

Salvation's Scriptures Summary

(A Tale of Two Gods)

It should be asked, using human reason;

Is there any form of communication to men, which has greater power to express

*the **sincerity of the source** or the **significance of the communication**,*

than giving one's life for another?

...except, ...perhaps,

...the giving of the life of one's child ('Son' or daughter) for another?

“ If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me. ”

God

To Know Him is

.....To Love Him is

.....To Serve Him

To Know Him

To Know Him we turn to Recorded Scripture,

(Even if it is only to compare with our own experiences in life.)

Beginnings

Gen 1:1-25 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. ...and it was so. ...and it was good.

This passage which summarizes the substance of the creation story declares that God created all things, and that they were good from the beginning.

Gen 1:26-27 And God said, Let **Us** make man in **Our** Image, after **Our** likeness...
...So God created man in **His** own image.

Recorded scripture has this passage spoken by God: and He (God) uses the 'plural' pronoun to describe Himself, not the 'singular'.

While those whose souls believe in the singularity of God, will argue that He is using a form of nosism (using the 'Royal We' to indicate His high place) it remains equally (if not more) legitimate to take this passage (as it stands) to express His plurality. For those whose souls believe that Jesus is indeed God (manifested as the "Son") this passage, as recorded, backs that belief.

This passage goes on to say that of all His creation, man alone is recorded as being created in the image of God: giving man higher dignity than the remainder of the creation (animals, etc.). It may also be argued that man alone (out of the entire creation) will have to answer to God.

Gen 2:7 And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground,
...and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;
...and man became a living soul.

This passage says that our bodies are composed of the elements (the "dust of the ground" - which science confirms), ...that life itself comes from the Creator (breathed into man's body) and will therefore never be recreated by man, ...and that our essence is contained in a living soul (that is a spirit encased in our living bodies - at least here on earth).

Psalms 66:9 adds that our soul is held in life: that is that our spirit (or essence) is encased in our physical life, at least here on earth.

Gen 3:4-5 And Eve, after rehearsing to the serpent (*Satan - self will*) that, at God's command, we (*man*) were not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; was, in turn, persuaded by the serpent (*Satan - self will*), using the argument: ...Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, ...knowing good and evil.

Satan's argument is an argument for self determination (a key characteristic of Satan himself)

Man, through exercising the free-will which he was given of God, in turn, disobeyed God (being tempted of Satan / self) to follow his own self-will and self-determination.

Gen 3:14-15 And the Lord God said unto the serpent (*Satan*), Because thou hast done this (*seduced man*), thou art cursed ...and I will put enmity between thee (*the serpent - Satan*) and the woman, ...and between thy seed (*Satan's seed*) and her seed.

enmity - a state of being actively opposed or hostile to each other.

An interesting expression - "the seed of a woman" ...and support for the One born of a virgin (Jesus) to be both the enemy of Satan (self) and the enemy of Satan's 'seed' (those that belong to him, His planting on earth).

Gen 3:17-19 And unto Adam (*man*) He said, Because thou hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: ...cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee.

The earth is cursed on account of man's disobedience to God. ...Man receives the "fruit" of his own choice (...this was not God's will for man - man brought this on himself).

Gen 4:4-7 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof (*that is, the life thereof*). ...And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: ...but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect.

Note that both offered gifts to God: and Abel's was accepted, and Cain's was not. What was the difference between the two gifts that made one acceptable to God while the other was not? ...The passage does note that Able's gift involved the giving of "life" while Cain's did not involve the giving of "life". ...Could this be the difference?

...And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. ...And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? ...If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? ...and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, ...and thou shalt rule over him.

This passage says that If we do well, we are accepted with God; ...but if we do not well, sin (which is literally falling short of God's mark) lies in wait (even at the door).

The passage also says that it is sin's desire to have us (that is, to claim our soul), and that we shall rule over him (sin). ...That is, we consciously control whether we sin or not.

Gen 6:3-
Gen 8:21 And the Lord said , My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh...
...for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.

Note: "...from his youth" ...not born with

Gen 6:5-13 And 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**. ...And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh has come before Me; **...for the earth is filled with violence through them**.

God had decided to end all flesh upon the earth for the violence brought about by man's continual wickedness.

(Note that this is where man ended up when acting on his own.)

Recall that when God created the world "it was good". It was when man, given the free-will which he was given by God, chose to follow his own self-will and self-determination (being lead of the spirit of Satan - a spirit of self-will and self-determination) that evil and all of the fruit of evil (hatred, injustice, violence, pestilence, disease, and perversion) entered the world. ...Psalm 82:5 says that "all of the foundations of the earth are out of course".

...We are responsible for all these things, not God.

Gen 7:23 And every living substance was destroyed which was on the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.

This flood, as described in scripture is a spectacular sign and wonder, and cannot be explained as scripture describes it outside of a 'source of influence' outside of our experience. ...If it came from God, as described, it certainly establishes God to be of great power over this realm of existence.

Gen 8:20-21 And Noah builded an alter unto the Lord; ...and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offering on the alter. And the Lord smelled a sweet savour.

This passage concurs with God's response to Abel's offering of "life" as a sacrifice.

Gen 9:3-6 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. ...But the flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. ...And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. ...Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: ...for in the image of God made He man.

This passage declares the significance of man's life to our Creator.

God gets the Attention of a Man of Faith

Gen 15:6 And he (*Abram*) believed in the Lord; ...and He (*God*) counted it to him for righteousness.

God found Abraham to be a man who exercised faith in God, and that would "command his children and his household after him" to "keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgement" (Gen 18:19).

Gen 22:1-18 And God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest and get thee to the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering, upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. ...So Abraham took his son Isaac, and went unto the place which God had told him. ...And Isaac asked him where the lamb for a burnt offering was (*not having brought a lamb*), to which Abraham responded, saying, My son, ...**God will provide Himself a lamb** for a burnt offering.

...And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an alter there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the alter upon the wood. ...And as Abraham stretched forth his hand with a knife to slay his son, the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, saying, Abraham, lay not thy hand upon the lad: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

This particular test and act of faith on Abraham's part registered with God, and God promised him that He would bless his descendants ...and that all the world would be blessed through him.

*Note that while the word "Himself" is not set apart by commas in the passage, for those who see Jesus (*and the One that He calls His "Father"*) to be their God, the passage might as well read, "God will provide, Himself, a lamb for the sacrifice." ...Indicating that God will give Himself over to become the lamb for the sacrifice. ...Blasphemy to those who believe in the concept of God as an all powerful Creator, ...but the greatest act of love and pull to the human spirit for those who believe in a concept of God Who gave His own life (*manifested through the life of His "Son"*) to redeem them from their inherent unworthiness of Him.*

And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: ...as it is said to this day, ...In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

Note that this place is called "the Mount of the Lord", and the passage testifies that something in the future will be seen at this location, and that it will relate back to this event that occurred here between God and Abraham/Isaac.

With a little bit of sleuthful work it can be determined that this mountain in Moriah will later become the location of Jerusalem, and more specifically the location of Golgatha or Calvary for those who believe in a God of "Self-giving sacrifice".

Gen 22:16-18 By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing (*in displaying that degree of faith*), and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, ...and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven; ...and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; ...and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; ...because thou hast obeyed My voice.

A consummation of God's promise to Abraham, whom He had tested and found obedient, and faithful, ...even to the point of offering his own beloved son as a sacrifice to God.

*The question is, ...Are Abraham's "seed" his descendants according to the flesh?
...or are they his descendants according to the spirit?
(that is, those with the same faith as Abraham)*

Gen 25:21-34 *(Jacob/Israel's beginning)*

And Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren: and the Lord was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord.

...And the Lord said unto her, ...Two nations are in thy womb, ...and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; ...and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; ...and the elder *(first born)* shall serve the younger.

...And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came out red, all over like a hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob.

...And the boys grew,

...and it came to pass that Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: and Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him; and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. ...thus Esau despised his birthright.

Why record this passage regarding the beginnings of Jacob/Israel in recorded scripture?

It is because the words "Jacob" and/or "Israel" will be used to describe God's people throughout the rest of scriptures.

What can be gathered from these passages? First, that Jacob and Esau represent two different types of people, even as God Himself declares to Rebekah. Second, that the "firstborn" and rightful heir, Esau is supplanted by Jacob, his sibling.

It could also be noted, that Esau sold his birthright to satisfy fleshly needs, while Jacob usurped it, driven by belief that the birthright was more important.

Gen 28:14-19 *And the Lord said unto Jacob; In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. (God repeats His covenant with Jacob - Abraham's 'seed') ...And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.*

And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, ...Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. ...And he was afraid, and said, ...How dreadful is this place! ...this is no other but the house of God, ...and this is the gate of heaven. ...And he called the name of that place Bethel.

This place is recorded as a highly significant place, ...“none other but the house of God, and the gate of Heaven”.

Once again, with a little sleuthful work it can be determined that this will become the location of Jerusalem (for those seeking a God of “signs and wonders”, and more specifically Golgatha or Calvary (for those seeking a God of “Self-giving sacrifice”).

Gen 35:16 And they journeyed from Bethel; ...and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath (Bethlehem).

Note that Bethlehem is but a little way from Jerusalem.

God and Us

(Scriptural Storyline)

Ex 3:14-15 And God said unto Moses, “I AM that I AM”, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, “I AM” hath sent me unto you. ...The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, ...this is My name for ever, ...and this is My memorial unto all generations.

***I AM** (that is, I exist), and He added that He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*

Ex 7-11 God shows many spectacular signs and wonders upon Egypt, to force them to let the children of Israel (who were in bondage to Egypt) go.

These signs and wonders performed upon Egypt not only force Pharaoh to release the children of Israel according to God’s will, but also establish the God of Israel to not only have dominion over our realm of existence but to be acting in support of Israel.

Ex 12:1-13 And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, to take to them every man a lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year, and ye 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. ...**It is the Lord’s passover.** ...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.

In the last of signs imposed on Egypt, God instructs Moses to direct the children of Israel to sacrifice a blemishless male lamb (per family) and to apply its blood to the entry posts of their homes as a token and sign which He will regard to spare the lives of their first born as He passes through Egypt killing the firstborn of Egypt.

Ex 15:1-17 *(After deliverance from Egypt through spectacular signs and wonders)* Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and rider hath He thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation: He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt Him.

...The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is His name. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone.

...Thy "right hand", O Lord, is become glorious in power: Thy "right hand", O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.

...And in the greatness of Thy excellency Thou hast overthrown them that rose up against Thee: Thou sentest forth Thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble. And with the blast of Thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the flood stood upright as a heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.

...The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lusts shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them. Thou didst blow with Thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters.

Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou stretchedst out Thy right hand, the earth swallowed them. Thou in Thy mercy hast led forth the people which Thou hast redeemed: Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation.

The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina. The dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of Thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till Thy people pass over, which Thou hast purchased. Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established.

This song that the children of Israel sang after final delivery from the Egyptians, while praising God for present delivery from their oppressors, has sections which can be received as prophetic for those who seek the God that Jesus represents.

The expression "right hand" when referring to the Lord God can have two different meanings: one applying to each possible concept of God which develops in scripture. Both concepts are represented in this passage.

For those who seek an all powerful God of "signs and wonders", manifested through the powerful events He performs on Israel's enemies, the expression "right hand" represents His power and influence over His creation (in the immediate text it would be over Pharaoh and the Egyptians). The passage is full of praise for this concept of God.

For those who seek a God of "Self-giving sacrifice", manifested ultimately in what Jesus has done for mankind, the expression "Right Hand" represents His "Son" (Who is in the position of indispensability and honor at the Father's side - His "Right Hand"), and the "enemy" spoken of would be "Satan" or "self". The highlighted passages could certainly pass for praise to this concept of God.

The sections of this song regarding “leading forth the people which Thou hast redeemed” (or “purchased”) to “Thy holy habitation” (or “Sanctuary”) could certainly refer to something greater than the Jews being brought to Canaan. ... You be the judge.

Two Different Concepts of God Evolving from Scripture

With the Creator (*God*) manifesting Himself to man through these great “signs and wonders” performed on behalf of the children of Israel who were enslaved in Egypt, the concept of God as a God of “signs and wonders”, sovereignty and power begins to take hold.

How does the natural man react after experiencing God as the Israelites experienced Him? This great God of “signs and wonders”, sovereignty and power, has just manifested Himself to mankind and has chosen you. It is only natural (*that is, in man*) to treat Him as holy (*set apart and altogether above*). You listen to every word that He says and try to obey (*if not out of respect, then for fear*). You try to give something back to Him for choosing you.

All of these things are manifest in the way that the Jews responded to Him: ...they kept Him altogether holy and above (*even to the point of amending His commandments and judgements to that end - its ok to kill if it helps keep God holy and takes evil influence away from His people*). They built a temple for Him to dwell in on earth, and built an alter to worship Him (*even after they told Moses that they could not be in His presence or they would die*). After He had saved them from their earthly circumstances as slaves they looked to Him as a savior from their human conditions.

On the other hand, Jesus will later go on to reveal that the concept of God which He represents is not impressed with “signs and wonders” and considers those who seek after signs and wonders to be both “evil and adulterous” (*un“faith”ful*).

Sooooooo many of the laws, ...ordinances, ...statutes, ...and judgements contained in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy are actually contradictory, that, assuming our Creator to be consistent and non-changing (*as scripture declares*), they must be evaluated on a case by case basis in order to discern which ones actually came from God, and which ones came from man (*and his understanding*) in an attempt to keep God holy or to give something back to Him.

Ex 20:1-17 And God spake all these words, saying,

...Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

...Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. Thou shalt not bow thyself down to them, nor serve them. (*for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments*)

...Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.

...Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
 ...Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land.
 ...Thou shalt not kill.
 ...Thou shalt not commit adultery.
 ...Thou shalt not steal.
 ...Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
 ...Thou shalt not covet any thing that is thy neighbor's.

These are the ten commandments as recorded in scripture, but a certain clause planted within them does not sit right with a just God.

Assuming God to be Just (giving each individual what they have earned or have a right to) the clause at the end of verse 5, "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me", does not appear to be just, making it questionable as to whether these words were spoken by God or added by man (Moses).

The separated out clause is certainly not consistent with either the words or actions of Jesus, so this clause was certainly not given to Moses by a God of "Self-giving sacrifice" (one of two concepts of God developed in scripture).

It should be noted that Deut 5:22 states that these were the only commandments given unto the people directly by God. Everything else (laws, ordinances, statutes, and judgments) came indirectly through Moses.

It should be further noted that when interpreting the actual meaning of each commandment that those who believe that Jesus is God Himself (manifested as the "Son") have an advantage in that they have God's own explanation as to the meaning of these commandments. For them, "God Himself" has clarified that it is the intent of the heart that determines the breaking of one of these commandments. For example, if it is your intent to "kill", rather than "defend yourself" when you take a life then you are guilty of "killing". If it is the intent of the heart to commit adultery, then you have already committed adultery (in your heart).

Ex 20:20 And Moses said unto the people, "Fear not: for God is come to prove you..."

It should be noted that at the conclusion of the giving of the ten commandments that Moses tells the people. "Fear not, for God is come to prove you."

To 'prove' means to establish the 'truth' through evidence. Could it be, that the Law, given by God to Moses, was given to find out (actually "reveal") if man could obey God's truth of himself: ...which, it is highly likely that, an all-knowing God already had the answer to.

Ex 20:24-25 An alter of earth thou shalt make unto Me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings. And if thou wilt make an alter of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: ...**for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.**

This passage indicates that when man adds anything to God's word or instructions, through his own understanding or perception (even with the intent of supposedly improving upon it - at least in man's eyes), that he has polluted it; ...making it no longer of God.

God gets the Attention of Men of the Flesh

Deut 4:32-40 For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it? ...Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? ...Or hath God assayed to go and take Him a nation, 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, according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?

Note that while this list of events is true, it may also be the only way that the Creator, if He were a God of "Self-giving sacrifice" Who was looking for faith, could get the attention of men who respond to only what they "see".

Note that all the items listed communicate to man through his senses (his 'flesh'). Contrast this with Abraham, who would have killed his own son at God's request (no signs or wonders involved - only belief - faith) in belief that God would raise him from the dead (if necessary) in order to fulfill the promise that his descendency would be through Issac (his son whom he would have killed).

Note that not one of these items concurs with what Jesus says regarding how His "Father" (Who He says is the only true God) would have us come to Him.

Unto thee it was showed, that thou mightest know that the Lord He is God; ...there is none else beside Him.

This statement is certainly true if our Creator wants to be recognized as a God of "signs and wonders" which He has performed on His creation. It, however does not invite faith or belief in something that we cannot perceive through our senses ('flesh').

Note that Abraham raised a knife to his beloved son because he trusted in God (that is, had faith in God), not because he saw "signs and wonders"; ...and God, Himself, identifies Himself as the God of Abraham.

Thou shalt keep therefore His statutes, and His commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, for ever.

Keep His commandments out of fear for what you have seen and experienced through the flesh and things will go well for you.

An invitation by a God of "Signs and Wonders"

Ex 34:10 Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people (the Jews) I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou art (the gentiles) shall see the work of the Lord: for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee.

Ex 19:3-6 Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; Ye have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself. ...Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.

Lev 11:44 For I am the Lord your God: ...ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, ...and ye shall be holy: ...for I am holy.

These three passages look like a powerful invitation by the God speaking (a God of signs and wonders Who expects to be obeyed and kept holy) to set yourselves apart from the rest of mankind and follow your understanding of what He has communicated to you.

The following are scriptural passages attributed to a concept of God consistent with coming from man in an attempt to keep God holy or give something back to Him. *(All are recorded as coming indirectly through Moses, and all either directly contradict God's commandments given directly to the people, or Jesus' testimony regarding His "Father's" communication to men.)*

Ex 21:1 Now these are the judgements which thou shalt set before them...

Ex 22:20 He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed.

Lev 24:16 He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death.

Ex 21:12 He that smitteth a man, so that he die, shall surely be put to death.

Ex 21:16 He that stealeth a man, he shall surely be put to death.

Ex 21:17 He that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death.

Ex 31:14 Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: everyone that defileth it shall surely be put to death.

Lev 20:10 Those who commit adultery shall surely be put to death.

Lev 20:13 Those who act homosexually shall surely be put to death.

Lev 20:15 If any lie with a beast they shall surely be put to death.

Lev 20:27 Any with a familiar spirit shall surely be put to death.

Are these the judgements of a God Who said "Thou shalt not kill"? ...or are they an attempt by man to keep a God which they experienced through signs and wonders, holy?

Lev 20:26 says, "And ye shall be holy unto Me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be Mine". ...Which God is speaking here? A god "self-determined" of the people through their senses? ...or a God revealed in His ten commandments Who speaks to their souls (spirits)?

Question: Are they made holy by killing all that are not holy?

Deut 7:9-16 Know therefore that the Lord thy God, He is God, ...the faithful God, ...which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments: ...and repayeth them that hate Him to their face, to destroy them.

Jesus says that He has not come to destroy men's lives, ...but to save them (Lk 9:56); making the God spoken of in this passage clearly different from the God Who sent Jesus.

Thou shalt therefore keep His commandments, and the statutes, and the judgements, which I command thee this day to do them. If ye hearken to these judgements, and keep them, and do them that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which He sware unto thy fathers. And He will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee.

Follow His commandments and be blessed; turn from His commandments and be cursed.

And thou shalt consume all the people which the Lord thy God shall deliver thee; thine eye shall have no pity on them: neither shalt thou serve their gods; for that will be a snare unto thee.

One has to wonder if Israel destroyed innocent people in the name of this God of "signs and wonders" and that this merciless conquest would have been considered an abomination to the God which Jesus represents.

Deut 23:1-2 He that is wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off, shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord. ...A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the Lord.

God must be kept holy, ...even if it means rejecting some people for things that they have no control over. ...Once again, this is not the God that Jesus represents.

Deut 23:10-14 If there be among you any man, that is not clean by reason of uncleanness that chanceth him by night, then shall he go abroad out of the camp, he shall not come within the camp. For the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy: that He see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee.

Being made unclean, not from something within, but rather something without the man. ...This judgment is opposite what Jesus says, uncleanness comes from within a man, and there is nothing outside a man that entering him makes him unclean.

Jesus' very words and actions oppose this instruction from Moses, so He clearly represents a different concept of God than this judgement by Moses.

Num 5:1-3 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, that they put out of the camp every leper, ...and everyone that hath an issue, ...and whosoever is defiled by the dead: both male and female shall ye put out, without the camp shall ye put them; that they defile not their camps, in the midst whereof I dwell.

The God of this passage must be kept holy: ...Jesus, on the other hand, touched lepers and healed them.

