v30. 6v38,39. 12v28. 17v1,4,5,10. 18v33-37. 21v19. Heb.10v5-7. Someone has said, "How often has ambition conquered those who have conquered nearly all else." If our only motive for desiring the gifts of the Holy Spirit is to build our personal or denominational kingdom, then we desire them for the very worst of reasons. We are not here to build our kingdoms, or our bank balance, by exalting Christ and His gifts; we are to follow the example of the Holy Spirit, and use His gifts for the sole purpose of exalting Jesus and glorifying God. Jn.16v12-15. 14v12-14. Our emphasis should be "Our Christ," not ourselves, or our church, God is the only one to be served and worshipped.

Jesus has left us the perfect example of financial integrity and sincerity; His attitude to money was beyond reproach. Christ's enemies mocked His preaching against love of money and worldly-mindedness, and His total

lack for any desire for money. Lk.16v10-15. Jesus was called many things by His enemies, but He was never called a "money-grabber." Christ's simple needs were met by grateful, kind-hearted people, mainly women, who had been greatly helped through His ministry; and others gave food and shelter for Himself and His disciples. Lk.8v1-3. 19v5. etc. However, Jesus often had no shelter and had to "sleep rough," out in the open air; He knows what it is to be homeless. Mt.8v19,20. Lk.9v57,58. Christ never tried to squeeze finances out of the people that He was preaching to; no one was to be charged for Divine healing, "Freely ye have received, freely give." Mt.10v7,8. There were to be no demands for money, indeed, as they were able, the apostolic band gave money to the poor and needy. Jn.12v5-8. Jesus did not financially put upon those who sympathised with Him and helped Him in His work; He did not sleep at the best hotels, He had nowhere to lay His head on many occasions. Lk.9v57-62.

Christ did what the Father told Him to do, not what He felt was good or necessary. It is a striking fact that the Father never told Jesus to do things that are looked upon as essential today. Christ built no buildings, His means of transport was His own feet, He did not employ Scribes to write down and distribute His sermons. Jesus just made Himself a channel of His Father's will, love and power. Jn.5v18,19,30. It is wrong to do everything that comes to our minds; we have to make quite sure that we meet the priorities that God lays down. Jesus kept His needs down to a minimum, His base was a simple home in Capernaum, and we will do well to follow His example. Mt.4v13. Mk.2v1. 9v33. Christ's one aim was to glorify His Father and do His will, and if we want to defeat the attacks of Satan, our aim will have to be the same.

N.B. Satan still tries to stop Christians from manifesting God's power and love through His Gifts.
Luke.11v52. (NKJ) "Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered." Luke.11v52. (TLB) "Woe to you experts in religion! For you hide the truth from the people. You won't accept it for yourselves, and you prevent others from having a chance to believe it."

Satan has also been busy in our day, and has deceived Christian teachers into thinking that the God-given experiences of the early Church are not valid for us today. This heresy has prevented Christians from experiencing God and His gifts, which are so clearly promised in the Scriptures. Like Israel's religious leaders, these false teachers, ignore and twist the truth of the Scriptures on the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit. They foolishly argue that the historical accounts in Scripture cannot be used for formulating doctrine, or as a basis for our experience of God and His gifts. They will not seek God for His gifts, and by their unbelieving example and incorrect exposition, they actively hinder Christians from seeking and receiving an experience of God and His gifts. The historical parts of the Scripture show the outworking of Divine truth; they reveal God's desires by His acts. Christ's life and acts, and His sufferings and death, have revealed God's love and redemptive purposes for men, far better than any doctrinal statement could ever have done. Are we to lay aside the historical accounts of Christ's life and actions as having no doctrinal importance? All true Christians will deny such a dangerous and pernicious theory. The facts about our Lord's life, death and resurrection are best entered into and understood by reading the actual events in the Gospels. Paul informs us in 1Cor.10v1-15., that God has instructed and taught His people vital doctrine through history. Paul also tells us in 2Tim.3v15,16., that, "All Scripture is profitable for doctrine." Indeed, in many cases, it is only through the insight revealed by the historical passages that we can correctly interpret Scripture truth. Such things as water baptism, demon exorcism, the baptism and gifts of the Spirit, and even the Lord's Supper, can only be properly understood from the historical portions of Scripture. Indeed, the epistles deal mainly with practical historical problems in the churches, not just with theoretical problems. Some of our most valuable doctrines for living, preaching, and praying, are found in the historical parts of Scripture. The full extent of the authority of the name of Jesus is best seen in the lives of those in the Scriptures who have called upon the name of Jesus. The mighty power that is available to us through the invocation of the names of God, and the name of Jesus, is best seen in the lives of those who invoked them in power. Let us take the Divine names that have been given to us in the name of Jesus, and use them as instruments of power for the glory of God, and for ministration to the needy. We learn best about prayer and the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit by seeing their operation through men of God in the Scriptures.

9. SEEKING AND RECEIVING GUIDANCE FROM GOD.

David was amazed that an insignificant person like himself could experience such tender thoughtful guidance, and amazing providential foresight and planning from God. Ps.8v3,4. 139v5,6,9-16. God has not overruled our wills, but He has, in His great wisdom, planned for His children before the foundation of the world, and has taken into account everything about us, our failures as well as our successes. Rom.8v28-30. Rev.13v8. Titus.1v1,2. The guidance we receive now was conceived and foreknown before creation, no emergency can take our heavenly Father by surprise. Divine guidance is an accepted fact in Scripture, the God who has led us to Calvary, will lead us on. Jn.16v13. Rom.8v14. It is this Divine guidance and Divine presence that marks us out from the world. Exod.33v12-16. God's glory cloud uplifts, protects and guides His people. Exod.13v21,22. 14v19,20,24. Ps.78v14. 99v7. 105v39. Neh.9v19. The Lord is our Shepherd, and He will lead us, if we will be meek and teachable. Ps.23v1,2,5. 25v5,9. 32v8. Jn.10v3,4. God will guide us continually and eternally. Is.58v11. Ps.48v14. Rev.7v15-17. 21v1-4. The Holy Spirit comes to guide us into truth, Jn.16v13., into a life of prayer, worship, and communion, Jn.4v23,24. 15v1-11.; and into a life of holiness and service. Jn.17v17-19. To miss God's plan and guidance for our life is a tragedy, but to see, follow, and experience God's guidance and plans, transforms the life and fills it with joy. Ps.16v11. Eph.3v9. Human guidance is not enough; we need the

guidance of God. Prov.14v12. 16v25. Jer.10v23. Mt.7v13-29.

God's gives guidance to seekers for guidance; this means we must be diligent in prayer. Heb.11v6. If Jesus needed to spend a night in prayer when seeking guidance; we cannot expect guidance from God without earnestly seeking Him. Lk.6v12-16. This means that we will have to be meek and teachable, “praotes.” Mt.5v5. 11v29. James.1v21. 2Cor.10v1. Ps.25v9. Our aim in seeking guidance must be to glorify God, not ourselves, our church, or our denomination. We must seek God intelligently; we must not be like the horse or the mule; that is, lacking in wisdom and discernment. Ps.32v8-10. We must be wise and spiritual enough, and big enough in God to take the responsibility that the guidance brings. God's guidance does not lead to the armchair, but rather to sacrifice and service. Mt.19v27-30.

A. GOD WILL GUIDE US BY HIS WORD.

a. Through definite commands and instructions, and clear and definite warnings.

Failure to observe God's will revealed in His Word, will frustrate God's will for us; the Almighty cannot fulfil His wonderful plans for us if we are wilfully disobedient. Rom.10v21. If we surrender to the Lordship of Jesus, we will obey the commands He has given in His Word. Prov.3v5,6. Jn.15v13-17. Rom.12v1,2. Much of God's will for us is revealed in God’s Word, it gives us His directions for daily living; failure to realise this will produce a feeling of frustration. God's Word clearly shows us the way to revival, and revivals have been produced by people listening to the reading of the Scriptures. 2Chron.34v14-33. Neh.8v1-18. Acts.2v1-47. We should read the Scriptures prayerfully and unhurriedly, and meditate upon them. Ps.1v1-6. When we do this, a text may suddenly light up and jump off the page at us, and give us the spiritual help and guidance we need. However, we should never use the Bible like a book of magic, do not open it and pick out a text at random, or you may get some very erroneous guidance, use the Scriptures that specifically apply to your situation just like Jesus did.

We must not seek guidance for things where God has already given definite directions in His Word, or said a definite “No” or “Yes” in His Word, for we already have the answer. For example. We are not to marry an unbeliever. 2Cor.6v14. 1Cor.7v39. The need for regular fellowship, prayer and service. Heb.10v25. Mt.28v18-20. Acts.8v1-4. The need for moral purity and sanctified living. Mt.7v15-27-27. 1Cor.6v1-20. God's guidance will never be contrary to God's Word, and any guidance that contradicts God's Word must be rejected. Is.8v19,20. Scripture must be interpreted within its context, and within the general tenor of Scripture and not twisted. 2Pet.3v15-18. We will be spiritually safe as we follow the revealed will of God His Word.

b. Through general principles on doubtful matters.

There are some situations which the Bible does not cover, but it does give us some relevant principles to guide us, they are:-

1. The principle of profitability and edification. 1Cor.6v12. 10v23,24. Heb.12v1-17.
2. The principle of abstinence from appearance of evil. 1Thes.5v22.
3. The principal of consideration of others; perhaps weaker Christians. Rom.14v1-23. N.B. v13.
4. The principle of doing all things to God's glory. 1Cor.10v31-33.
5. The earnest love of others will save us from mistakes in doubtful matters. Rom.14v14.

B. GOD WILL GUIDE US BY HIS SPIRIT.

a. Sometimes only direct guidance from God can meet our needs.

In many circumstances of life, there are no specific commands or general principles of Scripture to cover our situation; on such occasions we need the direct guidance of God. God can give us a word of wisdom to direct our way, and as we have seen under the word of wisdom, there are many cases in the Scriptures where God has done this. God will guide us with His eye. Ps.32v8. God can enlighten our judgement, or give a deep conviction on certain lines, as well as direct us by voice, vision, dream, sign and token. Guidance nearly always comes by personal revelation by word of wisdom, and not by tongues and interpretation, or prophecy. In really important matters I have found the Lord has sometimes warned and given guidance before the circumstances that demand Divine guidance have arisen; this has usually been by dream or vision. It is quite wrong to speak in tongues and expect God to give us specific guidance in the interpretation. Divine guidance is certainly not as simple as this. We cannot force God to speak how or when we want, we should wait until He inspires.

b. Sometimes we need to search our hearts before God can guide us.

God often allows difficult circumstances, and delays in receiving His guidance, to search and purify our hearts and motives. God searches our hearts and allows circumstances and trials to expose them. 2Chron.16v9. 32v31. Rev.2v23. Lk.22v61,62. Job.1 and 2. N.B. Job.1v22. 2v10. This is one of the main reasons why we do not usually receive “instant guidance.” We read in Jer.42v1-7., that Jeremiah earnestly sought God for ten days before he received the guidance that he required.

Delays in receiving guidance can be a great blessing, because the earnest seeking of God's guidance and blessing, changes us and prepares us for the service that the guidance brings. In really important matters, or major difficulties, I have found the Lord has warned, or given guidance even before major events have happened; and this has usually been by dream or vision. I have hardly ever experienced direct guidance by prophecy, or by tongues and interpretation from others; these have sometimes contained general assurances of guidance, but they seldom contain specific details of guidance. The Lord likes to give us guidance that we

will have no doubts over, and so generally, in the church, God will only confirm what He has already revealed to us. This confirmation is particularly blessed, when the Christian who is giving the prophesy or interpretation, know nothing of our circumstances, or the desires of our heart.

c. The New Testament privileges and responsibilities in seeking guidance.

In the Old Testament, people went to proven prophetic ministries like Samuel, Huldah, and Jeremiah, to enquire of God for personal guidance. 1Sam.9v9.etc. However, in this New Covenant age of grace, this aspect of prophetic ministry has been greatly modified and changed. The Old Testament prophet foretold, led and directed people; the New Testament prophet foretells, warns in emergency, and may confirm God's guidance to a Christian. but do not give orders and direct the lives and acts of Christians. Under the New Covenant, we have a personal responsibility to seek God for ourselves. The Scripture tells us that under the New Covenant we are more privileged than the greatest Old Testament prophet, every Christian who abides in Christ, walks with God, and lives in the Spirit, can experience God's guidance, and be personally led by the Holy Spirit. Mt.11v11. 13v16,17. Jn.14v16-26. 16v7-15. Rom.8v14. The new relationship of sonship, brings a new experience of personal guidance. 1Jn.3v1-3. 1v5-7. Rom.8v12-17. We are told in Heb.8v8-13., that the new covenant does away with one person directing another in the will of God, for "they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, 'know the Lord,' for all shall know me from the least unto the greatest." We are also told in Heb.10v19-22., that the veil is gone, and that the blood of Christ has made it possible for every child of God to come right into the presence of God. Indeed, all Christians are personally invited to come directly to the Father and Son for grace and mercy and everything else that we need, and this includes Divine guidance. Heb.4v14-16.

d. Beware of dominating directive guidance.

To direct others by prophecy in such things as marriage, or their work for God is quite unscriptural in this dispensation: these things are between a Christian and their Saviour, as Peter found out in Jn.21v20-22., when he tried, with genuine concern and love, to find out Christ's plans for John. God can use the members of the body of Christ, to reveal and meet a person's crushing need or to confirm guidance. God can warn of great dangers ahead, and so deliver Christians from danger in an emergency, but to direct them in life's everyday affairs, or Christian work by supposed prophecy, is quite another matter, and is definitely wrong. Each Christian has the privilege and responsibility to seek God for themselves for Divine guidance. We can all experience personal direction from God, but great care should be taken when we are making important decisions, and guidance from others should be treated with the greatest caution and NEVER swallowed without question.

