

The Gospel According to the Old Testament

Volume I: Genesis-Deuteronomy

Revealing the Gospel of Jesus in the Old Testament

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Preface

The good news: or rather, as we commonly call it – the gospel, is something that was planned and known before the world began. From eternities past The LORD, our Father; Jesus, His son; and The Holy Spirit – the Triune God, has known of the gospel. It has been known, planned, and has been as good as done since the foundation of the world. “*God, that cannot lie, promised [eternal life] before the world began.*” [Titus 1:1] Before the world began, God promised eternal life. This eternal life of which Paul speaks, and of which The Bible speaks, comes from Jesus Christ. Eternal life is opened unto us because of what Jesus has done. Namely, that He has died for our sins upon the cross, was buried, and three days later rose again, and is alive today.

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” [Rom 6:23]

And thus, though it had yet to occur in our time domain, yet from eternity past, even before the world began, Jesus was slain and risen: the gospel was not just planned and known, but it was complete, as good as done. For again, as The LORD called Abraham a father of many nations before he

even had any children, so too here: “God...calleth those things which be not as though they were.” [Rom 4:17] And Jesus is, “The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” [Rev 13:8] When God promises something; when He sets out to do something, who can change it? Who can turn it back? He says, “yea, before the day was I am He; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall reverse it?” [Isa 43:13] And again,

“And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?”
[Dan 4:35]

The Lord cannot lie. In fact, we are told, “it [is] impossible for God to lie.” [Heb 6:18] Therefore, if The LORD had promised eternal life before the world began: then it was so sure, so secure, so certain, that it was in reality already complete. For if God makes a promise, He shall fulfill it, and there is no possibility of anyone stopping Him, no matter how hard they try. For regarding all the power and might of the nations; regarding all of their influence, it is written in Isaiah, “behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small

dust of the balance: behold, He taketh up the isles as a very little thing.” [Isa 40:15] And, “all nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to Him less than nothing, and vanity.” [Isa 40:17] Therefore we see again: if eternal life, which comes from Jesus’ death and resurrection, was promised before creation, it was from thence also complete. “Forever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.” [Psa 119:89]

This point must be labored. For the gospel of Jesus Christ is the center of all things. It is the climax of everything God does. Jesus is the absolute center around which all things revolve. From beginning to end, all things are about Him who is the Beginning and the End; the Alpha and Omega; the First and the Last.

“For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him.” [Col 1:16]

And seeing that all things revolve around Jesus and His cross, it is no surprise then when we see the gospel in every page of The Bible. The gospel is not just limited to the New Testament or to the gospel accounts. The gospel of Jesus is revealed through every single book of The Bible.

This devotion, then, seeks to lay before the reader just that: the gospel in the Old Testament. To show how the gospel is the center of God's plan and work, and how through every circumstance, every story, every book, and every minor thing: Jesus Christ reigns supreme as the subject.

Chapter I: The Gospel in Noah's Ark [Genesis]

We begin our journey and exploration of scripture, in a feeble attempt to draw out various allegories and typologies of the gospel, in Genesis. Those truths and glories, which have been carefully and wisely carved into Israel's history by God The Father, and which have been thoughtfully brought to man's remembrance and pen by The Holy Spirit, are contained in the eternal scriptures as gems among the deep rocks of earth. Though the first of these precious pictures of Christ's work found in scripture is not our topic for today, nevertheless, we shall begin our study with Noah's Ark.

Long ago, long before Christ walked the earth, and before Abraham, it is written,

"The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, the end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." [Gen 6:11-13]

As The Spirit relates it to us, as far as the plain text conveys, it was not long after Adam and Eve left the garden of Eden – relatively speaking – that "God saw

that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” [Gen 6:5] Furthermore, “*there were Nephilim in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men...*” [Gen 6:4] These men, “*mighty men which were of old, men of renown,*” [Gen 6:4] were what we commonly refer to as “giants.” They are, as the Hebrew word naphil, (נָפִיל), conveys, “rebels, apostates.” [Gesenius] These came about as plainly as The LORD writes through Moses: fallen angels, under the headship of Lucifer, (that wicked angel and apostate accuser, that dragon of old), took upon themselves the likeness of human flesh – as Jude writes, “*the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation [body]*” [Jde 1:6] – and had sexual relations with women, thus producing a foreign and perverse seed: of which seed came Goliath of Gath and his brethren, as well as Og and Sihon those ancient elders of the kingdom of the Amorites.

Truly, the wickedness of man was great. But it was not merely so – for do we not see the same today? Do we not concur with The LORD’s estimation of earth, at least in some part? That, “*the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually[?]*” [Gen 6:4] For it is written,

“There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God: they are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” [Rom 3:10-12]

Dear reader, are you exempt? Am I? Do we think mankind's doomed nature inherited from Adam to have somehow evolved and ascended above that wicked state of Noah's day? Nay, but if then in Noah's day, then so too today. For wherever the seed of fallen Adam spreads, so too wickedness and evil. It is the curse and the disease upon us all – a disease so tough and so deep, that only the blood of The Son of God, Jesus Christ can fully cleanse it. May we then see an important caveat: the mention of Nephilim is no accident, and it is this subject that we shall explore first. For in doing so, we shall hopefully come to a more reasonable conclusion regarding The LORD's judgment upon earth. And it is His judgment here in Genesis, with the flood, which lays the foundation for our understanding of His latter judgments: mainly, His coming judgment and destruction of the earth with fire, and secondly, His judgment and damnation of those souls and bodies which did not believe in The Lord Jesus. For Peter writes,

“For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the

earth was formed out of water and through water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”
[2 Pe 3:5-7]

It is plainly written for our understanding that Christ Jesus did not become an angel, but a man, so that He might redeem man. “*Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also likewise took part of the same...*” [Heb 2:14] And, “*For verily He took not hold of angels; but He took hold of the seed of Abraham.*” [Heb 2:16] When Christ shed His glorious form, (His heavenly body), not esteeming His life dear to Himself, He did shed it to obtain a far lesser form: as it says, “*the likeness of sinful flesh.*” [Rom 8:3] But He humiliated Himself even further, as it is written,

“Who, being in the form of God, did not esteem equality with God a prize to cling to: but emptied Himself [of that form], and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” [Phil 2:6-8]

Therefore, seeing that Jesus became a man, and not an angel, what of Nephilim, who are a hybrid of the two? Neither fully man nor fully angel. What of them and their candidacy for redemption? We must frankly conclude, based on The Holy Spirit's logic in Hebrews, that as angels are irredeemable – for Christ became a man not an angel – so too Nephilim. Therefore, this wicked lineage and hybrid race: a corruption of man's seed so engineered by satan to disrupt the lineage of The Messiah, for it had been prophesied to satan, "*I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; He, [The Messiah], shall bruise thy head, [Satan], and thou shalt bruise His heel,*" [Gen 3:15] must therefore be destroyed. Even as satan knows not the mercy of God, having never tasted it nor ever having a shred of hope to taste it, so too the Nephilim race.

We must see, dear reader and good Christian, that our God is a merciful and good God. Let us conclude therefore that the destruction of the earth, and those inhabiting it, in large part and in addition to the righteous judgment of sin, was to purge the world of this Nephilim corruption and so preserve an avenue for the Seed, for Jesus Christ – mainly, an unblemished bloodline. Not a bloodline unblemished by sin, God forbid! for then we should all have perished by now, but a bloodline unblemished by the genealogical corruption of

satan's seed. For the Nephilim bloodline is destined unto corruption and death: an irredeemable hybrid of sorts between angel and man. Therefore, in part to stop the spread of this disease, God did choose to flood the earth in a great display of His sovereign power and righteous judgment.

It may do us well at this point to revisit an important question. It is far easier to swallow the truth about God's judgment upon the Nephilim race: an irredeemable race created by the wiles of satan's evil; but what of mankind? What of the conceptually millions or billions of people inhabiting the earth during Noah's time, who were not of the eight, and who were likewise destroyed? We should do well to burden our minds for just a few moments as we ponder these hard questions. It would be easy enough to pass over such things, and write them off to providence and sovereignty, but though that route be easy, it may not be satisfactory. Having done this then, we shall from there begin to inquire into the glorious picture of Christ which runs deep beneath the text and the reality of this story.

The Apostle Peter once wrote of Noah, saying that he was "*a preacher of righteousness.*" [2 Pe 2:5] It was during those days, one hundred or so years, "*when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing,*" [1 Pe 3:20] that Noah, that man whose merit and works did not merit

salvation but who, as it is written, “*found grace in the eyes of The LORD,*” [Gen 6:8] yes, it was in those days that Noah was a proclaimer of righteousness. And what is righteousness, dear reader? What do the scriptures say? Why, they say nothing but this, again and again: “*the just shall live by faith.*” [Rom 1:17] We see then that Noah preached faith, for he preached righteousness. And did God ever preach faith which was unattainable and far off? No. As it is written,

“But the righteousness which of is faith speaketh on this wise, say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven? (That is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, who shall descend into the deep? (That is, to bring up Christ again from the dead:) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth The Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”
[Rom 10:6-9]

Therefore, we can safely conclude that Noah, a preacher of righteousness and faith, was so sent and commanded of God for the salvation of those around him. For again, “...[The Lord] is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” [2 Pe 3:9] Just as in Noah’s day, God’s longsuffering waited, [1 Pe 3:20]

so too God's longsuffering waits now: urging those who are unsaved to believe and be saved, for He takes no pleasure in their death. "*As I live, saith The Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live...*" [Ezek 33:11] And what exactly was the faith? The faith Noah exercised and which he no doubt preached was that of faith in God's salvation against a certain judgment to come. It is the same faith that we have, as we shall see. That just as Noah, as it says in Hebrews, "*being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of His house,*" and by such "*became heir of the righteousness which is of faith,*" [Heb 11:7] so too we are warned of judgment to come, and through a healthy fear, are provoked to put our trust in Christ, even as Noah trusted in God's provision of the Ark.