Lev 24:20-21 And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbor; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him; breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him again.

Jesus says that this recorded judgement cometh of evil (that is, getting even comes of an evil heart) and says rather that we should turn the other cheek when smitten on the cheek.

Num 30:1-2 This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded. If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.

Judges 11:39 records Jephthah (a judge of Israel) sacrificing his virgin daughter for the sake of a vow that he made to the Lord in Judges 11:30-31. ...Because Scripture also says that God looks at human sacrifice as an abomination in His "eyes", ...Which of the two Gods depicted in Scripture (...the God of "sign and wonders" ...or the God of "Self-giving sacrifice") looked at this act as necessary for obedience to His commandment ...and which one looked at it as an abomination?

Ex 24:9-11 Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: and they saw the God of Israel: and there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in His clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: ...also they saw God, and did eat and drink.

Are these, indeed, the recorded words of Moses? Whatever the meaning of this passage is, it is in conflict with Ex 33:20 which states that "no man can see God and live".

Ex 25:1-8 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and let them make a sanctuary that I may dwell among them.

This passage has God requesting for man to make a place for Him to dwell among them, which contradicts the many passages in scripture that indicate that man cannot prepare a place for God to dwell in (that such a place would have to be the work of God Himself).

And the next 10 chapters are devoted to instructions to build this sanctuary, and its alter, and its priests, and the prescribed sacrifices, perpetual burning of incense, etc.

Which concept of the one true God spoke to Moses in this passage? ...Was it the God of "signs and wonders" Who manifested Himself to the Israelites through great signs and wonders and Who they wanted to keep holy? ...or was it the God of "Self-giving sacrifice" (manifested through the Spirit of Christ - a Spirit of "Self-giving sacrifice")?

Ex 32:1-14 And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what has become of him. (And so they made gods to go before them, even after God had commanded them not to.)

...And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people: ...Now therefore let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.

If God had actually said this, He would, in turn, be breaking a promise that He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel) regarding blessing their seed.

This response would however be consistent with a holy sovereign God Who expects to be obeyed.

...And Moses interceded for the people, saying, Turn from Thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against Thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Thy servants, to whom Thou swarest by Thine own self, and saidest unto them, I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven. ...And the Lord repented of the evil which He thought to do unto His people.

...Moses reminding God of what He had forgotten, ...accusing Him of 'evil' intentions against His people, ...and asking Him to 'repent': ...to which God 'repented of the evil that He thought to do unto His people'.

...God forgetting? ...God repenting? ...God thinking evil? ...God changing His mind? ...at the intercession of a man?

Was this passage Moses words? ...Does it represent God for Who He truly is?

Num 14:11-16 And the Lord said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke Me? and how long will it be ere they believe Me, for all the signs which I have showed among them? ...I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make thee a great nation and mightier than they.

The concept of God depicted in this passage appears to be a concept associated with "signs and wonders" performed on Israel's behalf, ...and that He expects to be obeyed (or else).

...And Moses said unto the Lord, then the Egyptians shall hear it, (for thou broughtest up this people in Thy might from among them): And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that Thou Lord are among this people, that Thou Lord are seen face to face, and that Thy cloud standeth over them, and that Thou goest before them: and the nations round about will say, Because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land which He swear unto them, therefore He hath slain them in the wilderness.

Is Moses actually educating an all knowing God? and reasoning with Him?

Lev 26:3-12 **If ye walk in My statutes, and keep My commandments, and do them:** ...then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase. ...and ye shall dwell in your land safely. ...I will have respect unto you, ...and make you fruitful, and multiply you, ...and establish My covenant with you. ...And I will set My tabernacle among you: ...and My soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, ...and will be your God, ...and ye shall be My people.

Blessings for following and obeying. ...This passage depicts God as a God of rewards for obedience.

Lev 26:14-30 **But if ye will not hearken unto Me, and will not do all these commandments; and if ye shall despise My statutes, or if your soul abhor My judgements, so that ye will not do all My commandments, but that ye break My covenant:** ...I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: ...And ye shall sow your seed in vain, and I will set My face against you, ...and ye shall be slain before your enemies. They that hate you shall reign over you. ...And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters. ...And My soul shall abhor you.

Curses for not following and obeying. ...This passage depicts a God of coercion.

The following are scriptural passages attributed to a concept of God consistent with God's character as expressed through Jesus. (All are recorded as coming indirectly through Moses)

- Ex 22:21 Thou shall neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.
- Ex 21:22 Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child.
- Ex 21:25 If thou lend money to any of My people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not lay upon him usury.
- Ex 21:26-27 If thou at all take thy neighbor's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down: for that is his covering.
- Ex 23:1 Thou shalt not raise a false report: ...put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.
- Ex 23:2 Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil: ...neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgement (*follow a crowd in an unrighteous decision*).
- Lev 19:15 Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgement: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: ...but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor.
- Lev 19:16 Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people:
...neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbor.
- Lev 19:17 Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor (*we are to warn our neighbor when they sin*), and not suffer sin upon him.
- Lev 19:31 Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them.
- Lev 19:35-36 Ye shall do no unrighteousness in measure. ...Just balances, ...just weights.

If He (Jesus) is God (manifested as the "Son") then His words and actions will be recognized as God's words and actions, by those who have heard and learned of a God Who speaks and acts as Jesus has.

God and Us (cont')

Deut 18:15-19 The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb *(at the mount upon the giving of the ten commandments before the people)* in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire anymore, that I die not.

And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. ...I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in his mouth; ...and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

Note that the word "Prophet" is capitalized in this passage.

The promise of a coming Prophet, like unto Moses. ...He will be a Jew, ...He will be like Moses to the people (a go between between God and the people), ...and He will speak God's words.

Even though the word "Prophet" was used in this passage, there can be no denying that this description could be applied to Jesus.

...And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him.

If this passage is referring to Jesus (and it certainly looks possible) then every word that Jesus has spoken to us will be required of us!

Ex 34:6-7 And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed...

Note that a 'proclamation' is an official announcement of a matter of great importance, ...and this is the only recorded 'proclamation' from God in the recorded scriptures.

"The Lord, ...The Lord God, ...merciful and gracious, ...longsuffering, ...and abundant in goodness and truth, ...keeping mercy for thousands, ...forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, ...and that will by no means clear the guilty".
(visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.)

The Lord God - the One having power and authority
...Merciful - not rendering unto another what they actually deserve
...Gracious - giving unto another what they do not deserve
...Long-suffering - patient to the point of suffering for it

- ...**Abundant** - emphasizing plenty or more than enough
- ...**Goodness** - that which can be shown to be beneficial for man
- ...**Truth** - that which is right in the highest realm
- ...**Iniquity** - not just (not morally right or fair)
- ...**Transgression** - acting against God's instructions
- ...**Sin** - missing God's mark
- ...**Means** - an action, system, or method by which a result is brought about
- ...**Clear** - remove an obstruction or unwanted item from
- ...**Guilty** - justly chargeable with a particular fault or error by virtue of being responsible for that specified wrongdoing

Note that while forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin:
that **...He will "by no means clear the guilty"**

The second portion in this passage (in red), has been separated out from the first because its words are inconsistent with the words of the first portion of the passage.

"...visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."

...Once again, we find this same clause recorded in scripture and associated with God speaking. ...This clause definitely questions God's being just, making it highly improbable that it came from the same Source as the first portion of the passage.

In this passage it seems more clear that Moses is trying to address the conundrum of forgiving sin, while by no means clearing the guilty by indicating that God will punish the guilty through visiting their iniquity upon their children, which is not just, and certainly not indicating an "abundance of goodness and truth" which the Source in the first portion of the passage just claimed, ...making it highly likely that this phrase was added by Moses (or by men placing Moses' words in Scripture).

...Was this last clause added by man (Moses) and his understanding in an attempt to explain the previous phrase, that, while forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin (which we are all guilty of) that He will by no means clear the guilty? ...If He will not clear the guilty (and we are all guilty) then there is no hope of salvation relying on God's mercy alone. If He is to remain "just", a price must be paid equal to the offense in God's "eyes".

Did Moses recognize that the endless killing of animals was not reconciling man to God?
...Was this his only explanation?

There is no way to believe that God is not just (giving all what they deserve or have a right to) if we are to have any hope of order in Heaven. ...but visiting the iniquity of sinners upon their children is not just, ...meaning that there must be some other solution to the forgiving of men's sins.

Lev 17:11-14 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the alter to make an atonement for your souls: ...for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. ...For it is the life of all flesh; ...the blood of it is for the life thereof.

Blood atonement - the life of the innocent for the guilt of the guilty.

Deut 5:29 O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all My commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!

This passage seems to indicate that God knew, even from the beginning, that man would not respect His words or guidance, despite the fact that His words were given for our good.

Deut 29:29 The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: ...but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever.

What God has revealed belongs to us - and we will answer for it

Deut 31:16-20 And the Lord said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake Me, and break My covenant which I have made with them.

God knew in advance how His chosen people (man in general) would behave.

And I will surely hide My face in that day for all the evils which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods. ...For when I shall have brought them into the land which I swore unto their fathers, that floweth with milk and honey; and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke Me, and break My covenant.

This passage testifies that when man becomes comfortable and all his needs are met, then he turns from God.

Deut 31:21 And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them for a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed: ...for I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I swear.

God knew that man would seek his own self comfort and self will, and would turn his back on God, and He had Moses record the following testimony which will testify against man in the end.

Deut 32:1-29 **He is the Rock, ...His work is perfect: ...for all His ways are judgement: ...a God of truth and without iniquity, ...just and right is He.**

(Interpretation) He is the sure and safe place:

...the efforts that He performs in order to achieve the purpose or results that He intends have all of the required or desired elements and are as good as it is possible to be;

...for all of the directions or manners in which He goes are considered decisions leading to sensible conclusions:

...a God Whose very being, thoughts, and actions are verifiable to be right in the highest realm,

...with no deviation from that which is right or just.

They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of His children: they are a perverse and crooked generation. Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Is not He thy father that hath bought thee? hath He not made thee, and established thee?

...For the Lord's portion is His people;

God's people are His portion in His creation. ...They are what He gets out of it.

And He said, I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end shall be: ...for they are a very froward generation, ...children in whom is no faith. ...Neither is there any understanding in them. ...O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!

Deut 32:37-39 And He shall say, Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted, which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink offerings? Let them rise up and help you, and be your protection. ...**See now that I, even I, am He, ...and there is no god with Me**".

He knows that He is the One and only; ...all the gods of men are but vanity.

The Situation of Man

Jrmh 7:17-19 Seest thou what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? ...The children gather wood, ...and the fathers kindle the fire, ...and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke Me to anger. ...Do they provoke Me to anger? saith the Lord: ...**do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces?**

Jrmh 9:3 They are not valiant for truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not Me, saith the Lord.

Jrmh 9:5-6 And they will deceive every one his neighbor, and will not speak the truth: ...they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity. Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know Me, saith the Lord.

A warning to all, to examine the intents of your own heart when interacting with others. ...Do we really speak the truth to each other, or is there an element of deception in our dealings with others?

Habk 1:3-4 For spoiling and violence are before me: and there are that raise up strife and contention. ...Therefore the law is slacked, and judgement doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; ...therefore wrong judgement proceedeth.

Can you see this in the current society?

1Sam 8:4-7 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel, and said unto him, make us a king to judge us like all the nations. ...And Samuel was displeased, and prayed to the Lord. ...And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.

And so it continues ...even today.

Jrmh 6:10 To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? ...Behold, their ear is uncircumcised (*not dedicated to the Lord*), and they cannot hearken: ...behold, the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it.

Jrmh 10:23 O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

God Reprimands Man

Isah 50:1 Thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or Which of My creditors is it to whom I have sold you? ...Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away. ...Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? ...When I called, was there none to answer? ...Is My hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? ...or have I no power to deliver?

Jrmh 2:5 Thus saith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in Me, that they are gone far from Me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?

Are the ten commandments given by God really so bad?

Has God really been so hard on us?

Psalms 82:1-5 How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? ...Defend the poor and fatherless: ...do justice to the afflicted and needy. ...Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.

...They know not, ...neither will they understand; ...they walk on in darkness:

...all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

Prov 1:30-31 They would none of My counsel: ...they despised all My reproof. ...Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

Job 34:11 For the work of a man shall He render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways.

Prov 14:12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, ...but the end thereof are the ways of death.

A Warning to Atheist

Psalm 14:1-3 **The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.** They are corrupt, ...they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. ...They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, ...no, not one.

Isah 42:19-20 Who is blind as he that is perfect. Seeing many things but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not.

Psalm 22:29 All they that go down to the dust shall bow before Him: and none can keep alive his own soul.

Two truths that we will all experience.

The Wicked Called Out

Job 24:1-16 Why, seeing that times are not hid from the Almighty, do they that know Him not see His days? Some remove the landmarks; they violently take away flocks, and feed thereof. They drive away the ass of the fatherless, they take the widow's ox for a pledge. They turn the needy out of the way: the poor of the earth hide themselves together. Behold, as wild asses in the desert, go they forth to their work; rising betimes for a prey. They gather the vintage of the wicked. They cause the naked to lodge without clothing, that they have no covering in the cold. They pluck the fatherless from the breast, and take a pledge of the poor. They cause him to go naked without clothing, and they take away the sheath from the hungry.

...They are of those that rebel against the light (*note that Jesus is referred to as "the Light"*); they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof. The murderer rising with the light killeth the poor and needy, and in the night is a thief. The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me: and disguiseth his face. In the dark they dig through houses, which they had marked for themselves in the daytime: ...**They know not the light.**

Psalm 10:4-6 The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts. Thy judgements are far above out of his sight: He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity.

Job 21:7-15 Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? ...Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes. ...Their houses are safe from fear, ...neither is the rod of God upon them. ...They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. ...They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.

...Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto Him?

*If all of your fleshly needs are satisfied, would you feel the need to seek God?
This is actually a tragic situation.*

Psalm 28:5 **They regard not the works of the Lord, ...nor the operation of His hands.**

This is unfortunately true of most of mankind.

Jrhm 5:26-31 For among My people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men. Their houses are full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; the right of the needy do they not judge. ...The prophets prophesy falsely, ...and the priests bear rule by their means; ...and My people love to have it so:

Isah 59:3-15 For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness. ...None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: ...they trust in vanity, and speak lies; ...they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.

Neither shall they cover themselves with their works: their works are works of iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands. Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgement in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.

...Therefore is judgement far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: ...we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. ...We look for judgement, but there is none; ...for salvation, but it is far from us. For our transgressions are multiplied before Thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them. In transgressing and lying against the Lord, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.

...And judgement is turned away backward, ...and justice standeth afar off: ...for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. ...Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey.

A Warning to the Wicked and Proud

Psalm 49:6-8 They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: (*...For the redemption of their soul is precious, ...and it ceaseth for ever.*)

The redemption of a soul is a precious thing - an everlasting thing

Mal 4:1-2 For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; ...and all the proud, ...yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: ...and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts.

...But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.

A Temple for God ?

2Sam 7:4-14 And it came to pass that the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying, Go and tell My servant David, Thus saith the Lord, **Shalt thou build Me a house to dwell in?** ...I took thee from the sheepcote, to be ruler over My people, over Israel: and I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies. ...Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them anymore, as beforetime.

Also the Lord telleth thee that He will make thee an house. And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, ...and I will establish his kingdom. ...He shall build a house for My name, ...and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

...I will be his Father, and he shall be My son.

Once again, the words of scripture allow two different understandings of this passage: ...one for those guided by a spirit of human reason which says that Solomon (David's seed according to the flesh) will build a house for God's name; ...and the other for those guided by a Spirit of the "God of Self-giving sacrifice" (the "Spirit of Christ") which says that Jesus (God's "Son") will establish a "house" for God's name.

1Kngs 5:3-5 *(Solomon speaking)* Thou knowest how that David my father could not build an house unto the name of the Lord his God for the wars which were about him on every side. But now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side. And, behold, I purpose to build an house unto the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build a house unto My name.

The passage which Solomon is referencing (just above - 2Sam 7:12-14) does not say specifically "Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build a house unto My name"; it says, rather, "I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever." And it goes on to say, "I will be his Father, and he shall be My son".

Solomon presumptuously believes that he is the son of David referenced by Samuel, and consequently builds a physical structure, even after God, speaking through Samuel, questioned it, saying. "Shalt thou build Me a house to dwell in?"

Samuel's prophecy, arguably, is much better fulfilled through Jesus and His work to make the indwelling of God (through His Spirit) possible for all of those called by His name, ...thus providing a 'house' for God on Earth.

2 Cron 3:1 Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jubusite.

"...in mount Moriah" ...The location where Abraham offered to slay his son Issac.

1Kngs 8:10-13 *(After the finishing of construction of Solomon's temple for God)* ...And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord. So the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord. ...Then spake Solomon, The Lord said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. I have surely built Thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for Thee to abide in for ever.

It does seem strange that God would put His seal on this structure which He questioned in the first place. ...Is it possible that Solomon and the people were so zealous of this place that they misread a "cloud" to be the glory of the Lord?

It should be further noted that God Himself is not recorded anywhere in scripture as saying that "He would dwell in the thick darkness", as Solomon claims. Deuteronomy 5:22 (Moses speaking) describes God, upon the giving of the ten commandments to the people, as speaking "out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness". ...If we receive other people's recorded words in scripture as God Himself speaking, then 1st Timothy 6:16 (the apostle Paul speaking) in contrast says, that God "dwells in unapproachable light".

Perhaps the difference between "dwelling in the thick darkness" (i.e. "man's understanding") and "dwelling in the unapproachable light" (i.e. "spirit and truth"?) is as different as the two concepts of God depicted in scripture.

1Kngs 8:23-24 And he (*Solomon*) said, Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee, ...Who keepeth covenant and mercy with Thy servants that walk before Thee with all their heart: ...Who hast kept with Thy servant David my father that Thou promised him, as it is this day.

Is this, perhaps, the hope of salvation with this concept of God? ...That He will keep a covenant of mercy with those who walk before Him with all their heart?

1Kngs 8:30-43 (*Solomon praying a prayer of dedication for the temple which he built in God's name*) And hearken Thou to the supplication of Thy servant, and of Thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling place: and when Thou hearest, forgive.

...and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness.

Many of God's prophets declare that no one is righteous.

...When Thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against Thee, and shall turn again to Thee, and confess Thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto Thee in this house: then hear Thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of Thy people Israel, and bring them again into the land which Thou gavest unto their fathers.

...What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all Thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house: then hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, that they may fear Thee all the days that they live in the land which Thou gavest unto our fathers.

...Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of Thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for Thy name's sake; (For they shall hear of Thy great name, and of Thy strong hand, and of Thy stretched out arm); when he shall come and pray toward this house; hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to Thee for: that all people of the earth may know Thy name, to fear Thee, as do Thy people Israel; ...and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by Thy name.

Solomon is speaking to the God of "signs and wonders" who is known for His "strong hand" and "stretched out arm"; and he (Solomon) is associating Him (the God of "signs and wonders") with this "house, which I (Solomon) have builded".

Where God Placed His Name ?

1Kngs 8:28-29 (*Solomon speaking*) Yet have Thou respect unto the prayer of Thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which Thy servant prayeth before Thee to day: that Thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, ...even toward the place which Thou hast said, ...My name shall be there.

Interesting that he associates “this house which he built” with the “place where God placed His name”. ...While both places are generally in Jerusalem, it does not necessarily make them the same place.

While it is true that God said that there is a place where He will place His name, and it is located generally in Jerusalem; Solomon assumes that it is this house which he has built.

Isah 66:1-2 Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool: where is the house that you build unto Me? and where is the place of My rest? ...For all those things hath Mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord:

A reprimand to those who believe that they (through their efforts) will build God a house.

...but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word.

God will look to the man who humbles himself before Him.

The Hope For Man

Job 33:27-28 He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which is right, and it profited me not; He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, ...and his life shall see the light.

Those that acknowledge that they are sinners, will look to their Creator (the One that they have sinned against) for a solution, ...and will find the “Light”.

Psalm 78:5-7 For He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: that the generation to come might know them, ...**that they might set their hope in God.**

For those suffering in life, and trying to endure all the things that life throws at us; or even for those blessed in life, after chasing all things in life, and coming to the conclusion that all things that can be pursued are vain: it is, in the end, God and the hope that He has given us through His communication with us that is the one thing that will remain, that we can place our ‘hope’ in.

Psalm 111:7-8 The works of His hands are verity (of fundamental importance) and judgement (considered decisions);

Note that His ‘works’ are considered decisions of fundamental importance to man!

...all His commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.

