



Obtaining
the
Kingdom

Volume 3

parables and hard sayings of Jesus

Maurice Barratt

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Volume 3

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Manchester M14 5QH, UK.

info@barrattministries.org.uk

www.barrattministries.org.uk

www.youtube.com/user/BarrattMinistries1

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Preface

For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell
on the face of the whole earth.

Luke 21:35

I am writing this preface in January 2021 whilst on a train journey between Manchester, my home city, and Scunthorpe in North Lincolnshire, to spend a week with friends to write this third volume. I have a carriage to myself because of the restrictions, and social distancing laws, and everyone on the train is wearing a mask except myself (I am wearing an exemption lanyard). I have been reminiscing, on this journey, and thinking

Preface

about the past year, 2020, since the Covid19 panic has disrupted our world.

The Great Reset

This very week the World Economic Forum are meeting to discuss ways to implement what they call 'The Great Reset'. Life will never be the same and the 'New Normal' they are talking about will see a fast track programme to bring in a New World Order which will be a form of communism based on China's Social Experiment.^{Footnote 1} I can see the storm clouds gathering for disaster, disease, famine, bloodshed, and World War III, as foretold by Jesus and the prophets.

If ever there was a time in world history when believers should understand the mysteries of the kingdom of God, the kingdom Jesus will bring with him soon, it is thismaybe last generation.

Footnote 1

The social experiment in China under Chairman Mao's leadership is one of the most important and successful in human history.

David Rockefeller, "From a China Traveller",
New York Times, August 10, 1973, p. 31.

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Note: Over 60 million Chinese died in Mao's experiment.

China today proves it is possible to have a wealthy, modern society, and still be totalitarian. Beijing's use of consumer data, biometric information, GPS tracking coordinates, facial recognition, DNA, and other forms of data harvesting has turned, and continues to turn, China into a beast never seen before worldwide, not even under Mao or Stalin. In China, the tools of surveillance capitalism are employed by the surveillance state to administer the so-called credit system which determines who is allowed to buy, sell, and travel based on their social behaviour.

Taken from 'Live not by lies'
by Rod Dreher (Page 84-85)

I have a friend who was born in Germany and understands the mind-set of Naziism - she says that what is happening in the UK and America is exactly what happened in Germany before Hitler started his evil regime change.

We know that the world of present values is in the melting-pot and that a New Order is to come,

whatever crucifixions and deaths may be suffered before the Candidate of universal humanity can be raised to a greater mastery.

Freemason & Rosicrucian Arthur Edward
Waite, *New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*,
(p.175)

The aim of socialism is not only to abolish the present division of mankind into small states and all national isolation; not only to bring the nations closer to each other, but also to merge them.

Vladimir Lenin, *The Socialist Revolution &
the Right of Nations to Self-Determination*
(1916)

Introduction

I estimate there are over 100 hard sayings and parables in the four gospel accounts, and the majority are about the Kingdom of God. I have already listed over 70 for this series and I believe there will be many more by the time I finish. By 'The Kingdom', I mean the spiritual Kingdom of God that is now within a person and the coming 1,000 year physical Kingdom that Jesus will set up when he return to earth. The Church is not the Kingdom of God and never has been – that belief comes from Catholicism's desire to Christianise the whole world and call it 'Christendom' – The Kingdom of Christ.

I have heard many Christians oppose the 1,000 year literal reign of Christ and say it is not a physical kingdom of 1,000 years as it is only mentioned once that Jesus will reign for 1,000 years, and appears only in a prophecy in the book of Revelation at that.

Here are the verses in the book of Revelation that mention it.

And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection: on such the second death has no

power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Revelation 20:2-4 and 6

I find that argument does not hold up to scrutiny. If Satan is to be bound for 1,000 years then how do we spiritualise this into the real world and the fact that he will be loosed after this period of time? It makes no sense as there are dozens of mentions of the Kingdom of God in the four gospel accounts, and epistles, showing it to be literal and physical. Whether it is for 1,000 years, 10 years, or 1 year, it does not alter the fact that it will be on earth both literal and physical.

One day is as 1,000 years

Many believers oppose the literal reign of Christ for 1,000 years by quoting the phrase from Peter's 2nd epistle:

But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

2 Peter 3:8

This verse is actually in the context of the second coming of Jesus and is a key to understanding the plan of God, conceived before the foundations of the earth were laid.

God's Great Plan

The creation account in the first chapter of the bible is a prophetic overview of the whole plan of God if only we could see it. The 7 day week is a prophecy of the plan of God. As one day is as 1,000 years to God he is showing us that the plan is for 7,000 years. We are now at the end of the 6,000th year since creation and God has been working and dealing with man in this period of history. When the 7,000th year starts, God will begin his Sabbath rest and will hand everything to Jesus his son. Jesus will be God for 1,000 years. His name in that day will be Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, and the Prince of Peace. His Kingdom will last to the end of the age. Isaiah prophesied this hundreds of years before Jesus came to earth the first time.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:
and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and
his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The

mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 9:6-7

After this Sabbath rest of God is completed, then Jesus will hand the kingdom, power, and glory back to God so that God can be supreme throughout eternity.

For he must reign, till he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he has put all things under his feet. But when he said all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

1 Corinthians 15:25-28

The plan will be complete when God creates a new heaven and earth and those on the new earth will all live happily ever after.

This plan of God is in everyone's heart because we were made in God's image and we long for everything to turn out right in the end and the good guys to win. Even in occult based prophetic films such as 'The Exorcist', the demon is cast out and good triumphs over evil – Satan is the counterfeit and wants to be like God, the good guy. The Lion King is a good example of this. Many Christians falsely believe the 'Lion King' is a type of Jesus coming to gain his rightful place when, in fact, the Lion King is antichrist coming to take his rightful place and bring peace forever.

There is only one plan, but one is counterfeit and one is the real

Most Christians do not understand this vital revelation and so are deceived and, therefore, their theology is all mixed up with paganism and doctrines of devils. So many think C.S.Lewis's 'Narnia Tales' are Christian allegories when, in fact, they are full of occult and pagan symbolism and are allegories of the plan of Satan and not God. Hitler with his 1,000 year Reich is another

example of the counterfeit millennial reign of false peace.

If you do not believe the Kingdom of God is literal and will not be for 1,000 years on this earth, please read this volume with an open mind and let God convince you one way or the other. I can only write in the light and revelation I have at this present time.

In this volume I have grouped the parables that pertain to the Millennium into two categories for clarity of understanding and to show that, although taken from different places in the four gospel accounts, they paint a comprehensive picture of the Millennial reign of Christ and his Bride.

1. Before the Kingdom
2. Obtaining the Kingdom

I trust that after reading this volume you will understand more about this wonderful part of God's plan that is soon to be played out on earth's stage.

Part 1

Before the Kingdom

Chapter 1

Elijah Will Restore all Things

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

Malachi 4:5-6

Elijah Will Restore all Things

God is a God of order and before the Kingdom comes there will be a preparation. The Bride of Christ has to make herself ready for the return of Jesus to set up his Kingdom on earth and God's man, Elijah, has to prepare Israel and turn their hearts back to God in preparation.

In the following passage Jesus says that Elijah will restore all things. Jesus is actually talking about John the Baptist but said he was Elijah who was prophesied to come.

And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elijah truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elijah is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they wanted. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that **he spoke unto them of John the Baptist.**

Matthew 17:10-13

It is obvious, on hindsight, that John the Baptist came to prepare the way of the Lord but Israel, as a nation, rejected his message and he was killed by the counterfeit 'King of the Jews', Herod.

The Same Spirit

If John the Baptist, in the spirit of Elijah, did not fulfil all that was prophesied, then it follows what remains must happen some time in the future before Jesus returns the second time to earth.

There is another clue to this mystery in a dialogue between Jesus and his disciples later in the book of Matthew, where Jesus is explaining about the role of Elijah that will happen in the future. Here are the verses:

And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what did you go out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what did you go out for to see? A prophet? Yes, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before your face, which shall prepare your way before you. Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the

days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you will receive it, **this is Elijah, which was to come.**

Matthew 11:7-14

Jesus' Second Coming

In the above passage Jesus is quoting from Malachi 3. But it is obviously about Jesus' second coming in judgement and not his first coming as sacrificial saviour.

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom you delight in: behold, he shall come, says the LORD of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

Malachi 3:1-2

After this conversation with his disciples Jesus says a phrase that he repeats many times in the

gospel accounts and also to the seven churches in the book of Revelation,

He that has ears to hear, let him hear.

Matthew 11:15

This is a clue. Jesus is saying that it is a mystery and only those with eyes to see and ears to hear will understand the true meaning.

Jesus Will Restore All Things!

It is clear, from the whole of the bible, that Jesus is the one who will restore Israel when he comes again to this earth and not John the Baptist. The prophets prophesied it, and the disciples believed that the Messiah would restore the Kingdom to Israel.

Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What do you want? She said to him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on your right hand, and the other on the left, in your kingdom.

Matthew 20:20-21

The first question the disciples asked when they saw the risen Christ was about this very thing.

When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, will you at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

Acts 1:6

Isaiah also prophesied that Jesus would restore Israel when he comes.

And he said, It is a light thing that you should be my servant **to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel:** I will also give you for a light to the Gentiles, that you may be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

Isaiah 49:6

This scripture from Isaiah is also about his second coming – not his first.

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she has received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins.

The voice of him that cries in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD has spoken it.

.... O Zion, that brings good tidings, get up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that brings good tidings, lift up your voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, **the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.** He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

From Isaiah 40:I-II

So, the question we need to ask is: If Jesus will restore the kingdom to Israel, then what will Elijah restore when he comes? To understand what an Elijah (John the Baptist, Man with the spirit of Elijah) will restore before Jesus returns we need to

look at the ministry of Elijah in the Old Testament. Remember, his ministry is to prepare the way of the Lord. What is this preparation?

1 Kings 18 will give us the answer for in it is the account of the confrontation of Elijah and the prophets of Baal and of the groves.

And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down.

Surely this is a preparation for restoration – to repair the broken altars

And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be your name: and with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD:

This restoration is about the physical nation of Israel who have not accepted the Messiah up to the time of this preparation, and not the Bride of Christ who are spiritual Israel. The Bride of Christ, of course, includes those of physical Israel

who have accepted Jesus as their Messiah and are saved by faith.