N.B. Paul's astonishing refusal to listen to Divine warnings and Divine guidance.

God can, then, speak through the gifts to warn of danger, as well as confirm personal guidance, and we should not dismiss such warnings and guidance. We see this intervention in emergency in Acts.20v22,23. and 21v4,10-14.. Through the Christians at Tyre, the Holy Spirit continually warned Paul, "not to go up to Jerusalem," ("me anabainein eis Ierousalumu," in the Majority Text): and "that he should not set foot in Jerusalem," ("me epibainein eis Ierosoluma," in the Critical Texts). The Holy Spirit had already warned Paul about this in every city that he had been to, and it was also confirmed by Agabus. Acts.20v23. 21v10,11. Our Lord had personally warned Paul many years before that the Jews at Jerusalem would not accept his testimony, and that He was sending him to the Gentiles. Acts.22v17-21. Paul had continual great inner pain over Israel's rejection of Christ, and out of a great desire to see them saved, he bound himself with a vow made out of the will of God. Acts.18v18. Rom.9v1-5. 10v1. We are filled with admiration for Paul's great love for his people, when he said that he, like Moses, was willing to be "accursed from Christ," if it would save them. Rom.9v3. Exod.32v32. Compare Gal.1v8,9. 1Cor.12v3. 16v22. This shows us how carefully we must watch our strong and loving desires, never mind our selfish desires; otherwise, we can find ourselves out of the will of God.

There was a strong pressure group in the Church that was trying to Judaize it and bring it under the Law. We have to watch pressure groups with a party label, or axe to grind, when we are seeking guidance from God. Acts.6v7. 11v1-18. 15v1,2,28-30. The leaders of the Church at Jerusalem asked Paul to try the doubtful expedient of appealing to the unconverted Jews by taking a vow in the Temple to show that he kept the Law. Acts.21v23,24. In the light of Paul's teaching in his epistle to the Galatians, this expediency appears to have been very wrong; Paul had criticised Peter for doing a very similar thing a few years earlier. Gal.1v6-10. 2v4,11-21. 3v10-14. 4v9-11. 5v12. Col.2v14-17. Heb.10v2,9-12. Some expositors think that Paul was not giving way on the principle of justification by faith, for in Acts.21v25., the brethren seem to have admitted that this was not the issue. Acts.21v25. Paul may have felt that he was acting on the principal he laid down in 1Cor.9v19-23.; Paul and the others could have felt that this public act of consecration to God in the Temple was an act of love to remove barriers, and might help to win people to Christ. It did in fact do the very opposite, and resulted in great persecution and real opposition to the Gospel. Paul proved by bitter experience the truth of Christ's warning that the Jews would not receive his testimony. Acts.22v17-21. This expediency badly misfired as Jesus warned that it would; and it is a tragedy that the church leaders at Jerusalem actually brought the prophetic warnings to pass. Acts.21v17 to 22v30. Paul had to write a few years later that he was "the prisoner of Jesus for the Gentiles." Eph.3v1. 4v1. This is the only recorded incident when Paul was disobedient to the Holy Spirit, and even then Paul's great love for his people fills us with admiration rather than criticism. Divine revelation had guided Paul's feet on many occasions before this, and in Acts we read some of the guidance the early Church received from God through His gifts. There are undoubtedly many more cases of Divine guidance that are not recorded in the New Testament. Gal.1v12. 2v2. Acts.8v26-29. 10v1-22. 11v28.

13v1,2. 15v28. 16v6-10. 18v9-11. 19v21. 23v11. 27v9-12,22-26.

e. God's peace will witness to God's guidance.
The peace of God is a simple yet profound method of guidance, and test of guidance. God's will is always confirmed by God's peace. Phil.4v6,7. Col.3v15. We can have God's peace even when circumstances are trying and dark and there is bitter persecution. Be sure that the peace of God is with you in your decisions; if there is no peace; stop what you are doing, or the way you are going. God's way is confirmed by God's peace. This is the simplest way of receiving a word of wisdom from God, and it is a valuable way of confirming Divine guidance. However, remember that the Devil is the accuser of the brethren, and he tries to spoil our peace. Rev.12v10. The voice of Satan is harsh and jarring even when we are right, the voice of God is gentle and firm, even when we are wrong. By losing God's peace, I do not mean that we get into a fretful state; we have the gentle but firm voice of God speaking to our hearts and informing us that we have done wrong, or are going on the wrong way, and need to retrace our steps. On important matters, God will not just guide us by giving us His peace, He will speak to us in several ways and several times, so avoid hasty decisions, the more important a decision is, the less hasty it should be.

C. GOD WILL GUIDE US THROUGH PROVIDENTIAL CIRCUMSTANCES. Rom8v28.
a. Watch for the divinely directed providence of God.
Some things that happen to us are anything but coincidences; they are the very definite providence of God. When circumstances, the Spirit, and the Word of God agree, we can be sure that God is guiding us, if they do not agree, then we should doubt our guidance. Watch for openings, an open door, a need put to us; if we are listening to the whispers of Jesus, we may hear Him say, “This is the way, walk ye in it.” Is.30v21. Watch for even the small and trivial happenings on certain occasions, a chance meeting, or word, has on some occasions led to great things and proved to be God's guidance. On these occasions, there will be a very powerful and obvious presence of God, and we will realise that it is God's providential intervention and guidance.

b. God's stops are often just as important as His directions to go.
Be prepared to let God stop you by circumstances, He will do this if we are sincere and desire His guidance, and do not insist on our own way. In Acts.16v6,7., God stopped Paul and his helpers from going in a certain direction, and we should be prepared for God's checks and stops through circumstances and the Spirit., Jesus will not let us go astray, if we are sincere, teachable, and want to do His will. “The stops, as well as the steps, of a good man are ordered by the Lord,” and if we do not realise it at the time, we do later. Acts.16v6-10.

c. The perfect timing of our Father's Divine purposes.
When God guides us things can be carefully timed, which makes it possible for us to miss something great if we do not know or realise the time. If we live close to God, we will hear the voice of Jesus directing us, and how and when to act. Everything was perfectly planned and timed in the life of Christ, He spoke of “mine hour,” and “my time,” Jn.2v4. 7v6,8. 12v23-27., He “fulfilled,” and “filled out the full,” God's plans and prophetic Word. Mt.1v22. 2v15,17,23. 8v17. 12v15-21. 13v34,35. 21v4,5. 26v54-56. 27v6-10. Lk.4v21. Jn.12v37-41. 13v18. 15v25. 19v24,34-37. See Jn.4v4. “must needs,” and Jn.5v19,20,30. We can receive unconscious guidance from God without even realising it. Indeed, sometimes it is only as we look back that we realise that we have enjoyed the providential guidance of God.

D. GOD WILL GUIDE US THROUGH HIS PEOPLE. Prov.11v14.
a. God often gives us guidance when in Christian fellowship.
Fellowship is not only a rich way of living on a higher Christian plane; it can be a definite channel of Divine guidance. We should seek and consider the wise counsel of mature Christians, when we feel that it is necessary; for they can give us advice and counsel that will indicate God's path. However, it must be counsel on their part and not decision. Be very careful of interested parties, or strong personalities with an axe to grind; do not let them counsel you to their decision; the decision should be your decision and not the decision of other people.

b. Godly Christians can often give us Divine counsel and guidance.
Wise counsel from others can preserve us from great danger, and, fellowship with other Christians is a good cure for spiritual blind spots. We may hear God's voice speaking to us through others, when we have been deaf to it ourselves, for example, a man who indulged his children was told by two good friends, “You are an Eli,” 1Sam.3v13., It made him realise his mistake. Young Christians especially need the safeguard of mature spiritual guidance to preserve them from error and fanaticism. Acts.14v23. 1Pet.5v1-11. Under the New Covenant, we have a personal responsibility to seek God for ourselves, and so it is wrong to rely on other people directing us by prophecy or revelation. A person may sometimes have a revelation for us, particularly in an emergency, but the decisions are ours. John.21v20,21. Acts.11v27-30. 21v10-13. Rom.8v14-17. Heb.8v10,11. However, it is sometimes necessary to go to a wise and spiritual person and ask them to weigh up a situation for you and give their advice, but beware of strong personalities, and don't let them counsel you to their decision.

E. GOD WILL GUIDE US THROUGH A SANCTIFIED COMMON SENSE. Rom.12v1-3. 15v22-33.
a. Don't be like a horse or a mule, whose every movement needs guidance.
Though it is not in man to guide his footsteps, without the help of God, Jer.10v23., many problems of guidance can be solved by a sanctified common-sense. God says we should not be like the horse or the mule that need

to be guided in every movement. Ps.32v8,9. We do not need God's guidance for everything; we will get that when we need it, we must use our common sense and make an intelligent choice. “Where can I do the most good?” will answer the vast majority of problems of guidance. Wesley said that he would, “Lay my reasonings at Thy feet,” and as we think things over prayerfully in God's presence, we will find our thoughts will be clarified and the best thing to do will become obvious.

b. Divine guidance does not rule out discussion.

The fact that there is such a thing as Divine guidance, does not mean that there is no place for discussion and common sense in the Christian life, there will always be a need for them. Acts.15v1,2,7,28. Note Acts.15v28., “It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us.” See also Acts.6v3. “Wherefore, brethren, look ye out from among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, who we may appoint over this business.” God can guide us by the gifts of the Spirit, but we must use our common sense and keep things in proportion. If we do not get a definite word from the Lord in a certain circumstance, let us prayerfully do the thing that we think is best.

F. GOD WILL GUIDE US BY OUR TALENTS, PERSONALITY, AND SPIRITUAL MINISTRY.

a. Our Lord's yoke for us is a perfect fit. Mt.11v28-30.

We should realise that God will never guide us into a work that we are not spiritually equipped to do; the work that God gives us to do will fit us perfectly. We need to be honest with ourselves and recognise the limits of our ministry, and give place to the ministries of others. Rom.12v10. Those who fight for a position and work in Christ's Church they cannot fulfil, are in for heavy judgement when they meet our Saviour. James.3v1. God will always prepare us for any work He desires us to perform. We should ask ourselves, “What ministry has God called me to?” Have I responded to that call, and prepared myself, so that God can give me a ministry?” “Has the ministry that God has given to me matured enough for God to give me a higher ministry?” Acts.13v1-4. We must not only have a call to do a work for God, we must have received the spiritual equipment to perform that work. The desire to do a work for God is not enough, good as it is, we must ask ourselves what ministry we possess from God. Is it a local ministry, or is it a wider ministry? 1Cor.12v28. Rom.12v3-8.

b. Our talents, gifts and ministries make a way for us.

We are told in Prov.18v16. that, “A man's gift makes room for him and brings him before great men.” The gifts and ministries that God has given us will obviously point to God's way and will for us. We will sometimes find God's call coming to us through the invitations and pleas for help from others who need the ministry that God has given to us. What we are and what God has given to us, will decide what God will do with us. The call and guidance of God take into account all that we have and are, our talents, temperament, character, responsibilities, environment, and spiritual qualities and ministry. God considers all that we are and plans accordingly, He does not do violence to our personality, He finds the best use for it. 2Tim.2v20-26. Very often the things that we would like to do for God, because of our abilities and compassionate feelings, are the very things that God wants us to do for Him.

c. Most of our service for God, is in our home and work situations.

The calling of God varies very greatly, and our ministries in churches are but part of our Christian call. Paul makes it clear in Col.3v16-25., that family responsibilities and secular work carried out as a sacred service to the Lord, will result in us receiving Christ's “Well done,” and our heavenly inheritance. It is wonderfully encouraging to realise that our dear Lord Jesus looks upon loving concern and care in family life and work life as sacred service for Him. Indeed, most of our work for God is in our home and work situations. The sooner we grasp the fact that God has given us a task that is uniquely ours, the better it will be for us. When we realise that God has given us, in our homes, and secular and church work, a task for Him, an opportunity of witness by life and lip, which no one else can do quite like us; we will eagerly say, “Lord send me.” Is.6v8. Let us serve God in our daily lives, and be open to what He wants to do through us, and let us fulfil it to the best of our ability.

WHAT TO DO WHEN GUIDANCE FROM GOD IS NOT APPARENT.

a. Do what God last told you to do, until He tells you otherwise.

On the occasions when we pray for guidance and none is forthcoming, we should commit the whole matter to God in prayer, and obey the golden rule for guidance, “Do what God last told you to do, until He directs you otherwise.” We should keep our ears open to the whispers of Jesus, but we should not be continually looking for signs and impressions in everything; there are great areas in the routines of life that don't need guidance, they need common-sense and good judgement Ps.32v8,9. If God desires us to meet a need, He can break into our routines, as He did with Moses, Ananias and Peter, so don't be anxious about missing God's way. Exod.3v1-12. Acts.9v10-19. 10v9-19. We need to make sure that the guidance we seek is not escapism, God's guidance often led into trouble, not out of it. Acts.16c6-11,22-25. We also see that guidance was given to people who were in real need, or in the path of duty and actively serving God, “Get going to get guidance,” is a good maxim, if we are on the stretch for God, we will find guidance from God will come much more easily than if we are resting on our laurels.

b. Our Good Shepherd will always protect and guide us.

The Lord is our Shepherd and He has promised to be our guide forever, and even when we are not conscious of

from the dead.

"Existemi," This verb “existemi,” means literally, “to stand out from, to be beside oneself,” and so “to be amazed.” It occurs 17 times in the New Testament. It occurs once in Matthew's Gospel, in Mt.12v23., in the imperfect tense “existanto,” all the multitude were beside themselves with amazement and excitement at the deliverance of a demon possessed person. It occurs four times in Mark's Gospel; at the healing of the palsied man, Mk.2v12.; it is used in the aorist tense, “exeste,” by Christ's family to say He was insane, in Mk.3v21., See Acts.26v24. and 2Cor.5v13. It is used with “ekstasis” in the raising of Jairus's daughter from the dead in Mk.4v52.. It is used in the imperfect tense in Mk.6v51., with “ekthaumazo,” when the apostles “were exceedingly beyond measure in themselves were amazed” (“existanto”), and marvelled, (“ethaumazon”), when our Lord walked on the water. “Existemi” is used three times in Luke's Gospel. In Lk.2v47., it is used to show the reaction of people to Christ's understanding and answers in the temple at twelve years of age. In Lk.8v56., it reveals the reaction of Jairus and his wife when Jesus raised their daughter from the dead. In Lk.24v22., it reveals the unreasoning astonishment and unbelief of the apostles to the women's testimony that they had seen the risen Christ.