Regarding His commandments; can anyone really deny that any of the Ten Commandments given by God are not beneficial to man?

Isah 45:21-22 There is no God else beside Me: ...**a just God ...and a Savior**; there is none beside Me. Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.

*God is declaring that He is the only one (there is no other through which we will receive salvation), ...that **He is just** (so don't look for Him to simply forgive men's sins), ...and that **He is a Savior** (He will make our salvation possible).*

Rms 3:20-23 By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: ...for by the law is the knowledge of sin. ...**For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.**

Jrmh 30:12-17 For thus saith the Lord, "**Thy bruise is incurable**". ...There is none to plead thy cause, that thou mayest be bound up: ...thou hast no healing medicines. ..."**I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds**", saith the Lord.

This passage indicates both that God is aware that mankind needs "healing" and that the healing of mankind is in God's hands alone.

Psalm 102: 19-21 For He hath looked down from the height of His sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; ...to hear the groaning of the prisoner; ...to loose those that are appointed to death; ...to declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and His praise in Jerusalem.

***His salvation will come from Zion.** The question is which concept of God? ...and which concept of salvation?*

Isah 16:5 And in mercy shall the throne be established: ...and He shall sit upon it in truth, judging, and seeking judgement, ...and hasting righteousness.

A judgement throne established in mercy, graciously rendering righteousness.

Psalm 9:10 And they that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee: ...for Thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.

While this passage applies to both concepts of God: it is also true that the two concepts of God lead to two different Gods (...and two different afterlives).

Zech 9:16-17 And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of His people: for how great is His goodness, **and how great is His beauty!** (*exclamation point placed in scripture*)

"Beauty" here refers to an appeal to the soul or spirit of man.

*Do "signs and wonders" appeal to your soul? or Does "Self-giving sacrifice" appeal to your soul? ...**Choose your God, ...both are represented in scripture.***

God Reprimands Man (cont')

Ezkl 33:31 And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as My people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their coveteousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not.

Jrmh 7:21-28 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices and eat flesh (*go ahead and make a meal and banquet out of My sacrifice which was meant to reverence the giving of an innocent life in your place*). For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices.

This statement discredits much of Leviticus, meaning that the God which is speaking through Jeremiah is not the same one that specified all of the temple sacrifices listed throughout Leviticus.

The prophet Hosea, speaking for God, said in Hosea 6:6 that God "desired mercy, and not sacrifice; ...and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings".

*Could it be that the expression that "God desires mercy, and not sacrifice" could actually mean that God seeks our reconciliation to Him through the application of compassion and forgiveness (*the components of mercy*) - as evidenced through His manifest mercy and grace which He has extended to us ... and not through our ceremonies (*like sacrifices*) dedicated to Him?*

But this thing I commanded them, saying, Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people: ...and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward.

Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all My servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them: ...Yet they hearkened not unto Me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers.

Therefore thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee. ...But thou shalt say unto them, This is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the Lord their God, ...nor receiveth correction: ...truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth.

When we lose contact with God, it is an inevitable consequence that "Truth" perishes.

Isah 30:9-11 This is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord: ...Which say to the seers, See not; ...and to the prophets, Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits: ...get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, ...cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.

Don't give us God's precepts ...make things easy.

Psalm 50:7-21 Hear, O My people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God. I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, to have been continually before Me. I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is Mine. ...If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is Mine, and the fulness thereof. ...Will I eat flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? *(What do your sacrifices mean to Me?)* ...What hast thou to do to declare My statutes, or that thou shouldest take My covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest My words behind thee.

...These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.

Isah 58:5-11 Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? ...Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?

Is this what you think is acceptable to God, bowing down in sackcloth and ashes?

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? ...to loose the bands of wickedness, ...to undo the heavy burdens, ...and to let the oppressed go free, ...and that ye break every yoke? ...Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, ...and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? ...when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; ...and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? *(take care of your own family)*

This sure sounds alot like what Jesus says that His "Father" would have us doing.

If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, ...the putting forth of the finger, ...and speaking vanity. ...And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones.

Summary of Condition of Man / World

Isah 29:16 Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?

Shall we, in a lower state, be judgmental of our Creator (Who is in the highest state)?

Hos 10:13 Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: **...because thou didst trust in thy way** *(self-determination).*

Psalm 66:10 For Thou, O God, hast proved us: Thou hast tried us.

*He hasn't simply unjustly condemned us,
He has "proved" us, ...and we have all condemned ourselves.*

Isah 42:22 But this is a people robbed and spoiled; ...they are all of them snared in holes, ...and they are hid in prison houses: ...they are for a prey, and none delivereth; ...for a spoil, and none saith, Restore.

...**“robbed”** of what God intended for mankind; ...**“spoiled”** by the lusts of our own flesh; ...**“snared in holes”** of our own making; ...**“hid in prison houses”** with names such as “desire for popularity”, “pride”, “jealousy”, “pleasures”, “alcohol/drugs”, “material things”, “fantasy worlds born of man’s imagination on computer screens”, etc; ...we are all **“a prey”** to a “spirit of self” (**Satan**);

...and **“none of us can deliver ourselves”**.

Isah 24:4-6 The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. ...The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. ...Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate.

A scriptural explanation for the state which our world is in; including both its environmental ills (**earthquakes, fires, hurricanes, pestilences**) and the ills of the spirit of man.

It has often been asked, “If God is good, why does He allow bad things to happen to good people?” This question is like asking, “Whose in control here on earth?” This passage, like many others, points out that, with the exception of those whose souls belong to God (**which, incidentally, He describes as “few”**), it is the devil, or Satan, who is in control in this realm here on earth, ...which should be evident in that most people follow their own self-will (**a key characteristic of Satan himself**).

From the beginning (**when the world was created perfect**) God gave us “free will” to choose Him and His ways or our own. Being led of the spirit of the devil (**a spirit of self, and opposed to God**), we chose and we received the fruit of our choice (**an imperfect world in which God is not in control**).

God has not created evil, our choice to turn from God and His ways is what has created evil and its resultant suffering. After immersing Himself in our own sufferings and much worse (**see the ‘cross’**) for our sakes, it should be evident that God (**at least the God of “Self-giving sacrifice”**) is trying His very best to redeem and rescue us from the suffering that we have brought on ourselves.

We must also keep in mind that our essence lies in our spirit, not in our flesh; and that while bad things may happen to our bodies, they do not effect our souls. ...The dying child in the hospital bed, there only because it was their lot in life, whose soul (**actual essence**) is safely secured in the “hands” of their Creator, may be viewed by us as being evilly entreated (**while God does nothing about it**), that is if we look at them as no more than a body which has an end.

As a warning, this same principle works in reverse too. Some people may appear to be blessed by God with things that comfort their bodies, while their essence (**that is, their soul**) is doomed to eternal separation from God.

Psalm 119:126 **It is time for Thee, Lord, to work: ...for they (the people of earth) have made void Thy law.**

These words allude to the truth that we have brought the condition of our world upon ourselves and that it will require God’s efforts to save us. (**we cannot save ourselves**)

God will Intervene

Isah 46:4 I have made, ...and I will bear; ...even I will carry, and will deliver you.

He will do the hard work - but we must trust in Him.

Isah 57:16 For I will not contend for ever, ...neither will I be always wroth: ...for the spirit should fail before Me, ...and the souls which I have made.

This current status of separation from God will not always be, for our spirits would eventually fail altogether destroying our souls which He gave us.

Isah 29:13-21 Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near to Me with their mouth, and with their lips do they honor Me, but have removed their heart far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the precept of men *(Note: to be weary when taught by the precept of men - It can be argued that the 'precept of men' is responsible for the two different concepts of the one true God depicted in scripture):* therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.

...And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book *(recorded scripture)*, ...and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. ...The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, ...and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

This passage says that the "deaf", the "blind", the "meek", and the "poor" will all be elevated. Perhaps this should be a warning to those who "hear", "see", are "strong", or are "rich". (Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.)

For the terrible one is brought to nought, ...and the scorner is consumed, ...and all that watch for iniquity are cut off: that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought.

At the day when God does His work; ...the "terrible" will be brought to nothing, ..."scorners" will be eaten up, ...and all that scrutinize for any fault will be cut off.

Isah 43:5-21 Fear not: for I am with thee: even every one that is called by My name: for I have created him for My glory. Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears. Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, and My servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He: before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside Me there is no savior.

Note that He says "beside Me there is no savior". He points out that He is your only savior. You cannot save yourself even by doing things like ..."following His laws", ..."doing the best you can and constantly improving", ..."submitting to Him", ..."doing good works", or ..."guarding against evil".

Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. ...Behold, I will do a new thing; ...now it shall spring forth; ...shall ye not know it?

Those with God's Spirit will recognize it.

...I will even make a way in the wilderness (*doctrines of men, mistruths, and other stumbling blocks*), to give drink to My people, My chosen. This people have I formed for Myself; ...they shall show forth My praise.

For those men that have come to the conclusion that "doctrines of men", "mis-truths", and other "stumbling blocks coming from men", might as well be a "wilderness to God's word", this passage is easy to look at metaphorically to mean just these things.

Isaiah 28:13-22 But the word of the Lord was unto them (*those that don't understand*) precept upon precept, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement (*we have chosen separation from God*); when the overflowing scourge (*Judgement*) shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves (*"lies" and "falsehood" - the things that they are trusting in*).

...Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion (*the hill upon which Jerusalem stands - the place on earth where God placed His name - God's chosen place*) for a foundation (*that is, the basis on which something stands - in this case righteous judgement*), a stone (*that is something that is sound, immovable*), a tried stone (*that is something which is tested and without failure*), a precious (*that is, "precious" in His eyes*) corner stone, a sure foundation (*that is, a "foundation" to have "confidence in" or "place faith in"*): he that believeth shall not make haste (*that is, be forced to flee*).

...Judgement also will I lay to the line, ...and righteousness to the plummet (*a sure and approved means of judgement*): and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies (*nothing outside of the truth revealed at the cross will stand*), and the waters shall overflow the hiding place (*there will be no place to hide from this judgement*). ...And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.

**For the Lord shall rise up that He may do His work,
His strange work; ...and bring to pass His act, His strange act.**

"strange" - indicating that most of the world will not recognize it as an act attributable to what they perceive as an absolutely sovereign God.

Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: ...for I have heard from the Lord God of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth.

A warning not to mock these words, for the Creator has determined this upon all the earth.

Isah 23:9 **The Lord of hosts hath purposed it, ...to stain the pride of all glory, ...and to bring into contempt all the honorable of the earth.**

This passage, while "hidden" in a larger passage could certainly refer to a strange act purposed on the part of a sovereign God, that would fly in the face of all human glory, and bring into contempt all of the honorable works of men.

Zeph 3:9 **For then will I turn to the people a pure language,**

And no "language" is more "pure", ...universal, ...and clear than giving His life for us. (all men can relate to that)

Isah 49:22 **Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up Mine hand to the Gentiles, ...and set up My standard to the people.**

"I will lift up Mine Hand to the Gentiles"

For those that recognize the phrase "lift up" to mean "crucify" and the expression "Mine Hand" to mean God's Right Hand (the Son, Jesus); this passage can be interpreted; I (God - obviously the One of "Self-giving sacrifice") will give My life for the salvation of all men who will believe; ...and this will be My "standard" to all men.

Isah 26:11 **Lord, when Thy "hand" is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; ...yea, the fire of Thine enemies shall devour them.**

Lord, when Thy "Hand" (Jesus) is lifted up (crucified), they will not see (contemplate or understand it): but they shall see (when it is too late - at "Judgement"), and be ashamed for their envy at the people (weeping and gnashing of teeth - for eternity); ...yea, the fire (zeal) of Thine enemies shall devour them.

Isah 65:17-24 **Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. ...But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people: and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying.**

*...And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. ...They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: ...and Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands (yea, like "forever" long). ...They shall not labor in vain, ...nor bring forth for trouble; ...**for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord.** And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.*

"for they are the seed of the Blessed of the Lord" ...For those who recognize Jesus to be the "Blessed of the Lord" this expression means the offspring of Jesus (...and therefore of God the "Father")

Isah 1:27-29 Zion shall be redeemed with judgement, and her converts with righteousness.

Zion: God's place and people
Redeemed: regain possession in exchange for payment
Judgement: a considered decision on God's part
Righteousness: the quality or state of being morally right (and therefore justifiable)

And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed.

Isah 51:6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: ...for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, ...and the earth shall wax old like a garment, ...and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: ...but My salvation shall be for ever, ...and My righteousness shall not be abolished.

The earth (and its inhabitants) will pass away, ...but God's salvation will endure forever.

Reprimand to “Israel” / Exhaltation of “Zion”

Ezkl 16:14-22 And thy (Israel's) renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through My comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God. But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playest the harlot because of thy renown, and pourest out thy fornications on every one that passed by. ...And in all thine abominations and thy whoredoms thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, when thou wast naked and bare, and was polluted in thy blood.

Hosea 8: 12-14 I have written to him the great things of My law, but they were counted as a strange thing. They sacrifice flesh for the sacrifices of Mine offerings, and eat it. For Israel hath forgotten his maker, and buildeth temples.

Ezkl 22:26-30 Her priests have violated My law, and have profaned Mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they showed difference between the unclean and the clean, ...and I am profaned among them. ...Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening they prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain. ...And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord, when the Lord hath not spoken. ...The peole of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.

...And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before Me for the land, that I should not destroy it: ...but I found none.

Ezkl 36: 20-23 And when they (*Israel*) entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned My holy name, when they said to them, ...These are the people of the Lord, and are gone forth out of His land. Therefore, say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; I do this not for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify My great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them;

This passage says that God Himself will sanctify His holy name before the world, a name which He says His "servant" Israel has profaned.

*If our Creator is a God of "signs and wonders" (as *Israel* promotes), then more of them are coming; ...and if our Creator is a God of "Self-giving sacrifice", then that will be made manifest to man through some means that comes from the Creator Himself.*

It should be added that Jesus (the One associated with the God of "Self-giving sacrifice") is recorded as saying, that it is an "evil and adulterous generation that seeks after a sign". ...If He is speaking for the Creator then His testimony is that the Creator is not impressed with those who seek signs and wonders (considering those who do so as "evil and adulterous"). ...By the way, the very word adulterous means "un-faith-ful".

*If Jesus' claims to be one with His "Father" (Who He says is our God), ...backed by the voluntary giving of Jesus' life (even according to the testimony of God's prophets), convinces men that He represents our Creator (not "signs and wonders"), then it should be evident that He (God Himself) has come, ...that He has fulfilled the prophecies which went before Him, ...that He provided the 'blood atonement' (incidentally, "God's own blood" *) which men needed for justifiable reconciliation to their Creator, ...and that ultimately His (Jesus) words and actions will "clear up" our Creator's holy name before the world.*

** Note, that God Himself declares that sacrificing human blood is an abomination in His "eyes".*

Ezkl 43:7-8 My holy name shall the house of Israel no more defile, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom. In their setting of their threshold by My thresholds, and their posts by My posts, and the wall between Me and them, they have even defiled My holy name by their abominations that they have committed.

This passage could serve as a warning for those being seduced by any institution or religion that has kidnapped the Creator's words and actions, and placed their own words and actions so close to the Creator's as to deceive those seeking the Creator's.

The passage makes clear that God intends to set things straight regarding the way that man perceives Him.

Ezkl 20:39-41 As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord God; Go ye, serve every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto Me (*do as your spirit guides you*): but pollute ye My holy name no more with your gifts, and with your idols (*but don't associate Me with you*). ...For in Mine holy mountain, ...in the mountain of the height of Israel (*that is in Zion - at the cross for those who believe in a God of "Self-giving sacrifice"*), saith the Lord God,

there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve Me: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the firstfruits of your oblations, with all your holy things.

...and I will be sanctified in you (*Israel*) before the heathen (*the rest of mankind*).

Ezkl 20:24 And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have wrought with you for My name's sake, ...not according to your wicked ways, ...nor according to your corrupt doings.

Isah 49:7 Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel (*the "Father"*), and His Holy One (*the "Son"*), to Him (*one God*) Whom man despiseth, to Him Whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, ...Kings shall see and arise, ...princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and He shall choose thee.

This passage says that the Lord God, ...the Redeemer, ...and the Holy One are despised of man, ...and abhorred by the nation of Israel; ...but even the greatest of men will worship because the Lord is faithful.

Zech 4:6 Not by might, ...nor by power, ...but by My spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.

This passage does not seem to speak to a God of "signs and wonders".

Note, that it is through His Spirit that He will be revealed, ...not through kingdoms, ...or powers, ...or institutions, ...or men's words.

Isah 2:12 For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon everyone that is proud and lofty, and upon everyone that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low.

*Think you have all of the answers - **better be careful !***

Jrmh 3:14-17 Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you: ...and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, ...**and I will bring you to Zion:**

In those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord: ...neither shall it come to mind: ...neither shall they remember it; ...neither shall they visit it; ...neither shall that be done anymore.

At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; ...and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, ...to the name of the Lord, ...to Jerusalem: ... neither shall they walk anymore after the imagination of their evil heart.

The Lord reiterates His covenantal bond to His people Israel ("for I am married unto you"), ...then adds that "He will bring them to Zion".

This passage seems to indicate that “Zion/Jerusalem” will become a substitute that will completely replace “the ark of the covenant” for Israel (a ‘new’ covenant is coming - and it will associate with Zion/Jerusalem which He associates with His name).

*Note that **all** nations shall be gathered unto Jerusalem (actually Zion and what took place there).*

Isah 2:3-4 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord (*Zion*), to the house of the God of Jacob: and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: ...for out of Zion shall go forth the law, ...and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: ...and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Those (from all over the world) affected by “Zion”, will turn to the God of “Zion”, and will no longer war with each other.

Psalm 132: For the Lord hath chosen Zion; ...He hath desired it for His habitation. ...This is My rest
13-15 for ever: ...here will I dwell; for I have desired it. ...I will abundantly bless her provision:
 ...I will satisfy her poor with bread.

Zion: God’s chosen place. In Jn 6:33, Jesus defines the “bread of God” as “he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world”.

*And in Jn 6:51 Jesus clarifies that “the bread that I will give is My flesh (*life*), which I will give for the life of the world”.*

Isah 31:4-7 So shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof. So will the Lord of host defend Jerusalem; defending also He will deliver it; and passing over He will preserve it.

...Turn ye unto Him from Whom the children of Israel have deeply revolted. ...For in that day every man shall cast away his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which your own hands have made unto you for a sin.

Zion is the Creator’s chosen place; ...and in the end it will stand.

...The question is: will it stand according to man’s understanding of an absolutely sovereign God of power, Who chose Israel to be His people, ...and Who will mercifully forgive the unworthiness of those who do His will;

...or will it stand according to the love which an absolutely sovereign God of justice and grace will manifest to man in an act of Self-giving sacrifice in Zion.

Psalm 133:3 **The mountains of Zion:** ...for there the Lord commanded the blessing, ...even life for evermore.

everlasting life coming from the mountains of Zion

Ezkl 34:26 And I will make them and the places round about My hill a blessing...

*This scripture describes our Creator's chosen place,
...not as Jerusalem, ...but as a "hill".*

Obadh 1:16 For as ye have drunk upon My holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually, ...yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, ...and they shall be as though they had not been.

Salvation is of the Jews; ...but is offered to all men.

Hosea 10:15 So shall Bethel (*Zion*) do unto you because of your great wickedness.

Very interesting that the prophet should use the word "Bethel" to associate with God. For "Bethel" is the place that Jacob stumbled upon and called "none other but the house of God, ...and the gate of heaven" long before the Creator revealed Himself to the Jews through signs and wonders, or Jerusalem ever would stand there.

A Call To Man

Isah 55:1-3 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. ...Incline your ear, ...and come unto me: ...**hear, and your soul shall live;**

...and I will make an everlasting covenant with you.

"without money and without price" - that is "at no cost receive that which is priceless"

*Note also that God is offering us "**an everlasting covenant**".*

Psalm 119:79 Let those that fear Thee turn unto "me", ...and those that have known Thy testimonies.

Is "me" Israel? ...or is "me" Jesus? (Depends on your choice of God.)

Zech 13:1-3 In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

...And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

Note that in the day when this "fountain for sin and uncleanness" is established that there will be no more need for prophets.

Zeph 1:7-8 The day of the Lord is at hand: ...for the Lord hath prepared a sacrifice, ...He hath bid His guests. ...And it shall come to pass in the day of the Lord's sacrifice, that I will punish all such as are clothed with strange apparel.

Interesting that Jesus uses the parable of having a 'wedding garment' in order to come into God's presence (in Heaven).