But now in Christ Jesus you who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who has made both one (in context, Jew and Gentile) and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us: having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of two one new man, so making peace; and **that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.**

Ephesians 2:13-16

Elijah's prayer is the key

... And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that you are the LORD God, and that **you have turned their heart back again.**

When he said these words about restoring Israel the fire immediately fell on the people and they turned again to their God. Elijah had achieved the first step in the restoration.

Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

Elijah then told Israel to kill the false prophets, which they did. He had now fulfilled the second part of the restoration of Israel.

And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

The End of The Famine

It was part of Elijah's mandate to kill the prophets of Baal but he could not bring the rain – that was God's doing, and all he could do was to

intercede for God to send it. I believe that Jesus, on his return, will bring the refreshing rain – for that is what is needed in a famine. The fire does not stop the famine and is not meant to. The fire was a demonstration of the power and judgement of God, in order to turn the hearts of his people back to him and to give them the backbone to kill the false prophets.

And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.

From 1 Kings 18:3-41

Peter, in his speech after the lame man had been healed at the gate of the temple, saw this. Take note, that this was after Jesus had died and risen again so Peter must be prophesying about his second coming.

Repent therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; **And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things,** which God has spoken

by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

Acts 3:19-21

Read the passage below from the prophecy of Isaiah. Surely, in these last days we are living in, it is time for refreshing and restoration after 'Elijah' has prepared the way of the Lord by turning God's people back to God.

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.

Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall

waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

Isaiah 35:1-7

An angel prophesied over Zacharias, father of John the Baptist, when he was in the temple doing his priestly office. This prophecy didn't happen at the first coming of Jesus, therefore it must apply to his second coming with this prophet carrying the spirit of Elijah. This time Israel will turn to God and accept their true Messiah. This is the prophecy:

For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

Luke 1:15-17

Of course many of God's people did repent at the preaching of John but the nation rejected Jesus because the false prophets, the Pharisees, were not dealt with. They held God's people under their religious iron grip and John called them a generation of vipers

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said to them, O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

Matthew 3:7

Jesus went further and called them the 'synagogue of Satan' in his letters to the churches. These are the modern Zionists who will have to be removed before Israel will accept Jesus as their Messiah.

I know your works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but you are rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

Revelation 2:9

Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and

worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

Revelation 3:9

What About the Church Today?

I have shared what Jesus meant when he said Elijah would restore all things, but we must apply the principles to ourselves today as the Bride of Christ. We need to prepare the Bride for Jesus' return. Jesus will only come when the false prophets are removed from the church and I believe we are now in the days when many need to be exposed for their false teaching, false lifestyle, and false motives.

The false prophets with the spirit of Balaam and Jezebel are rampant in our churches and they need to be exposed and removed from the bride of Christ in preparation for his return.

But I have a few things against you, because you have there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

Revelation 2:14

Notwithstanding I have a few things against you, because you suffer that woman Jezebel, which calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she didn't repent. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searches the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

Revelation 2:20-23

I pray that God will raise up many men with the spirit of Elijah in these last days to prepare the way of the Lord and that those that are the Bride of Christ may be able to say this before his return:

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready.

Revelation 19:7

Chapter 2

The Sign of Jonah

For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?

Romans 11:15

At first glance the 'sign of Jonah' may not seem a mysterious phrase to most Believers,

The Sign of Jonah

as it seems straightforward to them. Here is the scripture I have taken this parable from.

An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Matthew 12:39-40

Difficult Saying

This is a difficult saying of Jesus and I feel Christians have not thought it out properly or considered the context, and have erred in their interpretation. The common explanation: Jesus was 3 days and 3 nights in the grave before he rose from the dead and when he rose again it would be a sign to Israel. This is not a good way of thinking for the bible does not support it.

Allow me to present another explanation of this statement of Jesus. Nowhere in the bible, except for this one scripture about Jonah, does it say Jesus would be 3 days and 3 nights in the grave, or as Jesus put it 'in the heart of the earth'. Not one of the scriptures that talks about the length of time Jesus was in the grave says he was in the grave for

The Sign of Jonah

3 three days and 3 nights. We know that he rose early in the morning before light, so he could only have been in the grave for two days if he rose early on the third day. Here are all the scriptures that mention the time before Jesus rose from the dead taken from the gospel accounts, and epistles, to prove my point. Nine times Jesus himself said he would rise again on the third day. ^{Footnote 1}

From that time forth Jesus began to show to his disciples, he must be killed, and raised again **the third day**.

Matthew 16:21

And they shall kill him, and **the third day** he shall be raised again.

Matthew 17:23

And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and **the third day** he shall rise again.

Luke 18:33

And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and **the third day** he shall rise again.

Matthew 20:19

The Sign of Jonah

For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise **the third day**.

Mark 9:31

And he said unto them, You go and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and **the third day** I shall be perfected.

Luke 13:32

And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and **the third day** he shall rise again.

Mark 10:34

Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised **the third day**.

Luke 9:22

The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and **the third day** rise again.

Luke 24:7

The Road to Emmaus

Jesus was walking with two disciples on the Emmaus road the third day after his death.

But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, **to day is the third day** since these things were done.

Luke 24:21

This last reference in Luke was after Jesus had risen and was talking to his disciples.

Then he opened their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, it is written, it is required that Christ should suffer, and to rise from the dead **the third day**

Luke 24:45-46

Peter confirms that Jesus rose the third day in his speech given in Joppa, when he realised Gentiles could also be saved

Him God raised up **the third day**, and showed him openly.

Acts 10:40

Paul says the same thing.

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again **the third day** according to the scriptures.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

Strong Evidence

Any open minded reader will have to admit that the evidence is too strong to say that this single scripture about Jonah is referring to the time Jesus was in the grave. Once we accept this fact we can now look for what Jesus was hiding in plain site for those who have eyes to see – it was a parable, a hidden revelation, to those who could see. It was being hidden from the Pharisees to whom he was speaking. Context is so important in understanding the bible and this is where we must begin our search for the hidden truth.

The Pharisees were asking Jesus for a sign to prove he was the promised Messiah. They wanted something visible as a proof, but Jesus would not fall into the trap because he knew if he did a

The Sign of Jonah

visible physical sign they would still not believe. Jesus raised the dead, turned water into wine, fed over 10,000 people with a few loaves and fishes and they were looking for a sign!! It is almost laughable.

Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but **the sign of the prophet Jonas.**

Matthew 12:38-39

Jesus gave them a sign but they were none the wiser and God's people today still miss the sign. Remember this was not a sign to the Church (the Bride of Christ), but to Israel who were backslidden in Jesus' day. In fact it was a sign to that very generation who were alive when Jesus first came. Luke also records that this sign was specifically for the generation that rejected Jesus.

As Jonas was a sign to those in Nineveh, so shall the Son of man be **to this generation.**

Luke 11:30

The Sign of Jonah

Then Jesus, seemingly out of context, refers to his second coming in judgement but this is another key to the mystery. Why does he switch his conversation to end times and his second coming? It is not by chance he uses the citizens of Nineveh, who repented at the preaching of Jonah, to show the generation he lived in what would be their fate for rejecting him.

The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

Matthew 12:41

If we look at another conversation with the Pharisees we will see that Jesus talked about the times and seasons and says they were blind to the mysterious plan of God. Again he mentions the sign of Jonah.

The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, you say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It

The Sign of Jonah

will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowering. O you hypocrites, you can discern the face of the sky; but you can not discern the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.

Matthew 16:1-4

Three Days and Three Nights

I believe Jonah was a type of Jesus in many respects and certainly was a sign to Israel.

Three days and three nights is prophetically the time between Jesus' first and second coming

Jonah was sent to Nineveh but they did not see him because he was in the belly of the whale for three day and three nights.

Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish **three days and three nights**.

Jonah 1:17

The Sign of Jonah

The second time he was sent to Nineveh, they did see Jonah and repented, and fulfilled the scripture in 2 Chronicles 7, the very 4 conditions for God to heal their land. And in the story of Jonah they represented Israel. Nineveh was founded by Asshur from the good seed of Seth unlike Babylon which was founded by Nimrod of the seed of Ham.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7:14

They Met the Conditions

Here is what they did at the preaching of Jonah. I have added my comments to show the four condition were met, and in the same order. I believe the conditions are progressive and have to be in the order given by God.^{Footnote 1}

1. They humbled themselves

So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the

The Sign of Jonah

greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:

From Jonah 3:5-9

2 and 3. They prayed and sought God.

But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God:

From Jonah 3:5-9

4. They turned from their wicked ways.

...Yes, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?

From Jonah 3:5-9

When Jesus returns the second time to the same people, the nation of Israel, for those who did not

The Sign of Jonah

believe he came 2,000 years ago it will the first time they see their Messiah and they will repent when they see him. He will heal their land and restore the kingdom to Israel. Hosea prophesied this and I believe this is another instance when 1,000 years is as a day to God. After 2,000 years he will revive Israel and in the 3,000th year will start the millennial reign of Jesus, where Israel will be elevated and restored to greatness.

After two days will revive us: **in the third day** will raise us up, we shall live in his sight

Hosea 6:2

The story of Esther is also relevant because Esther fasted with her maidens three days and three nights before the Jews were delivered from destruction.

Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast for me, and neither eat nor drink **three days, night or day**: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.

Esther 4:16

To summarize this chapter on the sign of Jonah I can say that it was a hidden prophecy to the Pharisees and to us that Israel will not be delivered until they meet the conditions that Nineveh met and they say 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'.

Don't Miss the Second Coming

Let me end this chapter with a warning for us today. God's people missed the first coming of Jesus but will see his second coming. On hindsight we accept that Jesus came the first time to earth to redeem us, but we must be careful not to miss his second coming. Israel thought they did God a service by killing Jesus. Isaiah 53 is what Israel will say when they accept their Messiah (and has nothing to do with the Bride of Christ).

Surely he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

Isaiah 53:4

Antichrist will precede the coming of the real Messiah. The world, and I fear most of the

Church, will welcome him as the real Christ. The signs of the last days is a time of deception and a great falling away, and I can see this is happening with the mainstream Evangelical Churches. They are looking for Jesus Christ Superstar and will find antichrist fits this bill.