“Existemi” occurs seven times in Acts. In Acts.2v7,12. of the amazement over the gift of tongues. In Acts.8v9. of the astonishment (translated “bewitched” in the A.V.) of the people at the evil occult miracles of Simon the sorcerer; and in Acts.8v13. of Simon's astonishment at the great miracles that God did through Philip. In Acts.9v21. it is used of the astonishment caused by the testimony of the newly converted Paul on those who heard him. In Acts.10v45. the Christian Jews, bound by their Jewish traditions, were beside themselves with astonishment, that Gentiles had been given the Holy Spirit. In Acts.12v16., it describes the amazement and exclamations of joy of the people praying for Peter's deliverance, when Peter came to the house of Mary, the mother of Mark, after his deliverance by the angel. Acts.12v12. Paul uses “existemi” once in 2Cor.5v13.; where he says if he was beside himself it was for God; he certainly did many things that the world and some Christians thought was quite mad, just as Christ's family thought that He was mad. Mk.3v21.

"Ekstasis." The noun “ekstasis,” is related to the verb “existemi,” it means literally, “a standing out,” from “ek,” “out of,” and “stasis,” “a standing.” It occurs 7 times in the New Testament. It is used in Acts.10v10. 11v5. and 22v17., when Peter and Paul became unconscious to everything else except the vision they saw. “Ekstasis” is used with “existemi” in Mk.5v42., when Jesus raised Jairus's daughter from the dead, and all were “astonished with great astonishment,” and the parents were “beside themselves with great ecstasy.” Lk.8v56. In Mk.16v8., when the angel told the women of the resurrection of Jesus, the women fled from the tomb “trembling and astonished,” “ekstasis;” Matthew reads, “with fear and great joy.” Mt.28v8. People were filled with wonder and ecstasy when the man born crippled was healed at the beautiful gate. Acts.3v10. In Lk.5v26., “amazement took hold on all,” “lambano,” “to take hold of,” is used with “ekstasis,” to describe people being gripped by amazement, at the healing of the paralytic, and by fear, “phobos,” when the widow of Nain's son was raised from the dead. Lk.7v16..

"Ekplesso." This verb is derived from the intensive, “ek,” “out of,” and “plesso,” “to strike,” and so means to be exceedingly struck in mind, and astonished. It occurs 13 times in the New Testament. It occurs 4 times in Matthew's Gospel. In Mt.7v28., the multitudes “were struck out of themselves;” the imperfect tense shows the continual buzz of astonished conversation at the authoritative teaching of Jesus. In Mt.13v54. His townspeople at Nazareth were likewise astonished at our Lord's teaching, wisdom and works of power; however, they were offended in Him, and refused to believe in Him; the imperfect passive shows the continual rejection of Christ. In Mt.19v25., the imperfect tense is used to show the disciples continuing mood of total astonishment when our Lord said that it is difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. In Mt.22v33. the perfect passive shows the settled state of amazement of the crowds at our Lord's teaching, they were amazed, beside themselves, and overwhelmed by it. “Ekplesso” occurs five times in Mark's Gospel; Mk.1v22. 6v2. 7v37. 10v26. 11v18.; three times in Luke's Gospel; 2v48. 4v32. 9v43.; and once in Acts; Acts.13v12., the temporary blinding of Elymas the sorcerer” by Paul, astounded the proconsul Sergius Paulus, and caused him to become a believer in the Lord.

"Phobos." A noun, which originally had the meaning of flight through being frightened, then it came to mean the fear, dread and terror that caused that flight. It is used of the fear that came on people when they saw the Divine miraculous. Mt.14v26. 28v4,8. Mk.4v41. Lk.1v12,65. 2v9. 5v26. 7v16. 8v37. 21v26. Acts.2v43. 5v5,11. Rev.11v11. “Phobos” is also used many times of the reverential fear of God, Acts.9v31. 19v17-20. Rom.3v18. 2Cor.5v11. 7v1,11,15. Eph.5v21. 6v5. Phil.2v12. 1Pet.1v17. 3v15. 1Jn.4v18.; and fear of death and eternal judgement, Rom.8v15. Jude.v23.; and the proper respect and fear of authorities and superiors in Rom.13v3,7. and 1Pet.2v18. In Acts.19v13-17. even a demon caused people to fear, and Christ to be magnified.

"Phobeomai." A verb akin to “phobos,” which in earlier Greek meant, “to put to flight;” in the New Testament it is always used with the meaning, “to be afraid, to fear, to show reverential fear. In the Authorised Version, it is translated, “fear,” 63 times; “be afraid,” 25 times; “be afraid of,” 4 times; and “reverence,” once. It is used of the fear of the disciples when our Lord stilled the storm, Mk.4v41. When the demoniac of Gadara was healed, all who saw him were afraid. Mk.5v15. Jesus told Jairus to believe and not be afraid. Mk.6v36. The apostles were sore afraid in the mount of transfiguration, Mt.17v6,7.; The visitations of angels, and even our dear Lord Jesus, brought fear to those who experienced them. Lk.1v13,30,50. 2v9,10. Rev.1v17.

When Jesus went up to Jerusalem just before His sufferings and death, the disciples were amazed ("ethambounto," the imperfect of "thambeo"), and afraid ("ephobounto," the imperfect of "phobeomai"), at the grimly determined way our Lord walked before them, and His whole grave and serious deportment. Mk.10v32. He steadfastly set His face like a flint to go to Jerusalem. Lk.9v51. Is.50v7.

"Phoberos." An adjective meaning "fearful," it is used in the active sense in the New Testament, that is, in the sense of causing fear, and so means, fearful, terrifying, or terrible. It only occurs in Heb.12v21., and 10v27,31.. "Phoberos" is translated as "terrible," in the Authorised Version of Heb.12v21., "And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceeding fear and tremble with terror."

"Ekphobos." An adjective, from "ek," "out of," and "phobos," "frightened." It only occurs in Heb.12v21. and Mk.9v6.. In Heb.12v21., Moses said, "I am exceeding fearful," even Moses was frightened and shaken by the manifestations of God's power and glory at Mount Sinai. Here, "ekphobos," "I exceeding fear," is used with "entromos," to tremble and quake with fear.

In Mk.9v6., it is revealed that the disciples were "sore afraid" at the revelation of the glory of God manifested at Mount Hermon, during the transfiguration of Jesus and the visit of Moses and Elijah.
The verb "ekphobeo," only occurs in 2Cor.10v9., where Paul writes, "as if I would terrify you by letters."

"Entromos." An adjective meaning "trembling with fear," from the intensive "en," "in," and "tremo," "to tremble, to quake." It only occurs in Acts.7v32. 16v29. and Heb.12v21.. It is used in Acts.7v32., of Moses trembling with fear at the burning bush, and in Heb.12v21., of Moses trembling with fear at the manifestations of God's glory at Sinai. In Acts.16v29., the jailor trembled in fear at the heavenly earthquake that shook the prison.

We are told in Heb.12v28., to serve God with reverence, "aidous" and godly fear, "eulabeias:" and we are told in Heb.5v7. that our Lord's strong crying and tears were heard in Gethsemane because of His godly fear, "eulabeia," which speaks of a careful and watchful reverence in every circumstance of life.

"Emphobos." An adjective, which literally means, "in fear," from "en," in, and "phobos," fear; and means afraid, terrified and affrighted. It only occurs in Lk.24v5,37. Acts.10v4. 22v9. 24v25. and Rev.11v13..

"Perieko." "To encompass, enclose, contain." In Lk.5v9., we read that astonishment encompassed and seized, "perieko," Peter and his companions at the catch of fish.

The strength and repetition of these words of awe, amazement, astonishment, wonder and fear, convey in the most striking manner the remarkable effect of the gifts of the Holy Spirit on those who beheld His miracles. People were compelled to listen and take heed to the Gospel by the "wonderful things" that God was doing; the same response occurs today where these gifts are manifested in power. The inhabitants of the world learn righteousness when God's power and judgements are manifested in the earth. Is.26v8,9. Rom.15v18-21.

APPENDIX 2. GOD'S PARABLES, PUZZLES, RIDDLES AND DARK SAYINGS.

In Numb.12v1-15., Miriam and Aaron were very critical of Moses when he married a Cushite woman. Some think that Zipporah, Moses first wife, may have died and Moses had married again, for over forty years had passed since his marriage to Zipporah. Others think that it could have been Zipporah the Midianite, the sister of Jethro and the daughter of Reuel, the priest of Midian, and the mother of his two sons Gershom and Eliezer; because they say the land of Midian in Arabia was included in the land of Cush as well as Ethiopia, for Habakkuk links Midian with Cushan. Ex.2v21. 4v24-26. 18v2,6. Hab.3v7. Midian was a son of Abraham through Keturah. Gen.25v1-4. An Israelite was forbidden to marry a Canaanite, but not an Egyptian or a Cushite woman; Joseph married an Egyptian woman. Gen.24v3. 41v45. Exod.23v1-8. 34v11-16. Josh.17v18.

The wife of Moses could have been a dark skinned Ethiopian, or a less dark Midianite, but Miriam and Aaron did not approve, they were full of racial prejudice, and thought that his marriage was a great mistake. Did Miriam and Aaron carry this bitter criticism in their hearts against the marriage of Moses to Zipporah for over forty years old? It is possible; for the wives of leaders have often been bones of contention. Some think that Zipporah could have died ,and Moses had married again.

Miriam and Aaron used the prophetic ministries that God had given them as a basis for criticising Moses, they said in Numb.12v2., "Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?" God heard this and was displeased, because they were using their God-given spiritual ministries and gifts as a means of arrogantly criticising Moses. They pretended they were equal to Moses in prophetic ministry and spiritual experience, when he was far superior to them in both, and the Lord let them know it. The Lord says in His inspired commentary in Numb.12v3., "Now the man Moses was very meek and humble more than all men who were on the face of the earth." God told Moses to write this down, for He who knew all men's hearts, knew that it was true. The word for "very" is "meh-ode," and can be used with other words, like the English, as an intensive or superlative; the superlative is given in the Divine commentary. The word for "meek" is "anav," (from "aw-naw," "looking down;") it can be used for those who are depressed, or poor in circumstances. However, Hebrew scholars agree that the thought behind "anav" in Numb.12v3., is that Moses was not only little in his own eyes, and was very meek, humble, and lowly-minded; he was also very saintly, patient, gentle

and kind. The Authorised Version translates “anav;” as “meek” in Ps.22v6. 25v9. 37v11. 76v9. 147v6. 149v4. Is.11v4. 29v19. 61v1. Amos.2v7. and Zeph.2v3.; and humble in Ps.9v12. 10v12,17. 34v2. and 69v32.; and “lowly” in Prov.3v34. and 16v19.; and “poor” in Job.24v4. Ps.18v18. Is.32v7. and Amos.8v4.

The character of Moses is the key to his prophetic ministry, the mightiest man in spiritual power under the Old Covenant; was the gentlest, humblest,, and kindest soul in all the world. The criticism of Moses was totally uncalled for, and his brother and sister had to be taught a lesson in humility. God calls them to the tabernacle and comes down in a pillar of cloud and talks to them. This was almost certainly the Lord Jesus, God the Word, the messenger of the Father. We can learn a great deal about prophetic ministry from the words of our Lord on this occasion.

A. GOD SHOWS THE GREAT SUPERIORITY OF THE PROPHETIC MINISTRY OF MOSES.

1. The difference between dream and vision ministry and open visions of God.

Our Lord told Miriam and Aaron, in Numb.12v6-10., of the vast difference between a dream and vision ministry and the direct face-to-face conversation with Himself, He said that Moses had reached the pinnacle of prophetic ministry, but they had still a long way to go. Our Lord said, “If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make myself known to him in a vision, and speak to him in a dream. v7. But not so with my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my house. (Heb.3v2-6.) v8. I speak with him face to face, even plainly, and not in dark sayings; and he beholds the form of the Lord. v9. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and He departed. v10. And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, suddenly Miriam became leprous, as white as snow. Then Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was a leper.” This discipline brought illumination, humiliation, and repentance. Moses asked God to heal Miriam, but the Lord insisted that Miriam should remain leprous, and be shut out of the camp for seven days. This was a necessary lesson for them and all the people of God, they were warned not to criticise such a great prophet. This stopped their niggling criticism, and doubtless brought a healthy fear among the people of God. When Ananias and Sapphira died for their sin, it brought a very healthy fear of God and sin, in the early Church at Jerusalem. Acts.5v5,11.

God explained to Aaron and Miriam that there are revelation gifts, and great revelation gifts; the very top level of prophetic ministry is face to face communion with God The greatest seers have all had visions of God, and we should be suitably humbled by this, and not think more highly of ourselves than we should. We should not deceive ourselves; no one has reached the highest level of prophetic ministry until they have had visions of the Father and Jesus, and continual revelations directly from them, of their plans, knowledge and wisdom. To these great prophets God unveils facts that His all seeing eye sees, and which He desires them to know, they see things as God sees them, without symbolic pictures, visions and dreams, with direct, clear impartation of knowledge personally from the mouth of the Lord. This was the very point that Paul made in 2Cor.12v1-4., when he was defending his ministry against the attacks of the Judaizers. Paul states that he had an experience similar to Moses, he was caught up to heaven and heard such confidential Divine secrets that God would not allow him to repeat them; this proved that his ministry had reached the highest levels of spiritual power and authority. In Gal.1v11,12., Paul states that he received his Gospel by direct face-to-face revelation from the Lord Jesus.