Let us remember that our God is just. And as it says regarding a just man and what is correct, "*withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it,*" [Prov 3:27] shall not The LORD save those who exercise faith in Him? Even if they were not apart of Noah's family and had wicked thoughts and imaginations? For I would think that all of us, if we are honest and careful to admit it, fell into quite the same category before our redemption, even as it says, "*but God demonstrates His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*" [Rom 5:8] Our LORD is not one

to boast of salvation, saying, “*turn unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else,*” [Isa 45:22] and to then not act on His promise, even if that be in Noah’s day. I doubt then, that God, who is just, would offer up salvation – indeed a good thing – to mankind by faith, and then fail to grant them such a deliverance upon their pleas and cries of faith, even if those pleas and cries be provoked on by the coming waters. For was this not partly motivation for the thief on the cross, who in the last moments of his life, faced with death and finally coming to his right mind, cried out to The Lord, “*Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom,*” and was so accepted of Christ? [Lk 23:42] Should we think those upon the earth after the doors of Noah’s Ark shut unworthy of redemption? Why so? Because they did not act without any evidence whatsoever? Because they did not believe Noah’s preaching? Good Christian, is there not a man among us, who has not resisted The Lord and then, having tasted of the fruit of our wickedness or unbelief, come to The Lord at the last, after we had come to our senses and perceived things more correctly? Why then should we flatly condemn those upon the earth in that day, as if God would smite them all to hell without another chance? For I would think then we should all be in hell: for again, there is hardly a man saved among us who did not require some stiff

motivation from The Holy Spirit in order to get saved.

And furthermore, lest we think our God unjust and unfair, unrighteously and haphazardly condemning all those dwelling upon the earth without any chance of repentance or salvation, may we also see that salvation and redemption – though not resulting in a deliverance from physical death – was still open to those who did not get on the boat with Noah. Some may say to this: “how so? For surely those who tarried until the floods commenced failed then to act in faith; and moreover, is it not written, ‘*all flesh died that moved upon the earth[?]*’” [Gen 7:21] But in response, may we remember Thomas, who though surely he was saved, yet Jesus says, “*Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet believed.*” [Jn 20:29] Was Thomas less-than-saved because he had to see Christ risen bodily? Hardly. Though it be a less blessed state as Jesus says, yet Thomas was saved. And furthermore, what of those during the Great Tribulation, who though having seen the Rapture and having seen and understood the judgments of God, yet are welcomed nevertheless if so be they believe? For John writes,

“*After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number...stood before the throne, and before the Lamb...These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have*

washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” [Rev 7:9, 14]

To say that only Noah and his family were saved – in the purely spiritual sense – and that there could not have been, nor was, any soul that cried out to God and experienced spiritual salvation after the waters began to pour down, is to say that only those who have not experienced or seen God work in any powerful way, are eligible to believe and have faith; and that those who have seen Him work in any case have passed into a category which marks them as irredeemable, for having been given good evidence of truth, they cease to be able to act in faith and be saved. But, good Christian, having read this logic, you should immediately see the flaw in it. For if those who did not get on the boat were thus eternally damned without recourse, then verily we should all be dead likewise. For does not scripture say, “O taste and see that The LORD is good;” [Psa 34:8] and, “then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed;” [Jn 20:8] and yet again, unto all of us is given “the sign of the prophet Jonah,” for Jesus says, “as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” [Mt 12:39-40] The LORD invites us to come and reason with him: to see Christ dead and risen, to see the evidence and choose to believe. As the angel said to the disciples, so too to us, “come, see the

place where The Lord had been lying." [Mt 28:6] Is our faith then, not faith, since we have in measure seen good evidence for Christ's Lordship and resurrection? God forbid. But let us see clearly that just because the flood waters came, and the truth of Noah's preaching would have become immediately obvious, so too there are times, (and will be a time during the Great Tribulation), where God manifestly shows us tangible evidence of His reality – and this is not an exclusion to salvation, but rather a catalyst.

And now, at last, let us come to the cross; for that is why we have undertaken to study the story of Noah's Ark. The first and most important point is the openness of God's salvation. We have spent great lengths to defend the righteous judgment of God upon wicked men and upon the earth. But we have also shown undoubtedly that salvation was open to all. The Ark was in building for around a hundred years: an incredible testimony to coming judgment and to God's promised deliverance. A physical and tangible proof of God's active presence in the life of men. It stood there, ever-growing larger and larger until that day when the waters came. It stood there, an open testimony to all who would, of not only the promised wrath to come but also the promised salvation for those who would believe. And the Ark remained open: open and available to all men, and such it remained until that day that

the door was closed, in which “*The LORD shut [them] in.*” [Gen 7:16] In a very similar manner, the salvation offered to men through Jesus Christ remains open. It is open to all who believe; to all who will of their own accord turn unto Christ. For it is written,

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His One-and-only Unique Son, [Jesus Christ], that whosoever is believing in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” [Jn 3:16]

And again,

“Whosoever shall call upon the name of The Lord shall be saved.” [Rom 10:13, Joel 2:32, Acts 2:21]

See here, dear reader, that this promise is fully and clearly open to “*whosoever.*” Whoever desires may come, and Jesus says, “*...him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*” [Jn 6:37] The LORD “*[has] no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but [desires] that the wicked turn from his way and live*” [Ezek 33:11] And as such, Christ turns no one away, gladly accepting all who would call upon Him and look to Him for salvation, saying again as a free invitation to all, “*come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*” [Mt 11:28] This is in direct alignment with The Father as well, who says through Isaiah, “*ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters...incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and*

your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you..." [Isa 55:1, 3] Just as the Ark stood in that day, a testimony for mankind, so too Christ stands today. And just as the Ark remained open before judgment, so too Christ remains open for "*whosoever*."

For our second point, let us then look to the Ark, which is a great picture of Christ. The LORD had given very specific directions to Noah. He gave dimensions of the boat: so many cubits here, and so many there, a singular door, and then He also said, "*and [thou] shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.*" [Gen 6:14] Think upon the dimensions of the boat for a moment. The LORD had said, "*the length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.*" [Gen 6:15] What if Noah had become lazy? What if he had, or so he thought, a better idea for dimensions? What if Noah quite liked the look of a skinny boat versus the rather wide Ark? We have probably all come to the same conclusion by now: Noah and his family would have died. The LORD, whose "*understanding is infinite*," [Psa 147:5] gave very precise measurements so that Noah might bring himself, his family, and animals upon the Ark as God had said: "*to keep them alive.*" [Gen 6:19] The vessel given, along with every dimension, had been carefully thought about by The LORD: given precisely to Noah as a pattern to be followed

exactly, not as a rough sketch where liberties could be had. If Noah had not believed God, and made the Ark according to his own image, his own fashion, then both he and his family would have perished in the global flood. As it was with the Ark and its dimensions, so it is with Jesus. The Jesus who brings salvation is a very specific Jesus; a Jesus who has been described to us in great detail even as Noah was given a specific pattern. Paul speaks of those who “*preach another Jesus,*” [2 Cor 11:4] and Jesus Himself warned, “*many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many.*” [Mt 24:5] There are many Christs and many Jesuses. But there is only one who can save; He is that Jesus who says, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*” [Jn 14:6] And He is described to us through God’s word, for “*His name is called The Word of God.*” [Rev 19:13] Just as Moses was “*admonished of God...that [he] make all things [regarding the tabernacle] according to the pattern shewed to [him] in the mount,*” [Heb 8:5] and just as David had “*the pattern of all that he had [for the temple] by The Spirit,*” which he said “*The LORD made me understand in writing by His hand upon me,*” [1 Ch 28:12, 19] so too God’s Word, of which Christ says, “*in the volume of the book it is written of me,*” [Psa 40:7] lays out a specific pattern of the one, true Jesus.

It is imperative that we believe in the true Jesus: in that Jesus who is described for us in God’s word.

Even as Noah's life depended on the exact creation of God's revealed Ark, following His divine dimensions, so too our salvation is dependent upon us believing in the true Christ. For if we believe in a deception, in a false Christ, where shall we be? For we would not have then believed in Jesus, but a false Jesus, one not described in God's scriptures, and we would be drowned as it were – destroyed in the judgment. There was one acceptable Ark design, and there is one acceptable Jesus. May we be those who cling to God's word: for therein Jesus is revealed. As God said, "*set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day...for it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life...*" [Deut 32:46, 47]

There are two instructions regarding the building of the Ark that we shall turn to now. The door and the pitch. Let us be careful to note that only one door was ordained by God. Even so, there is one way to salvation: Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself says, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto The Father, but by me;*" [Jn 14:6] and,

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." [Jn 10:7-9]

As there was one door, and only one way to enter into the Ark and find salvation from wrath, so too there is only one acceptable avenue to find salvation: Jesus Christ. *“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, [save Jesus Christ], whereby we must be saved.”* [Acts 4:12] No other Jesus will do; no other Messiah; no other Savior. *“He that hath the Son hath life: and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”* [1 Jn 5:12] Every other avenue, every other option, every other pattern, save Jesus Christ as found in The Bible, is false and erroneous: a perversion of truth and a pathway to hell. *“He that is believing on The Son hath everlasting life: and he that is not believing the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”* [Jn 3:36] And so in this we see that just as there was one Ark, and one door, and one set of specific directions – none other sufficing – so too there is but one Christ: one way to God The Father: Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Having now spoken of the door, let us look at the pitch.

The LORD had commanded Noah to cover the Ark with pitch, both within and without. The pitch was to waterproof the Ark. But what is encouraging and thought provoking is the Hebrew word used for the verb, “pitch.” The word used is the same for atonement, kawfar: כָּפַר. It is the same word used when The Lord instructed, *“and Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the*

blood of the sin offering of atonements...” [Ex 30:10] And again, “*and he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him.*” [Lev 1:4] The reason these words are the same is that at their root they mean the same thing: to cover. Just as we are atoned for by blood, the blood of Jesus Christ covering us: so too Noah covered the Ark with pitch. And therein is our picture. Just as Noah covered the Ark with pitch and was therefore protected from the wrath of God: that is, the flood: so too because we are covered in the blood of Jesus and atoned therewith, we are protected from the wrath of God against our sins. As Paul writes, “*much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.*” [Rom 5:9] Atonement has been made for our sins. They have been covered over by the blood of Jesus, poured out for us. God “*set forth [Jesus] to be a propitiation through faith in His blood...*” [Rom 3:25] And, “*how much more shall the blood of Christ...purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*” [Heb 9:14] And again, “*...without the shedding of blood [there] is no forgiveness [of sins].*” [Heb 9:22]

Without the pitch, Noah’s salvation was for naught. For without it, the water would seep in and ruin the Ark and all the provisions therein contained. Likewise, without the blood of Jesus: without His precious, innocent blood we would all be sunk:

doomed to condemnation and wrath. But now, through the blood of Jesus we are cleansed from all sin.