The first Christ to bring world peace will be the false one – so be prepared. The whole world will believe him and worship the Beast.

For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction comes upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

1 Thessalonians 5:3

May God help us to have discernment in these last days.

Footnote 1

There are also other references Jesus made that should be considered

Mark 8:31 And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected

The Sign of Jonah

of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes,
and be killed, and after three days rise again.

Mark 14:58 We heard him say, I will destroy this
temple that is made with hands, and within three days
I will build another made without hands.

Footnote 2

I have written 3 book on Intercession and cover these
conditions in volume 2.

ISBN 978-1-904598-99-0 Available from Amazon
as a paperback or Kindle download.

Chapter 3

The Stone the Builders Rejected

Jesus says unto them, Did you never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

Matthew 21:42

The Stone the Builders Rejected

Jesus was quoting from a Psalm of David in the Old Testament but what was it prophesying? What is the hidden meaning?

The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.

Psalm 118:22-23

Context is Vital

The context of a scripture is always important. We see that this statement from Jesus was made to the Chief Priests and Pharisees, but the meaning was hidden from them. Jesus had just been to the temple in Jerusalem and cast out the money changers, which of course displeased the Chief Priest and Pharisees.

And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but you have made it a den of thieves.

Matthew 21:13-14

This was not something they could allow to pass unchallenged and so the next day they came to confront Jesus with two questions.

1. By what authority do you do these things?

2. Who gave you this authority?

And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority do you do these things? And who gave you this authority?

Matthew 21:23

Jesus knew they would not accept the truth so he asked them a question he knew they would not be able to answer.

And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why

did you not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

Matthew 21:24-27

Jesus then told a story to expose them:

But what do you think? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. Which of the two did the will of his father? They said to him, The first.

Matthew 21:28-30

This, of course, was against them for they claimed to be God's servants but did not do what God said – they were hypocrites. He told them that the sinners would enter the kingdom before they would.

Jesus says unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom

of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and you didn't believe him: but the publicans and the harlots believe him: and you, when you had seen it, repented not afterward, that you might believe him.

Matthew 21:31-32

Destroying his Enemies

Jesus then told a parable about a husbandman (I will cover this in another volume). At the end of the parable Jesus asked the Pharisees what they would do with the wicked servants who killed the owner's son and they said the owner would destroy them and give the vineyard to others. The parable was obviously against those who would kill Jesus to get the inheritance, but they did not realise the parable was in reference to themselves. They could give no other answer than what is recorded.

They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

Matthew 21:41

Jesus was telling them in a coded message that they would be the branch that would be cut off and destroyed and the wild olive (the Gentiles) would be grafted on after they had rejected him. Israel had been fruitless and so God would graft the Gentiles onto his Olive Tree so that he could get fruit from them. Jesus then made the statement we are looking at.

Jesus says unto them, Did you never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

Matthew 21:42-43

Peter in his speech in Acts says the same thing, showing that David in his Psalm was calling Jesus this stone

The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.

Psalm 118:22-23

The Stone the Builders Rejected

This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

Acts 4.11

Therefore, we can establish that the stone was Jesus who came in the flesh. The Pharisees rejected John and now they were to reject Jesus, and in both these acts they condemned themselves to be utterly destroyed. Jesus says in the next verse that they will be ground to powder – what a turn of phrase.

And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spoke of them.

Matthew 21:44-45

Counterfeit Jews

I believe the modern Pharisees are the Zionists who have taken the land of Israel politically without meeting the conditions of 2 Chronicles 7:14 (we looked at this in the previous chapter). Therefore they are the counterfeit Jews mentioned in the letters to the churches (Revelation 2:9 and 3:9), and

The Stone the Builders Rejected

as the Jewish Encyclopedia states, 'Modern Jewry is Edom'.

Modern Jewry is Edom

Edom is Esau who is trying to get the birthright back from Jacob. When Jesus returns, Edom will be utterly wiped from the face of the earth. They are one of the nations that Jesus will smite with a rod of iron and they will not be a nation in the Millennial reign of Christ. Haman who tried to eliminate the Jews in the time of Queen Esther was from the seed of Esau and so was Herod, a counterfeit Jew, who tried to kill Jesus. The Amalakites that Saul failed to destroy were also from this seed.

I have loved you, says the LORD. Yet you say, Wherein have you loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother says the LORD? Yet I loved Jacob,

Malachi 1:2

As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

Romans 9:13

The whole book of Obadiah is about the judgement of God on Esau, but here is one verse.

For your violence against your brother Jacob shame shall cover you, and **you shall be cut off forever.**

Obadiah 1:10

When Jesus returns to this earth he will take the kingdom of Israel from Esau and hand it to Jacob for a glorious reign of 1,000 years, and Esau will be ground to powder.

Battle of the Birthrights

Right back from Esau and Jacob, in the book of Genesis, the battle for the birthright and the seed to rule Israel has been going on. It is still being fought over today for who will sit on the throne of David to rule the nations. God talks about the seed whereas the occult call it the bloodlines but it is the same age old battle and will not be resolved until Jesus returns to sit 'on the throne of his father David'. The film 'Da Vinci Code' and the assassination of Princess Diana is all about this battle for the bloodline. So is the Masonic and Zionist agenda to rebuild the temple and put their king on the throne. (You will have to do your own research into this for it is outside the scope of this book.)

Ground to Powder!

The Pharisees knew the scriptures and would know what Jesus was inferring when he mentioned that the stone would grind them to powder. Let me remind you of the fact that when the children of Israel rejected God, and replaced him with the golden calf, Moses instructed them to grind it to powder and drink it.

And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it.

Exodus 32:20

Josiah also did the same with the idols that Israel had worshipped.

Josiah brought out the grove from the house of the LORD, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burned it and stamped it small to powder,

2 Kings 23:6

The Chief Priest and Pharisees realised this parable was against them and they wanted to kill

Jesus, thus proving they were the very people he was talking about.

A Hidden Meaning?

Now we must look for the hidden meaning in this statement of Jesus. The Epistles of Peter and Paul will give us this revelation. There is a passage of scripture, in the letter to the Ephesians, where Paul is showing them that when Israel rejected Christ, the branch of the true olive tree is then cut off and the Gentiles, and those branches of Israel that accepted Jesus, will become one in Christ

But now in Christ Jesus you who sometimes were far off are made near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of two one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

Ephesians 2:13-16

In this age, both Jew and Gentile who accept Christ are part of a spiritual building and not a physical one. Jesus died as a man in flesh and blood, but when he rose from the dead he was no longer human, he had a spiritual body. Paul says that we are now the temple of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is now the spiritual corner stone of this new spiritual building. On one side are Israel who accepted Christ, and on the other side are the Gentiles who accept Christ, and we are now one building. Here is what Paul said:

*For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon **the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.** In whom all the building fitly framed together grows unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom you also are built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

Ephesians 2:18-21

Peter, in his first letter to the churches, also confirms that this stone is now spiritual and part of the same spiritual temple that we are part of.

To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, **You also, as lively stones**, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believes on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, **the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient:** whereunto also they were appointed.

1 Peter 2:4-8

The stone that Israel as a nation rejected has now become the cornerstone of the Bride of Christ – New Jerusalem that will come down from heaven to the new earth for eternity. What a beautiful truth is in the simple statement Jesus gave to the Chief Priests and Pharisees. Remember, it was David, from whose seed Jesus was born of the flesh, that had this wonderful revelation 100's of years before Jesus was even born.

Be a Living Stone

Can I urge the reader to press towards the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus and make sure they are ready and one of these living stones when Jesus comes for his Bride, and not be disobedient as God's people were at his first coming.

I'll end this chapter with the warning and challenge Paul gave to us.

Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble. Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. Don't you know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

1 Corinthians 3:12-17

Part 2

Obtaining the Kingdom

Chapter 4

The Last Shall be First

So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many are called, but few chosen.

Matthew 20:16

In this chapter I will look at the statement of Jesus which seems to be a contradiction at first glance. Here is the full verse.

The Last Shall be First

But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.

Matthew 19:30

Perfection was his Stumbling Block

What is the context of his statement? Surprisingly, it is the end of a comment Jesus makes after the rich young ruler goes away disappointed because his riches are stopping him from being perfected.

Jesus said unto him, If you will be perfect, go and sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

Matthew 19:21-22

Jesus then makes a strange statement. He says it is impossible for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. He says that with God, of course, all things are possible but he likens the odds to that of a camel going through the eye of a needle. I have heard preachers say that Jesus was referring

to a narrow passage in Jerusalem that camels had to push hard to get through and could not do this with luggage strapped to their sides. I know this is not what Jesus was referring to because he did not say it was difficult, or hard, or we can do it if we really try – he said quite plainly that with men it is impossible.

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

Matthew 19:23-27

The fundamental mistake of so many preachers is that they do not know the difference between eternal life and the Kingdom of God. They believe The Kingdom of God is eternity, or the church, when it is neither. It is either the Kingdom within that doesn't come with observation, or it is

the coming 1,000 year kingdom that Christ will establish when he returns to earth. The rich young ruler had already asked about obtaining eternal life and Jesus had given him the answer.

Behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

Matthew 19:16

His second question, 'What do I still lack?' was about the Kingdom of God and not Salvation.

The young man says unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what do I still lack?

Matthew 19:20

Impossible Without God

Now, Jesus answers this second question and shows that perfection, meaning maturity, is about obtaining the kingdom when Christ returns.

And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into **the kingdom of God.**

Matthew 19:24

This makes all the difference because we know that many rich people have accepted forgiveness of sins and qualify for eternal life and it is not hard for them to do so – I personally have had many rich friends in my lifetime who were undoubtedly saved and bound for eternal life.

The question is, will they be part of the Kingdom when Christ returns and sets up his government on this earth? This is what is impossible with men – for a rich man to enter the Kingdom – and not salvation.

Jesus' disciples were shocked at this statement. Peter looks for more answers and asked Jesus what rewards they will have in the Kingdom. He tells Jesus that they have left all and followed him just like the rich young ruler was told to do if he wanted to obtain the Kingdom.

Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed you; what shall we have therefore?

Matthew 19:27

Jesus then makes two amazing promises to those disciples who had left all to follow Jesus. I am convinced it is the same for us today.

1. That they will be with Jesus when he restores the Kingdom to Israel and whatever they have given up for this Kingdom they will receive an hundredfold on this earth and inherit eternal life afterwards.

And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That you which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ... every one that has forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

Matthew 19:28-29

The word 'regeneration' is interesting because one definition is 'restoration of a thing to its pristine state'. So that means that Israel will be returned to its finest hour which was surely during the reign of David and Solomon.

2. Jesus' second promise was also amazing. He said they would judge the 12 tribes of Israel in his millennial reign.

...you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Matthew 19:28

Only to Eleven Men

These promises were specific to the 12 Apostles for we will never sit on 12 thrones judging the tribes of Israel. However, we will certainly receive rewards in the Kingdom if we leave all and follow Christ according to what Paul told the Gentile Church.

Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he has built thereupon, **he shall receive a reward.**

1 Corinthians 3:13-14

Again, let me say this has nothing to do with our Salvation which is purely by faith and not how we have lived or what we have sacrificed for God.

We now come to the statement that is the subject of our parable or difficult saying of Jesus.

But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.

Matthew 19:30

We do not have to speculate or wonder what this means because Jesus carries on his dialogue with another parable which explains his statement fully – the parable of the pennies.

Chapter 5

Pennies from Heaven

Here is the parable Jesus gives to explain His statement 'The first shall be last and the last shall be first'. Notice the first verse of the parable shows it is about the Kingdom of Heaven so it is not about salvation and eternal life – this parable is about rewards in the Kingdom.

For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, And said unto them; Go also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and said unto them, Why do you stand here all the day idle? They said to him, because no man has hired us. He said to them, you also go into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall you receive.

So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard said unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.

But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise

received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and you have made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do you no wrong: did you not agree with me for a penny? Take what is yours, and go your way: I will give unto this last, even as unto you

Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? Is your eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

Matthew 20:1-16

God's Vineyard

I think everyone who reads this parable will accept that God is the man who goes out to find labourers for his vineyard and that it is about Israel. (I have shown in previous chapters that the vineyard is Israel.) He agrees to pay them a penny for a day's work. (The word penny is a translation

of the word denarius – meaning 'of 10' and was a silver coin used by the Roman empire.)

The master went out at various times in the day and saw men idle because no one had hired them. It seems he had pity on them and agreed to hire them to work the rest of the day. He did not agree a price but told them he would pay them what was fair. This means they were working on trust without any agreement. He even employed men at the 11th hour so they worked for only a small percentage of the day.

It's Not Fair

At the end of the day the last to be employed were paid first and they received a whole day's wage – a penny. The other labourers who had worked for different lengths of time also received a full day's wage. Those who had worked a full day were watching on and were quite happy with this generosity because they supposed that they would receive more than was agreed seeing as those who only worked part of the day received a full day's wage. They were shocked, disappointed, and angry when they only received a full day's wage and decided that it was 'not fair'.

But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, saying, 'These last have wrought but one hour, and you have made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.'

Matthew 20:10-13

These men were presumptuous in thinking that equality was one of this man's principles. (Christians also believe this of God.) They presumed that this master thought like they did and that those who worked the longest should have received the most money, and those who worked the least should have received the least money.

God's Ways Are Not Our Ways

This is a common fault amongst God's people. They think like the world instead of having the mind of Christ. God does not think like the world, in fact, his thinking is the very opposite. How audacious to think that God thinks like us and has the same perverted standards as the world. It is a universal problem that Christians

fail to understand how God thinks even though the bible is quite clear.

For instance, most Christians think democracy is good and many use this system in their churches voting for leaders in business meetings. They think it the most godly of any political systems when in actual fact it is the most satanic of all political systems. God called men to lead his people in the bible but we prefer the world's methods.

Love and Equality Don't Mix

Christians think 'equality' is good and yet the bible does not support this lie. God is a god of love not equality, and love discriminates by showing favouritism. If I loved everyone equally I would love no one because without showing favour I cannot demonstrate my love. Love and equality cannot coexist. God does not say 'If you love me we are equal', he says 'If you love me obey me'. God always has an order of authority and not equality. He makes nothing equal – equal means 'the same as', and God is a god of variety. Not one snowflake or blade of grass is equal to another. I do not believe God loves us all the same, nor do I believe he treat us all in the same manner. If only

Christians would read their bible as it is without their doctrinal bias and opinion of men instead of assimilating the world's ethos and mind-set.

For God said to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

Romans 9:15

The owner of the vineyard exposed their thinking. He told them that he was the owner and could do as he pleased and if he wanted to show kindness to those who were not employed until the last hour why should they make his kindness to be evil?

But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do you no wrong: did not you agree with me for a penny? Take what is yours, and go your way: I will give unto this last, even as unto you. **Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own?** Is your eye evil, because I am good?

Matthew 20:13-15

Because Christians want their God to be acceptable to the world, they paint a picture of God that is a lie. It is so hard to let God be God and

just accept him as he is instead of making doctrines about him to pacify the followers. We never have to justify God and his workings to anyone – saint or sinner. If they don't like the God who is, so be it, but let us never misrepresent God for the sake of pleasing people and making it easy for them to follow him. Jesus never did make things easy and his statement almost seemed to dissuade the faint hearted. Here is just one example but there are many in his teachings.

So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsakes not all that he has, he cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:33

The last verse of this parable ends with the same words as the last chapter but adds an extra phrase which I will look at in the next chapter.

So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

Matthew 20:16

How does this principle apply to us today? Well, if someone who has lived a wicked life and repents on his death bed because God had mercy on him

and grants him eternal life, and someone who has lived a dedicated life in obedience to all God asked him has the same reward it is not fair according to our view of fairness – meaning equality. However the thief on the cross had the same promise of eternal life as you or I because God has mercy on whom he will have mercy.

No Political Correctness

I trust you, the reader, will start to evaluate your thought processes in this regard and that you will not fit the bible to what you think is political correctness, because God's ways are in the sea and past finding out – may God help us all to know the mind of the spirit and not the flesh.

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counsellor? Or who has first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

Romans 11:33-36

some of those he has called for special treatment or positions above others.

Hand Picked

I am convinced that the majority of those who are saved by faith are called to be followers of Jesus, but I am also convinced that he hand-picks disciples and that you cannot choose yourself. Jesus clearly told his disciples that he had chosen them and not they who had chosen him – they may have been followers of Jesus, as were multitudes, but God chose and gave to Jesus those who were to be his disciples. I believe it is the same today.

You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

John 15:16

This is God's way of marriage – It is the father who chooses the bride for the son and not the son who chooses the bride for himself. In the same passage of dialogue in the upper room after the

Chapter 6

Many Called but Few Chosen

... For many be called, but few chosen.

Matthew 20:16

This is another hard saying of Jesus. What does he mean by it? I think it is hard for many believers to think that God would select

first communion meal Jesus prays to his father. He confirms that these eleven men were chosen of God and given to Jesus as the foundation of his Bride to be.

I have manifested your name unto the men which **you gave me** out of the world: **yours they were, and you gave them to me;** and they have kept your word.

John 17:6

Not All Are the Bride

I do not believe that all those saved by faith are the Bride of Christ and will reign with him for 1,000 years. The bible is clear that there are conditions for reigning with Christ. Here are a few scriptures to confirm this.

The first is a very challenging word from Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount. He is talking about the judgement seat of Christ which Paul also talks about. This judgement is to see if we qualify for the Kingdom. All are saved by faith but not all will reign as the Bride in the Kingdom. He shows that not those who do the works of God will enter the Kingdom – but only those who do his will.

Not every one that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? And in your name have cast out devils? And in your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity.

Matthew 7:21-23

There are conditions to fulfil to inherit the Kingdom.

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; **if so be that we suffer with him,** that we may be also glorified together.

Romans 8:17

Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must **through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.**

Acts 14:22

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us

2 Timothy 2:12

These scriptures indicate that suffering is one of the conditions to reigning with Christ. Our works – how we have lived as a Believers – also has a bearing, not on our salvation, but on our being the Bride and reigning with Christ. Paul tells the Corinthian church that they will be judged at the 'Judgement seat of Christ'. Surely this is for reward or punishment to decide who will reign with him in his Kingdom.

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble. Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

1 Corinthians 3:11-15

Gold, silver, and precious stones are what make up the New Jerusalem. John, in the book of Revelation, tells us it is the Bride that comes down

from heaven to the new earth for eternity. Those who produced wood, hay, and stubble in their walk with God will have their works burned up, and for me this means they do not inherit the kingdom so are not the Bride of Christ.

Adam and Eve – Christ and His Bride

All believers saved by grace are the body of Christ but will they be the Bride? Adam is a type of Jesus, and Eve a type of the Bride according to Paul, but only a rib was taken out of Adam. God made Eve out of a small part of Adam's body.

For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.

Ephesians 5:30-32

I believe the story of Esther is a wonderful example of the statement that many are called but few chosen. The king commanded that all the beautiful young women from his 127 provinces

were to be brought to his palace to prepare for introductions to the king. From these prepared ladies he would choose his new bride. If only one lady from each province was chosen then there would be many women who could have qualified to become the bride of the king. These 'called' women speak of those 'called' into a relationship with God. The women did not all become the bride yet every woman was a potential bride to reign with the king. They were all prepared by a eunuch, named Hegai who looked after these woman. They were purified inside and outside their bodies to be fit for the king to have a sexual relationship with them.

A Long Process

It took a whole twelve months for this process. Most commentaries say that Hegai represents the Holy Ghost and I agree with this. The Holy Ghost is the chaperone who looks after those who have been called and his job is to prefect and purify them for Christ.

Now when every maid's turn was come to go in to king Ahasuerus, after that she had been twelve months, according to the manner of the

women, (for so were the days of their purifications accomplished, to wit, six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours, and with other things for the purifying of the women;)

Esther 2:12

All those called to the palace had a sexual encounter with the king, an intimate relationship, but only one of them was chosen to be the bride of the king. Those who were not chosen were not sent back to their villages but were now treated like royalty and lived in the palace, ate royal food, were dressed in the wonderful clothes that befitted women belonging to the harem of a large empire, but did not reign with the king.