2. The difference between Divine puzzle visions and open conversation with God.

The word for “dark sayings” in Numb.12v8., is “chiydah,” (Strong 2420,) which means, “a puzzle, a trick, conundrum, dark saying, hard question, parable, proverb, oracle and riddle.” “Chiydah” occurs 17 times, in the Hebrew Old Testament.

a. In Numb.12v8., God uses “chiydah,” when He tells Miriam and Aaron that His face to face conversation of Moses was the ultimate in methods of revelation, and a far superior to His normal method of revelation by “dark sayings” to most prophets. God's use of it here gives a valuable insight into prophetic ministry, and God's methods of revelation to His prophets.

b. In Judges.14v12-19., “chiydah” occurs eight times over Samson's riddle. The Philistine Lords threatened Samson's wife and her family with death if she did not find out the riddle, and so she coaxed the meaning of the riddle out of Samson.

c. In 1King.10v1. and 2Chron.9v1., “chiydah” is used of the “hard questions” that the Queen of Sheba tried Solomon with.

d In Prov.1v6., Solomon states that one of his reasons for writing his book of proverbs, was to help people understand dark sayings, which are too profound to be understood by the foolish and simple.

e. In Ps.49v4., “chiydah” is used of a psalmist with a harp, singing a proverb and dark saying, which told the sad end of those who trust in riches; this was a riddle indeed to the greedy rich, but open truth to the children of God.

f. In Ps.78v2., Asaph uses “chiydah” in his prophecy that Jesus would tell hidden truths and dark sayings in His parables. This is quoted in Mt.13v34,35., when Jesus told a series of parables to the people, with the stated intention of hiding Divine truth from those who did not want to receive it, while revealing Divine truths and

mysteries to those who did. Mt.13v10-17.

g. In Ezek.17v2.. God gives a parabolic riddle of the vine, Israel, and two eagles, Nebuchadnezzar and Pharaoh. God warns that Israel's hope of deliverance by aid from Pharaoh was in vain; there was no escape from the Divine discipline of the Babylonian captivity, the Lord finishes with a message of hope in v22-24., God does not leave them without hope, this Divine encouragement in Divine discipline, is a very necessary mark of true prophecy. Ezek.17v1-24.

h. In Hab.2v6.. God makes a proverb and "taunting riddle" to the greedy and idolatrous in Israel.

i. In Dan.8v23. of Satan's dark sayings. God uses "chiydah" to reveal that the Antichrist, "the little horn" of Dan.7v8,11,21,22,24,25., "will understand dark sayings." Antichrist is the most powerful occultist of all time, and he not only knows the evil plans of Satan, but is also the chief instrument in bringing them to pass. Some have said that "understand dark sentences," is referring to Antichrist's diplomatic cunning and deceit. That "chiydah" can mean much more than diplomatic cunning, can be seen from its use in the above Scriptures; and also from the fact that the diplomatic cunning and deceit of Antichrist is referred to in Dan.8v25., where it states, "through his policy also, he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many." The Scriptures tell us that Satan will give his power to Antichrist and dominate and direct his mind and actions. Dan.8v24. Rev.13v4. Antichrist revels in the power that flows from the supernatural knowledge that Satan possesses and gives to him. The knowledge that is given by Satan's "dark sentences," gives Antichrist power over men, as well as supernatural diplomatic deceit, and guidance and strategy in war.

Satan has long used the bait of false knowledge as a snare to mankind, he used it to corrupt Adam and Eve; and he has made morons of the wise and intelligent in the areas of science and evolution, in a vain effort to explain away God as the great Creator. Gen.3v5-7. Rom.1v18-23. In v22., "fools," is "moraino." The fallen angels, who came and took upon them human form, and lived as men; are called, among other names, by the name "Nephilim." They are reported in ancient legends to have obtained influence over mankind, and worship as Gods, by their superior knowledge. An alternative name for the Nephilim, is "rephaim," which means "healers," and in the Septuagint it is actually rendered as "iatroi," that is, "physicians," in Ps.88v10. and Is.26v14.; but in other places "rephaim" has been translated into the Greek as "giant" or "Titan." Superior medical knowledge has always impressed mankind; when Satan is expelled from the heavenly places into the earth at the start of the great tribulation, he will undoubtedly make superior medical knowledge one of his ploys to deceive mankind. The claim to superior knowledge has always been made by the servants of Satan, the Gnostics, Theosophists, and other occult masters, they often claim that their knowledge was derived from angels, or other supernatural beings. According to Rev.7v7-12. and 13v42., after Satan is cast out of the heavenly places to earth, he gives his power, knowledge and wisdom to the Antichrist.

Antichrist will be possessed and energised by Satan. Gabriel told Daniel in Dan.8v24, that Antichrist's "power shall be mighty, but not by his own power." The apostle John on Patmos, over 600 years later, was told the identical facts, "the dragon gave him his power, and his throne and great authority." Satan shares his powers of mind and being with the Antichrist. It is out of the malevolent, vicious and sadistic mind of Satan that the horrors of the last days are conceived and brought into being. Antichrist is the most powerful occultist of all time, and he not only knows the evil plans of Satan, but is also the chief instrument in bringing them to pass. 2Thes.2v7. Antichrist, like Judas, will be possessed by Satan and fulfil his evil plans; they are both called "the son of perdition," having reached the ultimate in evil; Judas by his betrayal of Jesus, and Antichrist by bringing into reality Satan's plans to dominate and destroy the world. Jn.13v27. 2Thes.2v3. The children of God have revealed to them, not only the wonderful plans of our heavenly Father, "the mysteries of the kingdom of God;" they have also been told about Satan's evil plans, "the mystery of iniquity." Mt.13v11,16,17. Rev.10v7. Eph.3v10,11. 2Thes.2v7.

B. IT IS A FACT THAT GOD SPEAKS IN PUZZLES, RIDDLES AND DARK SAYINGS.

1. These ambiguous puzzles, enigmas, and riddles are divinely ordained.

When critics say that visions and dreams are dangerous, because they an at times be vague, and be misunderstood, they criticise the wisdom and will of God; for God has decreed that He is going to speak in this way, and we have to accept it.

2. Paul speaks of the blurred image of Divine revelation.

In 1Cor.13v12., Paul speaks of our present knowledge of God and spiritual things, as being like looking in a mirror that gives only a dim blurred reflection of reality. We do not have a silvered mirror, which can reveal every wrinkle and detail, we see, "as in a riddle, or enigma," "ainigma," but when perfection comes, we shall see in reality, face to face." This face-to-face vision is the open vision of God in Heaven. Moses had this face-to-face revelation on earth, **before** he was in the kingdom, which shows he was at the pinnacle of prophetic ministry. Moses shows us that the quality of revelation has a great deal to do with the growth of love, and the quality of love. It is not without reason that Paul states the truth about Divine enigmas in the chapter on love and its relation to our Christian character and work. God desires to develop love in us through the events in our private lives and public ministries, and His gifts and ministries to us. Sometimes God deliberately veils the revelations He gives through visions and dreams, they are real enigmas, and two or three different meanings are possible. God does this very deliberately, and with infinite wisdom, to make us think and pray about the

meaning of His visions and dreams. Samson's riddle was a real puzzle, and God can and often does, give us puzzles to solve with His parables and prophetic revelations.

these godly Church fathers relate.

Bengel gives the reason why spiritual gifts were absent in his day in the following short note. “The reason why many miracles are not now wrought is not so much because faith is established, as that unbelief reigns.” One fears that it is the reign of unbelief in the hearts of theologians that causes them to state, against all the evidence to the contrary, that spiritual gifts were confined to the apostolic age. It is a striking fact of Church History, that when faith, holiness and prayer have been renewed, God has restored His gifts to His Church.

In a 79 page treatise, John Wesley totally refutes Dr. Middleton's statement that the supernatural powers of the Church had ceased with the apostolic age, it is one of the best defences of spiritual gifts that has been written. I shall now quote some witnesses from Church history that show spiritual gifts have been manifested through Church History in periods of revival.

JUSTIN MARTYR. A.D. 100 to 165.
Justin made so many quotations from the Gospels, that it has been said that it would be possible to reproduce almost the whole of the first three Gospels from his writings; he also gives a very definite testimony to the Gospel of John. Justin was commanded to sacrifice to the Roman gods, and when he refused, he was scourged and beheaded. Marcus Aurelius, who reigned A.D. 161 to 180, was the Emperor who ordered Justin's execution; he was a philosophical moralist, who supported the Stoics; like many today, he claimed to be a moral person, but he had a deep hatred of Christianity, and many Christians suffered martyrdom because of him. He also orchestrated a vicious intellectual attack against Christianity, but the Church triumphed over it all. Justin's first apology to Emperor Antoninus Pius was favourably received; his second to Marcus Aurelius brought almost immediate death.

In his first apology to Emperor Antonius Pius, Justin stated: “That the empire of spirits has been destroyed by Jesus you may even now convince yourselves by what is passing before your own eyes; for many of our people, of us Christians, have healed and still continue to heal in every part of the world, and even in your city (Rome) numbers possessed by evil spirits (are healed) such as could not be healed by other exorcists, simply by adjuring them in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate. There are prophetic gifts among us even until now. You may see with us both women and men having gifts from the Spirit of God.”

EUSEBIUS. The famous Church historian of Caesarea. A.D. 260 to 340.
Eusebius writes in Book 3 of his Church History, of evangelists who were living during the early years of the second century.
“Of those that flourished in these times, Quadratus is said to have been distinguished for his prophetical gifts. There are many others, also, noted in these times, who held rank in the apostolic succession.... The Holy Spirit also wrought many wonders as yet through them, so that as soon as the gospel was heard, men in crowds voluntarily and eagerly embraced the true faith with their whole minds.”

IRENAEUS, The overseer of the Church at Lyons in France. A.D. 115? 125? to 202.
Irenaeus spent his early life in the neighbourhood of Smyrna, when he was at Smyrna, he came into contact with Polycarp, and became one of his pupils. Jerome tells us that like Polycarp, Irenaeus suffered martyrdom. Irenaeus writes in his “Against Heresies,” Book 3. c3. 4.: “Polycarp was not only instructed by apostles and conversed with many who had seen Christ, but was also by apostles in Asia appointed bishop of the Church in Smyrna; whom I also saw in my early youth, for he tarried on earth a long time, and when a very old man, gloriously and most nobly suffered martyrdom.”

Eusebius puts the date of the martyrdom of Polycarp at A.D. 166, others at A.D. 156. We know that when Polycarp was asked to revile Christ by proconsul Quadratus, Polycarp replied, “Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He never did me any wrong: how then can I revile my King and my Saviour?” Polycarp's presence was so infused with God that it awed his persecutors, but they were determined to kill him. This remarkable Christian was then burnt at the stake, and finally dispatched with a sword, because the fire had not killed him. This would, taking the date of Eusebius of Polycarp's death as A.D. 166, put the conversion of Polycarp at about A.D. 80; the earlier date would put it at about A.D. 70. Polycarp was obviously converted as a child, and had about 20 to 30 years contact with the apostle John.

Polycarp was instructed by apostles, including the apostle John, so Irenaeus could hardly have had a better tutor and example than Polycarp in his formative years; and that Polycarp trained him well in the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is proved by his writings. After his early years in Asia, Irenaeus then went to Lyons in France, first becoming a presbyter, and then the leading elder and overseer, when he succeeded Pothinus, who was martyred in the later persecutions under Marcus Aurelius in about A.D. 177. More peaceful times followed, and in about A.D. 180, Irenaeus wrote his five books “Against Heresies,” or as Eusebius calls them, “A Refutation and Overthrow of False Doctrine.” In his writings Irenaeus defends the gifts of the Holy Spirit. He writes in book 2: “Even among the brethren frequently in a case of necessity, when the whole church united in much fasting and prayer, the spirit has returned to the ex-animated body, and the man was granted to the prayers of the saints.”

And after some other observations he writes: “But if they say that our Lord also did these things only in appearance, we shall refer them back to the prophetic declarations, and shall show from them that all these

things were strictly foretold, and were done by Him and that He alone is the Son of God. Wherefore, also, those who were truly His disciples, receiving grace from Him, in His name performed these things for the benefit of the rest of men, as everyone received the free gift from Him. Some, indeed, most certainly and truly cast out demons, so that frequently those persons themselves were cleansed from wicked spirits, believed and were received into the Church. Others have the knowledge of things to come, as also visions and prophetic communications; others heal the sick by the imposition of hands, and restore them to health. And, moreover, as we said above, even the dead have been raised, and continued with us for many years. And why should we say more? It is impossible to tell the number of gifts which the Church throughout the world received from God, and the deeds performed in the name of Jesus Christ that was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and this to every day for the benefit of the heathen, without deceiving any, or exacting their money. For as she has received freely from God, she also ministers. Nor does she perform anything by means of angelic invocations or by incantations, or by any other wicked, curious art; but directing her prayers to the Lord who made all things, in a pure, sincere and straightforward spirit, and calling upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, she has been accustomed to work miracles for the advantage of mankind, and not to lead them into error. ---- The name of our Lord Jesus Christ EVEN NOW confers benefits, and cures thoroughly and effectually ALL who ANYWHERE believe on Him."

In book 5 Irenaeus writes:" In like manner do we also hear many brethren in the Church who possess prophetic gifts, who through the Spirit speak all kinds of languages, and bring to light for the general benefit the hidden things of men and declare the mysteries of God, whom also the apostles term spiritual." End of quote.