“But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.” [1 Jn 1:7]

It is fascinating and rewarding to see these pictures displayed for us. Through them, we can better understand what Jesus did for us, and more easily remember them. But out of all the analogies one might draw in comparing Noah and the Ark to our salvation found in Jesus, there is perhaps no greater and more important than this:

“But Noah found grace in the eyes of The LORD.” [Gen 6:8]

It is of upmost importance that we see and understand this clearly: Noah was not saved because he was good. He was not saved because he was better than anyone. He was not saved because he worked harder. No, but as it is written, *“Noah found grace in the eyes of The LORD.”* And with us it is the same. As The Spirit writes,

“Even when we were dead in sins, [God] hath made us alive together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of

God: not of works, lest any man should boast.”
[Eph 2:5, 8-9]

If the account of the Ark should teach us anything, if it should add anything to our understanding of Jesus' love, if it should deepen our love and appreciation of our God – then let it be at least this: because of God's grace, (and by no addition or work of our own), through believing in the one-and-only, unique Jesus, and by His shed blood, we are saved from God's wrath. As Noah found grace, and was invited to live by faith by God, putting his trust in the provided design, so too we are invited to partake of Christ and be saved. So too we are invited to come and taste of The One, True God, to have His blood cover our souls, and so be saved from judgment and condemnation. It is not the law, nor our works, but God's grace which saves us.

Chapter II: The Lamb of God [Exodus]

Moving onward into the book of Exodus we find one of the most notable pictures of Jesus within the Old Testament: the Passover Lamb. During the very last moments of Israel's bondage in Egypt, when "God assayed to go and take Him a nation from the midst of another nation, [that is of Egypt], by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, and by great terrors," [Deut 4:34] The LORD spoke to Moses and said,

"I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am The LORD." [Ex 12:12]

The final plague before Pharaoh finally let Israel go is what is called The Passover. During this plague, The LORD would pass through Egypt and smite all the firstborn residing within a home wherein the blood of an unblemished, male lamb was not smeared upon the door. Again, as it is written,

"And Moses said, thus saith The LORD, about midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill: and all the

firstborn of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more.”
[Ex 11:4-6]

And so, as The LORD had promised,

“It came to pass, that at midnight The LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt...and Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead.” [Ex 12:29, 30]

It came to pass, then, after this final plague and judgment from God, that “[Pharaoh] called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel...” [Ex 12:31] Finally, after ten plagues, after The LORD had executed His fierce judgment upon Pharaoh and Egypt’s false gods, Pharaoh let Israel go free. “In the month of Abib,” which is the seventh month of the secular calendar, The LORD, “by strength of hand...brought [Israel] out from [Egypt].” [Ex 13:3-4] And for this reason: The LORD bringing His people out of bondage and into freedom, redeeming them from the hand of Pharaoh – under whom they had served in rigorous bondage for hundreds of years – The LORD made that month, otherwise known as Nisan, the first month. “And The LORD spake unto Moses...saying, this month shall

be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." [Ex 12:1-2] It is here that we shall begin our discussion of The Passover. For just as The LORD flipped the calendar and made Nisan the first month, where it had not previously been first, thus making Israel's redemption and salvation both the beginning of a new life and the beginning of each new year, so too it is with us.

In Christ Jesus we are new creations. Because Jesus has saved us, as God saved Israel, we are made new and given a fresh start. *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."* [2 Cor 5:17] Our true life, our real life, began not with our birth, but with our second birth, with our redemption. Like with Israel and the flipping of their calendar at Passover, God has made our new birth in Jesus Christ the first month of the year as it were. As Jesus' name is, Alpha and Omega Beginning and The End, so too our true life starts and ends with Jesus. As Jesus says, *"verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."* [Jn 3:3] We have been *"begotten again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead;"* [1 Pe 1:3] we have been born again, born from above. The Lord has *"ransomed [us] from the hand of him that was stronger than [we]."* [Jer 31:11] Through the blood of *"the Lamb of God"* [Jn 1:29] we have been delivered from bondage to sin, satan,

and the world, and we have been made new, having been born again of God's Spirit. Just as Israel was released from their rigorous toil under Pharaoh, so too we have been released from the bondage to sin under the rule of Satan. For we were once all "*dead in trespasses and sins,*" in which time we "*walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air;*" we were, because of our rebellion against God, imprisoned by Satan, "*taken captive by him at his will.*" [Eph 2:1, 2, 2 Tim 2:26] But just as The Lord God delivered Israel, Jesus Christ delivered us "*out of the pit wherein is no water,*" [Zech 9:11] delivering our souls "*from the lowest hell.*" [Psa 86:13] Whereas Israel worked as slaves making bricks, contributing to the kingdom of Egypt, we, as sinners and unbelievers, were in slavery to sin, not using our bodies for God's kingdom and glory, but for Satan's. Jesus says, "*verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin,*" [Jn 8:34] and truly, all of us, before Christ, did just that; for again as it is written,

"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." [Rom 6:17-18]

But God. But though we were in bondage and lost, God saved us, making us new creatures and giving us fresh starts. "*But God, who is rich in mercy, for His*

great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath given us life together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved).” [Eph 2:4-5]

The changing of the calendar in Moses’ day to mark the fresh start of Israel, marks also the great importance of this event. The Passover and God’s redemption of Israel out of Egypt, again and again, is brought to remembrance and referenced by The LORD. It is one of the most foundational things to Israel’s existence and relationship with God, even as our salvation in Christ is for us. For just as The LORD constantly reminds Israel of Egypt, for example, saying, “*thus saith The LORD God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage,*” [Jdg 6:8] so too we should be often reminded of what Christ did for us in saving us from our sins. Because as Paul says, “*the love of Christ constraineth us.*” [2 Cor 5:14] It is the deep, broad, wide love of Jesus Christ which constrains, which compels and urges us, to live for Him and not for ourselves. For if, as Paul says, “*one died for all, then were all dead: and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again.*” [2 Cor 5:15] Of Passover’s importance there is no doubt. But let us now delve deeper into the account given in Exodus that we might draw out further encouragements and parallels. For as John said,

Jesus is *“The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”* [Jn 1:29]

The first and main command that God gave to Moses/Israel was this:

“...In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: and if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls...and ye shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.” [Ex 12:3-4, 6-8]

And regarding the lamb itself,

“Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year...” [Ex 12:5]

Other commands besides these were added as well; for example, Israel was admonished of God, *“eat not [the Passover lamb] raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire...and ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the*

morning ye shall burn with fire.” [Ex 12:9, 10] And even the manner in which they were to eat it was different: “and thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste.” [Ex 12:11]

The most important aspect of the Lamb, beyond those commands on its state and the way in which it was prepared and eaten, was the blood. The blood was to be spread “*on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.*” For without the blood, the Lamb was in effect useless. A household could theoretically follow every, single other command: bringing the lamb in, making sure it was without blemish, etc. But if the lamb were never slain; if its blood was never spilt and then spread upon the home, then that household would indeed be lost. For The LORD said, “*and the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you.*” [Ex 12:13] The blood was of utmost importance. Without blood there is no forgiveness. As Hebrews quotes Leviticus, saying, “*...without shedding of blood [there] is no forgiveness [of sins].*” [Heb 9:22] And again, “*...it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.*” [Lev 17:11] And just as the blood of the lamb were most important for Israel’s salvation, so too is Jesus’ blood for us. Jesus told the disciples on Passover night, regarding one of the cups of wine which the

Jews were accustomed to drinking on that night, *“drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the forgiveness of sins.”* [Mt 26:27-28] That particular cup which they drank of, so admonished by Jesus, was one of four cups drank on Passover, each having a name. The name of this particular cup is the Cup of Deliverance. While handing us this cup, The Lord Jesus said, *“take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.”* [Lk 22:17-18] It was unto us that the cup of deliverance was handed. Our Lord forbore to drink of that cup: for there was a different cup that He was to drink that night. That is, the cup of God’s wrath. Remember in the garden how Jesus prayed, crying out to God,

“Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.”
[Lk 22:42]

It was the cup of God’s fiery wrath that Jesus prayed about and drank on our behalf. This is the very exchange which saves our souls: mainly, that Christ Jesus, as it is written, was sent *“to be the [atoning sacrifice] for our sins;”* yes, *“God hath set forth [Jesus His Son] to be the propitiation [for us] through faith in His blood,”* the sacrifice which atones for and calms God’s wrath against our sin. [1 Jn 4:10, Rom 3:25] Jesus drank the cup of wrath in full and handed to us the cup of deliverance. Not willing to be

delivered, but gladly accepting the cup His Father had, Jesus endured the wrath and punishment of God for our sakes, that we might be delivered. “*For in the hand of The LORD there is a cup, and the wine is red...the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them.*” [Psa 75:8] This was the cup that Jesus drank on our behalf, and it was Jesus, and Jesus alone, who drank it and who was crushed by God’s wrath. Regarding God’s wrath which will be poured out on Israel and the world, it says,

“*And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.*” [Rev 14:19-20]

That which The LORD will one day pour out, Jesus experienced. Upon that cross, during those hours of darkness, Jesus drank full and deep of this cup, being trodden underfoot of God. As it is written, “*yet it pleased The LORD to crush Him;*” [Isa 53:10] And again, remembering that Jesus was made into sin for us, [2 Cor 5:21] it is written, “*He will trample our iniquities underfoot; and [He] will cast all [our] sins into the depths of the sea.*” [Mic 7:19] Dear reader, you must see this. You must see that it was you sitting at the Passover table; it was to you the Cup of

Deliverance was offered; and it was this Man, this God, Jesus Christ, who willingly, for love's sake, took your cup, full of God's wrath, and drank it. As the throwing of Jonah into the sea stilled the storm, so too the throwing of Christ into the sea of God's wrath appeased and stilled His anger toward your sin. And as The LORD promised to trample our sins, so too Jesus was trampled underfoot for your sin.

And so, as the innocent, unblemished lamb was slain for each household's salvation, so too Jesus Christ, *"who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth,"* shed His precious blood and, *"His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."* [1 Pe 2:22, 24]

Before we move onto a few aspects of the Lamb's preparation and eating, let us notice again something of great importance: the Lamb had to be slain. And for you, dear reader, Christ must have been slain. You were no good person (and neither I) – for it is written, *"there is none righteous, no, not one...there is none that doeth good, no, not one."* [Rom 3:10, 12] And thus, for all of us, it was necessary that The Precious Lamb of God, The LORD's Only Son, be slain. But let us stay one moment further; for The Christ, Jesus of Nazareth, God's Lamb – it is not enough for you, good man, that He was just slain. For if we think back to Exodus, there were

many lambs slain, yet only those homes upon which the blood was spread were saved; and even then, it was only to those abiding in the house. Ask yourself a question then: is the blood spread upon you? Have you been cleansed and washed? Are you covered by His blood? Or has the Lamb remained alive as it were? Has Jesus' atonement never been applied to you? Have you seen Him spotless, as perhaps some did back then upon the lambs gathered; have you seen Him spotless, even touched Him and engaged Him? That is well: but has His blood been applied *to you*? Have you sought refuge under His wings, in The Father's house? For there is no other acceptable lamb, and no other acceptable house, and no other acceptable method for salvation. Therefore, with understanding in your heart, take the Lamb Jesus Christ, as it is written, and believe; enter under the roof of The Father's house with belief in that blood; see Him there upon that cross for you, and believe.

