



"...a seed will serve him." (Ps. 22:30-31)

The Planter

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Rethinking Traditional Babble

Our last study revealed that Christendom needs to rethink its teaching concerning the biblical entity referred to as lucifer. Moreover, further consideration needs to be given to the character known as the serpent, a.k.a. the dragon, Satan, and the devil.

I recognize that such writings stir controversy with many believers. However with the well intentioned, but inaccurate information that is being taught throughout the ranks of Christianity, it is important to understand what the Bible actually says about Satan.

We are in no way trying to bring undue attention or emphasis to the devil by publishing these writings. But we are attempting to bring balance and biblical insight that bears witness to what Jesus and the writers of the Bible taught concerning the devil.

Why Study About The Devil?

The Bible never refers to the devil being God's adversary. However, Jesus spoke of the devil, as an enemy, but whose enemy? (Mat. 13:37-43). The apostle Peter encouraged the believer to be sensible, well balanced, and vigilant or cautious at all times, firmly resisting the devil in the faith. Why? Because your adversary, the devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to seize and devour. (1Pe. 5:8-9).

Thus, we cannot simply dismiss the existence of a devil as some figment of the imagination. We are aware of those who suggest the "*carnal mind*" is the devil. However, while the Bible teaches the mind of the flesh, with its carnal thoughts and purposes, is hostile to God, it never says the mind is Satan. The mind's enmity toward God is a result of it not being able to submit itself to God's Law while focusing on the

flesh. (Ro. 8:7). This thought of the "carnal mind" being the devil has never rang true in my spirit. The apostle Paul declared that he served the Law of God with the mind; but with the flesh he served the law of sin. (Ro. 7:25). So does that make the "flesh" the devil, of course not, no more than the mind focused on flesh is the devil. However, I can agree the "carnal mind," or thinking focused on the flesh, is the devils "workshop." That is, it takes a "carnal mind," or focus, for the devil to work. Paul warns the believer not to give place or opportunity to the devil. (Eph. 4:27). Remember. The devil, is walking about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to seize and devour. (1Pe. 5:8-9). Therefore we are to put on the whole panoply or parade dress of God so that we may be able to stand firm against all the stratagems or schemes of the devil. (Eph. 6:11). Furthermore, we need to submit ourselves to God and resist the devil, and he will flee from us. (Jam. 4:7).

Our last study showed us that the Hebrew word "*Satan*" (Strongs #7854), is used 27 times in the Scripture. The Greek equivalent "*Satanas*" (Strongs #4567), appears a total of 36 times in the new testament and 19 of those references come after the death, burial and resurrection of Christ Jesus our Lord. Moreover, the Greek word "*diabolos*" (Strongs #1228), or devil is used 40 times in the Greek Scriptures, and 25 of the references are after the resurrection. Now that makes a total of 61 mentions of the devil after the resurrection of our Lord. This should suffice to demonstrate that the Satan is something the Christian needs to deal with even after the victory at Calvary.

What exactly are we dealing with? Is Satan an entity? That is, does the devil have a distinct and independent existence apart from God? This question is as old as religion. Agnostics believe

Satan is simply a symbol, concept or principle of evil and not an actual personality. While fundamentalists believe in a distinct, independent and powerful being that has an existence apart from God.

Modern Theology vs What Jesus Taught

Traditional teachings continue to perpetuate the devil, as a foe of the church. It is generally accepted that the devil is an enemy who will *not* be defeated until after "the rapture of the church," "the great tribulation" and "the defeat of the antichrist." Moreover, this slant shows God and Satan at war with one another. God is *protecting* all that is good and Satan is *projecting* all that is evil. Modern teaching shows Satan on the offensive, while God is on the defensive. This in itself should cause one to rethink their traditional doctrines.

Understanding The Beginning

Both Jesus and John mentioned the devil's beginning. "**THE BEGINNING**," is used throughout the Bible when it is speaking of the originating point of the subject in question. For our first example, it was "**IN THE BEGINNING**" that God created the heavens and the earth. (Gen. 1:1-31) This signifying God birthed the universe with its galaxies. Next, David and Solomon declared, "*The fear of the Lord is **THE BEGINNING** of wisdom.*" (Ps. 111:10; Pr. 1:7, 9:10) It is through this declaration that we learn wisdom has its **ORIGINATING POINT** in the reverential fear of the Lord. Our final example is found in the Gospel of John. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit John penned, "**IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, and the Word was with (pertained to) God, AND THE WORD WAS GOD.**" (Joh 1:1) He went on to express that **THE GOD WORD** brought everything into existence. Thus concluding, nothing exists apart from **THE GOD WORD**. (Joh. 1:1-4; Col. 1:16-20). This helps us to recognize that everything has its origin in God. Moreover, all comes out of God, goes through God and into God, to him be the glory throughout all ages. Amen. (Ro. 11:33-36)

Finally, the Lord gives us a crystal clear example of what he intends, when he uses "**THE BEGINNING**," for when he spoke to Moses and Aaron, in the land of Egypt, during the seventh

month, "Abib" on Israel's civil calendar, he said, "*This month will be to you **THE BEGINNING** of months. It will be **THE FIRST MONTH** of the year to you.*" So, from that time forward the seventh month on the Jewish civil calendar has been the first month of the Jewish ecclesiastical year. This is the month in which the Feast of Passover is kept. *The month of "Abib" corresponds to March-April on the Georgian Calendar. Following the Babylonian captivity the month of "Abib" was called "Nisan" on the Jewish calendar.* Nonetheless, it is the seventh month on the Jewish civil calendar, but the first month on their ecclesiastical year. (Ex. 12:1-2; De. 16:1, 16; Neh. 2:1; Est. 3:7).

Explaining the meaning of "**THE BEGINNING**," no doubt, seems like a mute point. Some ask, "*Why take the time to clarify something so obvious?*" We have done this because it is important that we take nothing for granted. Therefore, we are making sure we are all on the same page when it comes to understanding what is meant by "**THE BEGINNING**." If something exists in a certain condition from "**THE BEGINNING**," it means that from the time it was formed or established, it was in that condition. Following this line of reasoning should not be difficult for anyone.

Where Is The Conflict?

It is on this very point that we find a conflict, because we run into a head-on collision with fundamental doctrine. That is, despite the fact from "**THE BEGINNING**" clearly means from the creation of a thing, men continue to teach a traditional doctrine that contradicts this simple statement of fact. We speak of that which is taught concerning Satan.