TERTULLIAN. Of Carthage in North Africa. About A.D. 160 to 220.
Tertullian was educated as a Lawyer, and was a very earnest advocate for the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Tertullian wrote a large number of works, and made many quotations from the New Testament. He was a Montanist, that is, a follower of Montanus, A.D. 171, who "began to teach the necessity of new inspiration to quicken the decaying life of the Church." Montanus taught fasting, self-control, and purity of life after baptism. Tertullian opposed Marcion the Gnostic heretic and wrote five books refuting his heresies. Tertullian wrote his great work against Marcion in A.D. 207; and in it he invites Marcion to produce evidence of the gifts of the Holy Spirit being manifested among his followers as they were among Tertullian's Christians. "Let him exhibit prophets such have spoken, not by human sense, but with the Spirit God, such as have predicted things to come, and have made manifest the secrets of the heart; let him produce a psalm, a vision, a prayer, only let it be by the Spirit in an ecstasy, that is in a rapture, whenever an interpretation of tongues has occurred to him."

Tertullian said that in the name of Jesus miracles had occurred throughout the Roman Empire, and had produced many converts in spite of the persecutions. He said in his time, about 200 A.D., that the Christians in a single province were more numerous than the Roman army. Some estimate that this means there were at least nine million Christians in the Roman Empire. Some historians say this estimate by Tertullian is conservative, they calculate that Christians comprised as many as one in six, or even one in five, of the population.

ORIGEN. A.D. 185 to 254.
In defending Christianity from the attacks of Celsus, an arch opponent of Christianity; Origen tells how he had seen with his own eyes the healing of grievous diseases and the insane by invocation of the name of God and Jesus, he states in, "Against Celsus." 3.24. "And some give evidence of having received, through their faith, a marvellous power, by the cures which they perform, invoking no other name over those who need their help than that of the God of all things, and of Jesus, along with mention of his history. For we too HAVE SEEN many persons freed by these means, from grievous calamities and from distractions of mind and from madness and from countless other ills which could not be cured either by men or devils."

ANTHONY. Of the Thebaid in Egypt. A.D. 251 to 356.
Anthony has been called the father of monasticism, he went from Alexandria into the Thebaid in Egypt, and organised a community from scattered companies of recluses. They called the community Coenobia, from "koinos bios," "a life in common;" and as a result were called Coenobites. They bound themselves by a vow of poverty, chastity, and manual labour for the common good. This was in sharp contrast to the wealth that Anthony gave up for this life of prayer. Anthony became well known for his healing ministry, and also experienced bilocation. After nearly killing himself with too much fasting and prayer in his early life, Anthony lived to the great age of 105.

Anthony was born in A.D. 251 and died at the age of 105 in A.D. 356. He was a comparatively illiterate man, who rose to a great heights of spiritual wisdom and power, which was sustained by long periods of solitary communion with God. Anthony's spirituality made him of far more use to God than the highly educated churchmen of his day. In his earlier years, Anthony led such a rigorous ascetic life that his health was badly impaired and he almost died. He later realised that God requires a relationship of love more than anything else, however, he still kept up a disciplined life. Anthony was frequently used by God to heal the sick, but he always pointed people from himself to God, and said it was the work of God alone. Anthony inspired the rise of other monastic settlements; the largest being formed by Pachomius at Tabennae, an island on the Nile; when Athanasius visited it, 3,000 monks singing hymns and litanies greeted him.

The monasteries were centres of learning and scholarship, and some valuable work was done in them. Jerome spent many years in a cell at Bethlehem preparing for the translation of the Latin Vulgate; and Athanasius wrote his works against the Arians while hiding with Anthony and his monks in their monastery in the Thebaid desert. Many Christian leaders received their training in the monasteries. Unfortunately the monks often suffered mental breakdowns, partly through the heat, but mostly through loneliness; for though they lived in community, their ascetic lives and the solitude of their cells brought about morbid fears, hallucinations, and in some cases mental derangement and lunacy. The concentration upon their own spiritual improvement tended to produce the evils of spiritual pride and self-righteousness. Concern and care for other people's spiritual welfare is the way to true humility and spiritual growth.

The Historian Neander, wrote of Anthony: "He could easily have acquired the fame of being a worker of miracles, since many, particularly of those who were thought to be possessed of evil spirits, were indebted to his prayers and to the impression of tranquillity and peace which went forth from him.... But he pointed those who applied to him for help, or had been indebted to him for it, away from himself to God and Christ.... They were to know that the power of healing belonged neither to him nor to any other man, but was the work of God alone, who wrought it when and for whom He pleased."

CHRYSOSTOM, THE GOLDEN MOUTHED. A.D. 345 to 407.
Chrysostom was famed for his eloquence and spirituality, he was the greatest of the Antiochian school, and the finest orator of the Eastern Church, and a notable expositor; about 640 of his homilies are still extant. Chrysostom is by general consent the greatest of the bishops of Constantinople. His father Secundus was a general in the imperial army, who had considerable wealth, but he died while Chrysostom was an infant. Chrysostom's young widowed mother, Anthusa, trained him in Christian things. Chrysostom was placed under the tuition of the pagan orator Libanus, in his training for the legal profession; however, the corruption of the legal profession and the profligacy of the city disgusted him, so he returned home and turned to Christian things. John still carried on with his secular career, however, after a three-year probation he was received into the Church. A fellow student called Basil tried to get John to enter a monastery, but his mother persuaded him not to do so; however, when she died he entered a monastery and stayed there for six years. In A.D. 381, John was ordained a deacon, and in A.D. 386, he became a presbyter at Antioch. When Nectarius the patriarch of Constantinople died, Chrysostom was ordained in his place. John led a simple abstemious life, and Church revenues were spent on charity, not luxury.

The Empress Eudoxia and worldly-minded clergy violently opposed Chrysostom. The charged him with being a follower of Origen, and he was banished from office; but was quickly recalled as an earthquake made Eudoxia fear. John soon offended the Empress again and he was banished to Cucusus, a village in the Tauros, on the borders of Cilicia and Armenia. John's great work continued, though isolated his fame spread far and wide, by letters and the planning of missions. Gibbon says, "Every tongue repeated the praises of his genius and virtue, and the respectful attention of the Christian world was fixed on a desert spot in the mountains of Tauros." John's opponents were again moved with jealousy and anger, they got John banished to the wild and desolate region of Pityrus in Pontus. The journey killed John; he died at Comana, some distance short of his goal, on Sept. 14th. A.D. 407. Thirty years later Chrysostom's bones were brought to Constantinople in honour. Emperor Theodosius the younger, publicly asked God to forgive the sin of his parents, Theodosius and Eudoxia.

In his "Libra Contra Gentiles" Chrysostom states that the greater works promised by Jesus in Jn.14v12., were fulfilled in the Acts of the Apostles, and then goes on to record that even the opponents of the Church recognised the miracles happening in his time. Chrysostom writes: "But if anyone should assert that those were mere smoke and a fictitious wonder unworthy of credit, let us view those of the present day, which are calculated both to stop and to put to shame the blaspheming mouth, and to check the unbridled tongue. For throughout our whole inhabitable world there is not a country or nation or a city where these wonders are not commonly spoken of, which, if figments, would never have occasioned so much admiration. And you yourselves indeed could testify to this. For we have no need to receive confirmations from others of what we assert, seeing that you yourselves, our opponents, supply us therewith." End of quote.

It is sad that some Christian scholars have less historical integrity and faith than these heathen opponents of the Church.

LACTANTIUS. Of Nicomedia. Approx. A.D. 307 Apologies.
He wrote "Divine Institutions," which attacked paganism and defended Christianity, probably in Diocletian's reign. He was called in his old age to educate Crispus, the son of Constantine, and he dedicated several books to the Emperor. Lactantius wrote an unusual and remarkable work on the "Deaths of Persecutors," which gave proofs for Christianity by showing the Divine judgements which fell on the enemies of Christianity from Tiberius onwards. So just as Herod was executed by God through the prayer of the Christians, judgement gifts took place during Church history too. Acts.12v1-23. N.B. v1,5,23.

AUGUSTINE. A.D. 354 to 430.
Emperor Constantine's "Edict of Toleration," in A.D. 313, made the persecuted Christian Church an official religion of the Roman Empire. So hostility and violent persecution were suddenly replaced by worldly acclaim, wealth and influence. The Church, which had kept a great deal of its glow through the centuries of vicious persecution and suffering, began to backslide in the time of seductive prosperity and worldly acceptance. Three

centuries of vicious persecution had forced the Church to pray in order to survive; when this pressure to pray was removed, the prayer life of the Church ebbed away.

The simple structure and close fellowship based on homes, that had caused the Church to survive almost three hundred years of persecution, was replaced by financially demanding buildings and organisational structures; which carried little of the fire and love, which had been the norm in the home fellowships, during the centuries of persecution. The minds of Christians became diverted from Christ, the Head of the Church, to the institutional structure of the Church, and the constraint to conform became part of the civil law. Augustine started the Church down the road that ended with the horrors of the inquisition, he taught that Christians could be beaten and whipped to force them to stay in the religious organisation. The emphasis had passed from looking for a kingdom in heaven, to making a structure and kingdom in the style of men, which had influence on earth. There was a gradual replacement of New Testament power and truth and evangelical doctrines, with ecclesiastical structures and kingdom building. Scriptural conformity began more and more to be replaced by man-made traditions, and lacking the guidance of both a spiritual glow and the Scriptures, Christians became gullible and superstitious. Once a religious system and kingdom have been built, it becomes self-propagating, even when God has little to do with it.

In about A.D. 390, Augustine wrote the following in his treatise, “On The True Religion,” “For when the Catholic Church had been diffused and established through the whole world, those miracles were no longer permitted to continue in our time, lest the mind should always seek visible things, and the human race should be chilled by the customariness of the very things whose novelty had inflamed them.”

This was written about four or five years after Augustine's conversion, and it could be that the young convert accepted and quoted the views of some of the spiritual leaders around him. However, shortly before his death in A.D. 430, Augustine admitted that he had not told the truth, and in His work, “Retractions;” 1.13.7.; he retracted what he had written in, “On The True Religion,” and stated that even when he wrote it, he had known of a blind man being healed in Milan, and other miracles. What integrity! It was a good thing that he repented and decided to tell the truth. Some 37 years after writing, “On The True Religion,” Augustine wrote at length, in about A.D. 427, about miracles taking place in his day; he states in, “The City of God,” Book 22, chapter 8: “Even now miracles are wrought in the name of Christ ... but they are not so brilliant and conspicuous as to cause them to be published with such glory as accompanied the former miracles.”

In other words miracles were still happening, but not in the abundance, or in the power of the early Church. Augustine goes on to tell of a miracle at Carthage; he relates how Innocentius, an ex-advocate of the deputy prefect was healed, in answer to fervent prayer, of an inflamed fistula; Augustine states it completely disappeared, “in my presence and under my own eyes.” Augustine then tells how a woman, who had an inoperable cancer of the breast, was told in a dream by the Lord to ask the first woman who came out of the baptistry at Easter to make the sign of Christ upon the cancer; the woman did as the Lord instructed her and was immediately healed. Augustine gives two cases of healing at baptism. He tells of a Doctor who was instantly and permanently healed of gout at baptism; and that “an old comedian of Curubis was cured at baptism, not only of paralysis but also of hernia.” Augustine continues recounting miracles and then states: “What am I to do? I am so pressed by the promise of finishing this work that I cannot record all the miracles I know; and doubtless several of our adherents, when they read what I have narrated, will regret that I have omitted so many which they, as well as I, certainly know.”

This shows that even at the start of the spiritual decline in Augustine's day, miracles were still taking place. Healings by means of relics that Augustine and others relate, do have a question mark over them. However, the healing of two blind people through the bones of the martyrs, was witnessed by too many people to be rejected as false, and we should remember that Elisha’s bones raised a man from the dead; showing us that this kind of miracle, can and does take place. 2Kings.13v20,21. It is also difficult to rule out people being healed through water, when John's Gospel records that the first person who stepped into the pool of Bethesda, after an angel troubled the water, was healed of whatever disease they had. Jn.5v1-7. N.B. v4. Let us not limit the Holy One of Israel. Ps.78v41. However, healing by such means as Elisha's bones and the pool of Bethesda are the rare exception and not the rule, and are certainly not God's ideal method of working, but rather an indication of a state of unbelief. A person full of the Holy Spirit is God's best means of manifesting healing and the other gifts of the Spirit. Backsliding from God replaces personal faith, truth and Scripture patterns with superstition.

We will not consider here how Augustine corrupted Paul's theology, and the disastrous effects of his new theology on the doctrine and faith of the Church. We will just state, that Satan found it easy to corrupt Augustine's theology because of the bias to evil produced by his former licentious life, and his involvement and fascination with various false doctrines before he became a Christian; and also by his desire to obtain and retain influence and power for his church structure and himself.

A. J. GORDON.

Gordon states in his book on healing, that the early Church Fathers testified that miracles continued long after the apostolic age. He writes “The weight of these and like testimonies is so generally acknowledged by Church Historians that it seems little less than hardihood for scholars to go on repeating the well-worn saying, 'The age of miracles ended with the Apostles.'“

THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA.
States that speaking in tongues, "recurs in Christian revivals of every age, e.g. among the mendicant friars of the thirteenth century, among the Jansenists, the early Quakers, the converts of Wesley and Whitfield, the persecuted Protestants of the Cevennes, the Irvingites, and the revivalists of Wales and America."

PHILIP SCHAFF. Historian
Schaff proves in his "History of the Christian Church," Vol. 1 page 237 of the 1882 edition, that the phenomenon of speaking with tongues reappeared between the years 1419 to 1882 during times of religious revival: "Among the Camisards and the prophets of the Cevennes in France, among the early Quakers and Methodists, the Readers (the followers of Lasare) in Sweden in 1841 to 1843, in the Irish revivals of 1859, and especially in the "Catholic Apostolic Church," commonly called Irvingites, from 1831 to 1833, and even to this day." Schaff says of Vincent Ferrar, who died in 1419; "Spondamus and many others say, this saint was honoured with the gift of tongues." Schaff tells us that Francis Xavier, who died in 1552, "Is said to have made himself understood by the Hindus without knowing their language."