Today's Parallel

This surely is a perfect parallel today of those Christ has called to have a relationship with and be with forever, but does not choose to be his Bride. They will live with God and Christ forever on the new earth and will enjoy all the benefits, but they will not be 'New Jerusalem' – the bride. They will be the nations that are saved. They have access to the city but they are not the city. The city is the Bride.

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, **new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.** And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

Revelation 21:1-3

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And **the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.** And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

Revelation 21:23-26

Why did God choose Esther and not one of the other beautiful women? There is no answer to that question. Why did I choose my wife above other

women? Not because she was the most beautiful woman in the world, or the most intelligent, or even the greatest lover. There is no answer – somehow chemistry kicked in and it is almost as if the choice was made for me, I could choose no other. So it is with God. 'He has mercy on whom he will have mercy and whom he hardens, he hardens', and there is no rhyme or reason, logic or principles that govern it. It's called free will. Why not allow God his choice without questioning?

What About The Remnant?

The remnant is a thread that runs all the way through the bible from Genesis to Revelation, from Noah, Joshua and Caleb, right through to the twelve Apostles who were the only ones in the upper room with whom Christ shared the first communion meal.

Many are called but few chosen – love is selective, exclusive, and narrow – it is never all embracing. If I love all sports equally which do I really love? If I love all styles of music equally which do I really love? If I love all women equally which one do I really love? If Christ loves all those whom he had called equally, whom does he really love and chose for his Bride?

Many Called but Few Chosen

God chose the little nation of Israel out of all the nations of the earth to be his wife. They were no better than other nations so why choose them above others? Abram was from Babylon and worshipped their gods until he was chosen to be the father of faith and of Israel.

Stiff-necked People

This is what God told Israel to show them it was not on their merit that they were God's chosen people:

Speak not in your heart, after that the LORD your God has cast them out from before you, saying, For my righteousness the LORD has brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD drives them out from before you. Not for your righteousness, or for the uprightness of your heart, do you go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God drives them out from before you, and that he may perform the word which the LORD swore unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Understand therefore, that the LORD your God gives you not this good land to possess

Many Called but Few Chosen

it for your righteousness; for you are a stiff-necked people.

Deuteronomy 9:4-6

If you do not accept my revelation to this hard saying then you will have to find another explanation, but to me it is quite clear when you consider the whole plan of God and his dealings with mankind and his called out people. I believe the bible is consistent in this regard that 'many are called but few chosen'.

Chapter 7

The Unjust Steward

Below is the parable we are looking at in this chapter.

And he said also **to his disciples**, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted

The Unjust Steward

his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of you? Give an account of your stewardship; for you may no longer be a steward.

Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? For my lord takes away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much do you owe unto my lord? And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said to him, Take your bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then he said to another, And how much do you owe? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take your bill, and write fourscore. And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light

And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when you fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least

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is unjust also in much. If therefore you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

And if you have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Luke 16:1-13

This parable was not spoken to the Scribes, Pharisees, and Lawyers, or even to the crowds that followed Jesus. This parable was to his disciples, so we need to understand what Jesus is really saying to them. This is obviously a parable about accountability, covetousness, and which master we really serve.

A steward in bible days was a man entrusted with running his master's affairs; his business, servants, and sometimes even his children. This parable applies not to the general Christians but

The Unjust Steward

those God has entrusted to be leaders to manage and look after their master's affairs and the things he has entrusted them with. That is why Jesus did not address the followers but the disciples, those whom he would commission to look after his sheep.

For Those in Leadership

Paul confirms that ministers are stewards of God's heritage and warns them to be faithful stewards. The principles we learn from this parable must be applied today to those who are in leadership.

Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, **and stewards of the mysteries of God.** Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2

Peter also warns those in authority of their accountability.

As every man has received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, **as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.**

1 Peter 4:10

The Unjust Steward

Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away.

1 Peter 5:3-4

This parable is a warning to ministers who are unfaithful and abuse their privileged position of authority and power. It is warning them that they will have to give account of their stewardship.

The example of this stewardship is of how they handle finance because money, or mammon as Jesus often called it, is the biggest snare to any minister or ministry. Sexual sins are also a snare to those who are successful in ministry, but they are the consequence and not the root. Success is the biggest snare and financial reward is a natural consequence of any success.

In this world, success in any area of life brings with it financial rewards, but it should not be so with God's leaders. We are not in the Old Covenant dispensation where obeying God brings status and financial rewards. Under the New Covenant

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those who are righteous will suffer persecution and misunderstanding according to the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles. That is why Paul tells Timothy, a young minister:

And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

1 Timothy 6:8

Unfaithful in Financial Matters

Let me take you through this parable to see if we can learn from it. This steward had been unfaithful in matters of his master's finances and it had been reported to this master and so he was called to give an account for the reports accusing him of wasting his master's goods.

What a challenge to any minister or denomination to assess whether they have used the money they have received wisely or diligently. How can a minister justify spending millions of pounds, or dollars, on a beautiful building when people are without homes and lacking basic food and clothing in his district? How can they justify spending £30,000 on a PA system when Christians, their brothers and sisters in Christ, are starving in the third world?

It is Never Too Late

Well, I need to tell you if you are in a position where you have not been diligent, while ever you are alive it is not too late to do something about it. If you are guilty of being an unjust steward the parable shows that what the steward did caused him to be recommended by his master for his actions.

He went to his master's debtors and negotiated instant settlement at a reduced price. He knew he would be dismissed when his master found out about his unfaithfulness so that by doing this he was making friends out of his master's debtors and securing his future when he was dismissed. His master commended him for his wise actions because he brought in debts. We have a saying in my country 'A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush'. Money in the bank is worth much more than the promise of money. My boss used to tell me often: "Son, make sure you take the money before you deliver the goods because you can't bank promises." He was correct of course.

If we have failed we can make up for lost time or lost opportunities. We can take up our cross if we have stood still with it for years and not moved

on. We can redeem the time, and be recommended for our diligence even after we have failed.

The World Are Often Wiser!

Jesus then made a strange statement – he said that the world are wiser than the children of light. Of course it is true because those in the world realise that if they have been unfaithful and the boss finds out they will be punished if they don't redeem themselves, but God's children seem to think because they are saved there is no accountability and God will wink at their unfaithfulness.

And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light

Luke 16:8

I have been amazed at the number of Christians I know who have been slothful and wasted so many years in unfruitfulness yet, when challenged, do not act wisely but make excuses and carry on being unfruitful. There seems to be no fear of facing their master one day to account for the deeds

done in their body. (How they have managed their stewardship.)

And think this, O man, that judges them which do such things, and do the same, that you shall escape the judgment of God? Or do you despise the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? But after your hardness and impenitent heart you treasure up unto yourself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds.

Romans 2:3-6

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad.

2 Corinthians 5:10

Jesus, after the parable, refers back to finance and confirms that covetousness is the biggest snare to those in the ministry. Jesus says that if you are not faithful with money God will never trust you with true riches. A very strong statement indeed

and one we should seriously consider. It is the yardstick of spiritual riches.

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

Luke 16:10-12

A man called of God to be a minister or steward of God's heritage has to flee riches and covetousness because, as Jesus said on numerous occasions, 'you cannot serve God and riches'.

No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Luke 16:1-13

Let me end this chapter with the words of Paul to Timothy a young minister about these very things.

The Unjust Steward

If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof comes envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, **supposing that gain is godliness**: from such withdraw yourself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. **But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.**

For the **love of money is the root of all evil**: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But you, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto you are also called, and has professed a good profession before many witnesses. I give you charge in the

The Unjust Steward

sight of God, who quickens all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that you keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:

1 Timothy 6:3-14

If you count yourself a minister, called of God, then you need to take these words seriously, with the knowledge that you will have to give an account one day for your stewardship.

Although this parable was addressed to those who would be leaders, the principle applies to us all. We will all stand at the judgement seat of Christ and be judged on what we do with what others have given us. As we came into the world with nothing everything we have has been given us so we are only stewards of all we possess – a sobering thought.

the mysteries of the kingdom, but as I will show it has been misinterpreted by the body of Christ.

Meet Nicodemus

The phrase is taken from a conversation with a man called Nicodemus. He came to Jesus by night, indicating that he was seeking the truth because he was a Pharisee and ruler of the Jews. He did not ask Jesus a question, but affirmed that Jesus was a teacher who came from God. He did not accept Jesus as Messiah but he at least acknowledged that he was sent from God as a teacher because of the miracles he did. Let me go through the full dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus.

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that you do, except God be with him.

John 3:1-2

I believe he genuinely wanted to know more from this teacher. Jesus makes this statement to him.

Chapter 8

You Must be Born Again

You must be born again is one of the most well known phrases in the whole bible. It is taken from John's gospel chapter three. John 3:16 is the one gospel text that all evangelists have used more than any other when preaching about salvation. This may be a strange phrase to put in

You Must be Born Again

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:3

This statement is where the Church have failed to note what Jesus was talking about – he was not talking about salvation and eternity, he was talking about the Kingdom that he would restore to Israel at his second coming. He did not say unless you are born again you cannot be saved and have eternal life, he said you will not see the Kingdom, which is a different matter entirely.

Nicodemus did not understand, for he was thinking naturally and so made his logical protest by asking how he could enter his mother's womb and be born a second time when he is already old.

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

John 3:4

He was correct of course, no one can be born twice in the flesh. Jesus then explained in clear terms what the second birth was all about. We do not know whether Nicodemus understood or not

You Must be Born Again

at the end of the explanation, but the church have not understood as far as I can see.

Not Eternal Life

Jesus explains how to be saved and inherit eternal life in verses 15-16 and it is not to do with being born the second time but purely by faith. He is not talking about the Kingdom in these verses but eternal life.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That **whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that **whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**

John 3:15-16

Jesus explained what being born the second time to inherit the kingdom means.