Let us now take several additional points from the account in Exodus, which point us to Jesus.

First, The LORD specifically commanded the method of cooking the lamb. He said, "*they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire...*" [Ex 12:8] It was not to be "*boiled at all with water,*" nor was it to be "*raw,*" [Ex 12:9] but roasted with fire. To roast literally means "[to make suitable] for food by exposure to heat." [Webster] The Passover lamb

would not become accustomed to the heat over time, as with boiling, but would be exposed to the fullness of the fire's heat, absorbing that heat until suitable for consumption. In the same way, Jesus Christ, our Passover Lamb, bore upon Himself "*the fire of [God's] wrath*" [Ezek 22:21] for our sakes. He did not grow accustomed to the heat of God's fire over time but was crushed and burnt under its weight and heat in an instant. As "*The LORD shall swallow up [the wicked] in His wrath, and the fire shall devour them,*" [Psa 21:9] so too Christ, in our place, was swallowed up and consumed by God's fire, until having experienced the fullness of His wrath, was fit for us to consume as it were: to believe Him and receive Him into our hearts for salvation.

Second, The LORD said, "*and ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.*" [Ex 12:10] Our Lord Jesus, our Glorious King, The Lamb, "*poured out His soul unto death*" [Isa 53:12] for our sakes. Utterly and completely, as it is written, Jesus, "*emptied Himself.*" [Phil 2:7] And just as it was commanded of God regarding the Lamb, "*ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning,*" [Ex 12:10] so too Jesus was completely poured out for us, completely crushed for us, until nothing remained, except the shattered and mangled corpse of a slaughtered Passover Lamb hung upon the cross, bloodied and dirtied and broken for our sins. And

praise be to God for this. For it was Christ Jesus, that glorious Carpenter from Nazareth, The Sunrise from on High, who has completely and utterly drunk every drop of God's wrath for us, being completely poured out. As there was nothing of the Passover lamb on the next morning, according to the command of The LORD, so too on that morning after the Passover when Christ hung on the cross, there remained nothing. Nothing left of Him, and nothing left of our sins, and nothing left of God's wrath. Our sins had been paid for; the cost was relinquished up to God; and the redemption of all mankind was thus accomplished and secured.

Third, The Lord had commanded, "*thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste.*" [Ex 12:11] The Passover was not a meal so much to be slowly enjoyed – at least the first Passover was not – but rather, a meal to be quickly consumed. As The Lord had said, they ought to "*eat it in haste.*" In the same way, salvation is to be quickly laid hold of. It is not a matter to take slowly or methodically; it is not something that can wait until tomorrow; salvation is urgent and takes precedent above all. Whether that be the initial salvation of our souls, when we first come to Christ; or whether that be our continuing salvation/deliverance over sin. Paul writes,

"We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in

vain. (For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)” [2 Cor 6:1-2]

Salvation is no matter to delay! As the Israelites were told to consume the Passover quickly, so too let us quickly come to Jesus. Let us delay no further. If you be unsaved, or unsure of your salvation, turn to Jesus! Let there be no more delay; for what good shall the truth of salvation and God’s love do for you, if you delay the acceptance of such things unto tomorrow and today you die? Today may be the last day any of us have. Therefore come! Therefore turn! Whether you have never fell down at Jesus’ feet, have never submitted your life and heart to Him, believing in what He has done; or whether you have, and you simply require some victory/deliverance over sin – whatever the case, as Paul wrote by inspiration of The Spirit, so too I say to you: “*now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation[!]*” [2 Cor 6:2]

Chapter III: From Lepers to Royal Heirs [Leviticus]

In the Bible leprosy is often used as a picture of sin. In addition to this, leprosy is employed by God as a consequence of sin, further strengthening the connection. If there were a leprous man, God so commanded, “*that they put out of the camp every leper...*” [Num 5:2] This is one of the chief reasons that leprosy becomes connected to sin: for in the same way, it is our sin which separates us from God. Like the leprous man was not allowed to dwell in the camp with the rest of the congregation, so too sin separates and isolates us from fellowship: fellowship with men and with God. When we were in the world, living in sin, leprous as it were, we were “*without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.*” [Eph 2:12] Again, speaking of this separation, The LORD says, “*but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear you.*” [Isa 59:2] And again, “*The LORD is far from the wicked.*” [Prov 15:29] Thus the separation that leprosy causes in a man, having to be put away from the congregation, and thus from the tabernacle/God’s presence, immediately reminds us of the

consequences of sin. Again, in Leviticus, The LORD speaks,

“All the days wherein the plague [of leprosy] shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall [the leper’s] habitation be.” [Lev 13:46]

And regarding leprosy being used as a consequence, remember how Uzziah the king of Judah, despite warnings from the priests and the clear commands of God, which forbade kings from performing priestly duties, went into the temple to burn incense. In Kings we read,

“But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against The LORD his God, and went into the temple of The LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense.” [2 Ch 26:16]

And for this sin, “The LORD smote the king, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in an isolated house.” [2 Ki 15:5] Furthermore, when “Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married,” and said, “hath The LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us?” it is written,

“The anger of The LORD was kindled against them; and He departed. And the cloud departed

from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow.” [Num 12:1-2, 9-10]

Leprosy was a disease which men feared: for by it one's life would be, save a miraculous healing, utterly doomed to isolation. Leprosy was in effect a death sentence, and in this, we see another parallel, for it is written, “*the wages of sin is death.*” [Rom 6:23] The consequence to our sin, the separation from God, (just as Adam and Eve faced in the garden when it says, “*therefore The LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden...so He drove out the man...*” [Gen 3:23, 24]), is indeed death. As The LORD said to Adam, “*...in the day that thou eatest [of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and thus sin,] thou shalt surely die.*” [Gen 2:17] “*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*” [Rom 5:12] And again, “*the soul that sinneth, it shall die.*” [Ezek 18:20]

Our sin separates us from God. It disallows us from entering into His presence: both now and forever. “*Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?*” [1 Cor 6:9] Those who practice sin shall never enter into heaven, nor taste of the blessings God has to offer through Jesus Christ, even as those who continued to be lepers were not allowed into the camp, nor into God's presence, as The LORD said regarding the priests, “*what man*

soever of the seed of Aaron is a leper...shall not eat of the holy things..." [Lev 22:4] Again, as John says by The Spirit,

"Whosoever has been born of God doth not continue to commit sin; for His Seed remaineth in him: and he cannot keep sinning, because He has been born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."
[1 Jn 3:9-10]

This is the single, common dilemma that plagues mankind. That all of us *"have sinned, and are falling short of the glory of God."* [Rom 3:23] Yes, even if we have not sinned in the same manner as some, or of Adam, yet death and sin reign, and we, like the leper, must be put out of God's presence.

"Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, [that is, unto the law]." [Rom 5:14] The glory of God – or rather, the character of God, is the standard to which we are all, Christian and non-Christian alike, falling short. For who is like God? There is no one that has climbed the mountain of His righteousness and stood atop it, glorious in their flawless perfection. We have all come short; yes, and if we are honest, must say we are still coming short. But thanks be to God who gives us victory and freedom through Jesus Christ. For even though we are falling short, yet it is not our righteous deeds nor our

ability to keep the law of God, or any law at that, which makes us fit to inherit heaven or be saved. No, there is not one good thing we can do which shall earn us forgiveness or a place at God's table. And if we are saved, there is not one good deed, not one obedience, which shall earn us more favor from God, or a higher standing in His kingdom. It is not our works which can revive and heal us of our eternal leprosy, but only God's grace. Just as the disease of leprosy had no cure in those days, and if one were to try they would have fared as the woman who, *"having an issue of blood twelve years...spent all her living upon physicians"* but *"was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,"* [Lk 8:43, Mk 5:26] so too our disease of sin bears no cure. No, there is no work of man, or of doctor, or of preacher, or of religious man, which can cure a man of sin. There is nothing we can produce which may save us. As it was with the lepers healed of God and of Christ in scripture, and only ever of God or of Christ, so too a man can only ever experience healing from his sin through Jesus. *"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."* [Acts 4:12] As it is written,

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and

upon all that believe: for there is no difference.”
[Rom 3:21-22]

And, “*therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*” [Rom 3:28] Apart from good works, apart from the law, (and only ever apart), a man is saved by faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus is the singular Messiah who came to “*save His people from their sins;*” [Mt 1:21] and it is through Him alone we are saved from our chronic disease of sin.

“Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom The Lord will not impute sin.” [Rom 4:6-8]

“No man is justified by the law in the sight of God;” and this “*is evident: for, [as it is written], the just shall live by faith.*” [Gal 3:11] The man who has placed his complete faith in Jesus for salvation from his sin, from both the power and effects of it, is no longer separated from God. He is at once, in an instant, declared and made righteous, and in him, as the scriptures promise, “*the righteousness of the law...[is] fulfilled.*” [Rom 8:4, 2 Cor 5:21] As a result, that man is reconciled and brought near to God, being freed from the separation that his sin had caused. “*And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies...yet now hath He reconciled in the body of [Jesus] flesh*

through death..." [Col 1:21-22] Whereas leprosy, and sin, separated men from God, in Christ we are brought near, for He saves us from our sins and blots them out. Sin is no longer a barrier to fellowship with God for those in Christ; for, "*now once in the end of the world hath [Jesus] appeared to the annulment of sin by the sacrifice of Himself.*" [Heb 9:26] And God says, "*I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.*" [Heb 8:12] And again, "*sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*" [Rom 6:14] No longer under the law, (for, "*we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we used to be held...*" [Rom 7:6]), but rather under grace, we are loosed from the effects of sin, loosed especially from separation from God. We have been given victory over every spiritual enemy, including sin, law, and death.

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." [1 Cor 15:55-57]

And again,

"And having stripped the principalities and powers of their armaments, [Jesus] exposed them openly, leading them in triumphal procession in [His cross]." [Col 2:15]

Praise be to God who gives us the victory in and through Jesus. And praise be to Him who gives us victory over the power of sin, both now and forever. *“Thanks be unto God, who is always leading us forth in triumphal procession in Christ...”* [2 Cor 2:14] Now, in Christ, whereas we were once separated, dead and doomed to die, we have life.