SOUER. The German Historian.
Souer writes on page 406 of the 3rd volume of his "History of the Christian Church," that Martin Luther experienced the gifts of the Holy Spirit: "Dr. Martin Luther was a prophet, evangelist, speaker in tongues and interpreter, in one person, endowed with all the gifts of the Holy Spirit."

DR. HORACE BUSHNELL. In his "Nature and the Supernatural," writes on page 324:
"Descending now to the times we call modern, the times, for example, subsequent to the reformation, nothing is easier, exactly contrary impression, than to show that the same kind of prodigies are current here, in the last three, as in the first three centuries of the Church. Whoever has read that classic "The Scots Worthies," has followed a stream of prophecies, and healings, and visible judgements, and specific answers to prayer, and discernment of spirits, corresponding at all points with the gifts and wonders of the apostolic age."

THE REV. R. BOYD, D.D..
D.L. Moody said, "I believe Pentecost was but a specimen day." The Rev. R. Boyd, writes in, "Trials and Triumphs of Faith;" how his close friend, D.L. Moody, had spiritual gifts in his meetings.

"When I (a Y.M.C.A. member) got to the rooms of the "Young Men's Christian Association" (Victoria Hall, London), I found the meetings 'on fire.' The young men were speaking with tongues, prophesying. What on earth did it mean? Only that Moody had been addressing them that afternoon! What manner of man is this? thought I, but still I did not give him my hand....Many of the clergy were so opposed to the movement that they turned their backs upon our poor, innocent "Young Men's Christian Association" for the part we took in the work; but afterwards when the flood-gates of Divine grace were opened, Sunderland, (near London), was taken by storm. I cannot describe Moody's great meeting: I can only say that the people of Sunderland warmly supported the movement, in spite of their local spiritual advisers."

GENERAL WILLIAM BOOTH. Said of the miraculous gifts of the early Church:
"There is not a word in the Bible which proves that we may not have them at the present time."

MRS BAXTER. Of "Christian Herald" fame.
Mrs Baxter experienced some outstanding operations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit; she writes:
"We can never be judges as to whether any of the gifts of the Blessed Spirit can or cannot be dispensed with in His working. There are some who think and say that the Holy Spirit's workings in the way of physical healing, or in the gift of tongues, is not needed in our day: and that His working in wisdom and knowledge alone is necessary. Let God be the judge: He hath set the members every one in the body as it hath pleased Him, and it is the workman who must judge what tools His work requires; the Head must judge with what member He can carry out His purposes." Christian Herald, May 12th. 1910.
Around 1885 God enabled Mrs. Baxter to preach for 35 minutes in German, a language she was almost unfamiliar with, she said, "After that He led me to speak almost every day, and often twice a day to hundreds of people, although when I went into a shop I could not make myself understood, nor could I understand the people."

We thank God for the inspiration of God's saints in Church History who have manifested God's power and love through His mighty gifts. We could go on and give many other instances of the manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in Church History. Church History records that Pachomius, Thomas Walsh, John Welch, Charles Finney, Evan Roberts, and multitudes of others have known the blessing and inspiration of the gift of tongues, and other manifestations of the wonderful gifts of the Holy Spirit.

THE MULTITUDES OF MODERN DAY MIRACLES.
The number of miracles which has taken place in modern days is absolutely remarkable. The raising from the dead of people who have been certified dead by doctors has occurred in the ministries of Wigglesworth, Branham and others. There is the remarkable case of Dorothy Kerin, who our Lord brought back from death; she had been a hopeless bed-fast invalid for five years and had then died, but at Christ's touch, Dorothy instantly became a healthy girl, and two stones heavier overnight; this is a fact that cannot be denied. The

equally remarkable healing of Agnes Hancock of Parkinson's disease, and her increase of almost four stone in weight in about ten minutes is also beyond dispute and confirmed by medical evidence.
The Betty Baxter story is equally glorious, a dreadful cripple with multiple serious sicknesses, bowed over in a C shape with lumps all down her spine, was completely healed personally by Jesus in less than half a minute. Glory to God! God is not "The Great Has Been," He is still "The Great I Am," who still works signs, wonders and miracles.

CONCLUSION.
The following facts are abundantly clear.
1. Spiritual gifts were manifested by most Christians in the early Church and not just by apostles, and independently of the apostles, as in the churches at Rome and Colosse, neither of which was founded by an apostle.

2. Spiritual gifts and the baptism in the Spirit were communicated to others by Christians who were not apostles, as in Acts.9v10-19., when Ananias laid hands on Paul.

3. Those who have honestly examined Church History have found incontrovertible evidence to show that spiritual gifts and healings have continued throughout Church History, and have been manifested very powerfully in times of revival, when the Church has prayed diligently and expected God to fulfil His Word. Time would fail us to tell of the miracles that took place in answer to prayer in the experiences of Luther, the Waldenses, Moravians, Huguenots, Covenanters, Quakers, Baptists, Methodists, Anglicans, Pentecostals, and many others. People who would die, and did die, rather than lie; the shed blood of the martyrs, witnesses to the truth of their testimonies. There is an abundance of proof for those who have ears to hear, those who fail to hear have closed their ears to God. Mt.13v10-17. N.B. v15.

APPENDIX 4. THE HEBREW WORDS FOR PROPHETS AND SEERS.

1. "NABIY." Pronounced "naw-bee." Strong 5030.
"Nabiy," is by far the most popular word for prophet in the Hebrew Old Testament, occurring some 309 times. It speaks of a prophet or inspired man, a receiver and speaker of the oracles of God, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. 2Pet.1v20,21.
"Naba," Strong, 5012; is by far the most popular word for prophesying in the Old Testament, occurring 115 times in the Hebrew Old Testament. Prophets allowed God's thoughts "to bubble up, to flow forth from them, and were inspired to prophesy words abundantly, and to speak, or sing, as a prophet." The prophet's words often revealed the gentle heart of God, their words "distilled and dropped like dew and gentle rain;" "nataph;" 5179, Strong says "nataph," means; "to ooze, i.e. distil gradually; by implication, to fall in drops; and figuratively, to speak by inspiration: drop, prophesy." This word not only shows the gentle side and nature of prophecy; it also reveals that prophecy can come slowly, bit by bit, with pauses, short or long, between the parts of each complete revelation. The prophet Micaiah uses this word to speak strongly against those who prophesy falsely and encourage people to sin. Mic.2v6,11. Sometimes prophets spoke prophecies with strong judgement emphasis, these "severe, hard, and heavy tidings," "qasheh," 1Kings.14v6., 7186 Strong are sometimes called a "burden," "massa," Prov.30v1. 31v1. Is.13v1. 14v28. 15v1. 17v1. etc. Jer.23v33-38. Nah.1v1. Hab.1v1. Zech.9v1. 12v1. Mal.1v1..

Abraham was a prophet and seer and was shown future events by God, who calls him a prophet, "nabiy," in Gen.20v7.. In Is.41v8., God speaks with warmth of, "Abraham my friend." James.2v23. 2Chron20v7. Because of this friendship, God revealed Sodom's destruction to Abraham, Gen.18v17-33., but much more importantly, the birth, life, ministry and death of Jesus was revealed to Abraham, for Jesus said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it and was glad." Jn.8v56. Abraham also looked for and waited expectantly for the New Jerusalem, whose Architect and builder was God, because God had revealed it to him. Heb.11v10. Outstanding prophetic ministry springs out of friendship and communion with God. Jesus has called us His friends, blessed be His name! Lk.12v4. Jn.15v14,15.

Moses said that God would raise up a prophet like to him, and those who would not listen to Him would be cut off from among the people. Deut.18v10-22. Jesus was "The Prophet." Act.3v22-24. 7v37,52. See John.1v21,25,29-34., "Are you The Prophet?" "Are you Elijah?" Mal.4v5. Our Lord's ministry was proved by miraculous credentials. Deut.13v1-18. God the Word became God the Son. Ps.2v7. 45v6,7. 102v25-27. 110v1. Heb.1v5,8,9. Aaron and Miriam had prophetic ministries, and God said that they were co-deliverers with Moses of Israel from Egypt. Micah.6v4. Exod.4v10-16. 6v28-30. 7v1,2. Numb.12v1-8.

Samuel was a prophet, and his ministry caused a resurgence of prophetic ministry, for when he was a child the word of the Lord was rare and precious, "yaqar," in those days; there was no frequent or widespread vision, "chazown," "a dream, a vision, a revelation." By the time Samuel was an old man, 1Sam.7v15. 8v1., there were groups of prophets in the land, who could prophesy to music. 1Sam.10v5-13. These ministries had obviously been brought about and inspired by the ministry and spiritual influence of Samuel at the command of God.

Elijah and Elisha formed groups who were called "the sons of the prophets:" this could mean that their fathers were prophets and that their sons caught the prophetic fire; for there were many prophets in Israel

with a considerably less powerful ministry than the ministries of Elijah and Elisha. 1Kings.18v4. 19v10,14. It could also mean that the “sons of the prophets” were young men who were trained by the prophets, as Elijah trained Elisha. 1Kings.19v16-21. See 20v35-43. Paul called Timothy and Titus his sons; 1Tim.1v2. 2Tim.2v1. Tit.1v4.; and this could be the thought behind the sons of the prophets, each ministry is expected to reproduce itself in spiritual children, and prophets should produce prophetic children. It appears that at Gilgal, Bethel, and Jericho, there were “schools,” of “the sons of the prophets,” under training for the prophetic office, by Elijah and Elisha and other prophets with a mature prophetic ministry. 1Kings.2v1,3,5,7,15. 4v38-44. God often met the material needs of His prophets and their dependants by supernatural miracles of provision. 1Kings.17v1-24. 2Kings.4v1-7,38-44. 7v1-20. The word “nabiy” is also used of false prophets among the people of God, their motives for prophesying falsely were usually popularity or mercenary gain. Is.28v7-13. Jer.13v14. 27v4-22. 28v5-17. “Nabiy,” is also used of the false evil prophets of Baal and Ashteroth, who corrupted and troubled Israel. 1Kings.18v19,40. 2King.10v19. Hos.4v5. 9v7,8. (The word “neba,” an Aramaic noun, only occurs in Ezra.5v1.; and “nebly,” a masculine Aramaic noun, only occurs in Ezra.5v1,2. and 6v14.. “Nebuah,” occurs in 2Chron.9v29. 15v8. Neh.6v12.)

The Feminine form of "nabiy" is "nebiyah."
It occurs six times in the Old Testament; five times of good prophets; **Miriam,** in Ex.15v20.; **Deborah,** in Judges.4v4.; **Huldah,** in 2Kings.22v14. and 2Chron. 34v22.; **Isaiah's wife,** Is.8v3.; and once of the false prophetess **Noadiah,** in Neh.6v14. who prophesied falsely for financial gain. In Neh.6v12-14. we see that Tobiah and Sanballat hired Noadiah and Shemaiah the son of Delaiah and other prophets, to prophesy falsely that Nehemiah's life was in danger, to make Nehemiah afraid. Cf. v5-19. It was true that Nehemiah's life was under constant threat from his enemies Sanballat and Tobiah, but these false prophets tried to produce fear and unbelief, and their prophecies were given in a spirit of gloom, doom, bitter criticism, and unbelief. A statement can be true, but if it attacks faith and discourages God's children, it can be evil and have evil effects, and become a false revelation; like the report of the ten spies, who were overcome by the problems of possessing Canaan, and left God out of the reckoning, and died for it. Numb.13v1 to 14v38.

2. "ROEH." Pronounced "Ro-eh." Strong 7203.
It is the masculine active participle of “raah,” pronounced “raw-aw,” Strong 7200; a primitive root which means “to see,” either literally or figuratively. The word “roeh,” means a seer, prophet, vision or oracle; it shows the means whereby prophetic revelation was communicated to the prophet of God**. In 1Sam.9v9. we read, “Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he said, come let us go to the seer; for he that is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer,” a “roeh.”** This shows that God taught prophets through visions, and a person cannot be a prophet without having a continual vision ministry. “Roeh” is applied to **Samuel** in 1Sam.9v9,11,19. 1Chron.9v22. 26v28. 29v29.; and **Hanani** the seer, in 2Chron.16v7,10. and 19v2.; also see Isa.30v10., “which say to the seer; see not.”

3. "CHOZEH." Pronounced "kho-zeh." Strong 2374.
It is a beholder in vision; a seer. a prophet, an astrologer. The word “chozeh” occurs 22 times in the Hebrew Old Testament; on eleven of these occasions, it is linked with people to whom God had given a prophetic ministry. David was surrounded by seers, and this is one of the major reasons for the remarkable blessing of God on David's kingdom; David wanted and sought the guidance and blessing of God, and let the Divinely given ministries function as God intended them to. **Gad,** David's seer, 2Sam.24v11. 1Chron.21v9. 29v29. 2Chron.29v25.; **Heman,** the king's seer, 1Chron.25v5.; **Iddo,** 2Chron.9v29. 12v15.; **Hanani**, 2Chron.19v2.; **Asaph,** 2Chron.29v25., the leader of worship in David's time, 1Chron.16v5,37., with **Heman,** 1Chron.25v1-5., two seers directing worship; **Jeduthan,** with **Heman,** the kings seer, 2Chron.35v15.. **Amos,** Amos.7v12.. “Chozeh” is also used to speak of seers in general, 2Kings17v13. 2Chron.33v18,19. Is.29v10.; in Is.30v10. it is translated “prophets” in the Authorised Version; and of false prophets that “see” vanity and peace where there is none, Ezek.13v9,16. 22v28. Micah.3v5-7.; and stargazers, Is.47v13., and those who make an “agreement,” “chozeh,” with Sheol, Is.28v15..