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which

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

John 3:5-6

Natural or Spiritual

These are the key verses to the mystery of being born again. Jesus said what is born of the flesh is flesh, so he is talking about the physical birth. We know that we are surrounded by water in our mother's womb and the waters have to break for us to be birthed. It is the same with the spiritual birth, for then Jesus says, 'that which is born of the spirit is spirit'. In a natural birth we are born with a natural, physical, body. It follows, that will be born of the spirit will have a spiritual body.

Jesus is talking about the rapture of the Bride who will meet him in the air when those who rise will be changed into spiritual beings. They will not rise from the dead in their natural flesh but will have a spiritual body like the one Christ had when he was changed from his physical body to a spiritual one. The body in which he appeared to the disciples after his resurrection. He came in this spiritual body through closed doors yet he proved he was not a ghost, it was a literal, tangible body

with which was able to eat and drink, and had flesh
and bones.

Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself:
handle me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and
bones, as you see me have.

Luke 24:39

**A physical birth will produce a
physical body and a spiritual
birth will produce a spiritual body**

I understand what Christians mean when they say they have been born again but it is not scriptural. They are children of God for sure and have been conceived of the Holy Ghost but they are still in the womb awaiting the rapture when they will be changed in the twinkling of an eye.

The bible never refers to a baby in the womb as a 'fetus' but as a child – the phrase the bible uses is 'the woman was with child'. It is already a child from conception and when it is born is already nine months old because a human life

starts at conception not birth. We are indeed God's children but we are waiting for our birth into spiritual bodies and beings. John explains this in his first epistle to the church. He confirms we are now sons of God but we are waiting for the birth of the sons of God.

Perfectly Logical

This makes sense to me because when a child is in the womb we can name them, and the mother can feel the movement, but we can only speculate as to what they will look like. Will they be like their mother or their father, or maybe their grandparents? We have to wait for the birth to know what they will look like. John shares more of this in his first epistle

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

1 John 3:2

When a person accepts Christ there is often a spiritual experience but this is the conception, not

the birth. We may be a child of God but we have only just been conceived and have to wait until the time of the birth. Paul puts it succinctly in his letter to the Galatian Christians. A baby in the womb has to be formed into the image of his father and mother before it is born.

My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.

Galatians 4:19

Just as with a natural child in the womb, the baby takes its life from the mother (all its nutrients and life comes through the umbilical cord), so it is when we are in the spiritual womb, we have no life of our own – it comes from God. We have the spiritual life of Christ. As it is in the natural realm, so it is in the spiritual realm. When the baby is manifest it is cut off from the mother and starts its own independent life.

New Spiritual Man

When we are born again at the return of Christ we will no longer rely on the life of Christ for we will have of ourselves eternal spiritual life. When we see him we

will be like him. Paul explains about this new spiritual man that will manifest at the first resurrection.

So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

1 Corinthians 15:42-49

The next verses confirm what Jesus said; that if we do not have the spiritual birth we cannot enter the Kingdom. We cannot reign with Christ if we are in flesh and blood. Only those in the first resurrection will have spiritual bodies.

Now this I say, brethren, that **flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God**; neither does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

1 Corinthians 15:50-53

In the Human Body

The rest of the dead who are not raised with a spiritual eternal body will face the Great White throne in their flesh to account for the deeds done in their flesh – their works.

But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection: on such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Revelation 20:5-6

We are already children of God and have the eternal spirit of God in us, but we are waiting for the redemption of our body into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Here is how Paul describes it:

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies **by his Spirit that dwells in you**. For the earnest expectation of the creature waits for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who has subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and travailes in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, **waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body**.

From Romans 8:11-21

I believe this is the correct interpretation of the second birth, but I fully understand those who think

they have been born twice already because they are correct in as much as they have the life of Christ and have been conceived of the Holy Ghost.

You will have to make your own mind up as to what Jesus really meant by this phrase given to Nicodemus. For me, being saved by faith is about eternal life and salvation. Being born again is refers the first resurrection and being given a new body to inherit the Kingdom of God and to reign with him for 1,000 years. It is about being the New Jerusalem that comes down from heaven to the new earth for eternity.

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things

You Must be Born Again

are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

Revelation 21:1-5

Chapter 9

God Demands Increase

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

Every branch in me that bears not fruit he takes away: and every branch that bears fruit, he purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

John 15:1-2

God Demands Increase

This verse from John 15 is very challenging and a hard saying of Jesus because it shows that we can be in the vine and not bear fruit. If we do bear fruit he will purge us to bear more fruit because God demands growth and development in his children just as an earthy father will demand growth in all areas of a child's life until it reaches maturity.

One World Government

For those Believers who have discernment and can judge the signs of the times it will be obvious that we are nearing the One World Government which the bible says precedes the return of Christ. This should alert us to the fact that when this counterfeit world Government is in place, and all the world worship the Beast, then the last trump shall sound and the true One World Government will be set up by Christ on his return.

And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

Revelation 11:15

Saved As By Fire

As Believers we need to prepare ourselves for when we stand before Christ to be judged. This is to see if we will obtain the Kingdom or be saved as by fire. The question we need to ask is; how will we be judged when we stand before the judgement seat of Christ to account for how we have lived as a Believer?

There are many conditions to obtaining the Kingdom but one of them will be concerning the fruit we have produced. As Christians we are in the light – we have the knowledge of the plan of God, have accepted it, and are saved by faith. However, that doesn't mean we will automatically walk in the light, for a Christian can walk in darkness. Here are some scriptures to show this from the apostle John – he is talking to the Church.

If we say that we have fellowship with him, **and walk in darkness**, we lie, and do not the truth:

1 John 1:6

He that says he is in the light, and hates his brother, **is in darkness** even until now.

1 John 2:9

You cannot produce fruit if you do not walk in the light. Fruit does not grow in darkness – it needs light. What is this fruit that Jesus will be looking for? Fruit is the character of Christ as described in Galatians – the fruit of the spirit.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Galatians 5:22

The Beatitudes in Matthew 5 are also a list of the attributes of the character of Christ and this is what we must produce if we want to obtain the Kingdom when Jesus returns to earth. Jesus told his disciple that not only should they bear fruit but that it should remain.

You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and **that your fruit should remain:**

John 15:16

How long should it remain? It has to remain until Christ returns to judge us for our reward

or punishment for one of the things he will be judging is whether we have produced. To bear fruit is the very reason God chose us. He wants us to be the light of the world and to demonstrate his character to those in darkness.

Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be my disciples.

John 15:8

Life Through Death

God has been good and has a way for us to bear fruit – the cross. It is a wonderful way for new life and fruitfulness but it only comes through death. There would be no resurrected Jesus if he had not been willing to die first, and it is the same with us.

If we are not willing to die to ourselves, and the nature of Adam, we will never walk in the newness of the life of Christ. Jesus told us these things but it is hard to accept and so many believers think that success, self-love, and blessings will bring fruit. Unfortunately these things will only gender pride, self righteousness, and worldliness.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone: but if it die, it brings forth much fruit.

John 12:24-25

God's Creation is Fruitful

God's character is displayed in his creation and it is one of fruitfulness. The first commandment to Adam was to be fruitful and fill the earth with humanity. There are over seven billion people alive today all from the fruit of Adam and Eve. Unbelievable fruitfulness.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, **Be fruitful**, and multiply, and replenish the earth...

Genesis 1:27-28

God gave the same instruction to Noah after he had destroyed the earth and started again.

God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, **Be fruitful**, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

Genesis 9:1

Everything that has life is abundantly fruitful. Just one pip from an apple, after a few years, will produce 100s of apples each year for 100 years – that's God's fruitfulness. A single cat in five years can produce 20,000 offspring. The exponential growth of fruitfulness is amazing and such a challenge to us once we have the revelation of it.

God gets angry when we do not produce increase because it goes against his very character. I will look at the parable of the talents in the next volume which is all about increase with what we have been given and being accountable for it. Another parable I will look at in the next volume is the unprofitable servant who only did his duty and did not bring increase.

Gifts or fruit?

The gifts of the spirit will bring profit and increase to the Kingdom of God but only the fruit will bring increase to us personally and be acceptable to Jesus when we face him. He will not ask us how many miracles we did or how many times we prophesied, nor how many 'souls' we have won. He will be looking for fruit. It will not be enough when we face Christ to have done his

works, we will have to have done his will and that is to bear much fruit. We have to become like our father in heaven in character and transformed from the thinking of the world to having the mind of Christ. As Paul says, Christ must be formed in us if we want to be in the Kingdom that is coming. It does not make any sense to me that Jesus would have proud, selfish, self-centred, unforgiving, and bitter Believers ruling over the ungodly with him.

**In this life we are
training for reigning**

God's Work or God's Will?

We may be saved but we have to show that we have produced gold, silver, and precious stones at the judgement seat of Christ and not wood, hay, and stubble. It is not enough to do God's work – we must do his will.

Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them. **Not every one that**

says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, and in your name have cast out devils, and in your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity.

Matthew 7:19-23

When you plant a seed in the ground it has to die before the new life can come forth, increase, and multiply. God planted his seed into us when we were baptised into him and he expects it to grow and bear much fruit. The life of Christ has been deposited in us and the seed knows how to grow if only we will feed and water it.

We must grow in Christ's character but it will only be through the trials, pruning, testing, and death to self that we will produce the new life and character of Christ. May God help us all to be faithful in this area and to hear the words 'well done, good and faithful servant' at his judgement seat.

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto

you. Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be my disciples.

John 15:7-8

Chapter 10

Suffering for the Kingdom

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.

2 Timothy 2:12

In this part of the book I am looking at conditions for obtaining the Kingdom

Suffering for the Kingdom

and reigning with Christ for 1,000 years. For many Christians the thought that suffering and persecution are requirements would seem unacceptable to their doctrine, but that is only because they have believed their church doctrines above what the bible clearly states. Why would Christians think we shouldn't suffer hardship and persecution when the bible is so clear on this subject. This is nothing new, of course, for God's people. Jesus said, many times, that those who should be teaching the commandments of God are instead teaching the traditions of the elders. Why would we think it different in any age when we have history to educate us to how things work amongst God's people.

No Apologies

I do not apologise for using so many scriptures in this chapter because the reader needs to know that I am not basing my statements on my beliefs or doctrinal bias, but on the word of God, comparing scripture with scripture.