Zech 8:7-13 Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Behold, I will save My people; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, ...**in truth and in righteousness.**

Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words by the mouth of the prophets, which were in the day that the foundation of the house of the Lord of hosts was laid, that the temple might be built.

The "foundation" of a physical temple? ...or the "foundation" of a new relationship with our Creator?A "foundation" built by man? ...or a "foundation" built by God?A physical "temple" in which God will dwell? ...or a Spiritual connection in which God will indwell the souls of His people?

...For before these days there was no hire for man, nor any hire for beast; neither was there any peace to him that went out or came in because of the affliction: for I set all men everyone against his neighbor.

"Affliction" due to physical enemies? ...or "affliction" due to sin inherent in man?

...But now I will not be unto the residue of this people as in the former days, sayeth the Lord of hosts. ...For the seed shall be prosperous; ...the vine shall give her fruit, ...and the ground shall give her increase, ...and the heavens shall give their dew; ...and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things.

Do the words "seed", and "vine", and "ground" in this passage refer to physical sustenance for man? ...or do they refer to the souls of those that belong to this God?Does the expression "and the heavens shall give their dew" refer to physical relief from above? ...or does it refer to the support of the God of this passage in bringing forth His will on earth?

...So will I save you, ...and ye shall be a blessing (*many on earth will be blessed on account of us doing His will*): ...fear not, ...but let your hands be strong.

Specific testimony of God's work of redemption which is coming

Isah 62:11 Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, "his" reward is with "him", ...and "his" work before "him".

Hmmmm, our "salvation" is embodied in something called a "He" that "has work to do".

Isah 45:13-15 I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build My city, and he shall let go My captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts.

Does this passage refer to Cyrus, who would be used by God to eventually return the Jews in captivity back to Israel? where they would rebuild "my city" (Is "my city" Jerusalem?). ...Are "my captives" in the passage the Jews in exile?Or does this entire passage reference Jesus; ...making "My city" Heaven, ...and making "My captives" all men who are held captive under sin?

Whoever this passage is referring to, it says that he will be directed by God in all his ways, ...that he will build "God's city", ...that he will release "God's captives", ...and will do it all without regard to profit. ...Note that Jesus did what He did for us out of pure love and compassion.

Thus saith the Lord, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: they shall come after thee; in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, saying, "Surely God is in thee: and there is none else, there is no God. ...**Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself**, O God of Israel, ...the Savior".

This passage is interesting, it reads like it is addressed to Israel until it comes to the part where it says "Verily Thou art a God that hides Thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." at which point it seems to be referring to God hidden in human flesh (Jesus).

Isah 25:7-12 And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth.

Yes, "this mountain" which Isaiah (an esteemed citizen of Jerusalem) is referring to, is the very mountain that Jesus will be crucified on hundreds of years later.

...And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; ...we have waited for Him, ...and He will save us: ...this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.

While those trusting in an absolutely sovereign God Who chose Israel to be His people, will look for a forceful salvation coming from Zion in this passage: ...others trusting in a God who loves them and has authority over all things (both physical and spiritual) will recognize this passage to be prophetic of Jesus and His work on our behalf (which took place in Zion).

For in this mountain shall the hand of the Lord rest, and He shall spread forth His hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim, and the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall He bring down, even to the dust.

*"and He shall spread forth His hands" (to the right and to the left)
Can you envision Him on the cross from this passage?*

Isah 7:14 Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, ...and bear a son, ...and shall call his name Immanuel.

Immanuel literally means "God with us"

Micah 5:2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; ...Whose goings forth have been from of old, ...**from everlasting**.

“from everlasting” ...that is, from “eternity” ...and only One has had His goings forth from eternity - and that is God - making the One born in Bethlehem, God Himself

Isah 9:6-7 For unto us a child is born, ...**unto us a son is given**: and his name shall be called ... Wonderful, ...Counsellor, ...The mighty God, ...The everlasting Father, ...The Prince of Peace. ...Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgement and with justice from henceforth even for ever.

Jesus was both born (became human) and claimed to be one with His Father (our God and Creator). ...This passage equates this prophesied child to “The mighty God, the everlasting Father”, ...so if Jesus is indeed the One Who this prophesy speaks of, it follows that He was not just sent, ...but “given” (offered up).

Isah 22:20-22 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call My servant **Eliakim the son of Hilkiah**: ...And I will clothe him with Thy robe, ...and strengthen him with Thy girdle, ...and I will commit Thy government into his hand: ...and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. ...And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.

While this passage is addressed to Shebna (the royal steward of Judah in the reign of king Hezekiah) as part of a reprimand by God and telling him that he will be replaced by another, it has a deeper meaning for those who see its cryptic prophecy relating to Jesus and His work.

For anyone seeing the phrase that “he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open”; and recognize it to be indicative of Jesus’ position regarding Heaven: the passage becomes a clear prophecy of Jesus and His work.

Upon further investigation of the title “Eliakim the son of Hilkiah” it will be discovered that “Eliakim” literally translates “raised up by God” (or “provided for by God”), and that “Hilkiah” literally translates “portion (that is, part of a whole) of Jehovah”: ...both descriptions that describe Jesus, ...and further confirm Him to be one with His Father (as He claims).

For those who recognize this passage to be speaking of Jesus, the passage attest to the threefold nature of God: with the “Holy Spirit” speaking and saying, “I will call My Servant” (servant being the “Son”): and I (the “Holy Spirit”) will clothe Him (the “Son”) with Thy (the “Father’s”) robe (meaning that He will be anointed by God), and strengthen Him (strengthen Him for what must be done if we are to be saved) with Thy girdle, and I will commit Thy government into His hand (the rule of God’s people will be placed in His hands) ...and the key of the house of David will I lay upon His shoulder; (that judgement will be deligated to Him) so He shall open, and none shall shut; and He shall shut, and none shall open (meaning He shall open the way to Heaven or close the door to Heaven and no one can influence it).

Isah 52:14-53:12 ...his visage was so marred, more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: ...So shall he sprinkle many nations; ...the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

...he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. ...He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. ...But **he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities:** the chastisement of our peace was upon him; ...and with his stripes we are healed.

...All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.

...he was cut off out of the land of the living: ...**for the transgression of my people was he stricken.** ...And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, ...neither was any deceit in his mouth.

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; He hath put him to grief: when **Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin**, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; ...for **he shall bear their iniquities.** ...he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; ...and he bear the sin of many, ...and made intercession for the transgressors.

Who is the “Lord’s suffering servant” in this passage?

...Those who follow a God of “signs and wonders” Who chose Israel to be His people cling to the belief that the suffering servant in this passage is Israel.

...While those who follow a God of “Self-giving sacrifice” (revealed to man through Jesus and what He has done for us) see this passage as a reference to Jesus and what He has done on our behalf in order to make our forgiveness by our Creator justifiably possible.

Psalm 22:1-24 My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? ...Why art Thou so far from helping me, ...and from the words of my roaring?**But Thou art holy.**

Jesus is recorded as having spoken these very words from the cross when He was crucified. Some may ask, if He was God Himself, why would He speak to God (the “Father”) asking why He was forsaken. ...But scripture also says that He had become sin for us (taking all of our sins upon Himself). ...If this is the case then the “Father”, being holy, had no choice but to turn His face away.

...But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver him: let Him deliver him, seeing He delighted in him.

Whatever these words may have meant when king David penned them, there can be absolutely no denying that they can be seen applying to Jesus at His crucifixion. ... This is precisely what the people said at His crucifixion.

...I am poured out like water, ...and all my bones are out of joint: ...my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. ...My strength is dried up like a potsherd; ...and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; ...and Thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

This passage describes a person being crucified.

...For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: ...they pierced my hands and feet. ...I may tell all my bones: ...they look and stare upon me. ...They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

This passage, though written hundreds of years earlier, could not be any closer to describing His crucifixion than if it had been written as the crucifixion was taking place.

...I will declare Thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation I will praise Thee.

For His (Jesus') brethren (those that belong to Him), Jesus' words and death proclaim who God the "Father" is.

...For He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; ...neither hath He hid His face from him.

In the light of Jesus' crucifixion (for our sakes); He (God) not only "hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted", but actually immersed Himself in the same, and much worse.

Salvation's Arrival

Jn 6:37-40

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; ...and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. ...For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him who sent me. ...And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. ...And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone which seeth (*recognizes*) the Son, and believeth on him (*what He is about / why He is here*), may have everlasting life; ...and I will raise him up at the last day.

Jn 3:14-15 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up (*crucified*): ...that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

Jesus makes an analogy between "looking" to His death for our sakes, and as provided for by God (the God of Self-giving sacrifice), to the account in Num 21:8-9, in which God provided that the backsliding children of Israel who were being bitten and killed by fiery serpents, could "look to" a bronze serpent on a pole, which Moses had been directed by God to prepare, and be healed simply by following God's instructions and "looking to" His provision.

In making this statement Jesus has associated Himself with the God Who provided the healing accounted for in Num 21:8-9.

Jn 3:16-17 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.

*Note: not 'sent', ...but "gave"
"For God so loved the world that He gave..."*

This scripture indicates that God is more than just an absolutely sovereign aloof entity, Who is unaffected with the needs of man.

Psalm 31:7-8 says, "I will be glad and rejoice in Thy mercy: ...for Thou hast considered my trouble; ...Thou hast known my soul in adversities; and hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy". ...Psalm 103:13-14 says, "Like a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. ...For He knoweth our frame; ...He remembereth that we are dust". ...Psalm 113:5-6 says, "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!" ...God says, in Isah 46:4, that, "I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you".

While God answers to no one and is free to do as He pleases by virtue of His position (that is, Who He is), He still has to answer to Himself. And because of His love for us, ...and concern for our weaknesses, He has provided a means for our forgiveness and reconciliation to Him, ...at His own expense.

Isah 52:6 Therefore My people shall know My name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am He that doth speak (...through the cross): ...**behold, It is I**

Mthw 1:20-21 The angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: ...for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. ...And she shall bring forth a son, ...and thou shalt call his name Jesus (*note that the name Jesus literally translates "God is salvation"*): for he shall save his people from their sins".

Note that scripture's very words are that "He shall save His people from their sins", not "people from their sins".

While John points out that He is the "Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world" (that is, the entire world), the soul-saving efficacy of His shed blood only applies to those who believe in it.

Mthw 11:27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: ...and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.

*This passage seems to indicate that you really can't know the "Father"
...until you know the "Son".*

Jn 5:22-23 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgement unto the Son: that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. ...**He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him.**

Psalm 21:8 states that "Thy 'right hand' shall find out those that hate Thee". Don't kid yourself, the expression "right hand" (the position of indispensability and honor) when referring to the God of Self-giving sacrifice, does refer to Jesus, His "Son".

Psalm 98:1-3 says, "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for He hath done marvelous things ...His "right hand", and His "holy arm" hath gotten Him the victory. The Lord hath made known His salvation: ...His righteousness hath He openly showed in the sight of the heathen. ...He hath remembered His mercy and His truth toward the house of Israel: ...all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God".

Note this: The "Father" does not judge; but has committed all judgement to the "Son".

...We will be judged by our response to Jesus alone.

...And this is fair judgement, in that it is Jesus (the "Word") and what He has both said and done, that has communicated with us through the flesh (that is, things that we can see and relate to on a fleshly level here in our own realm of existence).

Jn 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

In order for God the "Father" to draw you to Jesus; you would have to recognize your God in Jesus (His "Son"). And this recognition would have to come through recognizing Jesus' words as your God's words, and recognizing Jesus' actions as fulfilling the testimony that you recognize as coming from your God.

Jn 6:45-46 Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

Once again, if your drawn to Jesus then it is because you were first drawn to His "Father" which you recognize as your God.

Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

While you haven't actually seen your God, you do recognize Him, and are drawn to Jesus His "Son".

Jn 12:47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: ...for I came not to judge the world, ...but to save the world.
His mission is to save the world, ...not to judge it.

Mthw 18:11 For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

How will Men Respond ?

Mthw 13:10-15 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath (*that is, hath the Spirit of the God which Jesus represents - My sheep hear My voice, I know them, and they follow Me*), to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not (*the Spirit of Jesus' God*), from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

Jn 10:24-27 records Jews coming to Jesus and saying, "How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly". But Jesus answered, "I have already told you, and ye believed not". ...Then He clarifies, saying, "the works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me (corroborating the testimony of God's prophets): But ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep, as I said unto you; My sheep hear My voice, ...and I know them, ...and they follow Me."

Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand. For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

Make no mistake about it, the Jewish scriptures (the Bible's Old Testament) will give support to two different concepts regarding God, but only those who "have heard and learned of the Father" will come to Jesus, and will accept the concept of God that He manifests.

Jeremiah says in Jrnh 15:16, Thy words were found, and I (that is, my 'essence' or 'soul') did eat them (that is, internalize or take them unto myself); and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: ...for I am called by Thy name.

There are many possible 'voices' to hear in life. ...You can choose to hear the voice inside of you (self); but you must ask yourself, Where has it got you so far in life? ...You can choose to hear the voice of the 'world' (man in general); but you must ask yourself, Where is it headed? ...You can also choose to hear the voice of your Creator revealed through a Spirit/spirit inside your soul, which, as scripture testifies, you were born with, and which the contemplation of the testimony of recorded scripture will draw out.

If the voice of the scriptures associated with "the God of Self-giving sacrifice" appeals to your spirit, chances are that it is because "you are called by His name".

Mthw 12:38-40 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous (*un "faith" ful*) generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah: for 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.

Note that a sign or miracle is something that can be perceived by the flesh (physical eyes, ears, etc), ...it does not require faith to see a "sign".

Jesus (God) has already told us in Jn 4:24, that "God is Spirit", and can, therefore, not be perceived by the flesh. Jesus has further revealed to us in Jn 4:23-24, that God would have us come to Him (indeed, must come to Him) in "spirit and in truth". If we expect Him to show us signs for our faith to be placed upon Him, it is considered by Him to be evil and adulterous.

Furthermore, the kind of faith that relies on signs, will not endure; as can be pointed out in the backsliding of the children of Israel after God had brought them out of Egypt with many spectacular signs and wonders.

Jesus notes that the only "sign" that will be given in general to all of mankind is His resurrection from the dead. ...For some this will suffice, ...for some it is not even necessary if the voluntary giving of His life (even according to the Creator's established testimony) has them already convinced as to why He came and gave His life for us, ...and for some nothing will convince them.

Jn 10:24-30 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost Thou make us to doubt? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: ...**the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.** But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, ...and I know them, ...and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

...I and my Father are One.

Jn 5:36-38 **The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.** And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. ...Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: ...for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

Jn 8:19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: ...**if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.**

If you know Jesus, ...you know God the "Father".

Interesting that scripture records the Pharisees as asking Jesus "Where is thy Father?" with the word "Father" capitalized. ...Did they have that degree of respect for his father? ...Or is it indeed a scriptural reference to Jesus being the "Son" of our Creator?

Jn 10:37-38 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me (*that is, personally*), believe the works: ...that ye may know, ...and believe, ...that the Father is in me, ...and I in him.

He wants to be recognized, not for His words, but for doing the works of His "Father", ...and that that is the way that believers will recognize His association with God.

Does He indeed know, that upon contemplating His works (especially the giving of His life - even according to the testimony of God given for centuries before He came) that those who are destined to come to Him, will be drawn by the "Father", in spite of whether they first believe in Him or not? (Just look to Saul's conversion; who at first persecuted Him, and then became one of His greatest apostles.)

Jn 10:19-21 There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. ...And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him? ...Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. ...Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

Two classic responses to Jesus

Salvation's Work

Lk 9:51-56 And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. And sent messengers before his face, who entered a village of the Samaritans which would not receive him. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elijah did? ...But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, ...Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. ...**For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, ...but to save them.**

Mthw 16:21-23 From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, ...and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, ...and be killed, ...and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and he said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: ...thou art an offense unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

Peter's rebuke would have obviously appealed to the flesh of a man. ...The fact that Jesus recognized it as coming from Satan, and His response that the suggestion offended Him (knowing that it was not the will of His "Father"), attest to the fact that: ...Jesus was more than just an man, ...that He was on a mission from God the "Father", ...and that He was one with His "Father" in the mission that He was sent for.

Lk 9:30-31 And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elijah: who appeared in glory, ...and spake of his decease **which he should accomplish** at Jerusalem.

Moses representing the law and Elijah representing the prophets (*covering the entirety of God's revelation to man*) both spoke of His "death" which He should "accomplish" at "Jerusalem".

...This confirms that in God's plan, ...His own (*howbeit temporary*) "death" would be required, ...that He would "accomplish" it, ...and that it would happen in "Jerusalem" (*actually "Zion"*).

Jn 7:14-18 Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. And the Jews marveled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? Jesus answered them, and said, ...My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. ...If any man will do his will, He shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. ...He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

This passage can be applied to the evaluation of any entity coming to you and claiming to "speak for God" (be it individual or "Church" - magisterium). If they speak of themselves or their own authority instead of the One Who sent or commissioned them, then beware!

Jn 12:23-24 And Jesus answered them, saying, ...The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. ...Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: **but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.**

*Was Jesus aware of some hidden truth in human nature when He said "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit". **He died for us.** ...Does that register with you? (It registers with His sheep!)*

Jn 8:28-29 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up (*crucified*) the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. ...And he that hath sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things which please him.

*In Jn 7:3-6, Jesus' brethren said unto Him "Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest, ...for there is no man that doeth anything in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. ...If thou doest these things, show thyself to the world." ...But Jesus' response to these instructions was, ...**"My time is not yet come"**; ...and this, in spite of having performed many miracles to that point in time, indicating that "His time" had to do with something beyond performing miracles.*

*Lk 9:43-44 says, "While they wondered, every one, at all things (*miracles*) which Jesus did, He said unto His disciples, "Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men". (*He knew why He was sent and what would happen to Him. ...His mission wasn't to impress us with miracles, ...but to die for us, in order to fill the prescription for the forgiveness of men's sins, ...established even from the beginning of God's revelation to mankind.*)*

*In testifying of Jesus, the apostle Paul, in 1Cor 2:1-5 says, that he doesn't use "excellency of speech" or "enticing words of man's wisdom" to declare the testimony of God, and that he is determined not to esteem as important anything but... **"Jesus Christ, ...and Him crucified"**; ...that our faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, ...but in the power of God.*

Jn 15:4-5 Abide in me, and I in you. ...As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.
...For without me ye can do nothing.

The expression that we are the branches and Jesus is the vine, and except "we abide in the vine" we can bring forth no fruit, is a word of warning to any 'good souled' person who may be doing those things that our Creator would have you doing (like feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and caring for the sick).

God is saying, that if your sins (and all have sinned) are not covered by belief in Jesus' atoning death, your works (even on God's behalf) are in vain. This stems from the fact that God is "just" and cannot forgive your sins without belief in His "Son's" atoning death: ...metaphorically - "His hands are tied".

However anyone who is doing His will is known of Him, and will consequently be contacted by Him, and will be naturally drawn to Him, and will as a result recognize and accept His "Son's" atoning death; ...and will be saved.

Mthw 20: 17-19 And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.

It is evident that Jesus knew why He was sent, ...and what would happen to Him.

Lk 22:15-20 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it (the true "Passover") be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. ...And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, ...This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, ...This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

Once again, it is evident that He knew that He was near death, and that He knew the reason that He would die (...for the remission of the sins of whoever would believe).

Mthw 26: 36-39 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and sayeth unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then sayeth he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible...

"It" refers to the forgiveness of sins. The "Father" would have certainly spared His "Son" if the forgiveness of sins was possible by any other means. ...The fact that Jesus went through with the sufferings that He would have to endure for our sakes attest to the fact that forgiveness by any other means was not possible.

For those who understand, any eternal relationship between us (our souls) and our Creator, hangs in the balance at this point. Unless Jesus can resist the devil, using his strongest temptation of self-preservation and avoiding suffering (in this case extreme suffering unto death), there will be no possibility of us spending eternity with a holy God.

Speaking of the devil, and on a side note for those inquiring regarding Satan's interaction with Jesus recorded in Mthw 4:6 where Satan supposedly quotes Psalm 91:11-12 saying that God will give His angels charge over Jesus to keep Him from harm. Upon comparing Mthw 4:6 with Psalm 91:11-12, it will be discovered that Satan leaves out a critical clause in the passage when quoting it in his interaction with Jesus, in an attempt to turn men away from the 'truth' of Jesus' mission on behalf of men. ... This passage does not simply say, as quoted by Satan when speaking to Jesus, "He will give His angels charge over thee, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone" (*indicating protection from harm which would not bear out in fact*): ...but the passage says, rather, "He will give His angels charge over thee, ...**to keep thee in all thy ways**".