Fundamentalists have long agreed that in "**THE BEGINNING**" Satan, a.k.a. Lucifer, was "*the anointed cherub that covers,*" mentioned in the book of Ezekiel. (Ezek. 28:14) Their teaching says he held the most coveted position among the angelic hosts until he led a rebellion against God in an attempt to usurp the throne. We are told at that time he was cast out of heaven and became the devil that he is today.

It is amazing that the previously mentioned doctrine has enjoyed such widespread acceptance among Christians while the teaching

of Jesus so clearly contradicts this thinking. Please note that the popular teaching of man says, "**IN THE BEGINNING**" there was a holy angelic being that fell from its first estate to become the devil. While Jesus clearly stated that Satan was a **MURDERER FROM THE BEGINNING** and *he abode not in the truth, because the truth NEVER AT ANY TIME ABODE IN HIM.* (Joh. 8:44) Not only so, but the apostle John, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, penned these words in regard to Satan's origin: "**THE DEVIL SINNED FROM THE BEGINNING.**" (1Jo. 3:8) Now, if the Bible means what it says – and we believe it does – we must believe that from Satan's origin he both sinned and murdered.

There is no conflict with this understanding and the nature of God, as some suppose. We have heard the argument that states, "*God would have never created something evil.*" To that assumption we reply with a question: "*What is the difference of God creating something knowing that it would become evil, and creating something evil in the first place?*" For it is no less credible to consider that God created one who would become evil, than to create this same one evil from its origin.

A Declaration Straight from God's Mouth

God says, "*I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: **I THE LORD DO ALL THESE THINGS.***" (Is. 45:7) We find another example offered through the words of Isaiah. For God says, "**I HAVE CREATED THE WASTER TO DESTROY.**" (Is. 54:16) It is from this passage that we understand Satan was created for a definite purpose. This purpose is further revealed in the opening words of the above quoted passage: "*I have created **THE SMITH** (that is the devil) *that blows the coals on the fire, and brings forth an instrument for his work.*" (Is. 54:16) [<http://www.promiseed.com/articles/stacy/evil.html> "The Evil of a Righteous God"]*

The Absolutely Sovereign God

We should not believe for one moment that anything in heaven or earth is out of God's power of influence, for he is always in complete control. Satan himself is under God's jurisdiction. If you can receive this, you will understand that Satan has no authority, except for what God

gives him. (Is. 66:1; Mt. 28:18) If you believe, for one moment, Satan is a thorn in the side of Almighty God, then your God is entirely too **SMALL**. Satan poses no problem for God, because this entity is a tool entirely within the hand of God. It is God who sets his boundaries and limits his power – it was, in fact, God who created Satan in the first place – and that was for one purpose and one purpose only: **FOR THE MATURATION OF HIS SONS!**

The Trees In Eden

I learned some time ago that the best way to learn about something is to start at its beginning. To find the "*first biblical mention*" of Satan we need to go back to the garden of Eden.

In the book of Genesis we are told the Lord God planted a garden, or fenced area, eastward in Eden. Eden means the garden of pleasure and delight. In the New Covenant Eden is equivalent to *Paradise* or *Heaven*. (Lu. 23:43; 2Co. 12:4; Re. 2:7) Eden was a protected area on the eastern side of God's garden. The east is where the Sun (*Son*) of righteousness rises with healing in his wings giving a fresh revelation of the new day. (Mal. 4:2) God placed Adam, whom he had formed from the dust of the ground, in this secure garden area to protect and work it. (Ge. 2:7-8, 15) God, to this day, places his sons, who are of the earth, earthy, in this area of revelation life. (1Co. 15:45-52) Each son is placed in the garden for the purpose of overcoming, while protecting and working it. It is in the garden that each son learns to walk in the strength of an overcoming life. (Ro. 8:27, 12:21; 1Jo. 2:13, 5:4-5; Rev. 2:7, 17, 3:21, 21:7)

In Eden the Lord God caused three categories of trees to grow. First, all the trees of the garden that were pleasant to the sight, and good for food and they grew along with the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in "*the midst*" of the garden. The first group of trees in the garden are usually thought of as the natural fruit and nut trees of the earth. But the prophet Ezekiel sheds light on the figurative means of these trees. The nations of the world, who were not included in the "Old Covenant" as the seed of promise, represented all the trees of the garden. (Ezek. 28:12-16, 31:1-11)

The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil grew together at the center or bisection of the garden, such as where two lines intersect. (Ge. 2:8-9) If both the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil were at the bisection, they were both in the exact center of the garden. One would certainly need a mature discernment to distinguish these two trees.

God told Adam, while he was still male and female, "*You may **FREELY EAT OF EVERY TREE** in the garden, **BUT** you will not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. For in the day you eat of it you will die.*" It is interesting to note that God gave permission for Adam "*to freely eat*" of all the other trees of the garden, but he called specific attention to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil by forbidding them to partake of it. This tree of knowledge was much more than mere information about good and evil. The tree encompasses the complete intellect, which includes perception, discernment, understanding, wisdom and skill concerning good and evil. It comes to humanity as a dual form or fruit. First, it is "*good,*" pleasant, delightful, precious, correct and righteous knowledge. Then, it is "*evil,*" knowledge that causes distress, misery, a crushing and guilt. In the new covenant it becomes clearer that the knowledge of "*good*" speaks of that which is "*worthwhile*" and the knowledge of "*evil*" embraces all that is "*worthless.*"

In the book of Hebrews the writers speak to those who have become sluggish in hearing. He says, "Considering the length of time that you have been believers, you should now be teaching others. Yet, you really need someone to teach you over again the very rudiments of the truths of God. Moreover, you have become those that require milk instead of solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unacquainted with the word of righteousness, for they are infants. Solid food is for the mature. That is, solid food is for those who through constant practice have their spiritual faculties carefully trained to distinguish both good and evil." (Heb. 5:9-14)

We should also make note that God never gave

identity, that is an awareness or command concerning the tree of life that is located equally at the center of the garden. It takes a revelation to recognize the tree of life. These two trees at the center of God's garden represent "*the divine law of God*" and "*righteousness which is of faith.*" (Ge. 2:16-17; De. 30:10-20; Ro. 10:4-12 Re. 2:7)

The Bible Contains Two Covenants

Just like the garden contains two trees at the center, the Bible contains two covenants at its center. There are sixty-six recognized or proven books in the canon, or Bible; and both the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil are recorded in "*the midst*" of this Book of books. That is, the Old Covenant and the New Covenant, one written in "*the midst*" of the other, from Genesis through Revelation. It would be convenient if the page found in most Bibles, between the book of Malachi and Matthew which reads "*New Testament,*" made an accurate division between the two covenants. However, it does not clearly divide, because both covenants are found on either side of this title page. So, how can one know the difference? It is discernable only to those that learn to differentiate between "*the letter*" and "*the spirit*" of the word. Remember, we are not speaking of two different words, but one word with two completely different expressions. (2Co. 3:1-18) These two trees might be described as the tree of the letter and the tree of the spirit.