He answered and said unto them, Well has Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This

people honours me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, **teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.** For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things you do. And he said unto them, **Full well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your own tradition.**

Mark 7:6-9

Paul, before his conversion, was ardently zealous for the traditions of his fathers and didn't realise he was fighting God.

And I profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the **traditions of my fathers.**

Galatians 1:14

Expect Persecution

Jesus told us to expect suffering if we want to obtain the Kingdom. He cannot be more clear than this. Read the passage below slowly and see if this is what is being taught in your denomination? If not, you are being fed on honey-coated, diluted

traditions, and crowd-pleasing, entertaining, bums on seats messages week after week which will never produce disciples of Jesus Christ!

The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness, that speak you in light: and what you hear in the ear, that preach upon the housetops. And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell ...Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a

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man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that does not take up his cross, and follow after me, is not worthy of me. He that finds his life shall lose it: and he that loses his life for my sake shall find it.

Mark 10:24 -39

In another dialogue Jesus tells his disciples to rejoice when persecuted because they will inherit the kingdom.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so they persecuted the prophets which were before you.

From Matthew 5:10-12

Jesus tells his disciples in the upper room to expect hatred and persecution.

If the world hate you, you know that it hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love his own: but because you are

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not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. **If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you;** if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

John 15:18-21

When Paul was on his missionary journeys, desiring to encourage and build the Believers up, he reminded them about the entrance to the kingdom. They were already saved, so now he was talking about reigning with Christ.

Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that **we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.**

Acts 14:22

The New Jerusalem, as described in the book of Revelation, is the Bride of Christ and consists of those who will reign with him in his Kingdom. The entrance to the city is through 12 gates which

are all made of pearls – the only precious stone formed through suffering, so even the symbolism of this city confirms the teaching of Jesus and the Apostles that suffering and persecution are the entrance to the Kingdom of God.

Birthed in Persecution

The early church were birthed in times of persecution and suffering. We need to start to read the New Testament in light of this knowledge. Whenever the church of Jesus Christ is successful, flourishing, accepted by society and not under persecution or suffering, it becomes decadent, worldly, and cold towards the real life of Christ. Church history proves this. Persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire occurred throughout most of its history, beginning in the first century AD. It was not until Rome paganised the teaching of Jesus and the Apostles in 313 AD, at the Edict of Milan, that persecution of Christians by the Roman state ceased – but that's when the dark ages.

The best evidence I can give to this chapter on suffering and persecution being the entrance to the Kingdom is to use scripture for that is my only

authority. Here is the introduction to one of Paul's letters.

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia: Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, **who comforts us in all our tribulation**, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring **of the same sufferings which we also suffer**: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.

2 Corinthians 1:1-6

Here are a few more scriptures. I have put many more at the end of this chapter for those who need more references to prove suffering and persecution should be normal for the body of Christ.

Suffering for the Kingdom

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; **if so be that we suffer with him**, that we may be also glorified together.

Romans 8:17

For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, **but also to suffer for his sake**.

Philippians 1:29

Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, **that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer**.

Thessalonians 1:5

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

2 Timothy 2:12

Yes, and **all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution**.

2 Timothy 3:12

The end time Church, Laodecea, in the book of Revelation, were prosperous, self sufficient, and worldly, but God had a very different view of them.

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He counselled them to buy gold tested in the fire. This mean the trials and persecution that would purify them as gold to be worthy of the Kingdom and receive a crown

And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things says the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot: I would you were cold or hot. So then because you art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth. Because you say I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and don't know that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: **I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire**, that you may be rich; and white raiment, that you may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness does not appear; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that thou may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. **To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me**

in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Revelation 3:14-21

John then writes the phrase that is at the end of all the letters to the churches and the same phrase that Jesus gave at the end of many parables. This phrase indicates that there is a mystery and only those with eyes to see and ears to hear will understand. I pray that you may be one of those who will hear what the spirit is saying to the church in the last of the last days. It will be a fitting end to this chapter.

He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches.

Revelation 3:21

New Testament Scriptures about suffering and persecution

From henceforth let no man trouble me: for **I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus**. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. To the Galatians written from Rome.

Galatians 6:17-18

And they departed from the presence of the council, **rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name**.

Acts 5:41

We labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; **being persecuted, we suffer it**.

1 Corinthians 4:12

I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things **I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need**.

Philippians 4:12

For verily, when we were with you, we told you before **that we should suffer tribulation**; even as it came to pass, and you know.

1 Thessalonians 3:4

For therefore **we both labour and suffer reproach**, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

1 Timothy 4:10

Suffering for the Kingdom

For which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day

2 Timothy 1:12

Therefore you **endure hardness, as a good soldier** of Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 2:3

For what glory is it, if, when you be buffeted for your faults, you shall take it patiently? But if, **when you do well, and suffer for it, you take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.**

1 Peter 2:20

But and **if you suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are you:** and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

1 Peter 3:14

Wherefore **let them that suffer according to the will of God** commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

1 Peter 4:19

Suffering for the Kingdom

For it is better, **if the will of God be so, that you suffer for well doing,** than for evil doing.

1 Peter 3:17

If any man suffer as a Christian let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf

1 Peter 4:16

Chapter 11

Riches and the Kingdom

How hardly shall they that have riches enter into
the kingdom of heaven?

Matthew 10:23

This is too hard a saying for most modern
Christians for they have been seduced

into believing that blessing, riches, and status in this world are a sign of godliness. I believe the biggest hindrance to obtaining the Kingdom of Heaven is riches. This seems like a bold statement so let me try and convince you from the scriptures.

I need make it quite clear that riches are not a hindrance to salvation and eternal life, but we are not talking about eternal life, we are talking about the Kingdom that Jesus will bring with him when he returns to earth to reign. As I have shown already in this volume – flesh and blood cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Eternal life and salvation is by faith alone in what God has already done for us. The Kingdom is not by faith but by works and what we have done for God, and how we have behaved since we were saved.

Impossible With Men

I have already looked at the rich young ruler and the amazing statements which Jesus said to his disciples, but it would be good to briefly go over it again in this chapter. When Jesus said that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle the disciples were astonished.

And Jesus looked round about, and said to his disciples, **How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!** And the disciples were astonished at his words.

Mark 10:23-24

Jesus qualified this statement and said it was trusting in riches that was the problem and again stated how difficult it was for rich men to enter the Kingdom. He said it was impossible – unless God did a miracle – for a rich man cannot do it.

But Jesus answered again, and said to them, Children, **how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!** It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them said, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

Mark 10:23-27

How can you be rich and not trust in your wealth? That is the very reason why people

accumulate wealth, it is insurance against disaster. Riches bring with it status and security. Paul takes a whole chapter in his letter to Timothy about the danger of riches, and warns him to keep away from those who think wealth is a sign of God's blessing.

If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof comes envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, **supposing that gain is godliness:** from such withdraw yourself.

1 Timothy 6:3-5

He then tells of the dangers of seeking riches and says those that do so will fall into many temptations, warning that the end can be perdition. (The word is synonymous with damnation.)

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. **But those that**

will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

1 Timothy 6:6-9

Love of Money is the Root

Paul then makes a statement that, if it was not in the bible I don't think we would believe. He says the love of money is the root of all evil. Not some evil, or most evil, but all evil. Either it is true or it is not, there is nothing to qualify the statement. I believe it whole-heartedly because I have studied this world's system for over 55 years and am convinced it is absolutely true.

For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But you, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

1 Timothy 6:10-11

The whole world system is based on greed and covetousness. Every country in the world owes

money to the World Banks and as the bible rightly says 'the borrower is servant to the lender'. How right the bible is in all areas of life.

The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender

Proverbs 22:7

All the World is Trapped

My own country England, according to the world debt clock, owes over 2 trillion dollars, and the USA owes over 18 trillion. The debt is secured by the tax obtainable from the working population of each country and the debt will never go smaller because all the money paid is to cover the interest not the capital debt. The whole world population are only digits on the New York stock exchange. We are slaves and do not realise it. That is why democracy is the most evil of systems because the populace believe they elect the leaders and have a say in how the country is run, but the bible is correct and the poor have never in history controlled the rich.

Jesus has something to say about treasures on earth – he says don't store them up.

Do not up lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but do lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

Matthew 6:19-20

He gives us the key in the next verse showing us that the heart is where our treasure is. So if you want treasures on earth then that proves where your heart is – the world, and not the Kingdom of God.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Matthew 6:21

The love of the world is spiritual adultery according to the book of James

You adulterers and adulteresses, don't you know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

James 4:4

Paul warns the Believers at Colosse that the love of money, covetousness, is actually idolatry.

If you are then risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, **and covetousness, which is idolatry:**

Colossians 3:1-5

We Are Gods

A god or idol has to be satisfied and appeased. Covetousness makes us into gods, with the need to be satisfied and appeased, and it is the greatest sin, for we make ourselves equal with God. All sin is a form of self satisfaction and misplaced self love. If we love God we obey him, and therefore, do not sin. The amount of sin in our lives is directly proportional to the amount we do not love God and the exact amount we love ourselves.

Persecution is the bane of Christians in the third world countries – but it purifies the Bride

Prosperity and the love of money is the bane of the western Church, it pollutes and corrupts it

Riches become our security and the means to do God's work – it is a substitute for faith and the power of the Holy Ghost. The richest churches in the world are the most corrupt. Just compare them starting with the wealthiest, the Catholic Church, right down to the Mega Churches that are now appearing in the USA, Philippines, Nigeria, and other countries.

The Laodicean Church mentioned in the book of Revelation is an example of our current situation. Their riches caused complacency and pride. How they saw and valued themselves was the very opposite of how Christ saw them.

And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things says the Amen, the faithful and

true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot: I would you were cold or hot. So then because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth. **Because you say, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and don't know that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:**

I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich; and white raiment, that you may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness does not appear; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.

Revelation 3:14-18

Where is Your Treasure?

Here is what Jesus says of those who want to be rich in this life – they will not be rich in the Kingdom. You cannot have the Kingdom now and also when Jesus comes. The tables will be turned – the Kingdom is about the great reversal

But **woe unto you that are rich! For you have received your consolation.** Woe unto you that are

full! For you shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! For you shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! For so did their fathers to the false prophets.