If Jesus' 'ways' are the reconciling of man to his Creator, which will require the death of His flesh, then this passage is truly prophetic in that the gospels record Jesus as very assertive in the face of physical harm up to the point of His crucifixion.

...let this cup pass from me: ...nevertheless not as I will, ...but as Thou wilt.

It is evident that He knew both that He would die, ...and that it was necessary.

For those who recognize the "Father" and "Son" to be "One", this request quite literally has God talking to Himself regarding His own choice between pain and suffering versus a relationship with us. ... The fact that He goes through with it demonstrates the depth of His desire for a relationship with us.

Lk 22:44

And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: ...and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Yes, ...He was suffering as a human!

It must be noted, that, while He is God (*the "Son"*); ...He suffered as a man! This passage is an indication of extreme stress experienced by a human.

On a personal note (*and confession*): as a child, and being brought up in a Christian home, I looked at the crucifixion of Jesus as nothing more than a prerequisite for His glorious resurrection, ...partially because God was all about glory and showing signs of strength (*the resurrection*), ...and of course dying would be necessary in order to rise again.

...Therefore all things that Jesus did led to His resurrection from the dead, which, to me, was the central event in His ministry and the ultimate sign of Who God is (*that is absolutely sovereign, and far above His creation*). Of course I believed that Jesus was fully God (*I must have missed all of the Bible's testimony to the fact that He was also fully man - so is the thinking of a "child"*), and would, therefore, feel no suffering upon being crucified.

...Unfortunately, the far greater "truth" that I missed as a child, which the "Holy Spirit" (*the "Spirit of Christ"*) revealed to me as a man, was the fact that the resurrection was not the central event of God's revelation to us (*and therefore Jesus' ministry*), but rather that it was at the crucifixion that God actually demonstrated just Who He is, and that the crucifixion actually demonstrates far greater strength and sovereignty than the resurrection ever could.

While I was guilty (*as a child*) of looking at Jesus as being fully God, ...there are those, on the other hand, who believe that Jesus was nothing more than fully human. For those who believe that He was nothing more than fully human, it is time to **“wake up”**. The scriptures record the suffering that He was going through long before He was placed in the hands of men (*where His doom would be sealed*). ...Because it is obvious enough that He (*as nothing more than a man*) had many opportunities to avoid the suffering that He would end up enduring, one must ask themselves, **Why did He do it, when He could have avoided it?**

The scriptures record that He even knew what manner of death He was facing long before actually facing it; ...and for any man (*or Being that is “fully human”*) that knows the horrors and suffering associated with a Roman crucifixion, they would obviously do all that is in their power to avoid it. So for those who believe that Jesus was nothing more than human, you must ask yourself...

...Why did He do it ?

Until you find an answer (*...or are given an answer in your soul*) you should not rest easy.

Mthw 26: 50-54 Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him. And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Think-est thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

Jesus, Himself, being God, would only have had to snap His fingers in order to melt down the entire universe in a billionth of a second; ...which speaks a lot to God's character and His love for us.

*Habk 3:3-4 says, God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. ...His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise. ...And His brightness was as the light; ...He had horns (nails?) coming out of His hand: ...and **there was the hiding of His power.***

*Isaiah speaks in Isah 45:14-15, saying, “Surely God is in thee; and there is none else, there is no God. **“Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself, ...O God of Israel, the Savior”**.*

... You decide for yourself if these two passages are referencing Jesus.

...But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

The way of man's salvation and reconciliation to God is entirely of God. He is both the author, and the One Who consummates the plan.

God left Himself testimony long before Jesus' passion that this was coming.

Jn 5:39-40 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

Jn 18:37 Jesus answered, To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.

...**Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice.**

He is speaking of His impending crucifixion and says "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth". ...Note that He associates the giving of His life with "bearing witness unto the truth".

The Central Event of All Time

Mthw 26:59 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; ...but found none.

Mthw 26:66 And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

...Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.

*He is condemned for claiming to be the Creator's Son.
...Blasphemy to some, ...and the truth to others.*

Mthw 27:22-26 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? ...But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.

Psalm 109:3-27 says, "They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause. ...For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer. ...And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love. ...I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shake their heads.

...That they may know that this is Thy hand; ...that Thou, Lord, hast done it.

For those who see these words as coming from Jesus, it is evident both that Jesus' passion and death are the work of our Creator, ...and that the God of "Self-giving sacrifice" is hated by this world without a legitimate cause.

When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: ...see ye to it.

Then answered all the people, and said, ...His blood be on us, ...and on our children.

Interesting expression - "His blood be on us"

While they meant that they were taking responsibility for his death, the wording is profound ...because in God's eyes it is true that His blood is on all of us: ...the question is

...are we guilty of it? ...or are we saved by it?

...Then released he Barabbas unto them: ...and when he had scourged Jesus, ...he delivered him to be crucified.

Mthw 27:35 And they crucified him.....

"And they crucified him": ...four simple words that can be quickly read...

*...but please don't take them lightly. Jesus physical and spiritual sufferings for our sake were extreme! ...Crucifixion is probably the cruelest form of execution ever devised in human history. It is an extremely painful death in which spikes are driven through the wrists and feet of the victim and their weight is supported on those spikes. ...Because the victim is nailed to the cross in a bent leg - outstretched arm position while on the ground, when they are raised up into a vertical position the body's weight is supported by the shallow angle that the arms form with the horizontal, increasing the tension force on the arms and shoulders many times that of the person's bodyweight, resulting in extreme pain where the spikes engage the wrists as well as at the shoulder and elbow joints as they are dislocated (*literally pulled apart*) all the while expanding the rib cage so that the victim cannot exhale (*which stops the breathing cycle*) with the only relief from this suffocation coming by placing more weight on the legs through contracting the muscles of the thighs in order to raise the body up to inhale, which, in turn, becomes more and more difficult as the thighs quickly become fatigued and weakened.*

Jesus' extra-dimensional suffering may have been greater than any man can fathom. For any believer that can fathom God's love for us, try to imagine His "Son's" suffering due to the temporary separation from this love during the crucifixion, while He became sin for us, and the "Father" turned His face away.

Mthw 27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, "My God, my God, Why hast thou forsaken me?"

*Some may ask, "If Jesus was God Himself why would He speak to God (*the "Father"*) asking why He was forsaken?"*

*It is in Psalm 22, which reads, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Why art Thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" (*verse 1*) that we find the answer in verse 3 of the same Psalm, which goes on to say. "...but Thou art Holy" (*verse 3*).*

*Scripture says that He (*Jesus*) had become sin for us (*taking all of our sins upon Himself*). ...If this is the case then the "Father", ...being holy, ...had no choice but to turn His face away.*

Jn 19:28 After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, **...I thirst.**

God has done His part in redemption's reality, and now "thirst" for us to do our part. ...Will we go on to get to know Him, ...to love Him, ...and to serve Him?

Jn 19:30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, **...It is finished:** and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

"It is finished" ...Redemption's work is done.

Note that God Himself has declared that His revelation to man is complete ("finished") at this point in time. ...No further revelation is necessary, ...prophets are no longer needed, ...the God associated with the cross has completed His revelation to men.

God, ...through His own efforts, ...has provided a means by which His love for us (in redeeming our souls from the consequences of sin which we all commit) can be reconciled to the justice that His character cannot deny. At Jesus' death on the cross, God took the punishment for our sins upon Himself, and died on our behalf, so that our sins might be justifiably forgiven and we might return to a relationship with Him forever.

God's realm (a Spiritual realm) can only be reached through faith. ...The God of "Self-giving sacrifice" has extended to us His own "approved standard" for placing our faith in, regarding entering His realm. Placing your faith in Jesus' death on the cross for your salvation is communicating across realms and telling God that you acknowledge Him as a God of Self-giving sacrifice, ...that you believe that Jesus (*Whom He spoke of, ...and sent*) is the "Father's" "Son", ...and that you believe that the two of Them consummated this act for your salvation. ...**This belief, on your part, is all He asks for.**

For those seeking a God of "Self-giving sacrifice" (and His promises made in scripture); Hope did not die at the crucifixion, ...but rather was confirmed at the crucifixion.

Mthw 27:54 Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, **...Truly this was the Son of God.**

Others said to the One Whose hands were "spread out all the day", ..."Stand by thyself, ...come not near to me; ...for I am holier than thou." (Isah 65:2-5)

Still others, seeing those things that were done, recognized to themselves that, through this act by God, ..."mercy and truth had met together" and that ..."righteousness and peace had kissed". (Psalm 85:10)

Heb 2:10-11 For it became him, **...for whom are all things, ...and by whom are all things, ...in bringing many sons unto glory ...to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.**

".....to be made perfect through sufferings."

A “closed loop” makes “complete” or “perfect”. ...God, through an act of His own will, has went to the opposite end of the spectrum of absolute being and power; which, as a result closes the “circle of being or existence”.

For those whose concept of God is, as a being who is above or removed from human suffering, this passage cannot be taken lightly. God, Himself, laid aside His immunity to pain. He entered our world of flesh and blood, tears and death. He suffered for us. He immersed Himself in human suffering unto death to save our souls because of His love for us.

In the light of His sufferings (...indeed, divine sufferings), our sufferings and all of the things that man has been forced to endure in this world become more manageable.

It should be noted that this personal experience with human suffering cannot be said of Allah, ...or Buddha, ...or any of the other concepts of God which have been presented to man throughout human history.

Did It Register With Men?

Jn5:41-47 *(speaking to those who do not recognize Him)* I receive not honor from men. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only? ...Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

Mthw 13:16-17 *(speaking to those who do recognize Him)* But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

Lk 24:13-27 And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, and they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

...And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how the chief priests and all our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel:

...and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulcher; and when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulcher, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

...Then he said unto them, ...O fools, ...and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ...Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

...And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

Did not God's previous revelation to man spell all these things out? ...Does anyone hear the prophets words? ...Are all so "slow of heart"? ...Didn't God's revelation say that Christ would suffer? ...and that He would do it for our salvation's sake?

Isah 53:1 Who hath believed our report? ...and to whom is the "arm" of the Lord revealed?

It is interesting that this passage, asking who believes God's established testimony and who recognizes the "Arm of the Lord" - Jesus, is placed right in the middle of the great passage from scripture referring to the Lord's suffering servant Whose soul will be given as an offering for sin.

The passage also suggest that few people will believe this passage as prophetic, ...and few will recognize Jesus to be the actual "Arm" of the Creator.

Jn 3:9-11 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

Jesus justifies the testimony of God's true prophets, saying, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen", ...but goes on to explain that "ye receive not our witness".

Regarding the reception of God's testimony that comes through both Jesus and the prophets; only those souls which have been given the ability to recognize the "Truth" ("Truth" that lies with God alone), after either being convicted of and/or convinced of the "Truth" through God's words and actions, will believe what God has revealed...

...and this conviction and/or convincing does not come easily. Some people simply do not think critically, and instead of receiving new testimony they will lean on the wishful, hopeful, or emotional thinking that brought them to the understandings that they put their belief in without even considering God's recorded words and actions. ...Others are followers who will say to themselves, "Our leaders will tell us what words to hear" and "What words not to hear". ...Still others, who while they may think critically, will instead of considering (or possibly even evaluating) the words that come to them, will, instead, look at the source of those words, and on account of self pride, will say to themselves of the one speaking, "thinks himself to be someone" ("who is he to advise me"), and will choose to ignore what is spoken.

Many people simply hear what they want to hear and lean on their own understanding and justify the conclusions that they come to regardless of the testimony that comes to them. ...Jesus, Himself, has noted, in Mthw 11:18-19, that "Wisdom is justified of her children", meaning that regardless of whether a witness comes to them displaying a particular behavior (...say "neither eating nor drinking") or displaying the opposite behavior (...say "eating and drinking") they will come to the same conclusions regarding those people.

Reflections on God's Work of Redemption

Ezkl 16:8 Now when I passed by thee, ...and looked upon thee (*when I considered man*), ...behold, thy time was the time of love (*I loved thee just the same*); ...and I spread My skirt over thee (*covered thee with the giving of that which was Mine*), ...and covered thy nakedness (*covered thy unworthiness - sins*): ...Yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, ...**and thou becamest Mine.**

Psalm 40:6-10 Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire: burnt offering and sin offering hast Thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: **...in the volume of the book it is written of me,** I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart.

...I have preached righteousness in the great congregation (*mankind*): ...lo I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, Thou knowest. ...I have not hid Thy righteousness within my heart; ...I have declared Thy faithfulness ...and Thy salvation: ...I have not concealed Thy loving-kindness ...and Thy truth from the great congregation (*mankind*).

Given the 'work' which Jesus is recorded to have done for mankind, ...and the reasons for which He has done that work, ...this passage is almost undoubtedly Jesus speaking through David's recorded words.

Isah 63:8-9 For He (*God*) said, Surely they are My people, children that will not lie: ...so He was their Savior. In all their affliction He was afflicted, and in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; ...and He bare them ...and carried them.

*God says, in Isah 43:1, "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee (*regained possession in exchange for payment*), ...I have called thee by thy name; ...**thou art Mine.**"*

Isah 52:10 The Lord hath made bare His "holy arm" in the eyes of all the nations; ...and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Jesus, openly crucified before the whole world!

God's work - a "pure" language to all mankind!

Psalm 118:16 The "right hand" of the Lord is exalted: ...The "right hand" of the Lord doth valiantly.

Psalm 21:8 Thy “right hand” shall find out those that hate Thee.

Isah 8:14-15 says, “And he shall be for a sanctuary: ...but for a stone of stumbling ...and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel. ...And many among them shall stumble, ...and fall, ...and be broken, ...and be snared, ...and be taken”.

*Lk 2:34-35 states that (Jesus) is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; **that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.***

*For those who recognize Jesus as God’s “Right Hand”, ...it is evident that His actions, through His death, have set the judgement that will differentiate who loves “The God associated with the cross” (**the God of Self-giving sacrifice**) ...and who hates Him.*

Jn 1:5-9 And the **light** shinneth in darkness; ...and the darkness comprehended it not.
...That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

Jn 3:19-21 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 everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, ...neither cometh to the light, ...lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, ...that his deeds may be made manifest, ...that they are wrought in God.

*Job, in Job 24:13, speaks of those “that know not God” (**verse 1**) as “those that rebel against the light: ...they know not the ways thereof, ...nor abide in the paths thereof”.*

*Those with God’s Spirit will be drawn to the “Light” (**Jesus**), ...while those who do not possess His Spirit will deny and turn from the “Light”.*

Mthw 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, ...thou that killest the prophets, ...and stonest them that are sent unto thee, ...how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, ...**and ye would not!**

God has done all that He can to reach out to us!

*Think about it: **What more can He give? - What more do we want?***

Jn 1:10-13 He was in the world, ...and the world was made by him, ...and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, ...and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, ...not of blood (*descendancy*), ...nor of the will of the flesh (*self*), ...nor of the will of man (*institutions*), ...but of God (*His sheep*).

Psalm 78:54 And He brought them to the border of His sanctuary, ...even to this mountain, which His “right hand” hath purchased.

For those that recognize Jesus to be the 'Right Hand' of God, this passage indicates that a sanctuary has been purchased by God Himself ...and its border (or entrance) is located on this mountain spoken of in this passage.

Psalm 50:2 Out of Zion, ...the perfection of beauty, ...God hath shined.

Some, directed by the spirit within them, will receive this passage as a statement of Jerusalem's beauty (or appeal) as the broadly accepted dwelling place of God on earth (His temple).

While others, directed by the Spirit within them, will receive this passage as a testimony to what God our redeemer ("Father"/"Son") has done, some 2000 years ago, at a garbage dump just outside the walls of Jerusalem Israel called Golgatha or Calvary (...the true location of 'Zion').

Sin blinds us to the absolute "perfection of beauty" in which God "shinned forth" on the cross. ...A beauty which is hidden in the symmetry of this act by God between the "Father" and the "Son". ...An act which makes manifest God's goodness toward His creation, ...His glory before His creation, ...and His love for His creation: ...when in Jesus' suffering on the cross; ...God's justice met with God's love, ...and God's mercy met with God's truth in a perfect balance at the cross, ...where God's longsuffering and faithfulness effected the redemption and reconciliation of those that belong to Him.

2Cor 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the **simplicity that is in Christ**.

Don't let anything distract you regarding your relationship with your Creator, ...from His message to you, ...from His provision for you, ...and the fact that He has done redemption's work through Jesus (...and His death):

...because it is simple (not complex).

Scriptural Passages Testifying to Jesus as God the "Son"

Jn 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, ...and the Word was with God, ...and the Word was God.

Jesus (and His voluntary death for our sake) is our Creator's ultimate communication with man: His "Word" to us. The word "Word" in this passage undoubtedly represents Jesus!

Isah 48:16-17 Come ye near unto Me, hear ye this; ...I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; ...from the time that it was, there am I: ...and now the Lord God, and His Spirit, hath sent Me.

...Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; ...I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, ...which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldst go.

The "Me" speaking in this passage says that He existed from the beginning ("from the time that it was, there am I"), ...that He was sent by the Lord God, and His Spirit ("and now the Lord God, and His Spirit, hath sent me"), ...and declares the titles "thy Redeemer", "the Holy One of Israel", and "the Lord thy God"; making clear that He is God, and yet separate from "The Lord God" and the Lord God's Spirit.

If this is indeed Jesus speaking (and it looks highly likely), then He is the One that will teach us to profit, and lead us in the way that we should go.

Psalm 2 Why do the heathen rage (why are people upset and in anguish at the condition of their world), and the people imagine a vain thing (peace on earth among men)? The kings of the earth set themselves (posture and set their positions), and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord (the Creator and Father of man), and against his anointed (Jesus, the One Who was sent), saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us (let us have nothing to do with Their ways).

...Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto me, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee". ...Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear (respect), and rejoice with trembling. ...Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way. ...Blessed are they that put their trust in him.

God's "anointed" and God's "king" in this passage could refer to either king David or Jesus. When the passage comes to God's "Son" however, the word is capitalized, eliminating king David as a possibility.

Psalm 45:7 Therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows.

"God's God" ...Note that this passage makes God distinct from Himself.

Psalm 110:1 The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thy enemies Thy footstool.

God talking to God. Hmmmmm!

Prov 30:4 Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in His fists? ...who hath bound the waters in a garment? ...who hath established all the ends of the earth?

...what is His name, ...and what is his son's name, ...if thou canst tell?

The answer to this question, "What is His son's name?" depends entirely on which concept of God you believe in. ...For those who follow a God of "signs and wonders", Israel is His "son". ...For those who follow a God of "Self-giving sacrifice", Jesus is His "Son".

Isah 64:4 For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, ...nor perceived by the ear, ...neither hath eye seen, ...O God, beside Thee (*referring to Jesus*), what He (*the "Father"*) hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him.

"Thee" and "He" in this passage both refer to God, ...and yet grammatically separate entities: HMMMMMM!

Zech 2:10-11 Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. ...And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee.

The "Lord" says that He will come and dwell with us, and that He will be sent by the "Lord of hosts"; ...making the two "Lords" in this passage distinct from each other.

Is the "daughter of Zion" the Jewish people? ...or is it all people who recognize and belong to their Creator (...and Savior) Who associates Himself with Zion?

Zech 14:3-4 Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations. ...And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem.

Note that the Lord God will stand upon the mount of Olives - and that He will have feet.

Rev 1:17-18 Fear not; ...I am the first and the last: ...I am he that liveth, ...and was dead.

Note that the "first and last" was also, at one point, "dead".

Isah 6-1 I (*Isaiah*) saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, ...high and lifted up, ...and His train filled the temple.

Isaiah saw his God "high" and "lifted up"

High" certainly could mean exalted, ...but "lifted up" can have two completely different meanings depending upon how you see your God.

In scripture the expression "lifted up" can mean either "exalted" ...or "crucified" (...two meanings as different as the two possible concepts of God).

*If the word temple is looked at by its old meaning of a "consecrated piece of ground", and the word "consecrated" has the meaning "declared sacred" which would apply to Zion (*which the Creator declared sacred*). Then the cross and the hill upon which it stood (*Zion*) can be looked at as the temple of God. ...Was His blood flowing down the cross and upon the hill upon which it stood "His train that filled the temple"?*

Scriptural Passages Testifying to Jesus' Passion

Zech 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion: shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: ...**he is just, ...and having salvation**; ...lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

This passage is addressed specifically to the "daughter of Zion"/ "Jerusalem", saying that their King (yes, it is capitalized in the recorded scripture) is coming: ...and that He is just ...and is bringing salvation.

The passage says that He/he will be identified as lowly and riding upon an ass.

Zech 11:12-13 And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. ...So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. ...And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. ...And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.