“And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in His sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel...” [Col 1:21-23]

What a joy it is to be saved. To be loosed from sin, from leprosy of soul. And may we thank God too, for whereas peoples in those days would be fearful of and avoiding those with leprosy, Jesus freely approached us and loved us. See how Jesus, when He *“was in a certain city, [and] behold, a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.”* [Lk 5:12] See how Jesus shows such tender love and compassion, not recoiling in fear or disgust, not shunning the leper, not telling him to keep his distance lest Jesus become ritually unclean; no, but in glorious fashion, as it is written for our encouragement even today, *“[Jesus] put forth His*

hand, and touched him, saying, *I will: be thou clean.* And immediately the leprosy departed from him.” [Lk 5:13] In the same way, when we “*were dead in trespasses and sins,*” [Eph 2:1] Jesus touched us and healed us. He was not afraid of us, nor put off by our condition: but as Jesus told the Pharisees, “*they that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.*” [Mt 9:12] And there may be one reading these words today – perhaps you, dear reader – who still holds that burden of sin: of leprosy as it were. You may have thought, for bad doctrine or for bad examples by others, that Christ would not have you; you may have been deceived by the prince of this world, or by your own flesh, that Jesus will not touch you, approach you, heal you, or any other good thing, except you first pretty yourself up and wipe off some of that dirt. But let me encourage you, dear reader – whether you believe in Jesus or not – that Jesus will have you as you are. As He said to the leper, so says He to all of us today who seek salvation or deliverance, “*I will: be thou clean.*” Do you desire to be clean? To be saved? To get victory over some area of sin? Go to Jesus, for He is willing, and He can make you clean.

Jesus is not too holy to be seen with sinners. He is not too righteous to come down and touch those who have corrupted themselves with foolishness or sin. Jesus is He who came down to earth, who took upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh, that He

might experience our suffering, and that He might suffer and die for our sins. He inserted Himself into our condition, our circumstances; but He did not come defeated nor to be defeated: but Christ Jesus came to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Yes, Jesus, in all His splendor, with all His love, and with all of God Almighty's authority, came to save us. Just as the lepers were forsaken of society, so too Jesus was forsaken for our souls; as He said truthfully from the cross, "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*" [Mt 27:46] My good man, precious reader – there is an answer to the question uttered by Christ on the cross, "*why hast thou forsaken me.*" The answer is you. You and I. It was for us – yes, each of us individually – that Jesus was forsaken. As Paul said, so too we can say, "*..The Son of God...loved me, and gave Himself for me.*" [Gal 2:20] It was Jesus who came down where no one else would or could – who came to dwell with and save sinners, who "*was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death...that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man.*" [Heb 2:9] Praise God that we are healed; that we are clean; that through Christ we are "*without fault before the throne of God,*" [Rev 14:5] and when The Lord looks upon us He says, "*thou art all beautiful, my love; there is no blemish in thee.*" [Songs 4:7] And regarding this cleansing, Leviticus also has something to say. Just as there are parallels between leprosy and sin, so too between

the cleaning ritual of a leper and the cleansing we have experienced in Jesus.

When a leper was cleansed from leprosy, The LORD commanded,

“He shall be brought unto the priest: and the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper; then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop: and the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and thy hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: and he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field.” [Lev 14:2-7]

In addition to other rituals and sacrifices that were to be done, as well as a period of waiting, The LORD also said,

“And the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand,

and upon the great toe of his right foot.” [Lev 14:14]

And as it was with blood, so too with oil, “*the priest [was to] put [the rest of the oil that was in his hand] upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of the right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot...*” [Lev 14:17]

There were other procedures to be followed besides these; however, we shall just mention two, and pluck out some details regarding them, showing how they picture our salvation that has happened in Jesus.

First, let us draw our attention to the birds. It was commanded that “*two birds alive and clean*” were to be taken; “*the priest [was to] command that one of the birds be killed,*” and the other bird, which was still alive, was to be taken with the other effects and dipped “*...in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water...and [then]...let...loose into the open field.*” These birds represent us and Christ. The bird that was killed represents Jesus, and the bird anointed with the blood of the slain and set free represents us. Just as that bird was splattered in the blood of the slain bird, a choice made by the priest, (and not left open to random chance or lots), so too it was The Lord’s sovereign choice to give Himself up and die for us. He is both priest and bird in this case. On the former, He is our High Priest who chose

Himself to be slain, willingly taking our deserved death upon Himself. And as for the latter, He is the sacrifice given up for us, and by whose blood we are set free, even as the living bird was let loose into the field. Jesus says, *“No man taketh [my life] from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”* [Jn 10:18] Jesus willingly, of His own accord, gave up His life. From the garden, where *“Jesus...knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth,”* to the cross where He said, *“it is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost,”* through and through Jesus was in control, *“who gave Himself a ransom for all, the testimony in His own time.”* [Jn 18:4; 19:30, 1 Tim 2:6] And because of His sacrifice we are set free, as it was prophesied, *“by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water;”* [Zech 9:11] and as we shall one day sing to Him, The Lamb, *“thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.”* [Rev 5:9]

And second, the matter of the blood and oil being put upon the ear, hand, and foot of the cleansed man. Earlier in the giving of the law, The LORD had commanded certain treatment to be performed in order to consecrate the priests. He said,

“Then shalt thou kill the ram, and take of his blood, and put it upon the tip of the right ear of

*Aaron...and upon the thumb of their right hand,
and upon the great toe of their right foot...and
thou shalt take of the...anointing oil, and
sprinkle it upon Aaron, and upon his garments,
and upon his sons...” [Ex 29:20, 21, Lev 8:23-
30]*

There was only two ways to receive this special treatment and ritual: that is, the anointing of blood and oil upon the ear, hand, and foot. One: to be born into the priesthood as a Levite, or two: to be healed of leprosy. In Israel the priests were among the most highly regarded and respected. For example, when king Saul ordered his servants to kill the priests, despite it being an order from the very king himself, *“the servants of the king would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of The LORD.”* [1 Sam 22:17] It was a respected and feared position. And the position of leper was very much, as we have seen, the opposite. They were shunned; outcasts; the lowest of the low. What an incredible thing it is then, that the cleansed leper should have such a glorious and warm treatment. It is similar to us; for before Christ we were as those in Jesus’ parable – *“[those in] the streets and lanes of the city...the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.”* [Lk 14:21] – yes, we were those whom Christ pulled up from the dunghill to set among His royalty, as it is written,

“Who is like unto The LORD our God, who dwelleth on high, who humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth! He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; that He may set him with princes, even with the princes of His people.” [Psa 113:5-8]

For we have been made “unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth;” [Rev 5:10] by the blood of Jesus, through His mighty sacrifice and our continued belief therein, by His merit and righteousness and no good of our own, (praise God!) we have been set free and joined everlastingly to Jesus as “joint-heirs with Christ” and “heir[s] of God through Christ;” we have been given the treatment of priests and of royalty, though like the lepers we have not been born into such lineage nor deserved such grace. [Rom 8:17, Gal 4:7] We are like blessed Mephibosheth, who though he was lame in both legs and could not offer king David a single, solitary thing, yet David, desiring to “shew the kindness of God” [2 Sam 9:3] restored the land of his father to him and invited him into the palace as his very own son to “eat bread always at [his] table,” [2 Sam 9:7, 10] to which things Mephibosheth said, “what is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?” [2 Sam 9:8] Truly, we are “not worthy of the least of all [The LORD’s] mercies, and of all the truth which [He] hast shewed unto [us].” [Gen 32:10]

Blessed are the cleansed lepers. Blessed are those who have had their sins washed white in the blood of the Lamb. Blessed are those that have their “names...written in heaven;” [Lk 10:20] “*blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.*” [Rev 19:9] Have you, dear reader, had your sins cleansed? Have you experienced the healing of your leprosy as it were? Or does that plague of sin still haunt you and afflict you? Today is the day. Today may you be set free. Whether you have never come to Christ, or whether you would come afresh, may you be set free today by the glorious, everlasting, ever-powerful blood of Jesus, and may that leprous plague no longer separate you from sweet fellowship to God.

Chapter IV: Behold the One Who Became a Curse [Numbers]

The premise of all our studies in scripture is twofold. One, that it is true what is written,

“All scripture is God-breathed, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” [2 Tim 3:16-17]

The book we have laid before us, namely The Bible, is such that it is far more than mere ink and paper. The words are as The Holy Spirit writes in Hebrews, *“living, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword...”* [Heb 4:12] They are living and breathing, and even more than that: they give life. Jesus says, *“...the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life;”* [Jn 6:63] and again, in the Psalms, *“give me life according to thy word.”* [Psa 119:25, 107, 154] Apart from this premise: that the scriptures contained in The Bible are God’s living, breathing, eternal words, what profit is there? If these be not the words of God, The True God, then we are better off finding something else to study – for these words bear weight and power because that very truth: they are indeed God’s words.

And two, our second premise, is that all of God’s words found in The Bible have one common

theme: Jesus Christ God's Son. For Jesus speaks, saying, "*Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.*" [Heb 10:7] Jesus, who is "*The Word,*" "*became flesh, and tabernacled among us;*" He is, "*The Word of Life,*" which was "*manifested...that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.*" [Jn 1:1, 14, 1 Jn 1:1-2] And so then, the scriptures, which are God's word, thus are concerning Jesus Christ, whose name is "*The Word of God.*" [Rev 19:13] Every picture, every account, every story, every book, and every chapter, without exception, in some way or another, whether big or small, point to Jesus Christ.