Moses gives us another glimpse of the two trees in the "*midst*" of the Garden when he presents the law to Israel. He tells them to ***LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF THE LORD GOD***, and hedge, guard, protect and attend to the commandments and statutes that are written in the book of the Law. (De. 30:10) It was never intended that Israel would merely obey the "*letter*" of the law, but they were to "*listen to the voice of the Lord*" that is found within the law *and* the prophets. (1Co. 2:6-16; 2Co. 3:6-18)

Moses goes on to reveal how close and tangible "*the word of faith*" that produces righteousness is to all who believe. He says, "***IF YOU TURN TO THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL.*** For the commandment which I command you today is not hidden from

you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?' Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who shall go over the sea for us to the region beyond the sea, and bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?' **BUT THE WORD IS VERY NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART, SO THAT YOU MAY DO IT.**" (De. 30:11-14)

The apostle Paul writes this same word in the New Covenant simply adding the confession that guarantees no works or self effort. He writes, "**CHRIST IS THE END OF THE LAW FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES.**" The law and the prophets speak of the righteousness which is in the Law in this manner, "Anyone doing the things written in the law, shall live by them." This is saying, "We know the law is good, if a one uses it lawfully." To use it lawfully one must understand that the law is not made for the righteous, but for the lawless and disobedient and if there be any other thing that is contrary to healthy teaching. (Le. 18:5; Ne. 9:29; Eze. 20:11, 13, 20:21; 1Ti. 1:8-11)

Paul continues by saying, "**THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH SAYS THIS:** 'Do not say in your heart, who will ascend into Heaven to bring Christ down. Or who will descend into the abyss to bring Christ up from the dead.'" As if we could be saved by our own efforts. (Deuteronomy 30:12-13) "What does it say? The Word is near you, on your lips and in your heart. That is, the Word of faith which we preach, if you acknowledge and confess with your lips that **JESUS IS LORD** and in your heart (adhere to, rely on, trust in) believing that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with the heart that a person believes (adheres to, trusts in, and relies on Christ) resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses (openly acknowledges his faith) resulting in salvation." (Ro. 10:6-10) For the Scripture says, "Everyone believing on the Lord will not be put to shame." (Ro. 9:33, 10:11; Is. 28:16, 49:23; Jer. 17:7; 1Pe. 2:6)

Now, going back to Moses who continues to describe the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil found in the law. He

tells Israel that by commanding them to **LOVE THE LORD**, to **WALK IN HIS WAYS**, and to **KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS, STATUTES** and **JUDGMENTS**, he set before them **LIFE** and **DEATH**; **GOOD** and **EVIL**; **BLESSING** and **CURSING**. (De. 30:15-16) Then he says, "**CHOOSE LIFE**, for **HE** is your life. It is necessary to choose the Lord so all the following can become possible. By choosing the **LORD** or **LIFE** in the "**MIDST**" of the law both they and their seed live, they are able to love the Lord, obey his voice, and cling to him. (De. 30:10-20)

Both trees are clearly available within the book of the law. They are also both readily found from Genesis through Revelation. However, the tree of life is visible only to those who have an eye to see and an ear to hear, for it remains concealed within the law and prophets until God opens the understanding. (Pr. 20:12; 1Co. 2:7-10)

A Snake Is In The Garden

Perhaps you believe, as so many people do, that there is a snake like hobgoblin, or red horned gremlin, with a pitch fork in hand, called Satan, causing all the trouble in the world? Let us look into the Bible to see what it has to say about this one. The first time Satan is mentioned in the Bible the Serpent is chosen to depict him in the garden of Eden. So to gain knowledge of the devil we must begin by getting to know the nature, traits and spirit of this adversary within its habitat. First we are told the Lord God **MADE** or **FASHIONED** the serpent more subtle, crafty, and sensible than any other living thing. (Ge. 3:1) Notice: It is the Lord God that made the serpent what it is in character.

A Whisper of Disapproval

It is at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that the serpent is first seen and heard. The word serpent comes from a Hebrew word which means to "hiss" or "whisper." The "hiss" is recognized as a sign of disapproval and derision. Thus, the serpent is the whisper or feeling of disapproval, worthlessness and mockery that comes from the law or the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

This first reference reveals the serpent as a tester of "son life." Every son of God must be

proven and found mature before the Father. The serpent, who does the testing, must be overcome by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of their testimony, and because they do not love their lives to the death. (Re. 12:11)

James teaches us to count it **JOY** (*cheerful, calm delight*) whenever we find ourselves hedged in by various testings of the faith. We are to understand the testing of faith increases and calms our endurance. Thus, we are to patiently endure until we become complete, lacking nothing. (Mt. 5:43-48; Lk. 3:38; He. 2:10, 5:8; Jam 1:2-4)

The serpent always begins by bringing God's word and plan into question. This testing is directed at the "help meet," or "the soul," who has been given for assistance in time of lack, difficulty, or distress. (Ge. 2:18, 20) The human is a tripartite creation, consisting of spirit, soul and body. (1Th. 5:23) That is, we are spirit, have a soul, and live in a body. This is the makeup of both the old and new creation humanity. The "help meet" or "soul" encompasses the psychological state of being. The book of Revelation describes the woman as possessing seven mountains, such as, understanding, objectivity, discernment, perception, desire, decision and emotion. The serpent's goal is to deceive the soul with his craftiness, thus corrupting the mind from the singleness that is in Christ. (2Co. 11:3; 1Ti. 2:14)

In Eden the serpent said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall eat from any tree of the garden?'" (Ge. 3:1) The woman responded to the serpent saying, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it **OR TOUCH IT**, or you will die.'" (Ge. 2:9, 3:2-3) It may be that the addition of "neither are we to touch it" was added as a "security blanket," to help prevent them from stumbling over this one requirement.

This response of the "help meet" reveals a couple of things to us. First, it shows that Adam's soul had not distinguished the tree of life in the "midst" of the garden. That is, they had not perceived the tree of life, as being

different or distinct from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Secondly, we learn that adding to what God says does not make God's word any easier to keep. It will actually make the Word of God a stumbling block, as it did for Adam.