And the Lord said, "a goodly price that I was prized at of them". ...This passage says that God Himself was priced at 30 pieces of silver.

...Note that Jesus was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver.

Zech 13:7 Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, ...and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts:

This is God speaking, and He is calling for His shepherd and the "man" Who is His "fellow" ("fellow" being defined as "a person in the same position, ...involved in the same activity, or otherwise associated with another") to be smitten.

Isah 53, ...which speaks of the Lord's suffering servant, says, ...Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him.

...smite the shepherd, ...and the sheep shall be scattered: ...and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

Jesus was smitten, ...and His disciples scattered.

Psalms 69:6-12 Let not them that wait on Thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek Thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel. Because for Thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face. ...I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children. For the zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen upon me. ...When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach. I made sackcloth (a human body) also my garment; and I became a proverb to them. ...They that sit in the gate speak against me ("away with him, crucify him"); ...and I was the song of the drunkards.

These may be king David's recorded words, ...but there can be no denying that all of these words apply to Jesus and the way He was treated.

Psalm 69:19-21 Thou (*O God*) hast known my reproach, ...and my shame, ...and my dishonor: ...mine adversaries are all before Thee. Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: ...and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; ...and for comforters, but I found none. ...They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

*Once again, these words were recorded by king David centuries before Jesus arrived, but are so applicable to the way that He (*Jesus*) is recorded as having been treated that they can certainly be considered prophetic.*

Zech 12:1-10 Thus saith the Lord, ...which stretcheth forth the heavens, ...and layeth the foundation of the earth, ...and formeth the spirit of man within him. ...In that day I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: ...all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it. ...And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: ...and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, ...and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son.

God Himself testifying that He will be pierced.

Zech 13:6 And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thy hands? Then he shall answer, ...Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.

Psalm 34:20 He keepeth all His bones: ...not one of them is broken.

This passage, ...which is attributed to Jesus crucifixion, ...is very interesting because it literally reads as a thought inserted into the Psalm that it comes from - it simply does not fit in the text that it comes from - the flow isn't there.

For those who look for logical communication from God to us (... 'tell us plainly'), one would have to wonder why David included this phrase in this Psalm.

Amos 8:9 And it shall come to pass in that day (...*the day of the Lord God*), saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day.

Scripture records darkness from noon till 3 during Jesus' crucifixion.

Jn 6:51 And the bread that I will give is my flesh (*life*), ...which I will give for the life of the world.

Whom do You say that I the “Son of man” Am?

Recorded scripture does not ‘directly’ testify to the divinity of Jesus through capitalizing pronouns which could be taken to represent Him as divine. This is even according to the will of our Creator that all men (*their souls*) come to any conclusions regarding Jesus without being influenced by the capitalization of scripture’s words.

Jesus Himself says in Jn 10:37-38, that He wants to be recognized as being associated with God, not through His words, but rather through doing the works of His “Father”: and further points out that this is the way that believers will “*know, and believe, that the “Father” is in Me, and I in Him*”.

Mthw 13:54-57 And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, inso-much as they were astonished, and said, ...Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? ...Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? ...And they were of-fened in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house.

Mthw 16:13-18 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: ...some Elijah; ...and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets (*this includes modern day Muslims who take Jesus as nothing more than one of God’s prophets*). He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, **Thou art the Christ, ...the Son of the living God.** And Jesus answered and said, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

*Jesus points out that Peter did not come to this conclusion through his flesh (*his human reasoning and understanding*), ...but that rather it was a revelation through the Spirit directly to his soul from his Creator (*Jesus’ “Father”*).*

*In the immediate next verse (*Mthw 16:18*), Jesus tells Peter that “upon this rock I will build my church”; meaning that it is the revelation to a man’s soul from God the “Father” that will establish who are God’s sheep (*His “church”*).*

*Scripture confirms in many places (*Isah 43:21, Jn 17:6, Rms 8:29, Eph 1:4 and 2:8-10*) that those that will come to their Creator through Jesus and ‘His work’ have belonged to Him from the beginning.*

...And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

For some “the rock” in this passage refers to the “revelation to a man’s soul directly from his Creator”, ...to others is refers to the man “Peter”.

1Jn 2:27 But the anointing which ye have received of him (*God*) abideth in you, ...and ye need not that any man (*or institution*) teach you: ...but this same anointing (*Spirit placed in you by your God*) teacheth you of all things, ...and is truth, ...and is no lie, ...and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him (*Jesus - “your God”*).

God's Promises Held Out to Men

Isah 55:6-7 Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

Such a great invitation from our Creator Himself.

Psalm 89:
18-34 For the Lord (*Jesus*) is our defense; ...and the Holy One of Israel (*Jesus*) is our king. With whom My (*the "Fathers"*) hand shall be established.

...My faithfulness and My mercy shall be with him, ...and My covenant shall stand fast with him. ...His seed (*those that belong to Jesus*) also will I make to endure for ever.

...If his children (*those that belong to Jesus*) forsake My law, and walk not in My judgements; if they break My statutes, and keep not My commandments; then I will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes (*they will suffer for it*). ...Nevertheless (*nevertheless*) My lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, ...nor suffer My faithfulness to fail.

...My covenant will I not break, ...nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips.

*This passage essentially says that if you cling to Jesus and what He has done for you - our Creator's covenant: ...**you will be saved.***

Isah 33:20 Look upon Zion (*Golgotha - Calvary*), not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.

*A couple of promises regarding Zion: ...its anchors will stand fast,
...and the bonds that it forms will never be broken.*

Psalm 24:7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

*While king David, in the context of this passage, seems to be referring to the Lord's holy place (*Jerusalem, the temple*), it is also possible, reading metaphorically, that the "everlasting doors" (*that is, the doors of everlasting decision*) are the doors of your heart.*

*Jesus is recorded later in scripture (*Rev 3:20*), saying, Behold, I stand at the "door" and knock, if any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in and sup with him, and he with Me.*

Mthw 11:28-30 Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ...Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. ...For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

An invitation to rest through learning **of Him (...what He is about)**, ...and taking His yoke upon you (...letting Him guide you)

Jesus speaking in Isah 48:16-17, says, Come ye near unto Me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; ...from the time that it was, there am I: ...and now the Lord God, and His Spirit, hath sent Me. ...Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; **I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.**

On God's Judgement of "Little Ones"

Mthw 18:10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

Do you honestly believe that a God Who has demonstrated what the God of "Self-giving sacrifice" has demonstrated to mankind would not consider the situation of "little ones" (children and the mentally incapable, even those who have not heard) in His judgements?

Psalm 89:14 declares that "Justice and judgement are the habitation of Thy throne", and that "mercy and truth shall go before Thy face". If this is the case then God will recognize the "truth" that those without the cognitive ability to respond to, or those who have not heard of, His act of redemption performed for our sakes, will be considered in His judgements.

God did not put on human flesh and give His life for nothing: ...belief in this fact is His declared standard for judgement for all who are sinners. Perhaps those who do not have the cognitive ability, or have not been offered God's remedy for our cleansing are not capable of "sin" (...in His judgement).

God's Warnings To Men

Mthw 7:13-14 Enter ye in at the straight gate: ...for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, ...and many there be which go in thereat: because straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, ...and few there be that find it.

Phil 3:18-19 For many are the enemies of the cross of Christ: ...whose end is destruction, ...whose God is their belly, ...and whose glory is their shame, ...who mind earthly things.

Mthw 12: 31-32 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

Heb 10:28-29 comments and asks, saying, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

This passage warns against "treading under foot the Son of God (Jesus)" and "counting His shed blood for your sanctification as unholy" (nothing special); ...so confirming that these two items are at the core of what the Holy Spirit inside of you is testifying.

*So it is the rejection of His Spirit inside of a person which testifies to ...**who Jesus is** ...and **what Jesus has done for them** in giving His life for their reconciliation to God that is the unpardonable sin.*

Mthw 22:2-14 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. ...But they made light of it, ...and went their ways, ...one to his farm, ...another to his merchandise (...another to his promotions, ...another to his studies, ...another to his playstation, etc.): and the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.

...But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

...And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:

A garment is a covering, ...and the wedding is an obvious metaphor for Heaven. So the "wedding garment" refers to having a covering for standing in God's presence.

...God's word tells us that it is our sins that make us unworthy before our Creator and that only belief in the atoning death of His "Son", Jesus, for our sakes, can cover those sins.

...and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ...For many are called, but few are chosen.

Note that God said back in Zeph 1:8 that "in the day of the Lord's sacrifice" (that is, once Jesus has paid the price for the forgiveness of man's sins) that "I (God) will punish all such as are clothed with strange apparel".

This parable illustrates a sad reality, ...that God's word, in which He tells us that we are souls indwelling flesh while on earth, ...and that there is a realm (an eternal one) outside of what we see and understand, ...and that belief in His "Son" Jesus is the only "door" to

this realm; is only like a fable to most people, and that the things which we see are accounted as the only things substantial.

For those who "hear": We have been invited to a wedding, ...the "Groom" has already said "I do", and has professed His love for you in the strongest terms possible (He hung on a cross until death for you), ...He has promised to take your hand, and walk with you and talk with you (in love) while the two of you serve the less fortunate (in compassion) together on this earth, ...and to carry you when you need carrying, ...and finally to take you back to His home in eternal union. ...He only awaits your "I do".

Jn 14:4-6 And whither I go ye know, ...and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto Him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him...

I am the way, ...the truth, ...and the life:

...no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Note that He says, "No man comes unto the Father, but by me." He does not say "No man comes unto God, but by me."

Note that the word "Father" shows relationship. A "Father" must have a child (son or daughter). If the One that Jesus refers to as His "Father" is the only true God then "No man comes to the only true God except through Jesus". If you want to go to the One that Jesus calls His "Father" then it is Jesus' testimony that you must come to His "Father" through Jesus.

If you do not trust in Jesus' words (which are backed by what He has done for you, even in accordance with His "Father's" foregoing testimony) then you may still go to your God, but be forewarned that "your God" may just exist only in your understanding. Jesus' "Father", on the other hand, exists in the voluntary giving of Jesus' life in a Roman crucifixion (which no mere man would have done) even according to the foregoing testimony of His "Father".

General Warnings

Jn 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared Him.

Jn 4:23-24 The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. ...**God is Spirit:** and they that worship Him must worship Him ...in spirit ...and in truth.

Psalm 145:18 says that "The Lord is nigh to all that call upon Him ...in truth!"

Jn 15:1-2 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Mthw 15:10-14 And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. ...For those things that proceedeth out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, ...murders, ...adulteries, ...fornications, ...thefts, ...false witness, ...blasphemies: ...these are the things which defile a man: ...but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

...Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. ...Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. ...And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

Mal 3:14-18 Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.

...(But) a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. ...Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, ...between him that serveth God ...and him that serveth Him not.

Isah 29:8 It shall even be as when a hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite: ...so shall the multitude of all nations be, that fight against mount Zion.

While this passage makes an analogy of the results that those who fight against Ariel (Jerusalem) will receive, it has a different meaning for those who recognize what God will bring to pass in Zion (the actual place which Isaiah is speaking of).

...Fight against Jesus and what He has done at the cross - and come away empty.

Mthw 15:8-20 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. **But in vain do they worship Me, ...teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.**

Mthw 10:34-39 Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. ...He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: ...and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ...And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. ...He that findeth his life shall lose it: ...and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

Make no mistake: ...What Jesus has done for us at the cross will divide men into two groups!

Mthw 10:32-33 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

For those who hear His voice, ask yourself if you're ashamed to use His name? ...and if so, why? ...He died for you. ...If a friend of yours stepped up and died for you (that is, in your place), would you use their name? ...would you tell others what they did for you?

...If so, why not Jesus?

2Tim 3:1-5 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, ...covetous, ...boasters, ...proud, ...blasphemers, ...disobedient to parents, ...unthankful, ...unholy, ...without natural affection, ...trucebreakers, ...false accusers, ...incontinent, ...fierce, ...despisers of those that are good, ...traitors, ...heady, ...highminded, ...lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

How many of these can you actually see in the current society?

2Tim 4:4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; ...and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

Just look at how many perversions (born of our own lusts) are now acceptable in society.

Mthw 7:15-17 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. ...Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

2Ptr 2:1-3 But there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them. ...And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of the truth shall be evil spoken of.

The simple truths of the Gospel will be challenged primarily by men who do not possess His Spirit.

Isah 5:21-23 Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

Isah 32:6 For the vile person will speak villainy, and his heart will work iniquity, to practice hypocrisy, and to utter error against the Lord, ...to make empty the soul of the hungry, ...and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail.

1Tim 1:6-7 notes that "some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling: desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm."

The fruit of those “uttering error against the Lord” is the “emptying of the soul of the hungry” and the “failing of the drink for those who thirst”.

Isah 47:8-10 Therefore hear now this, thou that are given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me. Thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me.

“ I am, and none else beside me.” - this is the position of the self-centered. ...They don't care what happens to others, ...or how others are effected by their actions.

Isah 30:1 Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of Me; and that cover with a covering, but not of My spirit, that they may add sin to sin.

Come now, let us reason together; do you honestly believe that a “covering” born of our works will shelter us from God?

...Only a “covering” born of His Spirit (His “works”) will cover us.

Mthw 24: 23-24 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. ...For there shall arise false Christs, ...and false prophets, ...**and shall show great signs and wonders**; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

A word of warning from God Himself, great signs and wonders will be seen again upon the earth, but will be used to separate which of the two Gods depicted in scripture that each individual is trusting in. ...These great signs and wonders will obviously have a greater draw to those trusting in a God of “signs and wonders”.

For those trusting in a God of “Self-giving sacrifice” (Jesus being this God) Jesus' words and warning will secure their trust despite great signs and wonders (which will come).

It should be further noted that Moses wrote back in Deuteronomy 13:1-5 that if a prophet gives a sign or wonder which comes to pass “whereof he speaks, saying, let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them”; that it is a test from God (the true God) to see if they love the Lord their God with all of their heart and soul.

This passage seems to indicate that “signs and wonders” can (possibly) be used to lead you away from “your god” (...whether He be a god of “signs and wonders” ...or a god of “Self-giving sacrifice”).

God's Advise to Men

Mthw 7:24-27 Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house (his faith in and relationship with God are being tested); and it fell not: ...for it was founded upon a rock.

And everyone that heareth (*He means receives and agrees with*) these sayings of mine, and doeth them not (*does not put them to practice despite agreeing with them*), shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

Mthw 6:19-21 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

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

Your heart lies with your treasure - whether that treasure is in heaven or on earth.

Mthw 6:24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.

...Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

You cannot serve both God and the pursuit of possessions, ...or gain.

Mrk 10:24-25 But Jesus answered again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

Temporal blessings (like money) cater to our flesh, and therefore lead us away from God and His ways. ...Recall Job's observations (Job 21:7-15) of the wicked who enjoy temporal blessings (like good health, riches, safety, easy lives), How they say unto God, "Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways". ..."What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him?" ...And "what profit should we have, if we pray unto Him?"

Deuteronomy 8:17-19 further points out that temporal blessings tend to make a person lifted up in their own heart where they say, "My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth" ...and they forget the Lord their God.

Temporal blessings can also seduce us into not contemplating or acting on the plight of others, and to rather take comfort in our own well-being and blessings.

1Tim 6:7-10 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

...But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

1Jn 2:16-17 For all that is in the world, ...the lust of the flesh, ...and the lust of the eyes, ...and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ...And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: ...but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

For those who hear it, this is a word of warning about where we should be devoting our time on earth. ...Even for those who don't hear it, their own experience should tell them that the material things that we own eventually get old and boring, and that the accolades that we receive for our accomplishments eventually fade, and that in the end these things leave little to show for the time invested. ...And our time is limited.

Mthw 5:43-48 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: ...for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. ...For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? ...do not even the publicans the same?

For those who recognize Jesus as God, this is manifestly God's behavior backing these words. ("Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.")

Mthw 12:43-45 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: ...and the last state of that man is worse than the first.

This passage should serve as a warning to anyone who has been rescued from an "unclean spirit" within (an adulterer, thief, extortioner, etc). Unless you fill the resulting gap in your soul with a spirit stronger than the one(s) removed (i.e. only God's Spirit is greater), then you will find that the unclean spirits will return and the end state of your soul will be even worse than its original state.

Peter, further points out, in 2Ptr 2:19, that if, after having escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, those who live in error are again entangled therein, and overcome, that their latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

Lk 12:47-48 And that servant, which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to His will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

...For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required.

Mthw 5:13 Ye are the salt (preserving influence) of the earth: ...but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under the foot of men.

When we no longer exercise a preserving influence on the world around us, through manifesting God's Spirit to the world, then we become useless in God's plan and will eventually be overcome ("trodden upon") by the spirit that is in the world (the spirit of men) which will end up resulting in God (and His ways) having no place in our world.

Lk 21:34-36 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

*A day will come when God will shut the "Door",
...and people will be found on one side or the other.*

Jn 21:15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith unto Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? (*"these" - being the fish which Peter had just returned to*)

This passage is included as a warning regarding commitment.

Ezkl 16:49 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom; ...pride, ...fulness of bread, ...and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, ...neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

A warning of what seduces away from God.

Recap of What He has Done for Us

Acts 13:26-39 Men and brethren, ...children of the stock of Abraham, ...and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him. And though they found no cause of death in him, yet they desired Pilate that he should be slain. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulcher. ...Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: **...and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.**

The word of salvation is sent to all those who fear (respect) God, ...and the passage also serves as a warning that just because you study or hear the scriptures given does not mean that you will find the true God...

Ultimately, what a person comes away with when reading the old testament will depend entirely upon the spirit within that person. ...Jesus was taken as nothing more than a blaspheming crazy guy, who despite being completely innocent (even loving toward the people who hated him) was crucified by them, ...while a village of Samaritans (Jn 4:42) after spending only a few days with Him declared that "He really was the savior of the world".

...all having read the same scriptures.

Good or bad, ...right or wrong, ...*(God's Spirit or man's understanding)*: you will surely find what the spirit inside **you** is looking for.

"...children of the stock of Abraham" Scripture records Abraham as a man of faith not seeking after "signs and wonders" but rather acting on faith. Could it be that his 'children' will seek the same God when searching for salvation?

Rev 13:8 ...the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

"The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

An interesting passage with some profound implications that reveal some profound truths. ...First, that the "Lamb" existed from the foundation of the world, ...and is therefore God.

...Second, that He (*the "Lamb"*) was slain or was ordained to be slain "from the foundation of the world". ...Implying that it was foreordained that the Lamb (*God*) would give His life for us, ...and that this concept found its authorship and consummation in God. (*Perhaps God knew that those who belong to Him would only recognize Him for Who He is across realms through His giving of His own life for them.*)

...Third, it indicates that God knew, ...even from the beginning, that man, would fall short of God ...and would therefore have to be redeemed.

Psalm 118: 22-23 The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

"Refused" by those following the law of Moses (*those following the God of "signs and wonders"*), ...but the very foundation of salvation for humanity.
(*"Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight".*)

Lk 17:20-21 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, ...the kingdom of God is within you.

They were looking for an earthly kingdom. ...Jesus was ushering in a spiritual kingdom.

"God's Anointed"? / "David's Seed"?

Psalm 89: 35-46 Once have I sworn by My holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me. ...**It shall be established forever.**

God's promise to David. So why the following immediate next verse...

...But Thou (*God*) hast casteth off and abhorred, Thou hast been wroth with Thine anointed (*David - Israel*). Thou hast made void the covenant of Thy servant: Thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground.

Apparently king David is not being blessed as expected. ...Is it possible that God's "Anointed" and "David's seed" refer to another?

How long, Lord? ...wilt Thou hide Thyself forever? ...shall Thy wrath burn like fire?

If the supplicant is still looking for a response through the blessing of David the king, on account of misunderstanding God's promise to David (...or even, perhaps, who "David" actually represents), then he may never get the answer he is looking for.

Just as a note: The name "David" which derives from the Hebrew word "dod" means "beloved", and could certainly refer to Jesus in the "eyes" of His "Father". ...If it turns out that our Creator is the "God of Self-giving sacrifice" instead of the "God of signs and wonders" then this passage is a promise from the "Father" to the "Son".

Ezkl:34:23 And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even My servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.

Note that the word "David" derives from the word "dod" and means "beloved". If this is the "Father" speaking, He could certainly be referring to His "Son".

Which God are You Placing Faith in ?

For what it may be worth for humans driven by their own self-determination, scripture does declare that there is only one God. Whether He is manifested in singularity or plurality depends on the spirit within each individual.

Even more importantly is whether He is a God of power over His creation Who communicates with us through our flesh (*senses*) through "signs and wonders" (*as Jewish scripture declares*) or if He is instead a God of "Self-giving sacrifice" that communicates through the spirit directly to our souls through faith (*as Jesus declares*).