Now then, it is upon these two premises we come to the book of Numbers, the fourth of Moses' writings. But some may say, "what has Numbers to do with Christ?" Ah, very much. Let us remember what Jesus says to the Pharisees, "*for had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.*" [Jn 5:46] What an audacious and bold claim from our Lord: that Moses, the revered and respected – and dare I say, worshipped – man, Moses: Jesus claims that Moses wrote of Him! Imagine yourself in the crowd that day, and there stands a man, Jesus Christ from Nazareth, the carpenter. And there He is, gracious word after gracious word coming forth from His mouth; teachings and miracles and all sorts of wonderful things. And then, as He was like to do, Jesus makes an incredible claim, a claim only God

Himself could make and hold – that Moses, who wrote far before Jesus lived on earth, in all his religious writings, wrote of Jesus Christ Himself. What would you think of Him? Would you think Him insane? There were some that did. Would you think Him an hypocrite? Again, there were those who thought likewise. Or would you believe Him, as only a few did? Truly, Jesus was an incredible man; but not just man: even God Himself. Taking this line of thought, that Moses wrote of Jesus, we may do well to depart in our minds for one moment and think of the law. Remember how it is written, how that God “*gave unto Moses...two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God,*” [Ex 31:18] whereupon was written the Ten Commandments. And if we are to take Jesus’ words literally, (which we must always do), then we must conclude that when God Almighty wrote upon the tablets of stone upon Mount Sinai, God was writing about Jesus Christ. It is an incredible and wonderful thing to think about. And may I ask you, dear man, do you believe such things? Take the ten commandments, yes take any law, and see if Jesus did not fulfil them all. See if His words, that He came to fulfill every single letter of the law, are true or not. Take love, upon which every law is founded, [Rom 13:8-10] and see its definition. How that love is longsuffering, kind, humble, not easily provoked, not keeping track of sins, etc., [1 Cor 13:4-8] and see if Jesus did not fulfil them all with astonishing

victory; or rather, if these laws, and if love, are in fact not just something Jesus fulfilled, but were in fact written of Jesus Himself and are merely descriptions of His character and person. And indeed, this is the case, for we read of Jesus, who is The Word, that, “*The Word became flesh.*” [Jn 1:14]

But let us now come back to Numbers. How shall Numbers picture and point to Jesus? Much in every way. Let us take two things. First, the layout and number of the camp of Israel in chapter two; and second, the bronze serpent which Moses created and reared up.

Our first point shall be quite short. In chapter two of Numbers, “*The LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron,*” [Num 2:1] and proceeded to tell them how Israel ought to camp. He said, to start,

“*Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father’s house...on the east side toward the rising of the sun shall they of the standard of Judah pitch throughout their armies...and those that do pitch next unto him shall be the tribe of Issachar...[and] Zebulun...[and] all that were numbered in the camp of Judah were 186,400...*” [Num 2:2-9]

And the text continues, with The LORD Himself directing which camp was where, in relation to the tabernacle, and then Moses’ commentary about the

exact number of the people. Let us notice a few things in particular, and may we start with the most striking and startling of them all. Remember first of all how Balaam sought to acquire wealth and fame, and as such, yielded himself and his gifting of prophecy unto Balak king of Moab, and how, “*it came to pass...that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into the high places of Baal, that thence he might see the utmost part of the people.*” [Num 22:41] Balak had brought Balaam there, saying, “*come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me...*” [Num 22:6] And Balaam took heed to this request, coming with a mind to curse Israel. Despite offering meager and vain words, mainly that he was not inclined to say or do anything The LORD would not have him to do, he was much like the religious people of Israel, who later in their days it would be said of them, “*this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me.*” [Isa 29:13] Thus, despite his words, Balaam sought to curse Israel in his heart. Therefore, through the effectiveness of his bribes, Balak brought him to a high place that he might look down upon Israel and curse them. Imagine what Balaam would have seen. No doubt, a great multitude of people; but how were they arranged? And what shape did they take on when he caught sight of them from a bird’s perspective? But let us also think to ourselves, why would The LORD take such initiative, and such care, to

specifically direct which tribes were where, and how they were to camp round about the tabernacle? Why not just let them camp as it suited them?

Consider one answer to this question: Jesus Christ. Was this not the premise that we started off with? Yea, and the true and correct premise to any real Bible study? Therefore, let us look closer. For if we take the tribes and their locations and are careful to note how many are camped where, (as Moses details out), and we then separate those numbers proportionately around the tabernacle – so that Judah’s space, having the most people, would occupy a greater area than Ephraim’s, which has the least people – then we would see that the shape created is nothing else than the cross. [Figure 1]

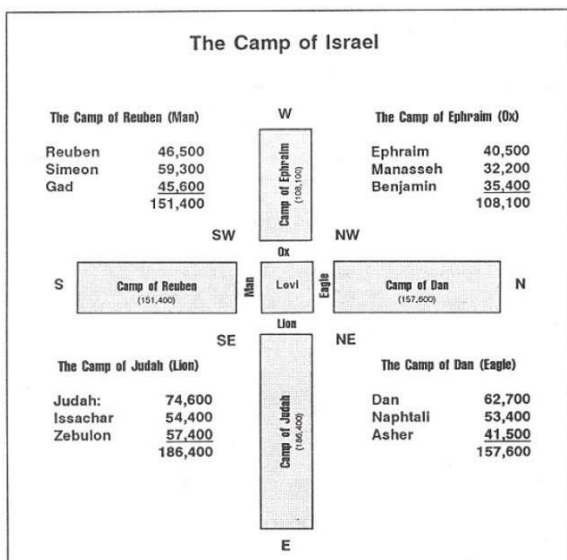


Figure 1¹

What an incredible thing that God has hidden the cross in the middle of a lengthy text about encampments! Hidden in plain sight, where most people would just skip over for boredom and for seemingly purposelessness, there lies the cross of Jesus Christ. We can see, then, why The LORD

¹ Missler, Chuck. "The Wilderness Wanderings." Koinonia House, 1 Feb. 2006, khouse.org/personal_update/articles/2006/wilderness-wanderings.

might have been concerned with the placement of Israel's tribes. Beyond any physical and practical reason, (which surely there was), we do see an incredible act of God's foresight and wisdom in forming the cross. And so, if we think back upon Balaam, when he looked down from the high place at Israel, what did he see? Why, Balaam that wicked prophet, saw the cross! Though he knew it not, there was the cross of Jesus Christ. And as Balaam looked upon Israel to curse them, God looked down quite the opposite: not to curse, but to protect and to bless. For while Balaam sought to curse Israel, as it is written, "*The LORD thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto [Israel], because The LORD thy God loved [Israel].*" [Deut 23:5] And The LORD spoke through Balaam, (despite Balaam's best efforts), and said,

"God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good? Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and He hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it. He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel: the LORD his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them."
[Num 23:19-21]

The LORD was, and is today, determined to bless Israel and would not suffer the curse to be brought upon them, no matter how hard their enemies fought and strained. As it is written elsewhere, “*for thou blessest, O LORD, and it shall be blessed for ever.*” [1 Ch 17:27] And as it was with Israel, so to it is with us. For when The Lord Almighty looks down upon us, instead of seeing our sin, or instead of finding reason to curse and hurt, God sees us through the lens of Jesus Christ and finds reason to bless. For, “*as [Jesus] is, so are we in this world;*” [1 Jn 4:17] and through Jesus God has “*reconciled [us] in the body of His flesh through death, to present [us] holy and unblameable and unreproveable in His sight.*” [Col 1:21-22] As Balaam saw the cross of God, and God, through Balaam, blessed His people, so too when The LORD our Father looks down upon us He always sees Jesus, and is always inclined to favor and bless us in Him, who are “*highly favored in the beloved [Son].*” [Eph 1:6] For as God turned the curse into a blessing then, we can rejoice today as well because “*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.*” [Gal 3:13] Jesus took upon Himself the curse and because of that we are blessed and can receive salvation, if so we are believing in Jesus. This is all because of the cross. It is because Jesus died upon the cross for our sins, and was

raised up again from the dead, that we can be blessed and loved in this way by God. And whereas with Israel, The LORD said, despite Israel's constant sin, *"He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel,"* so too in Christ we are blameless. As we are told, *"there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;"* [Rom 8:1] and again, in Christ we are, *"holy and without blame before Him in love."* [Eph 1:4] And again, speaking of Israel's restoration and thus what we presently have in Christ Jesus, The LORD says in Jeremiah, *"in those days, and in that time, saith The LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve."* [Jer 50:20]

In addition to this account in Numbers, which shows us the cross of Jesus, there is yet another picture, (and I am sure many more); a picture which even Jesus Himself references. We shall now come to our second point regarding the gospel in the book of Numbers: the bronze serpent.

There came a point in Israel's wilderness wanderings where they sought to go through the land of Edom, the ancient land of Esau, Jacob's

brother. However, having been forbidden by Edom, who said, despite Israel's hospitable and meek request, "*thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword,*" [Num 20:18] The LORD spoke to them to go around. And so, "*they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the people was much discouraged because of the way.*" [Num 21:4] Because the way was long, hard, tedious, and wearisome, the people became discouraged. And perhaps you, dear reader, have come today to this reading discouraged and distraught, because the way The LORD leads you through life has become tough. If it be so, let the next part not be so. For when Israel became discouraged, it is written,

"And the people spake against God, and against Moses, wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul despises this worthless bread." [Num 21:5]

It was for this grievous complaining against God, despite the fact that The LORD had and was giving them both water and bread, that, "*The LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much of the people of Israel died.*" [Num 21:6] Besides the point we shall come to, it may be

worthwhile to pause for a moment and reflect and observe: that complaining leads to death. Let us take heart in our journeyings and look unto God who formed us, our Good Shepherd who knows what we need before we ask Him.

It was because of this complaining that Moses went to The LORD and inquired.

“And The LORD said unto Moses, make thee a bronze serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.” [Num 21:8-9]

Though The LORD sent poisonous serpents into the multitudes, we may, before seeing how Christ fits in to all of this, meditate on and notice a few things.

First, it says in Deuteronomy, Moses looking back on the wilderness, “[The LORD] led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were poisonous serpents, and scorpions, and drought...” [Deut 8:15] Is there any among us who would suppose that this barren desert landscape was always void of

poisonous serpents, and that it was only for The LORD's punishment here that they were introduced? Surely not. What then? It was this: The LORD had always been protecting the very large group of Israelites from poisonous snakes, scorpions, and other terrors of the desert wilderness, such as wild beasts. He was very merciful in His dealings with Israel, protecting them and even their clothes, as Moses reminded Israel, "*thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.*" [Deut 8:4] So then, when we read of this punishment, we might rather understand that The LORD withdrew His protection from Israel; and that the poisonous serpents, which were always present, were now no longer forbidden from approaching and attacking Israel, God having removed His protective hand from them due to their complaining.

Second, there is no medicinal value in looking at a bronze serpent on a pole. Therefore, The LORD did not instruct them to do this because it was a secret medical healing agent, long lost to the ages – but rather, it was chosen because of the faith it would display and require, and for the typology of Christ that would come from it (as we shall see).

Third, the word for "*beheld*" when scripture says, "*when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived,*" is a word

which is better rendered “gaze.” It is the word The LORD uses when He says to Abraham, “*look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them...*” [Gen 15:5] Imagine, if you will, and take God’s words literally to Abraham. If Abraham were to obey these words in literal fashion, (as we should always take God’s words unless instructed otherwise), then what type of “looking” might be required of Abraham in order to number the stars in the sky? It would require, no doubt, not a glance, but a gaze. Not a passing look, but a prolonged stare. Therein is the definition of this word, and what was required of the Israelites: not a passing, quick glance at the bronze serpent but a prolonged gaze of faith in its healing power. And rather, not in the healing power of the metal or the snake, (for Hezekiah would one day say regarding this thing, “*Nehushtan,*” that is, “*a thing of brass,*” before “*braking in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made.*” [2 Ki 18:4]), but rather, in the healing power of The LORD and His words: for that is what truly bears power.