God's Word Became A Stumbling Block

Many of "Christianities laws" come into existence as an addendum to God's word. That is, when God deals with an individual about an area of weakness in the flesh often times a "new law" is birthed. Such as, The Bible says, "Don't you know you are the temple of God and the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are." (1Co. 3:16-17) Addendum: you are not to smoke, or eat the three whites (*sugar, bleached flour and salt*). Or how about "You are not to go to the theater, because it is *the pit of lust and a den of fornication.*" I understand we are not to commit "adultery" or "fornication," but as a youngster I could not connect Roy Rogers and Dale Evens, Gene Autry, Hopalong Cassidy, or Flash Laroo with any biblical sin or work of the flesh. (Ga. 5:19-20)

Remember. We are told not to add to or diminish from the word of God. The Word of God is already tested, proven and found to be true. It does not need to be defended, but obeyed. Moreover, God, who is the Word, is a shield to those who put their trust in him. So how did adding "neither are we to touch it" make it impossible for Adam to keep God's command? The wisdom of Solomon tells us, "Do not add to God's word, **LEST HE CORRECT YOU AND YOU BE FOUND A LIAR.**" (De. 4:2; Pr. 30:5-6; Joh. 1:1) Adding to God's word, or diminishing from it, leads to testing that finds one holding to a falsehood. And a falsehood is like a step that is not really there, so it leads to a stumbling or fall.

The response of Adam's help meet assured the serpent that the one being tested was not yet fully equipped. This is because full recognition of the Son of God, who is the tree of life, hidden within the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden, was missing. (Joh. 14:6; 1Co. 15:45; Col. 3:4; 1Jo. 5:12)

That is, Adam had not yet come to full maturity and did not measure up to the fullness of Christ. (Eph. 4:13-14) It was correct to recognize there was a tree in the middle of the garden they were not to partake of, but declaring they were *"not to touch it,"* revealed they were not yet aware of the tree of life that was also in the midst. Remember. *"Where there is no revelation, the people are naked; but blessed is he who keeps the law."* (Pr. 29:18) They were lacking the knowledge necessary to distinguish the two trees.

The prophets reveal what happens to those who lack knowledge or add to God's law. Hosea told us that God's people **"ARE DESTROYED FOR LACK OF KNOWLEDGE."** Moreover, those who reject knowledge, will be rejected from being a priest of God. (Is. 61:6; Hos. 4:6; 1Pe. 2:5-9; Re. 1:6, 5:10) Isaiah tells us God's people go into captivity because they have no knowledge. (Is. 5:13) Furthermore concerning the law, the Lord told Moses, *"You will not add to the word which I command you, neither will you take away from it, SO THAT YOU MAY KEEP THE COMMANDS OF THE LORD YOUR GOD."* (Deu. 4:2) So you see, Adam showed a lack of knowledge by not correctly dividing between the two trees. Greater yet, they added to God's word by saying they were not to even *touch* the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It was by adding to God's word that the woman was deceived. (1Ti. 2:13-15) Such lacking, or missing of the mark, resulted in the revision of God's established law and this change set them up for transgression.

The Serpent then plays upon Adam's weakness and says, **"YOU SHALL NOT SURELY DIE,** for God knows that in the day you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and **YOU WILL BE AS GOD,** knowing good and evil." (Ge. 3:4-5; Is. 14:12-14; Ezek. 28:2) This outright lie calls into question what Adam should have already known about his true state of being, for he was originally created in the image of God. (Ge.1:26) Remember. God chose us out of himself, in Christ before the disruption of the world. We are holy and flawless in God's sight, who loves and designates us beforehand into the placement of a son through Christ Jesus. (Ge. 1:26-28; Ps. 8:3-6; Eph. 1:4-5; Heb. 2:1-9) However, it is with the falsehood, *"you will not surely die,"* that

the serpent beguiles and leads the *"help meet"* astray. Then he murders Adam, taking the life of his true identity as a *"son of God."*

This did not kill Adam physically, because he lived approximately 930 years after he partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (Ge. 5:5) And it did not kill him spiritually, because he still heard God walking in the *"cool"* or *"spirit"* of the day and communicated with him. (Ge. 3:8-11) It was not Adam's *"help meet"* or soul that died. Adam's help meet was destined to become a **"LIFE GIVER."** (Ge. 3:15-16; 20) Adam died in the recognition of his sonship.

So the Lord expelled Adam from the garden of Eden (*the garden of pleasure, paradise*) to till the very earth from which he had been taken. (Ge. 3:23) I am sure this speaks to us of more than farming, for Adam was doing that in Eden. It actually implies that Adam would, *"serve"* the earth from which he was taken, for Adam was of the *"earth, earthy."* (1Co. 15:45-50) Adam had not yet recognized his heavenly, or spiritual roots, that were established in Christ from the foundation of the earth. (Ge. 2:26-31; Eph. 1:3-6) Adam died that day to the recognition of his *"relationship"* with God, as a friend.

God's Response To Disobedience

The Lord God said, *"Behold, Adam has become as one of us, knowing how to distinguish between good and evil, blessing and calamity. Now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live to **THE AGE.**"* (Ge. 3:22; He. 9:26) The tree of life was to be reached through *obedience* of God's word. That is, through *attentive listening, compliance* and *submission* to what God has said. Life is not intended as a reward for *disobedience*. (Ex. 19:5-6; Ro. 5:19, 6:16; 2Co. 10:6; He. 5:8-9; 2Th. 1:8) This is important for us to remember, because the path of obedience is the way back to the tree of life.

God not only *"sent"* Adam away from the garden of Eden, but he divorced Adam. (Ge. 3:23-24) When God divorced Adam, he placed cherubim to lodge east of the garden of Eden. There was also a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way to the tree of life. (Ge. 3:24)

NOTICE: This was not to keep humanity from ever coming to the tree of life, but to prevent him from reaching it before the disobedience of the earthen adamic nature is completely cultivated and prepared. The promise to every one who overcomes is, "**HE WHO HAS AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS to the churches. TO HIM WHO OVERCOMES I WILL GIVE TO EAT OF THE TREE OF LIFE, WHICH IS IN THE MIDST OF THE PARADISE OF GOD.**" (Re. 2:7)

Remember. God caused **TWO TREES** to grow in the "*middle of the garden.*" It is possible to touch both the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life. In fact **IT IS NECESSARY TO TOUCH BOTH** trees to learn to distinguish between the two and receive a revelation of life through obedience.