If there is only one God then the "other" God revealed in recorded scripture must be an abstract or concept brought about through man's own self determination.

Is Satan behind this other concept of God? Satan, whether he exist in reality or not, does seem to be closely related to "self" (*self-will, self-determination*). ...He is recorded in Genesis 3:1-6 as being responsible for "tempting" man to disobey his Creator (*God*) through suggesting that man determine for himself what God's actual commands were (*"hath God said"?*). ...He is recorded in Isaiah 14:12-17 as being self-centered to the point of exalting himself as "like God", with verse seventeen even declaring that he has taken "prisoners" - souls so devoted to their own self-will and self-determination that they cannot "see" their actual Creator any longer, ...making them "prisoners" on the spiritual level - where man's essence actually lies.

Psalm 33:4 **For the word of the Lord is right; ...and all His works are done in truth.**

Which "(W)word of the Lord? ...the Jewish scriptures? ...or Jesus' words and actions

Psalm 145:10 All Thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord.

His "works" speak to Who He is. ...His "works"; not the things which He has created.

Psalm 146:10 The Lord shall reign for ever, ...even thy God, O Zion.

*Both concepts of God as depicted in the scriptures are associated with Zion.
...One concept is associated with the temple, ...and the other with the cross.*

Psalm 138:2 I will worship toward Thy Holy temple, and praise Thy name for Thy lovingkindness and for Thy truth: ...For Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy name.

*Which "temple"? ...Solomon's (physical) ...or Jesus' (the cross)
Which "word"? ...God's laws (the law) ...or His "Son" (mercy and grace)*

Isaiah 41:8-18 But thou, Israel, art My servant, ...Jacob whom I have chosen, ...the seed of Abraham My friend. Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art My servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away. Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the "right hand" of My righteousness.

Who is "Israel" in this passage?

This passage says that God has taken Israel "from the ends of the earth". ...For the Jews "Israel" are God's chosen people, who He saved from bondage in Egypt and who He said would be their God. ...For those who believe in a God of Self-giving sacrifice, "Israel" is metaphorically His chosen people who belonged to Him before they were born.

It is worth considering that the characterization of the person "Jacob" ("Israel") in recorded scripture includes being described as a "supplanter" (one that takes over the place of someone else). ...If our Creator turns out to be the God of Self-giving sacrifice, as Christians believe, instead of the God of "signs and wonders"; then they (Christians) obtain the promises made to the Jews in scripture and become "Jacob" or "Israel" in truth.

Just look to the allegory of Esau (who despised his 'birthright') and Jacob (who usurped both it and his father's blessing) to that of Christians, rather than Jews (who were the 'first-born'), obtaining God's promises and blessings.

Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish.

This statement could apply to both concepts of God.

Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

While the God of this passage assures Israel that their enemies will perish and that He will help them, He also refers to "Jacob" (Israel) as a "worm", showing disdain. This would be consistent with an absolutely sovereign God Who doesn't need Israel (the Jews) but has chosen to be their God.

Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shall make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.

Question? Do the expressions "threshing" and "having teeth" in this passage refer to the ability to beat down enemies, ...or do they refer to having the capacity to manifest God's truth to the end that it separates the desired part of mankind from the undesired part?

When the poor and needy shall seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.

Do the expressions "poor and needy seeking water" in this passage actually refer to poor needy people in need of water, ...or do they refer to all men who acknowledge that they are 'poor and needy' being delivered from their conditions as lost sinners?

Psalm 79: 1-13 O God, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance; Thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps. We are become a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us.

With this opening line, it is obvious that the supplicant in this passage believes that God is jealous of ...'His chosen people', ...'His inheritance', ...'His city' and ...'His temple'; and will therefore be vengeful of 'His' people, inheritance, city, and temple.

...How long, Lord? ...wilt Thou be angry forever? ...shall Thy jealousy burn like fire? Pour out Thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known Thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not known Thy name. For they have devoured Jacob, and laid waste to his dwelling place.

The supplicant is asking God for vengeance against those that have not known the God of Jacob, because they have afflicted Jacob (defiling the temple, destroying Jerusalem, and mocking Jacob).

It should be noted that Jesus is recorded as saying to 'pray for your enemies, and those who despitefully use you, and persecute you; ...that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven'.

This contrast makes it evident (for what it may be worth) that the supplicant in this passage is not praying (from his soul) to the One that Jesus calls His 'Father', and consequently if Jesus' "Father" is the only true God, the supplicant's prayers will never be answered.

...O remember not against us former iniquities: let Thy tender mercies speedily go before us with spiritual guidance and help: for we are brought very low. Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Thy name: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for Thy name's sake.

An appeal to His mercy, despite acknowledging former iniquities; and request to purge away their sins for His name's sake (not a 'just' solution for forgiveness).

The supplicant is obviously not praying to a God "Who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son"... (a 'just' solution for forgiveness)

Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is their God? ...let Him be known among the heathen in our sight by the revenging of the blood of Thy servants which is shed. And render unto our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom their reproach, wherewith they have reproached Thee, O Lord.

An appeal to how God's reputation is looking before the heathen? ...and that He should respond through revenge.

Note that the supplicant believes that by afflicting God's people, inheritance, city, and temple, they are reproaching God Himself.

Psalm 90: 3-17 Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men. Thou carriest them away as with a flood. For we are consumed by Thine anger, and by Thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee. For all our days are passed away in Thy wrath. Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent Thee concerning Thy servants.

Once again, as in previous Psalms of supplication (this one attributed to Moses), the supplicant is bemoaning what he considers God's wrath being poured out on His people because of the life situation that they are in, not considering God's recorded testimony that they are bringing this suffering upon themselves.

...And establish Thou the work of our hands upon us:**yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it.**

I separated out this verse, because it may lend a clue as to why God's people are suffering, and why the supplicant is looking for the wrong answers in his prayers.

If it is the people's works that are separating them from God (as He indicates many places in the scriptures), then it is the very 'work of their hands' that is causing God to hide His face from them in the first place; and the supplicant's prayer is being answered in that the works of their hands are establishing the response which they are receiving from God (the very thing which he is seeking after in his supplication).

Psalm 110:1-6 The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool. ...The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: ...rule thou in the midst of thy enemies. ...Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness. ...The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. ...He shall judge among the heathen, ...he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; ... he shall wound the heads over many countries.

Who is this Psalm addressed to? The “rod of who’s strength” out of Zion? What exactly does it mean to “rule thou in the midst of thy enemies”? Who is the “Lord at thy right hand”? What does it actually mean that “He shall judge among the heathen”? ...“he shall fill the places with the dead bodies”? ...“he shall wound the heads over many countries”? What does it mean that “thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power”?

The answers to all of these questions depend entirely on the God that you seek. For some the God of “signs and wonders” will send a warrior Messiah who will deliver Israel from their oppressors, and Israel will be willing to join him in battle. For others the God of “Self-giving sacrifice” will send a Messiah who will deliver all men who believe in Him from the things that they do not see or understand, and His “sheep” will join Him in “battle”.

Psalm 149:4-9 For the Lord taketh pleasure in His people: He will beautify the meek with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, ...and a twoedged sword in their hand; ...to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; ...to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; ...to execute upon them the judgement written: this honor have all his saints. ...Praise ye the Lord.

This Psalm starts out saying that the Lord God takes pleasure in His people and that He will save the meek (this statement could apply to both concepts of God). ...After this, however, it calls for His saints to execute “vengeance” upon the heathen, which is inconsistent with the words of Jesus regarding enemies.

Psalm 89: Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound (*that is, that hear God’s voice*): they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance. In Thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted. For Thou are the glory of their strength: and in Thy favor our horn shall be exalted, For the Lord is our defense; and the Holy One of Israel is our king.

For some the “Lord” and the “Holy One” of Israel refer to the God of “signs and wonders” ...while for others the two expressions refer to the God of “Self-giving sacrifice”, manifested in Trinity (...“Father”, ...“Son”, ...and “Holy Spirit”): and the difference makes all of the difference in how these words are received.

Then Thou speakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David, My servant; with My holy oil have I anointed him: with whom My hand shall be established. ...My faithfulness and My mercy shall be with him, and My covenant shall stand fast with him.

For some this passage refers to king David, ...for others it refers to Christ Jesus the Messiah (God’s own “Son”).

It should be noted that the name “David” which derives from the Hebrew word “dod” means “beloved”, and could certainly refer to Jesus in the “eyes” of His “Father”.

...If it turns out that our Creator is actually the “God of Self-giving sacrifice”, Whom Jesus represents, instead of the “God of signs and wonders” then the promises of God’s faithfulness and mercy stand with Jesus, ...not king David.

...His seed also will I make to endure for ever.

For some this passage refers to Israel, ...for others it refers to those that belong to Jesus.

...If his children forsake My law, and walk not in My judgements; if they break My statutes, and keep not My commandments; then I will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. **...Nevertheless My lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, ...nor suffer My faithfulness to fail. ...My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips.**

For those that recognize only the God of "signs and wonders", these words speak of King David and God's enduring support for His chosen people Israel:

...but for those who recognize only the God of "Self-giving" sacrifice this passage says that if you cling to Jesus and what He has done for you at the cross (our Creator's covenant), that you will be saved, despite suffering for your continued sinfulness here on earth.

Psalm 109:
3-27 They compassed me about also with words of hatred; ...and fought against me without a cause. ...For my love they are my adversaries: But I give myself unto prayer. ...Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand. ...When he shall be judged, let him be condemned. ...Let there be none to extend mercy to him. I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shake their heads.

...That they may know that this is Thy hand; ...that Thou, Lord, hast done it.

Some believe that these words speak of Israel (or king David), ...while others believe that they speak of Jesus and His passion.

For those who see these words as applying to Jesus and His passion, it is evident that Jesus' passion and death are the work of our Creator.

Psalm 35:11-16 False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not. ...They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul. ...But as for me, when they were sick (*lost in their sins*), my clothing was sackcloth (*God put on flesh to save us*): ...I humbled my soul with fasting (*Self denial*); and my prayer returned into my own bosom. ...But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: yea, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not: ...they did tear (*whip*) me, and ceased not; with hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth (*they were violently mad at Him*).

While this Psalm was written by king David and can be read as David bemoaning the persecution that He was receiving at this time in his life; just look at how it compares with the persecution which Jesus received when the words "sick", "sackcloth", "fasting", and "tear" are interpreted by a believing Christian.

Psalm 80:17 Let Thy hand be upon the man of Thy right hand, upon the "son of man" whom Thou madest strong for Thyself.

This passage seems to equate the **man of God's right hand** and the **"son of man"**.
 ...If the "Son" Jesus is the Father's "Right Hand" then it follows that He is also the "son of man" referred to in this passage, and that he was made strong for the Father's sake.

Given what Jesus is recorded as having suffered for our sakes, and what His mission was (*the reconciling of man to God through His death*), it is hard to argue that Jesus was not just made strong "for God", ...but was also made strong "for us" (*man*).

Mechanism of Salvation

Jn 13:8 **Jesus (God) said, ...If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.**

If I do not cleanse thee from thy sins, thou hast no part with Me.

Lk 23:39-43 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

Jesus' very words confirm that this malefactor was, indeed, saved. While saving faith typically expresses itself through doing the "Father's" will, this malefactor was not in a position to bring forth any greater fruit than belief.

*...Which brings up the question: **What is the mechanism of salvation?***

*Is it faith in Jesus and what He has done for you? or does your faith lie in obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel? ...Does your justification lie in the personal righteousness of Christ? (**In which case you acknowledge that God alone is your savior.**) or is your own righteousness established through your obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel? ...Does belief in Christ death for your sake justify your person? or does that belief justify your actions, and your person for your actions sake? (**Paul the apostle comments in Gal 5:4 that Christ becomes of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; noting that "you are, therefore, fallen from grace."**)*

We are not justified by our actions, but by our belief...

...which, in turn, drives our actions.

*To say that our actions (**obeying the laws and ordinances of the gospel**) justify our belief is like putting the cart before the horse. Our belief (**the horse**) drives our actions (**the cart**). Just as the cart cannot move apart from the horse, no more can your actions establish your righteousness apart from your belief.*

*Just as Jesus says in Jn 15:5: **"Apart from Me, ye can do nothing"**.*

1Cor 1:17-24 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. ...For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; ...but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

...For the Jews require a sign, ...and the Greeks seek after wisdom: ...but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Some men require a "sign" (miracle) in order to believe, ...other men require "reason" (science and human understanding) in order to believe, while there do remain a "few" who possess a spirit deep down inside of them, which enables them to recognize Who they belong to when introduced to Him; ...an introduction that comes through the giving of His life for them (the cross).

...To Love Him

Where do we go from here?

We know Him through what He is recorded to have done for us. For those that recognize and acknowledge what He has done for us, they can't help but love Him for it. ...It is said of true Christians that the "cross is always before them" (*their meditations at all times are on what He has suffered for them*): and that this understanding and belief, in turn, ...drives them to serve Him, ...helps them endure their own sufferings, ...and helps them cope with the sufferings of others whom they serve.

Deut 32:9 **...For the Lord's portion is His people;**

God's people are His portion in His creation. ...They are what He gets out of it.

Tit 3:3-5 For we ourselves were sometimes foolish, ...disobedient, ...deceived, ...serving diverse lusts and pleasures, ...living in malice and envy, ...hateful, ...and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.

*Our Creator made the first move. For His great love for us and compassion on our weaknesses, He put aside His position of absolute sovereignty and went to the absolute opposite end of position and suffered undoubtably the worst case of suffering known to man ...**for us!** ...If you believe this, can you help but love Him for it!*

...To Serve Him

Jn 14:21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Jesus knows that we love Him through our keeping His commandments, and His "Father's" love for us, which was there from the beginning, is consummated through our love of His "Son" which He knows through our believing in Him and keeping His commandments.

...As Jesus loves you He will make Himself known to you.

Jn 13:34-35 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. ...By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

He is not giving us a list of "Do's and Dont's", or telling us to attend church services every Sunday morning, or to fast and deny ourselves things in His name, or to merely study His word or sing His praises; ...but He is telling us to "love one another".

He further goes on to say how we are to love one another: that is, "as I have loved you". Think carefully about how He has loved us. He left the glory that He had with His "Father" in Heaven to come down here and take our infirmities upon Himself (which He did not have to do); and in taking the penalty for our unworthiness before our Creator, He did for us what we could not do for ourselves; ...and His sufferings for our sake were incomparable.

Mthw 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them (those loving their fellow man), Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.

He ask us to manifest our love for Him through loving the least of those His brethren.

Isah 42:6-7 I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; ...to open the blind eyes, ...to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.

These are directions to a servant, and they're coming from God Himself.

The 'servant' could be either the elect Servant Whom God upholds and in Whom His soul delights in, spoken of in verses 1-4, or it could be those among men who believe in the God Who is speaking: ...either way He/they will act for a covenant of the people, and a light to the rest of the world.

Jn 15:16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, He may give it you.

Our Creator is looking for fruit from His field (the earth). God's 'fruit' is not material things, but love shown through compassion for others (the very things which He demonstrates Himself). ...He has chosen all that He has called long before they responded to Him. The 'fruit' that we produce in His name and for His sake will remain (it will affect the 'field' - the earth and its people).

Mthw 5:14-16 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. ...Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

We are the light of the world only as long as the true Source of light is in us.

Isah 60:1-2 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, ...and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

Isaiah placed these words immediately after saying that God's Spirit and words would continue forever; so they are directed at those guided by the same Spirit which God placed upon Isaiah.

These words instruct those guided by this same Spirit to get up and move ("arise") and to manifest this Spirit to the world ("shine"). And why do this? ...because "our Light hath come".

For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: ...but the Lord shall arise upon thee, ...and His glory shall be seen upon thee.

*"and His glory shall be seen upon thee." ...we must ask ourselves, **Is it?***

2Cor 5:15 They which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them.

Paul tells us, in 2Cor 13:5, to "Examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith; to prove our own selves, whether Jesus is in us or not". If His Spirit indwells you, you will strive to put off sin in your life, ...and bring forth fruit unto God.

This does not mean that just because His Spirit indwells us, that we cannot still be burdened with sin...

Note that the apostle Paul says, in 2Cor 12:7-9, after revealing how much he had personally suffered on Jesus' behalf, that he still carried a burden of sin that he was aware of, and had even asked God three times to remove, but was told by God, that "My grace is sufficient for thee: ...for My strength is made perfect in weakness".

So we must simply contend with sin, for He knows that we cannot defeat sin, only He can, and has!!! - we are only asked to trust in His work to provide a covering for our sins (even the sins that we continue to commit after belief in Him and His provision).

Mthw 25:31-46 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ...For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: ...I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: ...I was a stranger, and ye took me in: ...Naked, and ye clothed me: ...I was sick, and ye visited me: ...I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: ...For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: ...I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: ...I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: ...naked, and ye clothed me not: ...sick, ...and in prison, and ye visited me not.

Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Jn 14:12-13 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. ...And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

Jesus points out in Jn 14:13 that when we ask anything of God the "Father", that we are to ask in His name (that is, through Jesus). We don't just ask of God. "God" can mean many different things to many different people; but when we associate the "Father" with Jesus (His "son") we please God and He knows that we are speaking to Him because we are honoring the words of His "Son".

This promise came from God Himself; and the passage tells us that we have access to very great power. ...The question is, can we conjure the faith to put it into practice here on earth?

Serve Through “Works”

Jms 1:22 Be ye doers of the word, ...and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

1Jn 3:18 Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; ...but in deed ...and in truth.

Jms 2:14-17 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, ...**if it hath not works**, is dead, being alone.

Hasn't God redeemed us through His "works"? ...He didn't simply use words and declare us forgiven (which to our God would have had about as much substance to it as us telling a person in need "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled"), but He addressed the problem by way of His works.

Regarding evangelizing, How, do you suppose, your testimony will be received by a man who is hungry? or under any burden that challenges his flesh? If we don't give those in need the things that are needful to the body, our faith (or even the communicating of our faith) will not have profit (gain). Our faith must be put to practical use in taking care of peoples' fleshly needs, before it will be effective in bringing them to Jesus.

It should be noted that just as Jesus (God) provided the things that we have "need of" and that we could not provide for ourselves, rather than the things that we want or otherwise lust for; that we, who now possess His Spirit, should also focus on providing for the less fortunate the things that they have "need of" and cannot provide for themselves, rather than the things that they otherwise want or lust for.

It is far more practical to give the average "panhandler" a sandwich, or some shelter, or perhaps even a little time and an "ear" to hear his life situation, than to give him money that will most likely go to support things that he really doesn't have need of, like his vices.

Jms 2:21-22 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered up Isaac his son upon the altar? ...Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, **and by works was faith made perfect.**

Jn 5:17 But Jesus answered them, **My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.**

This passage gives God's attitude toward work and should be meditated upon by all believers regarding our attitude toward 'work'ing.

1Jn 3:17 Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, ...how dwelleth the love of God in him?

- Rms 15:1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.
- Jn 9:1-3 And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man which was blind from his birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in Him.
- This man can be seen as representing all people victimized or suffering from the fruits of man's fall from God's original intentions (sick, hungry, naked, helpless) and the "works of God" can be performed by anyone who has submitted what they have been given to God's control.*
- If life on earth can be looked at as a "proving ground" for souls, and man is a living soul (Gen 2:7), then other people's bodies or life circumstances which are less fortunate than our own, (having been victimized by the fruits of man's choice to turn from God in the first place,) can be looked at as an opportunity to use what we are given by God to join with Him in healing the victims of the fall.*
- If we have compassion on the less fortunate and become "God's hands and feet on earth", then our souls are shown to perform the "works of God" on earth.*
- If, on the other hand, we ignore the needy and serve only ourselves, we can see that our character is, at a minimum, far different from the character of our Creator, as demonstrated by the character of His "Son" Jesus, Who came here "to serve and give His life a ransom for many".*
- Heb 13:3 Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.
- 1Tim 5:8 But if any provide not for his own, ...and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.
- 1 Tim 5:16 If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.
- Tit 3:14 And let ours also learn to maintain **good works for necessary uses**, that they be not unfruitful.
- 2Thes 3:10-12 If any man would not work, neither should he eat. ...For we hear that there are some who walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. ...Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

Heb 10:23-25 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another.

The function of the church in gathering together is to encourage each other, ...to know of and share each others burdens (...that some member's abundance may be a supply for other's wants), ...and to complement each other in the things which God has given us individually for the benefit of all.