Now then, having read the account in Numbers, let us read what Jesus says in the gospel of John.

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be

lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His One-and-Only Unique Son, [Jesus Christ], that whosoever is continuing to believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.” [Jn 3:14-17]

Jesus then goes on to explain what it means to believe, to explain what the proof of belief is. That is, Jesus shows us in the next few verses what true, biblical believing in Him looks like and is evidenced by: that belief which leads to eternal life. And to this, we should give much heed. Not only does it correspond to the account given in Numbers, but it should be especially relevant to us when we remember the fearful words of Christ, “*not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but He that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*” [Mt 7:21] Therefore, we read,

“He that is believing on Him is not condemned: but he that is not believing is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the One-and-Only Unique Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come

into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that practices evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that practices truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.” [Jn 3:18-21]

Herein lies the fruit of true belief: practicing truth. [Jn 3:21] The man who believes in Jesus, and is thus not experiencing condemnation – what does he do? How does he act? Jesus says that in contrast to the man who is condemned and who is in darkness, the man who truly believes practices truth. He has a lifestyle of practicing truth. But what does that mean? Jesus explains to us here in these verses that it is a habitual, (though from time to time we slip), but that it is a habitual lifestyle of bringing one’s own deeds, thoughts, words, emotions, etc., to the light of Jesus Christ, to the light of scripture, so that He might reveal what is wrong. The man who practices truth has a great desire to obey The LORD. If something were off in his life, he would want to know so that he might take corrective steps. Therefore, that man, urged onto this practice by a love for Jesus in whom he believes, has a habit of bringing his deeds to the Lord: so that The Lord

Jesus, through scripture, might shine His light upon those deeds, revealing if they are in fact good or bad. This is what it is to practice truth. And it is a practice; meaning, dear brethren, that we are always working at it and improving, though we are hardly ever flawless. But the man who does not practice truth, but who instead is condemned and unbelieving – this man does not want his deeds exposed, and so, hating the light which exposes them, (for, “*whatsoever doth make manifest is light.*” [Eph 5:13]), he hides himself and his deeds from the light of God, from the light of scripture, ever desiring to remain in his sin, bad attitudes, bad thinking, or whatever else it may be. That man does not wish to be conformed into Jesus’ image, by means of God’s eternal and unambiguous word, but rather, not believing in nor loving Christ, would rather do as he likes: and so, he never does come to that light nor seek it out.

Now, brethren, let us draw the connection and bring ourselves back to Numbers, wherein we read of the bronze serpent. Let us remind ourselves how that, “*if a serpent had bitten any man, **when he beheld** the serpent of brass, he lived.*” [Num 21:9] And let us also remember how, upon further investigation, we saw how that the word for behold here means rather to gaze. It is not a glance at the serpent,

which saved a man, but a prolonged gaze.

Therefore, the same is true for Christ. Is there anyone reading this who professes to believe in Christ? I imagine that there is. And ask yourself, dear reader, what is your belief in The Lord Jesus like? Has it been a glance as it were, or a continued, (yes continuing even to this present moment), gaze? Have you set your eyes upon Jesus, upon the cross on which He bore your sins and died, and have never taken your gaze away? Have you fought and strove to remain faithful to Him in that gaze, fearful that if you would chance a glance but anywhere else you might die? Have you lovingly, faithfully stared upon your Savior? If you have said yes; if your belief in Jesus has been *continuing* and not just once-and-done; if your faith and belief, however weak and however small, has endured, then praise be to God, man, you are saved! However, if you say that your belief in Jesus has been but a glance; if you would say today that you have professed and confessed Christ at some point in the past, but it has not affected you nor persisted into the present day – but it has rather stayed in the past, then man, flee to Christ anew! For you exhibit not that glorious fruit of endurance and salvation, but that of false profession and damnation. As Jesus says, “...*he that endureth to the end shall be saved.*” [Mt 10:22] And ask yourself: endure in what? Why, endure in belief! If

your belief is not a lifestyle: a habit and practice which infects and affects every area of your life, mind, and heart – if your belief is merely word and thought only, or merely a past thing you remember from time-to-time, and not the heartbeat of your existence, then, my good man, flee to Jesus and be saved! Put your faith in Him, as Noah and his family and place yourself firmly upon the boat of Christ Almighty who died for your sins. Put your faith in Him as those poor souls bitten of the serpents and gaze upon Him, the man upon the cross, as if your life depended on it (for it does!).

We have all been infected and cursed with that wretched thing sin. Again, as we have seen, so let us see again what is written,

“There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one...all have sinned, and are falling short of the glory of God.”
[Rom 3:10-12, 23]

As those bitten of the serpents were doomed to die else some intervention was supplied, so too we have been bitten as it were. We have all been taken with the poison of sin, and must die. Lest there is

salvation given to us by some means, we shall all perish. All of us likewise shall die, for all of us likewise have sinned. *“For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.”* [Ecc 7:20] And, *“if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”* [1 Jn 1:8] But just as The LORD provided a means of salvation to the Israelites in the wilderness, so too God has given us an escape. As the bronze serpent was lifted up, so too Jesus Christ was *“made to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”* [2 Cor 5:21] Jesus was *“pierced through for our rebellions, He was crushed for our depravities: the discipline that brought us peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.”* [Isa 53:5] Jesus became sin for us; upon that cross He was the serpent, He was sin. And upon that cross every rebellion, every wickedness, every foul and unpleasant atrocity to ever flow up from our hearts and out of our mouths was placed squarely on His shoulders – as though He had done them all. And there He was, The Son of Man, The Great I Am, The Beloved Child of Heaven, The Prince of Peace, The Lion of Judah, The Lamb of God – there He was, can you see Him there, dear reader? Can you smell the sweat and the blood and hear the cries of agony from His lips? – there He was, our dear Lord and brother, upon that wretched tree, suffering under the great and

immeasurable weight of your sin; of my sin. He is our salvation. Jesus Christ The Lamb of God, the man upon the cross. He is the provided salvation. As the bronze serpent was for the people, so too Jesus is for us, if we would but gaze upon Him in belief. If you, dear reader, would but gaze upon Jesus Christ on the cross, in true belief that it was for your precious soul He died, you shall be saved. *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of The Lord shall be saved.”* [Rom 10:13] There is not another way, and there is not another savior. We might think it foolish, even silly, for a man in Moses’ day to have been bitten by a serpent, lying in the dust, dying, and who would refuse to just turn around and look up at the bronze serpent on the pole. Why, we might say, just look! Look and be saved, for why shall you die! Ah, but dear reader, why will you not turn to Christ, if so be you have not believed? Why do you persist in your own way of living, in your own ideas, in your own desires? Why do you persist in a rejection of Jesus as Savior? Why do you let the cross lay there on the ground, adamant in your refusal to pick it up and follow The Lord? *“Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die?...”* [Ezek 18:31] Turn from your sin and look to Jesus! *“Turn unto*

*me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am
God, and there is none else.” [Isa 45:22]*

Chapter V: Circumcision of the Heart [Deuteronomy]

Near the end of Deuteronomy, Moses, speaking to the people, said,

“See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love The LORD thy God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply...I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: that thou mayest love The LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey His voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him: for He is thy life, and the length of thy days...” [Deut 30:15-16, 19-20]

In all that was spoken, reminding Israel of what God had done and what He had said, Moses concludes with these words. He had set before the people *“life and death, blessing and cursing.”* Life, if they would choose it; life, if they would love The LORD and obey Him, clinging to Him. And death, if they would not. Moses laid the choice to the

people and said, “*choose life.*” Neither Moses nor The LORD desired the people to choose death; and yet, no doubt some of them would. For though there is a clear path which leads to life: clinging to and loving The LORD, yet there are some who would yet choose their own path and own way, a path that even leads to death. Though there are ways and paths which seem as if they shall fare better, than that which The LORD has chosen, yet those all, without exception, lead to death. “*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*” [Prov 14:12] These same sentiments are communicated through Ezekiel as well. There The LORD says,

“...*Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith The Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.*” [Ezek 18:30-32]

The LORD urges Israel, and He would urge each of us too, to repent: to turn from our sins and turn to Him. It is something that He cannot force any to

do, for God will not make a breach upon any man's free will. Cast away the sin! God would say, and come to me for "*a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*" It is a good question; a profound question: "*why will ye die?*" Having both paths: that of life and that of death, laid before a man, why would any choose death? It seems as simple as the question posed by Christ to a certain man who was lame in his feet, "*wilt thou be made whole?*" [Jn 5:6] And to you, dear reader, the same question is posed today. As "*the power of The Lord was present to heal them*" [Lk 5:17] upon a certain day, so too the power of The Lord is present now. And so the question is posed to you: that fateful and eternal question: "*wilt thou be made whole?*" Do you desire life? Or death? Blessing? Or cursing? The choice is up to you. The choice is up to all of us. But know this, dear reader, The LORD has no pleasure in the death of him that dies, having a strong desire that none should perish. "*[The Lord] is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*" [2 Pe 3:9]

And so, what was the solution posed by Moses in that day, and what is the solution proposed to us – how might a man receive and lay hold of this life being offered? It was chiefly to love God, and out of

love, obey Him and cling to Him. “Choose life...that thou mayest love The LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey His voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him: for He is thy life...” [Deut 30:19, 20] But as it was in that day, so I am sure it is in this day as well. That any man who would set forth to obey this command, to love The LORD with all that he has, (and that, Jesus says, is the greatest command [Mt 22:37-38]), would assuredly discover his inability to carry out such a command. He would discover in an instant, as perhaps you have too, dear reader, that which is written, “*the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*” [Jer 17:9] or of that which Paul wrote, crying out, “*O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*” [Rom 7:24] Though the command is a simple one, yet the carrying out of it is not. Earlier in Moses’ discourse, he wrote of what The LORD said to him,

“And now, Israel, what doth The LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear The LORD thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve The LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of The LORD, and His statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?” [Deut 10:12-13]