To complete this journey one must first pass through the flaming sword that is keeping the way. The flaming sword depicts the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. (Eph. 6:17) The Word of God is full of life and power. It is keener than the sharpest two-edged sword piercing even to the severance of soul from spirit, and it penetrates between the connections and the builders of life. Moreover, it discerns the secret thoughts and purposes of the heart. No created thing is able to escape the scrutiny of God's word, because everything lies bare and completely exposed before the eyes of him with whom we have to do. (He. 4:12-13) The flame also speaks of the work of the Holy Spirit within the believers life. For when we are immersed into the Holy Spirit there is a fire that begins to burn all that is superfluous from our life. The Holy Spirit holds a winnowing fork in his hand and he thoroughly purges his floor, gathering the wheat into the garner, but burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire. (Mt. 3:11-12)

In the beginning the serpent was placed in the garden to prove or test the knowledge and obedience of Adam to the divine word. Many of God's people today say we are not to touch or have anything to do with "*the knowledge of good and evil.*" However, the writer of the book of Hebrews dealt with this thinking when he said, "*People who live on milk are those who are immature and inexperienced concerning the*

word of righteousness. Such persons are mere babes. Solid food is for the mature – that is, FOR THOSE WHO THROUGH CONSTANT PRACTICE HAVE THEIR SPIRITUAL FACULTIES CAREFULLY TRAINED TO DISCERN BOTH GOOD AND EVIL." (He. 5:11-14)

This is not saying we are to partake of, or participate in both good and evil, as some might think. Also, it is not saying we are to judge **BETWEEN** good and evil, as most Christians do. That is, put what is considered to be "*good*" in one box and what is determined to be "*evil*" in another. I grew up with these boxes in my closet. In my thinking some things were forever classified as evil.

Religiously Dividing Good And Evil

An example of this was found in the use of alcoholic beverages. My Assembly of God background said any and all alcoholic beverage was sinful. However, my Catholic, Episcopalian and Lutheran friends were allowed to use alcohol in their homes and churches. My bringing up went so far as to say the wine that Jesus made from water was "*new wine*" and had the potency of grape juice.

One day my pastor's son and I were walking along a country road in the summer heat. We were each drinking a bottle of non-alcoholic "*Neer Beer*" that we had bought in a small store along the way. The bottle had the appearance of a bottle of beer, but the label said it contained zero percent alcohol.

We were laughing and carrying on when the pastor drove past us and stopped to give us a ride. When he saw the bottles we were carrying he hauled into the church office, where he strongly reprimanded us for drinking beer. Although, we tried to explain it was "*Neer Beer*," with no alcohol content, the bottle was enough to make us guilty as charged. After all, we were to "*abstain from all appearance of evil.*" (1Th. 5:22) The pastor's son was grounded for a month and told he could no longer befriend me, because of my "*evil*" influence on his life.

It was from that time all alcoholic beverages and those that gave an *appearance* of being alcoholic became associated with my "*evil box.*" Even root beer became identified with the "*evil*

box." This was until I traveled into the nations of the world where alcohol was treated differently than in the states. It was there that I learned alcohol should actually be classified as a cultural preference. In France wine was served at every meal. In Greece and Italy wine is served in the afternoon, as a light meal with bread and cheese. Then in Germany beer was served as refreshment when one went to the pub for fellowship in the afternoon.

In church we learned "*the evil box*" all too well. Everything that belongs to the lower nature was stacked in this box, including such things as movie theaters and drive-ins, pinball machines, a deck of playing cards and school dances. The apostle Paul never mentioned any of these things, but he did say, "*You know full well the doings of our lower natures. They are fornication, impurity, indecency, idol-worship, sorcery; enmity, strife, jealousy, outbursts of passion, intrigues, dissensions, factions, envyings; hard drinking, riotous feasting, and the like.*" He warned all who practice such things will have no share in the kingdom of God. (Ga. 5:19-21)

In the "*good box*" we stacked things having to do with our religion practice. Things like regular church attendance, daily Bible reading, daily prayer, tithing, good behavior and soul winning.

You Will Touch But Do Not Partake

It is foolish for anyone to think they can live in this world and not come into contact with the knowledge of good and evil. Everyone touches or is touched by the knowledge of good and evil at some point of their everyday life. One can blindly deny it all they want, but they are touched nonetheless. What are we to do about it when we come into contact with the knowledge of good and evil?

We are told by the writer of the book of Hebrews what God expects of us. He says, "Solid food is for the mature – that is, for those who through constant practice have their spiritual faculties carefully trained to discern **BOTH** good and evil. That is, we are to closely examine what we understand to be *worthwhile*, as well as, what we consider to be *worthless*. In doing so we may discover some things that are

"*worthless*" are necessary to produce righteousness, while some "*worthwhile*," things thought to produce righteousness, may not bring forth what we thought they would.

God said they could eat of all the trees of the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This tree was forbidden for food, but in the New Covenant we learn, by touching the knowledge of good and evil, but not partaking (eating) of it, we will become prepared as mature sons.

Adam's Blindness

The woman was darkened in her understanding and discernment, because she neglected to "*touch the knowledge of good and evil.*" The serpent recognized this blindness to God's word. Seeing this he said, "**YOU WILL NOT SURELY DIE, for God knows that in the day you eat of it, THEN YOUR EYES WILL BE OPENED, AND YOU WILL BE AS GOD, KNOWING GOOD AND EVIL.**"

It is the law that gives the knowledge of both good and evil. That is, the knowledge of what is *worthwhile* and what is *worthless* for ones life. It is also the Law that sets before humanity the knowledge of life and death. David declared, "*The Law or precept of Lord is perfect and entire, converting or turning back the soul. The witness of Lord is sure and confirms, making the simple wise. The statues and deposits of Lord are right or straight, rejoicing the heart; the commandments of Lord are pure and sincere, enlightening the eyes. The respect and reverence of Lord is morally and ethically clean, enduring continually; the decisions of Lord are stable and make right altogether. These are more to be desired than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. And your servant is taught and admonished by them and in keeping and guarding them there is great reward.*" (Ps. 19:7-11). The apostle Paul adds, "**But WE KNOW THAT THE LAW IS GOOD IF A MAN USES IT LAWFULLY, knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous one, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for homosexuals, for slave-traders, for liars, for perjurers, and anything else that is contrary to**

sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God." (1Ti. 1:8-11). Moreover, the law is spiritual, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good. (Ro. 7:12, 14). However, no one is justified by the Law in the sight of God, for, "The just shall live by faith. But the law is not of faith." The person, who practices keeping the law will live in them, but by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in God's sight; because through the law is the knowledge of sin. (Ro. 3:20; Ga. 3:11-12).