4. "MALAK." Pronounced "mal-awk." Strong 4397.
It is from a root that means to dispatch as a deputy, it could be used of ordinary messengers, but it is especially used for messengers of God; i.e. an angel, prophet, priest, Mal.2v7., or teacher. It is an ambassador, sent with a commission and representing the sender. In the Authorised Version, “malak” is translated “ambassadors,” four times; “messenger,” or “messengers,” 98 times; “angel,” or “angels,” 111 times. The children of God continually rejected God's prophetic messengers, until there was no remedy; and judgement became inevitable, and seventy years in captivity followed their rebellion. 2Chron.36v15-21. In 2Chron.36v15,16. “messengers” is “malak.” Haggai is called “the Lord's messenger,” in Hag.1v13.. In Mal.3v1., John Baptist is called “My messenger,” this is quoted four times in the New Testament, in Mt.11v10. Mk.1v2. Lk.1v76. and 7v27., and in this same verse the Lord Jesus is called “the Lord,” and “the messenger of the covenant.”

N. B. "YAHWEH MALAK," YAHWEH MESSENGER, THE INSPIRER OF THE PROPHETS.
In Is.48v12-16. and Zech.2v8-11., we read of one Yahweh being sent by another Yahweh, and in Mal.3v1., of Yahweh sending “the true Lord” as His messenger. In Jn.1v18., we read that no man has seen God at any time, this means that no man has seen the glory of the Father in all His unveiled power and glory; however, Jesus has manifested and declared the Father's character and glory. Jn.14v7-11. 17v6,26. In the Old Testament many manifestations of “Jehovah” or better “Yahweh,” were undoubtedly the manifestations of God the Word

revealing Himself to mankind before His incarnation. In these revelations, Jesus is called “Yahweh,” and yet, because the Father has sent Him, He is also called “Yahweh Malak.”

The words “Yahweh Malak,” translated in the Authorised Version as “angel of the Lord,” are better translated as “Yahweh Messenger;” **as Bishop Horsley states:** “The term 'Angel of the Lord,' which so often occurs in the English Bible, is so ill conformed to the original that, it is to be feared, it has led many into the error of conceiving of 'the Lord,' as one person, and of 'the Angel' as another. The word of the Hebrew, ill rendered 'the Lord,' is not, like the English word, an appellative, expressing rank or condition, but it is the proper name Jehovah. And this proper name is not, in the Hebrew, a genitive after the noun substantive 'Angel,' as the English represents it; but the words 'Jehovah' and 'Angel' are two substantive nouns in apposition, both speaking of the same person, the one by the appropriate name of essence, the other by the title of office. 'Jehovah angel' would be a better rendering.” **End of quote.**

God’s personal presence protected Israel. Exod.14v19,24. But in spite of all God’s warnings, Israel worshipped the golden calf at Sinai, even though God’s glory and power there had even made Moses “exceedingly fear and quake.” Exod.19v16. 32v1-35. Heb.12v21. This idolatry resulted in the personal guiding presence of God being withdrawn from Israel, but God did not forsake them, He repeated his promise of angelic aid, “mine angel shall go before thee.” Exod.23v20-23. 32v34. Moses, however, was not content with just an angelic messenger, as good and blessed as this was; he wanted and pleaded for the personal presence of Yahweh to go with Him, and to see His glory, both requests were granted to him. Exod.33v2,12-23. “Mine angel,” could be “His angel,” Gen.24v7,40. Dan.3v28. 6v22.; “the angel of His presence,” Is.63v9.; the angel who is the special messenger of Christ, and was trusted to impart to John, the prophecies, encouragements, and warnings in the book of Revelation. Rev.1v1. 22v16. Caleb knew that God had sent mighty angelic ministry before Israel to remove the evil angelic defence of the nations that Israel would fight, and so Israel were sure to win. Exod.33v2. Numb.14v6-10. We too must pray for God’s presence and power, and ask Him to send His angels to destroy the evil angelic fortresses. 2Cor.10v1-10. Eph.6v10-22. The visitations of “Yahweh Messenger,” are clearly distinct from those of ordinary angels. He is addressed as God. There can be no doubt that “Yahweh Messenger,” was God the Word, the messenger of the Father. He visited, directed and empowered the prophets, and others at times of crisis; may He manifest Himself to us. Jn.14v21.

a. Hagar in the wilderness. Gen.16v3-16. It was Yahweh who spoke to her, she called Him, “You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees.” v7,9,10,11,13. Cf. Gen.21v9-21. Gal.4v21-31. N.B. Gen.16v7-11. Hagar's promise.
b. Abraham in the plains of Mamre. Gen.18v1-33. 19v1,15. God came to Abraham with two angels, had a meal with Abraham, and promised him a child within a year. After the discussion about the destruction of Sodom, “Yahweh went on His way.” Jn.5v22. In Gen.22v1,11-18. God tests Abraham, and speaks in the first person as God, and Abraham calls the name of that place. “Yahweh Jireh.”
c. In Gen.31v11-13. Yahweh Malak says that He is the God of Bethel, and directs Jacob to leave Laban and return to the land of his kindred; and in Gen.32v24-32. Jacob wrestles at Peniel with God.
d. Moses at the burning bush at Horeb. Ex.3v1-16. “Yahweh Malak,” is called Jehovah and God, He made the ground holy.
e. The Captain of the Lord's of hosts visits Joshua. Joshua.5v13 to 6v3. His presence made the ground holy. Judges.2v1-4.
f. Gideon and Yahweh Malak. Judg.6v11-25.
g. Manoah and his wife, Yahweh Malak and Samson. Judg.13v1-25.
h. Samuel's childhood visitation. 1Sam.3v1-21.
i. David sins in numbering Israel. 1Chron.21v1-30. N.B. v12,18,30. and 2Sam.24v16.
j. Elijah and Jesus at Mount Horeb, and at the Mount of Transfiguration. 1Kings.19v5-7. and 2Kings.1v3,15. Lk.9v27-36.
k. “Yahweh Malak” defended Israel. Ps.34v7. 35v5,6. He destroyed all of Sennacherib's army. 2Kings.19v35. Is.37v36-38.

APPENDIX 5.
THE NAME OF JESUS GIFTS TO US ALL THE COVENANT NAMES OF YAHWEH.
The encouragement and power of the Divine Names.

When the great God of love wanted to reveal Himself to His people, He not only manifested Himself to the prophets and people in power and glory by His mighty acts; He revealed Himself through His names. God’s covenant names are a promise of what He will be to us, and the things that He will do for us. The invocation of the covenant names of God by faithful believers has brought into operation the gifts of the Holy Spirit; for this is included in His covenant relationship with His people. The name of Jesus includes all that is revealed in the covenant names of God, and it has been given to the children of God as an instrument of His power and love. To realise fully all that is conveyed to us in the name of Jesus, we need to consider the covenant names linked with His name. Our study is limited to a study of the covenant names of “Yahweh.”

THE DIVINE NAME, THE TETRAGRAMMATON. GOD'S COVENANT NAME WITH ISRAEL.

The sacred name of “Yahweh,” or “Jehovah,” depending on which form you prefer to use, comes from the Hebrew verb “to be,” as Exod.3v14,15., states, “And God said to Moses, I AM THAT I AM, (Hebrew, EHYEH ASHER EHYEH), and He said, You shall say to the Israelites I AM has sent me to you. V15----- This is my name for ever, and by this name I am to be remembered to all generations.” Hebrew scholars have stated that “EHYEH ASHER EHYEH” means, “I AM WHO I AM, AND WHAT I AM: AND I WILL BE, WHAT I WILL BE.” A Jewish

Rabbi told me that the name “EHYEH ASHER EHYEH and its context means, “I will be with you ALL the time, in ALL situations.” However, I think it means more, “I will be with you, at all times, and in all situations, to be what I am to you.” God comes to make His abilities and love available to us. The name of “Jehovah” or “Yahweh,” whichever way you prefer to pronounce it, encapsulates the meaning of the great name of God, “EHYEH ASHER EHYEH,” “I AM THAT I AM,” and manifests the eternal availability, of God's love and power. The name of Jesus has been given to us, and when we call on His name, He comes to give us what we need, His Name carries all the Divine love, power and presence of the covenant names of God. Exod.34v6,7.

ABRAHAM DID NOT HAVE THE NAME "YAHWEH" ON A COVENANT BASIS." Ex.6v2-4.

We know from Gen.22v14., that Abraham knew the name “Yahweh,” for he called the name of the place where God provided a sacrificial ram by the name “Yahweh Jireh,” but he could not invoke it on the basis of a covenant relationship. For we read in Ex.6v2-4.; “And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord: And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name YAHWEH was I not known unto them. And I have established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers.” “Known,” is “yada,” which speaks of an experimental relationship, they did not have the right of covenant invocation of the Divine Name, until it was given to Moses under the covenant of the Law.

THE COVENANT NAMES OF "YAHWEH," REVEAL THE INNER NATURE OF GOD.

In Exod.33v18,19., when Moses asked to see the glory of God, God answered, “I will make ALL MY GOODNESS pass before you, and **I WILL PROCLAIM THE NAME OF THE LORD before you.** From Exod.34v5-8., we see the clear link between the name and the mercy, grace, longsuffering and abundant goodness and truth of God**. The name reveals the inner nature of God, and invocation of the Divine Name makes all the inner glorious being and abilities of God available to us.**

PUTTING THE NAME OF GOD ON PEOPLE IN BLESSING AND PROTECTION TRULY WORKS. Numb.6v22-27.

God commanded Aaron to use the sacred Name to bless and protect the Israelites. This blessing placed a hedge of protective Divine thorns about the people of God, the same kind of hedge that protected Job; Job.1v9,10.; it turned God's face towards them in blessing. Jesus manifested the sacred Name to His disciples, and kept them in the Name, and declared the Name to them, that Divine love might become part of their beings. John.17v6,12,26. All the people of Israel heard and could use that Divine Name.

THE JEWS HID THE GREAT NAME OF GOD AWAY, AND WOULD NOT REPEAT IT.

The sacred name was made up of the Hebrew consonants; Yude-Ah-Vau-Ah, or in English, Y, H, W, H; the Hebrew Vau being pronounced as W. The Jews left out the vowels and **hid away** the sacred Name for fear that it would be **misused.** They should have let God defend His Name and let Him deal with those who used His name in vain. This has resulted in the Divine Name being largely **unused**; for though the Rabbis know the sacred Name, they will not repeat it, or write it down. So the Divine Name which was intended to be an instrument of power, blessing, and means of deliverance in the hands of ALL the people of God, has been hidden away and not used. What a tragedy! In the time of Moses, all the people could hear Aaron pronounce the Divine Name, and were able to invoke it for themselves.

The Jews invented a replacement for the Divine name by taking the vowels a, o, a, from the Hebrew “Adhonay,” which means “Lord,” or “Master,” and then inserted them into the sacred tetragammaton, Y, H, W, H; and so made YaHoVaH, or as we pronounce it Jehovah. Many have suggested other variations of the sacred Name. Some Third Century Manuscripts from Egypt have stated the Divine name was “Yabeh,” or “Yahweh.” Clement of Alexandria in the third century A.D. said it was pronounced “Yaoweh.” Theodoret of Cyprus in the fourth century said the Samaritans pronounced it “Yabeh” or “Yahweh.”

Many scholars believe that the Divine Name is “YaHWeH;” for from the often-repeated exhortation to “Praise you Yah,” “Hallelujah,” we know that the first part of the sacred name was “Yah.” The second part of the Divine Name starts with the Hebrew letter “Vau,” which is pronounced as a “W,” and ends with “H;” so “Yahweh” could be the Divine Name. The Hebrew “Halelu-Yah,” “Praise you Yah,” is not a single compound word in Hebrew, even though it has become a compound word in Greek and other languages. “Halelu-Yah,” is derived from the abbreviated Divine name, “Yah;” and “halal;” to be bright, to shine, to praise, to celebrate, to glorify; it carries the thought of radiance and ebullience in praise and worship to God. The Greek “Allelouia,” occurs in Rev.19v1,3,4,6.; where we see the saints and angels rejoicing that the kingdom of God has been set up, and that evil men and wicked angels have been judged and executed, and everlasting righteousness has been brought in, and prophecy fulfilled. Dan.9v24. Rev.10v7. Fifteen of the Psalms either begin or end with “Hallelujah,” and Psalms 104 to 109 are called, “the Great Hallel,” and were sung mainly at the feasts of Passover and Tabernacles.

The use of “Yah” in the expression of praise “Hallelujah,” reveals that God accepts “Yah,” as an abbreviated form of the sacred name, not only in praise and worship, but also as a name to be called upon for our defence and provision, and as an instrument of power in invocation. The Divine name conveys even more than God's eternal nature and immutability, “He who was, and is, and is to come.” Gen.21v33. Exod.3v13-16. 6v6. Ps.83v18. Is.12v2. 26v4 with Rev.1v8. Nor is God just “The Almighty,” “Ho Pantocrator,” Rev.4v8. 11v17. 15v3. 16v7,14. 19v15. 21v22. Through Jesus, the relationship has become a personal family matter; we are

now the sons and daughters of God. Lk.11v2,13. 2Cor.6v18. Our Father is, “The Almighty I Am,” and He will be to us what His covenant names say He is. “Yahweh,” “The existing One,” or as the French translate it, “The Eternal,” will convey to us ALL HIS NAME IS, through the covenant blood of Jesus.

The Great I Am, the Eternal, the Self Existent One, He who has always been, and always will be, is our Father. Ps.90v2. “From everlasting to everlasting thou art God.” Jesus said in Jn.8v58., “Truly, truly, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I Am;” the Jews fully understood that He was claiming to be “The Great I Am;” and tried to stone Him, Jesus miraculously hid Himself, and escaped from them. Jesus is, “That eternal life that was with the Father,” 1Jn.1v2. “Ten zoen ten aionion,” literally, “the life, the eternal.” “Which was with the Father,” is “en pros ton patera;” not “egeneto,” “came into being,” but “en and “pros,” “facing,” with the accusative of eternal intimate fellowship, exactly as in Jn.1v1., “en pros ton theon,” face to face intimacy with God the Father in eternal love and fellowship. The Godhead has made an eternal covenant with us, to share all they are in eternal love and fellowship, with us. 1Jn.1v3,4. How unspeakably generous and kind they are!