And furthermore, he gave the means by which such a thing might be accomplished, saying, “*circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.*” [Deut 10:16] As with physical circumcision and the cutting off of flesh, so too The LORD commanded: “*circumcise...your heart.*” There was flesh upon the heart, sinful flesh, preventing belief and love and obedience, and it was necessary for it to be removed. But who could do such a thing? Who could, of their own power, get themselves a new heart and new spirit? Ah, my good man, that is just the point. For, “*the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*” [Gal 3:24] And, “*by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*” [Rom 3:20] That which leads to life: love and obedience to The LORD, a steadfast abiding in The LORD – as simple as it sounds – is yet impossible in and of ourselves. For we are infected with that sinful flesh, and as Paul writes, “*the flesh lusteth against The Spirit, and The Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*” [Gal 5:17] For those who have not experienced deliverance by Jesus, who have not been set free from their flesh and from sin, (yes, and from the law too), they have no power to overcome in this battle, and as such, shall always, in the end, fall

short of that simple command: to love God with all the heart, mind, soul, and strength. As it stands, we are doomed: for that command which is ordained to life, we find to be unto death, not having the power to accomplish it. *“And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.”* [Rom 7:10] In alignment with this, The LORD speaks through Moses later in Deuteronomy, shifting the responsibility and revealing the means by which we shall be able to do such things. He says,

“And The LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart...to love The LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.” [Deut 30:6]

And so, at last we see the solution: a sovereign act of God. In order to experience and choose life, we need The LORD's intervention; His supernatural empowerment. But how shall we acquire such help? How shall we obtain this circumcision of the heart, yes, and get a new heart: a heart which is not desperately wicked, but which truly yearns after God's commands and loves Him? It shall happen by means of the New Covenant. For this circumcision is spoken of by Paul, who writes,

“For in [Jesus] dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead in bodily form. And ye are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” [Col 2:9-12]

It is from Jesus, and from Jesus alone, in whom we are complete, that we receive this spiritual circumcision. Through Jesus Christ we can become, by faith, “*children of Abraham*,” [Gal 3:7] having been joined to “*the Israel of God*,” [Gal 6:16] in our reception of this spiritual circumcision by faith: because in Jesus Christ “*there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision...but Christ is all, and in all*,” and, “*in Christ Jesus ye who were sometimes far off [from the commonwealth of Israel] are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one...*” [Col 3:11, Eph 2:13-14]

“He is not a jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and

*circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit,
and not in the letter...” [Rom 2:28-29]*

Whether Jew or Gentile, male or female, all of us must receive this circumcision of heart which brings us near to God through Christ, and near to His promises, allowing us to lay hold of them and enjoy them. This is the circumcision which enables us to love God, and it is that which gives us a new heart and spirit, something which The LORD promises as a part of the New Covenant, saying through the prophet,

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.” [Ezek 36:26-27]

Thus, we see that the circumcision which The LORD commanded through Moses is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who by The Spirit’s coming into our heart, cuts off the old man – that is, circumcises our heart – and we become new creatures, thus receiving a new heart and spirit. For, *“if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” [2 Cor 5:17]*

And this happens through faith, even as Deuteronomy explains. For none of us are saved by our own works, but by grace through faith.

“For this commandment which I command thee this day, is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.” [Deut 30:11-14]

This word in Deuteronomy is explained in Romans, when Paul quotes it, saying,

“The righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven?...or, who shall descend into the deep?...but what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach.” [Rom 10:6-8]

The commandment is near, not far off. The command to believe, to have faith: it is not far up in heaven nor down beneath the sea. It is near and

accessible to all, the glorious word of faith: that is, faith in Jesus Christ. For Paul then says, explaining the faith: “*that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*” [Rom 10:9] Is there any command so simple? So strikingly simple? We are told by God to believe in The Lord Jesus – and to the world, this simple command is as foolish as Namaan the Syrian thought Elisha’s word; as Paul says regarding the cross in which we believe, “*to them that perish [it is] foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.*” [1 Cor 1:18] The simple preaching of and believing in the cross of Jesus: how that Jesus took our sins upon Himself, died upon the cross as a trespass offering for our sins, and rose again three days later, is foolishness with the world. It is to them altogether too simple, and illogical. But as it is written, “*the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.*” [1 Cor 1:25] Is God foolish? Is God weak? God forbid: no! But even if there were something of His intellect or reasoning which were foolish, even if there were something of God that were weak: it would yet be a thousand thousand times wiser and stronger than the world’s best. And God has chosen this simple, pure faith as a means of salvation, for one, because as it says,

“But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence.” [1 Cor 1:27-29]

The word of faith, that which brings salvation, is simple. It is near to each and every one of us. For all of the unbelieving world – yes, each and every soul – they are but a word away from salvation. They are but a single word uttered from genuine belief in Jesus, from acquiring eternal life. Try as they might, and try as we might, salvation cannot and does not come from our own strivings, energy, thoughts, ability, or heart. It comes through simple faith in Jesus Christ, God’s Son, and in Him alone. The circumcision of the heart, of which we speak, and which was spoken of in Deuteronomy to be the necessary thing in order to truly love and serve God and thus experience life, is not something we can conjure up. Neither is it something that is difficult to obtain or far off. It is a simple solution, as we have already seen again and again in this book. The solution is a continued, genuine, simple faith in Jesus Christ: who He is and what He has done. For

even a mustard seed of faith, even the smallest of faiths, in that simple truth, is powerful enough to utterly transform any heart and any mind; powerful enough to change for good even the vilest of sinners.

The wonderful and simple answer is this: faith. Faith in Jesus Christ, for there is none other. It is not by our own works, effort, diligence, merit, or anything else we might possess. Salvation is for those weak men and women: to those who are poor and broken; to those sinners who see their need and cry out for Christ.

Something that we all must come to realize, is that there is none among us who can serve God. In our own power, our own strength, we cannot serve Him nor draw near to Him. In our own strength, we cannot be saved. Even as Israel could not, (and neither can we), circumcise their hearts. This is something Joshua pointed out to Israel, and something we would do well to take heed to as well. For without Jesus we cannot serve God, approach God, love God, or be saved; without Him we can do nothing.

When Israel heard the law of God, and was very zealous to do it, saying, “*God forbid that we should forsake The LORD, to serve other gods...therefore will we*

also serve *The LORD*; for *He is our God*,” Joshua pointed out the grim truth: “ye cannot serve *The LORD*: for *He is an holy God*; *He is a jealous God*; *He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins*.” [Josh 24:16, 18, 19] As it is written elsewhere, “*who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with the everlasting burnings?*” [Isa 33:14] For “*our God is a consuming fire*.” [Heb 12:29] We cannot but chance one step into His presence on our own merits or abilities, for again, He is “*dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto*.” [1 Tim 6:16] Who can serve Him? Who can stand in His presence? For we are all laden with impurity, wickedness, and sin, and it is written, “*thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity*,” [Hab 1:13] and, “*what communion hath light with darkness?*” [2 Cor 6:14] Therefore we cannot serve God. Joshua speaks correctly. And the word, to love God with all our heart, to serve Him with the uttermost of our soul, is likewise unreachable: for we, as men, are utterly lost.

Oh, but praise God. For though we cannot serve God; for though we cannot dwell with Him or approach Him, yet Jesus can. And it is He who is our mediator and high priest, who intercedes for us. It is through Jesus Christ that we can serve God and draw near. As it is written,

“And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David...That He would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.” [Lk 1:69, 74-75]

And,

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.” [Heb 10:19-22]

Praise Jesus who has given us a new heart and spirit. Praise Jesus who has gifted us salvation and made us fit to enter God's presence. Praise Jesus who makes it possible for us to serve and love and obey The LORD. Praise Jesus for that He has circumcised our hearts. Yes, praise Him for all things: for without Jesus we are nothing and can do nothing.

Afterward

It is my prayer that every one who reads this devotion goes away from it saved. Saved from sin, from hell, from the law; saved from the rigorous bondage of this world. But for those who have read this devotion and are already saved, it is my prayer that you, dear Christian, do not just read about the gospel – that glorious, good news of Jesus – but that it becomes a living reality in your life: that just as Jesus shows up in each book of The Bible, so too every circumstance of your life would picture and point to Him, and in each circumstance too you would experience the gospel and Jesus' salvation/power.

There is no other subject which we have been given which gives such refreshment and life. As it says in Isaiah, “*therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.*” [Isa 12:3] Salvation is like a multitude of wells out of which we draw, with joy, much refreshment and life. As a well in the midst of a weary land, as waters in the wilderness, so salvation – so the gospel of Jesus – holds for us innumerable amounts of life. Regarding “*the wisdom of God in a mystery,*” [1 Cor 2:7] that is, regarding the cross of Jesus, which is to the world foolishness, The Spirit writes,

“None of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the

Lord of Glory. But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” [1 Cor 2:8-10]

What the world, and what the spiritual powers behind the world, cannot understand, through The Spirit of God, we can understand. Those glorious mysteries of the gospel and of the cross, which were before hidden like gems in the Old Testament and throughout Israel’s written history, are for us revealed by The Holy Spirit. And so, let us with joy continue to draw up these truths like water from the well. May you, dear reader, give yourself to the study and love of Jesus, especially the good news of His salvation. May you ever experience the deep, rich love of Jesus and the life which comes from a true and genuine understanding of His cross.

And if you have still not heard it clearly enough, or if there is still some lack of understanding: then may you hear, dear reader, with ears to hear, the glorious truth – the very climax of eternity – that Jesus Christ, God’s Son, who is God Himself, humbled Himself to come to earth so that He might take upon Himself the punishment for your sins, that you might experience eternal life, if so you believe. May you hear it clearer than ever before, the

glorious and resounding trumpet blast throughout the ages, and throughout each book of scripture: JESUS LOVES YOU. It was for you, dear reader, that Christ died. It was for you, dear reader, that He was crushed upon that cross. It was for you, and you alone, that Jesus loved and died and rose again. And it is you He calls. With an everlasting love Jesus draws you and calls you. May you not take a single step elsewhere until you accept this great offer. For it is the only offer that leads to life and salvation. Why will you risk it? Why will you die? You may never have the chance again. Today; yes, this day, is the day of salvation. This day is the day to be set free from this world, from sin, from bondage, from evil. Today is the day to accept Jesus' call, the man, yes the God, who emptied Himself and died upon a cross, shedding forth His blood, for your precious soul. Today is the day to be made right with God: righteous in His eyes; today is the day to be purified and made white, whiter than snow. Today is the day to enter into a relationship with Jesus your Savior, Shepherd, King, and Lord.

“That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be

saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”
[Jn 3:15-18]

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” [Eph 2:8-9]

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, [except by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom God raised from the dead], whereby we must be saved.” [Acts 4:10, 12]

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