The Book of Job Shows Satan's Purpose

In the book of Job we see Satan's purpose being fulfilled in the life of a son of God. According to the word of the Lord, Job was "*a perfect and an upright man, who feared God, and departed from evil?*" (Job 1:8) However, when God looked deeply into Job's heart and life, he saw that an adjustment was needed, for Job was not a humble man. Moreover, his testimony was in need of repair. It had been damaged among his friends, because he was proud of his righteousness. Hear what his friends thought on this point: "*So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was **RIGHTEOUS IN HIS OWN EYES.***" (Job 32:1)

God desired to burn the dross of pride from Job's life. Although, he had the testimony of God that he was a righteous man in his generation there was still further work to be done within his life. For the purpose of further purification God brought forth the "*smith to blow the coals upon the fire.*" Note: It was not Satan's idea to "*turn up the fire*" on Job's life! No! It was God himself who brought up the subject with Satan.

The book of Job tells us "*the sons of God,*" came to present themselves before the Lord and Satan also came among them. (Job 1:6) God starts the conversation by asking Satan, "*Where have you been?*" Satan replied, "*Going to and fro in the earth and walking up and down in it.*" Notice: Satan made no mention at all of Job. Then, the Lord asked. "*Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him in the whole earth.*" (Job 1:8) Satan had noticed Job, but he was not doing anything to him. So he answered God by saying, "*Does Job fear God for nothing? You have set a hedge around him, his*

house and everything that belongs to him." (Job 1:6-9)

In this statement, about the hedge, Satan gave a glorious testimony of God's protection. It reveals there is really a hedge of protection established around God's people. We know that Christ Jesus himself is the hedge, fence or barrier around our lives. The psalmist also recognized this fact when he said, "*The Angel of the Lord camps round about those who fear him, and delivers them.*" (Ps. 34:7)

Now, Satan responded to God's question, "*You have put a hedge around him and all that belongs to him, so I cannot get to him!*" Then, he went on to say, "*But stretch out **YOUR HAND** and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face.*" (Job 1:11) However the Lord, who tries the reins and the heart, knows who belongs to him, also knows those who can be trusted with affliction. (Ps. 26:2; Jer. 11:20, 17:10; 2Ti. 2:19) So God said to Satan, "*Behold, all that he has is in your power – that is, in your hand – only upon him personally do not put your hand.*" (Job 1:12)

Satan quickly went out from the presence of the Lord (*somebody said he had already been cast out of heaven*) to work on Job. A day came when all of Job's children, servants livestock and possessions were destroyed or taken. Yet, Job kept his integrity before the Lord, even when he rose up, tore his robe, shaved his head and fell down upon the ground to worship; saying, "*I came naked out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return to it. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away. **BLESSED BE THE NAME OF THE LORD.***" In Job's grief he accredited the Lord with all of his loss. Yet, it was Satan, who did the "*dirty work.*" Yet, "*In all this Job did not sin, **NOR CHARGE GOD FOOLISHLY.***" (Job 1:13-22)

And again "*the sons of God*" came to present themselves before the Lord and Satan was among them. Again the Lord asks Satan what he has been doing and he replies, "*Going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it.*" Then the Lord said unto Satan, "*Have you set your heart on my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil? He is still keeping his integrity, although*

you moved me against him to destroy him without cause." Satan answered the Lord saying, "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man has he will give for his life. Now put forth your hand, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face." (Job 2:1-5) Simply put, Satan was saying that there is nothing more precious to humankind than their physical function. So Satan figured if he could touch Job's physical frame, causing pain, discomfort, and the loss of bodily function he would surely curse the Lord. The Lord, knowing the heart of Job said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand, but save his life." (Job 2:6)

Again Satan went from the presence of the Lord and afflicted Job with boils from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head. All Job could do is sit in dust and ashes while scraping his oozing sores with a broken piece of pottery. The testing that followed worked an endurance in Job's life beyond anything he had known. His wife came to him and said, "Do you still hold to your integrity? Curse God and die!" Job said to her, "You speak as a foolish one. What? **SHALL WE RECEIVE GOOD AT THE HAND OF GOD, AND NOT RECEIVE EVIL?**" Yet, In all this Job did not sin with his lips. (Job 2:7-10)

What Did Job Teach Us?

The prophets, who spoke as messengers of the Lord, patiently endured persecution. By doing this they illustrated for us that it takes much pressure to bring each generation into the kingdom of God. (Ac. 14:22) Remember. We call those blessed who endured as they did. Moreover, we heard not only of Job's patient endurance, but we have seen the conclusion, or goal of the Lord in these matters. Job came to recognize that there was so much more than knowing about God than just by what one hears. For Job was brought to the place of **SEEING GOD, AS HE IS**, which caused him to tremble and repent, on dust and ashes. (Job 42:5-6) Remember. We are God's children, but what we are to be has not yet been fully revealed. We know that when God is revealed, we will be like him, for we **SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS**. Now, everyone who has this hope fixed upon him, purifies himself so as to be as pure as he is. (1Jo. 3:2-3)

Job's experience demonstrates how extremely compassionate and full of mercy the Lord is. For after Job had interceded for his friends, God restored his fortune—and then doubled it! (Job 42:10) So let us learn above all else, do not swear, either by heaven or by the earth, or with any other oath. Let your yes be simply yes, and your no be simply no; so you may not come under condemnation. (Jam. 5:10-12)

More to Soon Come . . .



Pamla's Pause

A HIGHER CALLING IN GOD!

It never ceases to amaze me that just when I think I am mature in Christ, you know, when *I think* I have a handle on my salvation, I learn something new. Yet, looking back, in *each* stage of *my* salvation I *thought* I had it all. When I was in the Feast of Passover, I thought that was all there was, I did not believe in Pentecost. (My religion told me that the Pentecostal experience had died out and was now a demonic way of attracting attention). I was about 30 when I experienced the gifts of Pentecost. For many years I grew in my Pentecostal experience and did not even know there was a Feast called Tabernacles. Yet, Father opened my understanding to this "new" feast in my mid 40's. It truly was my Heavenly Father who graciously brought me to each new relationship experience for it certainly was not anything I did.