If we take seriously the mandate to now become God's hands and feet on earth, we now become the instruments through which God "will seek that which was lost, ...and bring again that which was driven away, ...and will bind up that which was broken, ...and will strengthen that which was sick" as He said He would do through His servant Ezekiel. (Ezkl 34:16)

1Tim 1:5-7 Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: ...from which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

Coming Persecution

Jn 15:19-21 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

...But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

Scripture tells us (2Tim 3:12) that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution". If we are conformed to Jesus' image, and manifest Him to the world, we will be rejected, even hated by the world.

The rejection of Jesus by the world shows that the world does not know God; but we know Him and must manifest Him to the world in spite of persecution.

Those that reject Him, it is both on account of their sinful nature, and the fact that they do not recognize a "God of Self-giving sacrifice".

Mthw 16:24-25 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

- Mthw 10: 16-22 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.
- ...But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.
- ...And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.
- Phil 1:29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.
- 1Ptr 4:19 Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.
- 1Ptr 2:19-23 For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. ...For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps:
- ...Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.
- 2Thes 3:1-3 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: **...for all men have not faith.**
- The wicked don't reason; they simply act. ...Jesus, Who in all 'reason' would have been released, was instead crucified by a crowd of 'wicked' men, saying, "Away with him, crucify him".*
- ...But the Lord is faithful, Who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

Not all Souls are of God

- Jn 8:47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ...ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.
- "ye are not of God" Interesting choice of words (given by God Himself, Who would know), and well worth contemplating for those who believe that all souls are the offspring of God.*

Rms 9:18-22 Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.

This passage seems to indicate that God Himself has selected certain souls to be precondemned to separation from Him forever.

...and yet God says, through His servant Ezekiel (Ezkl 18:23), "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? and not that he should return from his ways and live?" ...And 2Ptr 3:9 confirms that it is not His will that "any" should perish, but that "all" should come to repentance.

It should be evident to all who believe in the God associated with the cross (Jesus and His "Father") that through His actions at the cross (actions being even greater than words) that it is not His will that any should perish.

...And yet Jesus says, before His crucifixion (which is the remedy or lifeline to save us from God's condemnation) that He (Jesus) will give His life a ransom for "many", ...not "all".

When He says "many" not "all", it is because He (God) recognizes that while He is giving His life for "all", that only those that "belong to Him" will be affected by it (and consequently receive its effectivity).

...Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will?

Isaiah tells us (Isah 28:13) that God's word to man has been given "precept upon precept; line upon line; that they (those driven by their own will - or that of another) might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken". Adding that these same individuals (souls) speak, saying (Isah 28:15), "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge (Judgement) shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies (the opposite of the "Truth" - and Jesus is the "Truth") our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves".

This passage indicates that some individuals (souls) have chosen (of their own will) not to be associated with God, but to make their covenant with death and hell (separation from God).

...Paul goes on in this passage to ask, "What if God, willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?"

"the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction" *This statement by Paul presupposes that some entities (souls) are fitted to destruction (not of God). This is supported by the warning given by Jesus, Himself, in Mthw 7:6, which says, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you".*

Jesus is not speaking of pigs when He says "swine" ...this is likely a reference to evil souls (that is, the children of the wicked one).

In the parable of the wheat and tares (Mthw 13:24-30, 36-43), Jesus warns, that an enemy hath sown "tares" (that is, "the children of the wicked one") in the world.

On Faith

Habk 2:4 The just shall live by his faith.

Heb 11:1 Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Mthw 9:20-22 And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: for she said within herself, if I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; ...thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.

Mthw 14:28-31 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

...He knew Who to reach out to, anyway.

Mthw 17:18-22 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place: and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind *(of faith)* goeth not out but by prayer *(communion with God)* and fasting *(denial of self)*.

Psalm 20:7 Some trust in chariots *(force and power)*, ...and some in horses *(fleeing)*: ...but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.

*Apparently there is a third option when facing trouble:
It is not just a matter of 'fight' or 'flight'.*

On Forgiveness

Mthw 18:32-35 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Should not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

...So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

Being Judgemental

- Jms 4:11-12 He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. ...There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and destroy: who art thou that judgest another?
- Mthw 7:1-3 Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgement ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be mesured to you again. ...And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?
- Rms 14:12 So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God. ...Let us not therefore judge one another any more: ...but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.
- Rms 12:3 I say, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.
- 1Cor 4:6-7 Learn not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another. ...For who maketh thee to differ from another? ...and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? ...Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

Rms 11:20 reminds us, "Thou staidest by faith, be not high-minded (that is judgemental), but fear".

God is the Sure and Safe Place

- Psalm 19:7-11 The law of the Lord is perfect, ...converting the soul:
- ...the testimony of the Lord is sure, ...making wise the simple.
- ...The statutes of the Lord are right, ...rejoicing the heart:
- ...the commandment of the Lord is pure, ...enlightening the eyes.
- ...The fear of the Lord is clean, ...enduring for ever:
- ...the judgements of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.
Moreover ...by them is thy servant warned:
...and in keeping of them there is great reward.

Psalm 146:5-9 Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help,

...which keepeth truth for ever:

...which executeth judgement for the oppressed:

...which giveth food to the hungry.

...the Lord looseth the prisoners:

...the Lord openeth the eyes of the blind:

...the Lord raiseth them that are bowed down:

...the Lord loveth the righteous:

...the Lord preserveth the strangers;

...He releaveth the fatherless and widow:

...but the way of the wicked He turneth upside down.

Jrmh 9:23-24 Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, ...neither let the mighty man glory in his might, ...let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me,

...that I am the Lord that exercise lovingkindness, judgement, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.

Heb 2:14-15 Foreasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

The fear of death (having an end) will naturally cause a person to "live for the day", believing that some day we will no longer exist. This fear, therefore, has brought us into bondage so that we cannot see God and eternity, but our eyes are only fixed on our ultimate death and the (as we see it) end of our existence.

If we believe in Jesus (Who He is, why He was sent, and why He died for us), we, through His words to us and actions for our sake, can be assured of our own resurrection, setting us free from the fear of death, knowing that we will exist past death.

Truth regarding Man

Rms 6:16 To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; ...whether of sin unto death, ...or of obedience unto righteousness.

Rms 8:20-25 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. ...For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

...**For we are saved by hope, which we must patiently wait for.**

Trust in the Lord

Prov 3:5-12 Trust in the Lord with all thy heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

...In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.

...Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear (*respect*) the Lord, and depart from evil.

...Honor the Lord with all thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase.

...My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord: neither be weary of His correction: For whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

Heb 12:11 notes that "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby".

Psalm 91:4 He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

For those who accept the truth that He bears it will protect us as a shield and buckler against the lies of this realm.

Psalm 73:26 My flesh and heart faileth: ...but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.

While we may faint in spirit, we will always have an 'anchor' in knowing that we belong to our God; ...and He holds up those that belong to Him.

We have not been given a Spirit of Fear

2Tim 1:7-9 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; ...but of power (*confidence*), ...and of love, ...and of a sound mind.

Our fears don't come from God. Jesus says that He both goes before us and with us. This alone should remove all fear from a 'spiritual' standpoint for anyone who really trust in Jesus and His words.

...But while our spirits may be willing, even Jesus recognizes that the flesh that our spirits dwell in while here on earth is weak. This may be because we know our flesh, and therefore know that we will experience things, whether they be pain or comfort, rejection or acceptance, etc., through the flesh, while it requires faith to know the spirit, which we can't directly experience until we are free from our flesh.

We can be set free from our flesh only through trust in God:

Who, in turn, is revealed to us through both His and His "Son's" words to us, and Their recorded actions on our behalf.

*God's word tells us that "the Spirit of God (*which is love - 1Jn 4:8*) drives out the spirit of fear" (*which is of the flesh - 1Jn 4:18*). It is therefore, through practicing His love with our fellow human beings that we grow in His Spirit and overcome our flesh and its weaknesses (*like fear*).*

...Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling.

*Heb 12:3 says, "Consider him (*Jesus - our Lord and Savior*) who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds".*

Encouragements

Psalm 31:
19-20 Oh how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hath laid up for them that fear (*respect*) Thee; which Thou hath wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men!

...Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy presence from the pride of man: Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.

Isah 54:17 No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgement thou shalt condemn. ...This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord.

Isah 40:31 But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

Isah 66:5 Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at His word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified:

...but He shall appear to your joy, ...and they shall be ashamed.

Isah 62:8-9 The Lord hath sworn by His "right hand", and by the "arm" of His strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast labored: ...but they that have gathered it shall eat it.

A promise from God Himself as sure as His "Right Hand" and His "Holy Arm" that believer's treasure in heaven is secure.

Reassurance

Isah 33:17 Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.

Do you see the beauty of what Jesus has done for you? Is it not heaven (even now)?

Isah 43:1 Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel...

Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine.

For those who recognize the God of "Self-giving sacrifice" (the God associated with the cross) the expressions "Jacob" or "Israel" or God's "chosen people" all represent those who are called by His name among all men.

For them, this assurance from God Himself states that He has regained possession in exchange for payment (redeemed with His own life) those that He created and formed in the beginning, and has called them by name, declaring that they belong to Him.

Jn 6:63 It is the spirit that quickeneth (makes alive); the flesh profiteth nothing: ...the words that I speak unto you, ...they are spirit, ...and they are life.

Don't look for "life" in fulfilling the lust of your flesh: look for "life" in the words of Jesus (quite literally God's communication to you).

His words are spirit, and it is spirit that quickeneth (or gives life).

- Jn 8:31-32 If ye continue in my word, then ye are my disciples indeed; ...and ye shall know the truth, ...and the truth shall make you free.
- Jn 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. ...In the world ye shall have tribulation: ...but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.
- Psalm 23:1-4 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want (*that is, I shall not be in need*).
- ...He restoreth my soul (*note this, It is He that restoreth your soul*):
- ...He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
- ...Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me (*this is the reason for 'fearing no evil' because He is with you*);
-
- ...Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me (*even His 'rod' can be a comfort, to know that He cares for you*).
- Rms 8:28-29 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.
- ...For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son.
- 2cor 1:4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.
- ...For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, ...so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.
- 2Cor 4:16-5:1 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.
- ...For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.
- ...For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved (*that is, if our essence or spirit left our earthly body - our body died*), we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal (*that is, everlasting*) in the heavens.

Practical Advice for Believers

- Jms 5:16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, ...that ye may be healed.
- 1Jn 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: ...because many false prophets are gone out into the world.
- Heb 13:9 Be not carried about with diverse and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.
- 1Tim 1:4 Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, ...which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith.
- 1Thes 5:14 Warn them that are unruly, ...comfort the feebleminded, ...support the weak, ...be patient toward all men.
- Gal 6:1 If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; ...considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.
- Rms 12:19-21 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

...Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; ...if he thirst, give him drink; ...Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.
- Col 2:18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.
- Acts 20:35 So laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.
- Lk 14:12-14 When thou makest a dinner or supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

Anxiety

Deut 31:8 And the Lord, He it is that doth go before thee; He will be with thee, He will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: ...fear not, ...neither be dismayed.

Jesus says, in Mthw 28:20, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world".

Isah 26:3 Thou will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee.

Mthw 10:29 Not a sparrow shall fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Anxious? Do you feel that you're not seen or considered? Your Creator sees all things, and knows you, and where you're at, inside out.

Mthw 6:31-33 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? ...**For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.**

...But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Jn 11:26 **Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.**

Do you fear death? Here is a promise from the very One Who gave you life in the first place.

On Baptism

Acts 19:1-4 And finding certain disciples at Corinth, he (*Paul*) said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

Make no mistake If you are baptized (*cleansed and initiated spiritually through the purification of faith in Jesus and what He has done for you*) the Father's Holy Spirit will enter you.

Those who believe, know that it is a spiritual connection with God and His "Son" Jesus that profits the soul, not the ceremony of baptism. God, in asking that we be 'baptized' in His name, is not referring to a ceremony for a ceremony's sake, but is seeking an outward testimony on our parts (*before the world*) of an inward spiritual association with Himself and His "Son". God does not spell out baptism by water emersion, the baptism that He refers to is a spiritual connection, outwardly professed.

Jesus, Himself, in Lk 12:50, refers to His coming death as a "baptism to be baptized with". If you were martyred for Jesus sake, it would certainly count for a baptism, if you have devoted your life to Him before the world it would count for a baptism.

On Evangelism

Psalm 88:
10-12 Wilt Thou show wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise Thee? Shall Thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave? or Thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall Thy wonders be known in the dark? and Thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?

This passage has been included for those who have received God's truth: as an encouragement to share it with others, as there is no communicating God's works and care for us to those that have passed on (to wherever).

Mthw 9:36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then he saith unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest.

Mthw 7:6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

Jesus is not referring to pigs when He uses the word "swine" in this passage.

...This is a warning to be cautious regarding who you share the truth with.

Mthw 10:27-28 What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops. And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Jn 4:35-36 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

...And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

If you "lift up your eyes" and actually "look", you will see that the world (even the world immediately around you) is in need of what Jesus offers.

Does the world around you know what Jesus has done for them? Do they realize what their Creator has suffered on their behalf?

Who is going to share it with them?

Jn 18:19-21 The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him...

I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.

...Why asketh thou me? ...ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them:

...behold, they know what I said.

Believers know what He has said, God has revealed Himself to us, it is not secret!

Acts 26: 17-18 *(Jesus speaking)* Now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan *(self)* unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

Isah 66:8-11 For as soon as Zion travailed *(Jesus died)*, she brought forth her children *(those that recognized the significance of what had happened)*. ...Shall I bring to the birth *(the beginning of a new relationship with God)*, and not cause to bring forth? *(and not back up and support this new relationship)* saith the Lord: ...shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? *(there will always be souls that will come to God through the "cross")* saith thy God.

There will always be souls which will come to God through the "cross".

Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice with joy for her, all ye that mourn with her: that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.

Rejoice for what Jesus has done for us at the cross!

How to Share the Truth

2Cor 4:2 By manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

We share God's truth through "manifestation of the truth" (not cunning words of man's wisdom), so we testify through

"commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God".

Those that will come to God through Jesus (His "Son") and what He has done for us at the cross, will "recognize" their God through the words that we use and the actions that we display only if we present Him to them as He is.

We, in turn, can only present Him as He is through not corrupting the way that He has presented Himself through His holy "Word" (both written on paper and manifested through the flesh - Jesus).

While I may only have the theological credentials of a "Galilean fisherman who is grateful to my Savior for what He has done for me", I will stand behind both the words and commentary which I have placed in this "salvation summary" as representing the God of "Self-Giving sacrifice" for Who He is.

The "Spirit of Christ"

The "Spirit of Christ" is manifestly a spirit of Self-giving sacrifice.

Those that seek such a God will recognize this God through Christ and His actions.

Conclusion

Don't think for one second that the omniscient God, Who knew the nature of His creation, was caught by surprise at the death of Christ. His very actions in putting on human flesh (becoming a man), in coming here (stepping into His creation here on earth), and in going to the cross (suffering unto death for us) were all prophesied in advance, demonstrating that He knew that these things would be.

He has manifested Himself to us, through putting on human flesh and giving His own life for us, as a God of action (not mere words), of love (love greater than any man could endure for another), and of compassion (to consider us and our weaknesses in spite of being our Creator and infinitely above us).

Men guided by the spirit of this realm (which trusts in power and things perceived through the flesh, and does not recognize 'self-giving sacrifice') do not know the God associated with the cross for Who He is, and will not, therefore, recognize Him through the giving of His own life for them (in spite of the fact that all men value life as the most important thing that they possess and can therefore relate to).

In the end, God's plan and His works will stand, ...not upon the understanding of man, ...nor upon the spirit of this realm, ...but rather upon the sovereign grace of God.

The Book of Revelation

Let those who possess the “Spirit of Christ” be the judge regarding whether or not this book of the Bible was written by the same author who wrote the gospel of John or the letters of John, or whether or not it even belongs in the accepted canon of scripture.

God Himself said that **“It is finished”** at His death on the cross. If you believe that our Creator’s revelation to men (*in its simplest form*) is that He gave His life for us in order to redeem us from our own turning from Him; then His putting on human flesh and giving His life for our sake completes His revelation to us; and it is finished and complete at that point in time.

Following from this, all revelation after this event (*the giving of His life*) comes ultimately from man and man’s understanding. This includes the book of Revelation, along with any interpretations regarding the meaning or significance of the resurrection outside of Jesus’ own words that it would be provided as a sign given to men (*God Himself realizing that man would require at least this much of a sign in order to confirm His revelation*).

As a warning, if the book of Revelation turns out to be no more than an attempt by man to add to God’s revelation things not of God (*“if thou lift up thy tool upon it thou hast polluted it” - Ex 20:25*) then its words can only lead to added complexity with resulting confusion and strife among men; causing, as Isaiah puts it (*Isah 32:6*), *“the emptying of the soul of the hungry”* and *“the causing of the drink of the thirsty to fail”* (*resulting in the hiding of God’s true and simple revelation to men from reaching the men who need it*).

The following critique of Revelation’s words is offered for all to consider.

Rev 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

Interesting that the same John (supposedly) records Jesus in his gospel as saying, (Jn 15:15) “Henceforth (from this time forward) I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you”.

Rev 1:3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

Note that the author declares that this revelation is a prophecy (speaking on behalf of God). Note that, for those who respect Zechariah as a prophet (speaking for God); he declares in Zech 13:2, that once God has opened a “fountain for sin and uncleanness”, that He will cut off the prophets.

Rev 1:4-5 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven **Spirits** which are before his throne.

Interesting that the author of this passage does not capitalize the pronouns which represent the "Father" God, but does capitalize the word "Spirits" representing seven Spirits before the "Fathers" throne. Do these "Spirits" somehow deserve greater respect in the author's recording than the "Father"? You be the judge.

It is only in Revelation that we see any reference to the seven Spirits (note: capitalized) of God. None of God's previous revelation to men made any mention of them; note this.

and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.

John records Jesus in his gospel as saying (Jn 12:31), "Now is the judgement of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.", and again in Jn 14:30, "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and he hath nothing in me". If the same John now calls Jesus "the prince of the kings of the earth" it is, at a minimum, a very poor choice of words.

Rev 1:19-20 Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter: the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand...

Since when has God ever communicated with His sheep through a mystery? Jesus tells us (incidentally through this very same author - supposedly), in Jn 16:25-27 that He will show us plainly of the Father.

Rev 3:2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

This does not sound like the compassionate Jesus Who gave His life for us to expect perfection by us before God.

Rev 3:4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

So they themselves established their worthiness before God? Does this sound like the gospel that you received from God's revelation to men?

Rev 3:18 I counsel thee to buy of me...

It is my hope that this is the author speaking for himself (and not for God): as we do not buy from God (he has graciously provided all that we need).

Chapters 2 and 3 of the book of Revelation have nothing to say that has not already been said by Jesus regarding instructions to His sheep. They offer only the following promises made to those who “overcome”, none of which are mentioned by Jesus while He was with us.

- Rev 2:7 To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.
- Regarding the “tree of life”: for those who understand, there is indeed a “tree of life”, ...it has been planted in Zion, ...**and all men have access to it!** It is the cross upon which the only true God and Creator gave His own life for our reconciliation to Him.*
- Rev 2:11 He that overcometh will not be hurt by the second death.
- We “overcome” only through faith in Jesus’ atoning death, it has nothing to do with our efforts
(“apart from Me, ye can do nothing” - **Nothing!**)*
- Rev 2:17 To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.
- ...“hidden manna”, ...“white stone”, ...“a new name which only the one who receives it knows”Sounds like fodder for those who wish to intrude into things which they have not seen (or heard from Jesus).*
- Rev 2:26-28 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star.
- Rev 3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.
- Rev 3:12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.
- Rev 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne.
- The gospels of both Mathew and Mark record that Jesus Himself says that positions in His throne are not His to give, but shall be given to them **“for whom it is prepared of My “Father”**.*

Starting with chapter 4 of Revelation, The author, John, records himself as seeing the rest of the revelation while in the spirit (*Rev 4:2*). ...**Note that the word “spirit” is lower case - not God’s holy Spirit which would be upper case** (*even as it consistently appears throughout all of God’s revelation to the Jews throughout the recorded scriptures*).

...At this point the rest of the book of Revelation can be considered as not coming from God Himself.

An Invitation

After reading this summary of salvation’s scriptures, I would encourage all to view the following you tube video titled the “Lamb of God” by Rob Gardner.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nqdCz-TwCZ4>

It is my hope that this “masterpiece” effort on the part of Rob Gardner (*with the help of many others*) expressing salvation’s established testimony and how it has been received by the two different and distinct groups of men (*those pursuing a God of “signs and wonders” and those pursuing a God of “Self-giving sacrifice”*) will further help the true “Israel” to choose their true God.