THE NAME ABOVE EVERY NAME - JESUS - YESHUA.

The name “Jesus,” is from the Greek “Iesous,” which is derived from the Hebrew “Yeshua,” the shortened form of the Hebrew “Yehoshua,” the name “Joshua;” all of which mean, “Yahweh is salvation,” or “salvation of Yahweh.” Our Lord was named “Yeshua,” because He was going to “save His people from their sins.” Mt.1v21. Lk.1v31. In Is.45v22,23., the Name which is above every name, at which every knee shall bow in heaven and earth, is said to be the Name of “Yahweh,” and in Rom.14v10-12. and Phil.2v9-11. this Scripture is said to be speaking of Jesus, and the authority of His Name. The Divine covenant name that was given to Israel has been given back to us in the name of Jesus, with all its power and authority. These covenant names reveal to us what is included in the name of Jesus.

ALL THE COVENANT NAMES OF YAHWEH ARE GIVEN TO US IN THE NAME OF JESUS.

1. YAHWEH ELOHIM. The Lord our God. Deut.6v4. etc. This manifests the Trinity, Gen.1v26. “And God said, Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth. Elohim is plural, it is used to describe the plural evil Gods of the Canaanites, and the demon powers behind them. Exod.20v3. In order to try and deny this obvious reference to the Trinity, heretics, like “Jehovah's Witnesses,” have tried to prove, but without any success, that “Elohim” is, “The plural of majesty.”

2. YAHWEH ADONAI. Our Sovereign Lord. Gen.15v2,8. Often with “Lord of Hosts.” Is.34v15. 10v23,24. 22v5,15. 28v22.

3. YAHWEH ROPHI. The Lord our Healer. Exod.15v26. Is.53v4. Mt.8v16,17.

4. YAHWEH JIREH. The Lord will provide, or equally correctly, The Lord will appear, or be seen. Gen.22v8-14. It was a place in Jerusalem, later called Moriah. God provided His Lamb in Jerusalem, on the cross at Golgotha. Mt.27v33. Mk.15v22. Jn.19v17.

5. YAHWEH NISSI. The Lord our Banner and Conqueror. Exod.17v15. The battle cry of Moses. B.C. 1491. The uplifted hands of Moses, and the invoked Divine Name, defeated the Amalekites; Moses built an altar to commemorate this victory.

6. YAHWEH TSABAOTH. The Lord of Hosts. 1Sam.1v3. This battle cry of the saints occurs 281 times in the Old Testament. Ps.46v7,11. Our Lord said He could CALL for “twelve legions of angels,” in Mt.26v53., it was part of His normal practice in His ministry to the multitudes. It seems Elisha also invoked the name of Yahweh for angelic help; “They that be with us are more than they that be with them.” 2Kings.6v15-18. David beat Goliath by calling on the name of Yahweh. 1Sam.16v45.

7. YAHWEH SHALOM. The Lord our peace. An altar erected by Gideon about B.C. 1256. Judges.6v24. Gideon's act and expression of faith. It was also the Aaronic blessing on Israel; it brought physical, spiritual and material peace, blessing and well-being. Numb.6v22-27. “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you.” Jn.14v27. He gives us the peace of Heaven.

8. YAHWEH SHAMMAH. The Lord is present, or there. Ezek.48v35. The promised future kingdom presence.

9. YAHWEH MEKADDISHKIM. The Lord our Sanctifier. Exod.31v13. Lev.20v8. 21v8. 22v9,16,32. Ezek.20v12. etc.

10. YAHWEH RA-AH or ROHI. The Lord my Shepherd. Ps.23v1.

11. YAHWEH TSIDKENU. God our Righteousness. Jer.23v6. 33v6. Christ's atonement justifies us. Rom.5v1,2. 1Jn.4v9,10.

12. YAHWEH HOSEENU. God our covenanted Creator. Ps.95v6. Heb.3 and 4. Praise and worship give victory over foes.

13. YAHWEH ELYON. The Lord Most High. Ps.7v17. Supreme in love and power, he reigns in perfect justice over all.

14. YAHWEH ELOHEENU. The Lord OUR God.Ps.99v5,8,9. OUR God of joyful fellowship and worship. Acts.1v14. 2v1.

15. YAHWEH ELOKEKA. The Lord THY God. Exod.20v2,5,7. The eternal God with whose name we encourage each other.

16. YAHWEH ELOHAY. The Lord MY God. Zech.14v5. MY eternal God of personal encouragement.

17. THE COVENANT NAMES OF YAHWEH THAT DAVID CALLED ON, AND PROVED. 2Sam.21v1-4, 14v22. Ps.18.

A. YAHWEH IS MY ROCK. v2. The God of my rock. v3. B. YAHWEH MY SHIELD. v3.
C. YAHWEH MY SALVATION. D. YAHWEH MY SAVIOUR, Thou savest me from violence.
E. YAHWEH who gave David victory over the giants and his other enemies. 2Sam.21v15-22. 22v1-3.
F. YAHWEH MY REFUGE, YAHWEH MY HIGH TOWER. YAHWEH MY FORTRESS AND MY DELIVERER. v2.

David proved that the Divine Name could be invoked at all times and in all situations; this was the reason for his victories. We see from 2Sam.22v1-3. 14v22. and Ps.18., that David took God at His Word and called upon, and proved, the Divine Name in defence and deliverance. Solomon realised the source of his father's victories, he had seen David prove the power of the invoked Covenant Names of God, and invoked and proved them personally for himself, he wrote in "Prov.18v10., "The name of Yahweh is a strong tower ("migdol," "a great tower"), the righteous runneth into it and are safe." The Covenant Names of God are weapons of power and love for the children of God to use, they are all available to us, and are included in the Name of Jesus. Invoke His Covenant Names at all times, into all your situations, and He will be there to be to you, what He is, and what His Names declare Him to be.

CALLING ON THE NAME OF YAHWEH.

Calling on the name of Yahweh was an Old Testament fact. The invocation of the name of God in blessing and protection is clearly seen in Numb.6v22-27. and Ps.20v1-4. We also read in Ps.50v14,15., "Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay they vows unto the most High: and call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. However, Ps.50v16., makes it clear that the wicked cannot claim a covenant relationship with God. "But as for me, I will call upon God; and the Lord shall save me." Ps.55v16. "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth." Ps.145v18. We see that Joel.2v32., "Whosoever shall call upon the name of Yahweh, (Jehovah) shall be saved;" is applied to calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus in the New Testament in Acts.2v21..

In the New Testament, we see people calling on the name of Jesus and the Father. "And they kept on stoning Stephen as he was calling upon the Lord and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit." Acts.7v59. "And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Thy name." Acts.9v14. "Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem." Acts.9v21. "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?" Rom.10v14. "With all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." 1Cor.1v2. "With them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." 2Tim.2v22. "If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear." 1Pet.1v17.

We see, then, that invocation of the name of Jesus, and the Father, covers all areas of the Christian life from faith for salvation and forgiveness, to grace for dying for Christ. It covers all the areas mentioned in the covenant names of Yahweh.

AUTHORITY TO USE THE NAME OF JESUS, IS FROM HEAVEN, AND NOT FROM MEN.

Jesus gave His twelve apostles and the seventy evangelists, authority to act in His name and work mighty miracles. The initial surprise of the seventy at miracles happening through them in the name of Jesus is clearly seen. Lk.10v17. It is clear that our Lord sought the guidance of His Father over who was to be given authority to use His name, for he spent a night in prayer before he chose His apostles. Mt.10v1-8. Mk.3v13-19. Lk.6v12-19. Paul tells us in 1Cor.12v28., that God sets the ministries in the Church, not men; and in Eph.4v7-16., he tells us that people are given ministries, "to the measure of the gift of Christ."

Authority in Christ's Church comes from Heaven and not from men. Mt.21v23-27. Lk.20v1-8. This authority from God inevitably presents a challenge to the authority of the religious kingdoms that men build out of God's past revivals. The religious leaders of Israel immediately went to challenge John as soon as his ministry started, they rudely asked him, "Su tis ei," "Thou, who art thou?" Or in the language of today, "Who do you think you are?" John's humble reply caused them to ask, "Tis ei," "Who are you?" John.1v19,22. In Jn.8v25. Jesus was approached and asked in the same critical way, "Su tis ei," "You, who are you." There is an inevitable conflict between those who have authority from Heaven, and those who rely on authority from men. The kingdoms of men feel threatened by those who have authority from Heaven, because it exposes their lack of spiritual qualifications and Divine gifting and ministry. The kingdoms of men are self-perpetuating, and they

soon have enough machinery to continue without God.

THE AUTHORITY TO USE THE NAME OF JESUS IS SUSTAINED BY INTERCESSION.
Christians receive ministries from our Lord by Divine gifting, but they sustain them through communion with God, and by prayer and intercession. The apostles had been given authority to cast out Devils, but they could not cast the demon out of the boy in Mk.9v14-29., because they had neglected prayer and fasting. New Testament intercession is based on, and results in the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is based on the operation of God's power, not just in saying prayers. The explosion of ministries of healing in the New Testament was a result of prayer, intercession and communion with God; this sustained the authority that had been given to the disciples to use of the name of Jesus

The Holy Spirit is the director of intercession. It is only as He aids us that we can pray aright, the human intellect is not sufficient for the task. Paul, after being a Christian for over 20 years, said, "We know not how to pray as is necessary." Rom.8v26. In 1Cor.14v14-18., Paul gives us the secret of his own powerful manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit; he prayed with his understanding, and prayed with his spirit, that is with the gift of tongues. Paul thanked God that he prayed in tongues more than the verbose Corinthians. Paul edified himself spiritually with the gift of tongues, and this enabled him to powerfully manifest the other gifts of the Holy Spirit, and to use the name of Jesus with authority.

Our Lord's advice on prayer in Lk.11v1-13., shows the principles which guided His life of prayer, He let nothing stop Him from praying through for the ministry that would meet the needs of the people, and give them heavenly bread. In Lk.11v8., our Lord uses "anaideia," Strong 335, to speak of a similar kind of importunity and urgent persistence that is revealed in the word "pawgah," which is used for intercession in the Old Testament. "Anaideia," is derived from "aidos," which speaks of shamefacedness, bashfulness, modesty and reverence; but with the negative particle "aneu," which means, "without," the meaning is reversed, and gives the thought of "without shame, importunity and shameless persistence." By using the word "anaideia," Christ reveals the determined persistence that had characterised the whole of His prayer life, and which had been the source of His wonderful ministry.

In Ps.69v7-11,20,21., "the zeal of Thy house hath eaten me up," is speaking of Christ's zeal for prayer; His weeping, fasting and praying at Nazareth, and it cost Him great reproach. Jesus, who had lived a life of prayer, was angry with the religious leaders of Israel, who had made God's house of prayer, a den of robbers where people were fleeced of their finances. Jn.2v13-17. Mt.21v12-15. Mk.11v15-18. Lk.19v45-48. Such Scriptures as these, and Is.53v12. and 59v16,17., give great light on the intercessions of our Lord. In His earthly life He was the intercessor without equal, and He still is the incomparable intercessor, for "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." Heb.7v25. Let us enter into the victories that His death and intercessions have won for us; and use all the power and authority that are in the wonderful name of Jesus. True Christians rejoice in the revelation of God's character and promises, which are revealed to us in His covenant Names, all of which are given to us in the Name of Jesus.

INVOCATION OF THE DIVINE NAMES FOR FALSE PURPOSES IS FORBIDDEN.
"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless (and unpunished) that taketh His name in vain." Exod.20v7. Deut.5v11. In both Scriptures "vain," is the Hebrew noun "shav," 7723, which means: -

1. Evil which is committed, and a desolating evil and calamity which anyone suffers. Both meanings are found in Job.15v31., 'let him not trust in evil (wickedness): he is deceived, for evil (calamity) will be his reward.'

2. Falsehood, a lie, a false report, false witness.

3. Emptiness, vanity, nothingness.

The word "take," is "nasa," which means, "to take up, bear, carry, lift up." Moses lifted up the Great Name like a sacred banner or standard for noble purposes, when Israel defeated Amalek in Exod.17v10-16.; in Jehovah Nissi, "nissi" is from the same root as "nasa." Thou shalt not lift up the name of the Lord for destructive or evil purposes. This lifting up and misuse of God's names has certainly occurred. Many occultists have used the names of God in their evil invocations, and in their magic circles; using God's name for evil like this is forbidden by God and puts the occultists under the control of demons, instead of under the protection of God. Deut.18v10-22. This misuse of the name could also speak of "vain repetitions" in prayer, Mt.6v7.; or to swearing falsely in the name of God, to deceive people in commercial transactions, which our Lord castigates in Mt.23v21,22.. Those who use God's name as a swear word will have to answer for it. It is important to realise that no one will get away with using and invoking God's name for evil, false or wrong purposes.

TAKE THE NAME OF JESUS WITH YOU. By Mrs L. Baxter.

1. Take the Name of Jesus with you, Child of sorrow and of woe:
It will joy and comfort give you. Take it then where're you go.

Chorus.
Precious Name, oh how sweet! Hope of earth and joy of heaven. Repeat.

2. Take the Name of Jesus ever, As a shield from every snare;
If temptations round you gather, Breathe that holy name in prayer.

3. Oh, the precious Name of Jesus! How it thrills our souls with joy,
When His loving arms receive us, And His songs our tongues employ!

4. At the Name of Jesus bowing, Falling prostrate at His feet;
King of kings in heaven we'll crown Him, When our journey is complete.

Chorus.
Precious Name, oh how sweet! Hope of earth and joy of heaven. Repeat.

NOTE:

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