I was walking in my Pentecostal condition when I came into the understanding that there *is* another calling in God, a call of sonship. At first I was childlike in my belief that just BE-ING was all I had to do. After all, a son is a son, not a daughter, not ever going to be the Bride, but instead *is* the Christ, what more *did* I need to do but BE? I, like a child, use to think it was enough just to smile at people when I walked by. After all, it lifted their spirits, acknowledged their existence, gave them a reason to smile, (if just for a moment), and it made me feel like I was giving of my self. I actually thought that people would see Jesus in me and be

better for it. At first, BE-ING was enough, but as I mature I find that I have more to give. Now I know that people *need* more than just a smile, they need the Word of God that's been planted inside of me. It's this Word *in me* that brings forth the Christ which has been placed *in them*. (Eph 2:1) It is Christ who sets the captive free, feeds the hungry and heals the hurting. I am thankful I have come to the age of knowing that I have **more** to give than just a smile, I have to *do* something that shows who I am. I need to open my mouth and say, "I am a part of the body of Christ and I have an older brother who has shown me and will show you, by example, the **good** life we are to live." (Heb 2:9 - 11) To my joy, I am finding as I mature there *is* MORE to accomplish.

GROWING IN GOD'S FAVOR

Now, if you disagree with me because you think that BE-ING is enough, that is all-right, for there is NO condemnation for sons who are just now coming to the place of maturity. It is OK to be in hiding, after all, we have a great example in Jesus. His life, from 12 to 30, was hidden from public view. At age 12 he understood who his *real* father was for he told his mom, "*How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?*" (Luk 2:49). We know Joseph was a carpenter, so it is logical to accept that Jesus must have been talking about his real father, God, for he said this when they found him in the temple talking with the priests. Then we are told that for the next 18 years Jesus grew in wisdom, stature and favor with God and man. (Luk 2:52). (WOW, to think that Jesus grew "in favor" with God!) All this to say, we should not be surprised to find it takes time for us, and for others, to mature in the things of God. It was about age 30 Jesus came to maturity. His ministry started and Jesus begin to "flow" in his calling. And boy did he ever go about it with all his heart! He did not walk along whispering, "God loves you, so do I." Instead he preached, "*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent, and believe the gospel.*" (Mar 1:15) I guess he could have gone about his merry way, saying "I'm ok, you're ok, believe what you like we're all going to the same place," like so many today preach, but instead he risked popularity and proclaimed the

truth. Once he *knew* his calling he set forth with all his ability to become what he felt God said he should be.

HOW LONG DO WE HIDE?

So, when *are* WE to manifest as the sons of God? I remember when I was *waiting* on my ministry. I guess I expected God to do something so special in me that it would be evident *to everyone* I had a "ministry." Instead of waiting, I needed to realize that ALL things are of God who has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ. This was possible because he was **IN** Christ. Since then he has given *us* the Word of reconciliation. It's up to us to tell others that God is not imputing their trespasses against them. It is important to realize that we are Christ's ambassadors, and we are told to implore others to be reconciled to God. (2Co 5:18-20) What a wonderful ministry, this ministry of telling others that God has **not** charged them with their trespasses! The only problem is that we can *only* be his ambassadors if we open our mouths and speak. It is when we step out from our hiding place and start telling others about God's great love toward them that we find our ministry and manifestation.

ANOTHER REASON

There *are* other reasons why we need to speak out and not stay in "hiding." The first and foremost reason on my heart is because we have a responsibility to LOVE others. How can we say we love someone when we let them continue to believe whatever "god" they worship is going to save them? (Save means to save, deliver or make whole) Moreover, it certainly would be a shame to withhold such a great knowledge from someone, just because I thought they might not agree with me. Mat 7:12 tells me, "*Therefore all things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.*" We have a better salvation and we can bring this full salvation to others just by telling them about God's great love.

Another good reason to come out from hiding we find in the book of First Peter, "*Wherein you greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, you are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much*

more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:" Here we see that it is *after* our faith is tried we might be found glorifying our Lord when he appears! Not only is he going to appear but we are glorifying him when he does! If this isn't enough we go on to find the reward we receive from coming through a trial, *"Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."* (1Pe 1:6-10) How wonderful!

A NEED FOR PREPARATION

It is up to us to enliven the seed planted in the dead, so they might arise. (Col 2:13) Sure, it is possible we will be persecuted for our beliefs, but we are told that there is a reason for fiery trials, *"That is why Jesus, in order to sanctify the people by his own blood, also suffered outside the city gate. Therefore go to him outside the camp and endure the insults he endured. For here we have no permanent city but are looking for the one that is coming. Therefore, through him let us always bring God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name."* (Hebrews 13:13-15 ISV)

We need to keep a clear head and be ready to spring into action while watching for the appearing of Jesus Christ. His appearing most often comes when we are with others for he has *already* appeared to us. *"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with him in glory."* (Col 3:4) It is up to *us* bring forth the name of Jesus Christ, which is above all other names, so his glory might be seen. You see, I can be someone's brother, but if I do not tell people whose brother I am, they may never know, and even if someone *else* does tell them, *I have lost* the chance to proudly introduce myself and my family. I ask you, why should we hesitate? *Our* family is the crowned head! (Rev. 17:14)

BEING LIKE FATHER

"Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, you are gods?" (Joh 10:34) And again in Isa 41:23, *"Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that you are gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together."* It's important to

note that we are gods, **plural**, not God singular. This shows us the need for the BODY of Christ, which is speaking of sons. We are not to be like those doing *what* they want *when* they want, boasting they are GOD, but instead, we as a BODY, need to be in agreement in spirit. Each member doing that which glorifies God. What an import we will make as sons of God when we no longer say "Jesus, loves you and so do I," and then go about our merry way. Let us come to the maturity where we say, "because Jesus loves us, God loves you, I love you and I'm here to set you free!" WOW! Talk about a world changing attitude. It is time to truly become what we are proclaiming! We are the brethren of Jesus Christ! His blood is coursing through our veins. As he is so are we in the world! Now is the time to come out of "hiding" and proclaim Jesus Christ is Savior of the entire world.

So, WHO'S HIDING?

I have found that some would *rather* say to everyone, "I'm ok, you're ok." "After all God has reconciled everyone to himself." Although this is true, I would ask, are these denying the *power* of the **cross** and of **JESUS**? In times past I believed the power of the cross was in *MY* salvation, but *now* I know it is in the salvation of ALL. How do ALL know that this salvation has been made available? It is when they *hear* the proclamation!

COMING OUT FROM HIDING

So how do we get to the place where we manifest him? The scripture says *"As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him: Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."* This is a good starting place, for we can become rooted and built up in him when we study the scripture, (leaving behind the doctrine of men), and when we fellowship with other sons. We have already learned we have the ministry of reconciliation and now it is up to us to tell others about God's wonderful love for them.