Luke 6:24-26

Charge to Rich Christians

Please take note that in this chapter I am not criticising rich Christians for there were many in the New Testament and Paul gives a charge to them – and it is not to become poor. I personally know many rich Christians who are saved by faith, but this book is not about obtaining eternal life by faith it is about qualifying for the Kingdom when Jesus sets it up here on earth. Here is the charge Paul gives. Notice it is about eternal life and not the Kingdom. (A 'charge' is a solemn obligation.)

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a

good foundation against the time to come, **that they may lay hold on eternal life.**

1 Timothy 6:17-19

Chapter 12

Beaten with Few or Many Stripes

And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he comes shall find so doing. Of a truth

Beaten with Few or Many Stripes

I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he has. But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delays his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunk. The lord of that servant will come in a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes .

Luke 12:42-47

This hard saying is for ministers and those whom God has placed over his heritage, such as the five ministry gifts to the church in Ephesians 4: Apostles, Prophets, Teachers, Pastors, and Evangelists. In fact all Christian leaders come under this category of stewardship and so will include Deacons, Elders, and all who are responsible for the welfare of God's people.

The background to this saying is the Sermon on the Mount in Luke's Gospel (a paraphrase of

Matthew 5-7. In Luke's Gospel it is spread over a few chapters, mainly 6 and 12). Here are the verses in Luke's Gospel which correspond to Matthew's account.

But rather seek the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that fails not, where no thief approaches, neither moth corrupts. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Luke 12 31-34

A Warning for the Last Days

Jesus continues with the challenge that he will come at a time we don't expect him to return, so it's a serious warning to those in leadership to prepare themselves and be ready for Jesus' return to give an account of themselves.

Let your loins be girded, and your lights burning; And you yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding;

that when he comes and knock, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he comes shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Therefore **be ready also: for the Son of man comes at an hour when you think not.**

Luke 12:35-40

Peter Asks a Question

Peter asked an intelligent question, "Is this meant for us apostles, or is it to everyone?" From Jesus' answer it is obviously for the apostles and those who would be in authority after the day of Pentecost.

Then Peter said unto him, Lord, do you speak this parable to us, or even to all?

Luke 12:41

When Jesus answers he talks about stewardship and integrity in the last days and the preparation we need. We will have to give an account of our stewardship at the judgement seat of Christ when he returns. There will be rewards for those who have been faithful and have fed those entrusted to them with the word of God.

And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to **give them their portion of meat in due season**? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he comes shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he has.

Luke 12 :42-44

Surely the phrase 'give them their meat in due season' means that today those in authority should endeavour to give Believers the meat of the word.

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. **I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto you were not able to bear it**, neither yet now are you able.

1 Corinthians 3:1-2

The problem here is that there are not only rewards for well doing, but punishments for those who haven't been faithful and fed the household of faith but rather abused them. It seems to me that they are in danger of being damned. We all like rewards for well doing but are we as happy for punishments for ill doing.

But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delays his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; the lord of that servant will come in a day when he looks not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and **will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.**

Luke 12 :45-46

No unbeliever has his name in the book of life, so these servants of the master will be cast into the lake of fire. All the servants, good and bad, are stewards for the same master. I find no other explanation for the fate of these people. Our doctrines must not get in the way of plain scripture. If things do not fit our doctrines we must change our doctrines and not change the word of God – to do so is very serious.

False Prophets

How many so called prophets give words out of their own minds to bless people and neglect to do what a true prophet should do. God's prophets are to primarily warn his people of their backsliding and waywardness. How many pastors give sugar coated homilies of blessing, and self esteem, instead of giving the true word of God with all its warnings. How many leaders give their people entertainment instead of a challenge to a holy life and separation from the world with its empty tinsel and toys? They will have to give an account on the day they face Christ at his judgement seat.

Reward or Punishment

We now come to the verse that I have chosen for this chapter title, 'Beaten with Few or Many Stripes'.

And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.

Luke 12:47-48

From this parable it is obvious that there are rewards and punishment in the Kingdom when Jesus returns to earth. There are parables to confirm this, such as the talents, the sheep and the goats, and others, but in case the reader thinks that these parables can be viewed as only allegories to be interpreted to suit our doctrines, the plain word of God makes no mistake in this respect.

Paul says that those who produce wood, hay, and stubble will be banished from the kingdom. However they do not lose their salvation, but will be 'saved as by fire'.

Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

1 Corinthians 3:13-15

Another Warning

Paul also warns the Corinthians in another passage when revealing the truth about communion.

Christians do not take this meal seriously enough and relegate it to a symbol – but a symbol can never damn you. ^{Footnote 1}

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eats and drinks unworthily, **eats and drinks damnation** to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But **when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.**

1 Corinthians 11:28-32

Jesus also confirms that there are rewards and punishment at his judgement. Those who do God's work but not his will have no part in his millennial Kingdom.

Not every one that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; **but he that does the will of my Father which is in heaven.** Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? And in your name have cast out devils, and in your name done many

wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity.

Matthew 7:21-23

All these servants that we are looking at served the same master, so both categories are serving God. The criteria for rewards or punishment is doing, or not doing, God's will whether we know it or not!

Those who did not know God's will and so didn't do it (and the context is about giving meat to his household which can only mean feeding Believers the correct spiritual food), are to be beaten with few stripes. Those who did know the master's will and did not do it were beaten with many stripes. Is this literal or just symbolic? Well, It is difficult to spiritualise this beating, or to even symbolise it. Why do we not take it literally? We are instructed to suffer for Christ while we live. If we refuse then maybe we will suffer at the judgement seat of Christ so we can be part of the Kingdom and not be condemned with the world – I will leave the reader to come to their own conclusions, but please think about this seriously before dismissing it. Whatever conclusions you come to, this statement

of Jesus is a serious warning to us all and warrants our full investigation.

After Jesus warns about being beaten with few or many stripes he gives another challenge in the same verse and this will be the subject of the next chapter.

Footnote 1

I have written a book on the 'Breaking of Bread' and I recommend it if the reader is interested to learn more about this resurrection meal. It is available from Amazon as a paperback or Kindle download
ISBN 978-1-904592-84-6

context of this statement in the last chapter, so this statement from Jesus applies to leaders and their obligations to feed those people entrusted to them. I believe it applies to material things as well as spiritual things.

What About Riches

If we are wealthy, and all those who live in the First World are wealthy measured against the whole world population, then we are under obligation. Much has been given us and we are only stewards of what we have been given. Paul told Timothy, a young minister with people under his charge, to beware of riches. Read the passage slowly for the instructions are quite clear.

For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But **they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.** For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many

Chapter 13

Much Given – Much Required

For whosoever much is given of him shall much be required.

Luke 12:48

This is a hard saying for it puts Believers under obligation. We have looked at the

sorrows. But you, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness

1 Timothy 6:7-11

These instructions are only for those who, like Timothy, have been called to full time service for God. They should shun riches knowing they are a snare to a man of God.

Paul has not finished his instructions because he goes on to emphasise the importance of what he has just said. It is very serious for a man of God to disobey these instructions.

I give you a charge in the sight of God, who quickens all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that you keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 6:13-14

Covetousness is one of the signs of a false prophet. Those who love the rewards and benefits of having the gifts of the spirit are following the way of Balaam. Peter warns the Believers that these

false prophets are in the body of Christ, have been saved by faith and known the way of righteousness, but have forsaken this way and have turned again like a dog to its vomit and are damned. (Read the whole chapter, 2 Peter 2 to understand.) It is quite clear if you take your doctrinal glasses off!

And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingers not, and their damnation slumbers not.

2 Peter 2:3

Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

2 Peter 2:15

What about Christians that have not been called to full time service? The instructions are completely different. But again they are very clear. Paul also gives them a charge. (A charge puts a person under solemn obligation.)

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but

in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

2 Timothy 2:17-19

We are Only Stewards

We could apply this principle to all the things God has given to us in which to be good stewards. Our talents, business acumen, the ability to work hard manually, or to manage situations or people. With everything we have been given we are obligated to produce fruit, increase, and will have to give an account before Christ at his judgement seat.

We should be careful what we ask God for – sometimes the worst thing God can give us is what we want. Seeking power, fame, status or wealth are the wrong thing to desire and seek, and will give us problems. I cannot find any scriptures in the New Testament to tell a Believer to seek these things.

Motive 'is king' with God and he is looking at the heart not our works

Those in full time ministry are also stewards of the spiritual gifts we have been given by the Holy Ghost. The nine gifts of the spirit are the manifestations of the Holy Ghost. Here is the list.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these work that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

1 Corinthians 12:8-11

Paul tells us to seek the best gifts which are not the ones to demonstrate power but those gifts that will edify and build up the Believers.

Follow after compassion, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that you may prophesy. But he that prophesies speaks unto men **to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.**

1 Corinthians 14:1 & 3

Gifts of the spirit are like talents – we can use them or abuse them. It is always a narrow line, and so many men of God have used the gifts to make themselves wealthy, have status, and fame. Sadly it has been their downfall in God's eyes even though they or their followers may not realise it.

Salvation is all about God's grace, his work, his choosing – the Kingdom is all about our work, our choices

We must be careful what we ask God for because we will have to account for it and although this statement from Jesus is for stewards (those in positions of authority), the principles apply to every Believer. We have all been given the life of God and we have his DNA, as well as our earthy DNA which we inherited from Adam and his rebellion.

Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin; for his seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

1 John 3:9

A Believer saved by grace has two natures – the nature of Adam and the nature of God. We must walk in the new nature so that we do not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. We have been given much and we are obligated to walk in the spirit

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

Galatians 5:16

Divine Nature

We have been made partakers of God's divine nature and we have to be fruitful in this area by manifesting the life and character of Christ in our daily lives

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these **you might be partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

2 Peter 1:4

We have all been given much and much will be required of us when we face Jesus at his judgement seat. I will close this chapter with the verse we are

Much Given – Much Required

looking at. May God help us to be faithful stewards whether we are in a position of authority or not.

For whosoever much is given of him shall much be required

Luke 12:48

In the next volume I will look at the parables and hard sayings of Jesus concerning his millennial reign on this earth.

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