Let us remember our first love, when we *first* came to the knowledge of God's love for us, wanted to tell everyone. Sure we made many blunders and mistakes in our presentation, but we couldn't contain our excitement. We loved him so much

and were so thankful for his salvation, we couldn't wait to share the good news. We do not want to leave our first love. (Rev 2:4)

It is important to realize that it is up to each of us as individuals to take responsibility for continued faithfulness. Paul tells us, "*Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*" We can be "spoiled" if we believe any more or any less than Jesus dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily and that we are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power. We've been told we are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands: Buried with him in baptism: risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who has raised him from the dead. He has blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. Jesus spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly when he triumphed. (Col 2:8-15) Praise be to God for these truths! We have been given an *answer* concerning our *ministry*, we have been told what keeps us from being "spoiled," and we have been given a reason for feeling triumphant! WOW, how could we do less than bring this salvation to everyone who gives us opportunity?

THE IMPORTANCE OF BRINGING SALVATION

We know that Jesus brought salvation to all mankind, but Peter speaks of salvation of the soul, "*Whom having not seen, you love; in whom, though now you see him not, yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.*" (1Pet 1:8-9) Salvation is that which frees one from the corruption they have endured for so long. It is up to sons to bring the salvation. Jesus brought the redemption. The truth is that he *has* redeemed all mankind, and yes, he does love them and nothing will change that, but it is ONLY when people come to the knowledge of what this means for *their* lives, that they are changed. Imagine the following scenario if you would: A man accidentally killed someone and fled to a distant country, in hope to escape the death penalty. For in his hometown the law was a life for a life. He was far from friends and family when a good friend

of his, who had been out of the country for a long time stopped by his hometown to look him up. When this friend heard the entire matter, he loved the man so much he said, "let me pay his penalty." Since the magistrate did not care who's life was given, they said that would be fine and they killed the friend. Now the penalty was paid in full and the murderer could return home to his family, friends and a good life, with out fearing prison or death. The trouble was, he did not know what his friend had done for him. He lived a pure and good life in the foreign country to which he had fled and people liked him. There was even a visitor from his home land who knew the situation and that the penalty was paid. Even though this one would stop and talk to him, there was never a mention of the forgiveness of the sin because he thought, "It's none of my business, if he wanted to talk to me about it he would say something." So the man whose penalty had been paid lived and died in his lack of knowledge that the sin had been paid for and he had been redeemed. You see, although redeemed, he was not reconciled, or reconnected.

SONS ARISE! GIVE WITNESS OF YOUR GOD

I tell the above story so one might see how important it is to give *verbal* witness of what our Lord has done for all mankind. Let us get past the place where we are still waiting for God to do it. He has sent us, in his image of love, to be his witnesses. The problem is many are still saying "It's ok for me to believe like I believe and it's ok for you to believe like you do, after all, we're all going to the same place in the final analysis." And yet, we look at one another and question why sons delay their manifestation. Why are sons walking around with such great joy, but only inside? Why are we letting others live in sin and misery, having the answer, and yet not lifting a finger to take the burden off others? I proclaim it is time for Sons to rise up and break forth into joy, proclaiming what our Older Brother has accomplished

THEY STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND

I am sure that many, like I, have all their lives told others about Jesus, but not everyone to whom we gave the witness grew to know him and some who did, are not walking in recognition of him in their lives. Some of us may be at the place where we are saying, "What's the use?" "I'm tired of telling

others about God and not getting any results.”

We should all be encouraged when we remember that it is Father who opens the understanding. It is our duty, our ministry, to keep telling others about God’s open arms so they will find wellness in being reconciled to Him. After we have told them it is up to them to seek and to find. We are to assist them in any way we are able but ultimately, *anyone* who is *truly* in this walk has a real hunger to find the answers. They will be seeking and longing for the awakening that will produce the manifestation.

I would like to point out here that there is a difference between how we awaken that Christ seed now and how we used to get people to say the “sinner’s prayer,” (a rehearsed confession). Today we introduce Jesus as the lover of their soul. We just want others to know what Jesus has done. It’s not the sinner’s prayer that changes people, but knowing Jesus. We are to give testimony of our Lord, not a rhetoric that others are to repeat. It is up to us to introduce the one who loves them. Yes, just as they are, they do not have to change to make him love them. If they acknowledge him and his way, they *will* change because he will bring it. It is true that at some time they will have to make changes so they might grow into the salvation that HE bought to them. It is important for one to **GROW** in their salvation because this brings deliverance, holiness and

soundness that comes spirit, soul and body.

THERE ARE OTHERS

As I look back on my past involvement the legalistic religious system, I remember thinking, “if this is all there is to my relationship with God, then why should I bother leading others to Christ?” Before you stop reading, let me say, I was at a point in my life where I believed there was nothing I could DO to please God. No matter how good I did on one day, before I knew it, I was “sinning,” again, and sinning meant I was going to hell. Truth was, I was living in a daily hell. What I needed and wanted was to hear the good news. I needed someone to tell me about the Great Love *and* Acceptance of God, just as I was. This love and acceptance is what led me to the salvation of my soul. Remember salvation means deliverance and wholeness. It is this good news I desire to share with others, for do I not have a ministry? Most certainly I have a ministry, the ministry of reconciliation. Yes, I want to reconcile others to the love of their God, but **FIRST**, I must open my mouth and speak.

We pray you are abundantly blessed in all areas of spiritual awareness!

Damla

ps Ask God and he will liberally give. (Mat 7:7-12)

A Personal Note:

Stacy and I are fairing well and want to send a note this month to update you on all that is happening with us. First let me say that our Father is meeting our needs, physically, mentally and emotionally. It is true that we have our ups and downs, but in it all, we, like you, are enjoying HIS provision in all areas.

At this point in Stacy’s life there is no possibility for a kidney transplant until he loses 100 pounds. To our great joy our Father has made a way for the weight loss. Stacy has applied for a procedure called a “lap band.” (<http://www.lap-band.com>) The surgery consists of 5 small punctures to the abdomen, where a plastic band is inserted and wrapped around the top part of the stomach. Since all the feeling of fullness is at the top of the stomach, it takes a small amount of food for the “full” sensation and within in a couple of years the weight loss anticipated will be achieved. The foremost doctor in this field is about an hour’s drive from our home! The doctor has approved Stacy for the surgery and we are now waiting on the financial provision. At this point we are hoping that Medicare will pay the \$20,000.00 cost for the surgery but the doctor will not start preparation until he knows the payment is guaranteed. We are so EXCITED! The doctor tells us that this will cure Stacy of diabetes, and it is also *our* hope it will cure him of the renal failure. Though, even if it does not, he will be put on a transplant list and be made ready to receive a kidney!