

INSPIRATIONAL BIBLE SCRIPTURES

with comments by David R Hughes

No Partiality by those in Christ

James 2: 1-12 NKJV

¹ My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality. ² For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, ³ and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool," ⁴ have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? ⁵ Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? (Vs. 5 is similar to Jesus's words at the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven". The poor can be rich in spiritual blessings as they are not burdened and distracted by many possessions, if they avoid covetousness and the deceitfulness of riches.) ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? ⁷ Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called? ⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well; ⁹ but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. (Refer to Gen. 4: 7 where God explains to Cain, "If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.") ¹⁰ For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. ¹¹ For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. (If we reject keeping one point of God's eternal law we are considered guilty of rejecting His law altogether. James is specifically referring to the Ten Commandments by giving examples of adultery and murder and in vs. 8 the last six commandments that cover loving our neighbors which along with the first four that cover loving God, and Jesus said "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the prophets.") ¹² So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. (Follow the example of those who exhibit God's two commandment laws of love for Himself and love for our neighbors, written on their hearts, because it frees us from the bondage to sin and its penalty of death at the Judgement seat of Christ.)

Life through the Spirit

Romans 8

¹ Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you^[a] free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering.^[d] And so he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵ Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit

desires. ⁶ The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. ⁸ Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God. ⁹ You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life, because of righteousness. ¹¹ And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you. ¹² Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. ¹³ For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴ For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵ The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. ¹⁶ And by him we cry, "Abba, ¹⁷ Father." ¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Present Suffering and Future Glory

¹⁸ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that ²² the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. ²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. ²⁷ And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. ²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who ²⁹ have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

More Than Conquerors

³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written:

"For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."³⁷

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,³⁸ neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Song of Moses and of the Lamb

Revelation 15 NIV

¹ I saw in heaven another great and marvelous sign: seven angels with the seven last plagues—last, because with them God's wrath is completed. ² And I saw what looked like a sea of glass glowing with fire and, standing beside the sea, those who had been victorious over the beast and its image and over the number of its name. They held harps given them by God ³ and sang the song of God's servant Moses and of the Lamb:

"Great and marvelous are your deeds,
Lord God Almighty.
Just and true are your ways,
King of the nations.
⁴ Who will not fear you, Lord,
and bring glory to your name?
For you alone are holy.
All nations will come
and worship before you
for your righteous acts have been revealed.

⁵ After this I looked, and I saw in heaven the temple—that is, the tabernacle of the covenant law—and it was opened. ⁶ Out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues. They were dressed in clean, shining linen and wore golden sashes around their chests. ⁷ Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls filled with the wrath of God, who lives for ever and ever. ⁸ And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

You can hear my version of this song on the "His Word" album on the Eternity Road web page.

CONTINUE TO MORE SCRIPTURES BELOW

From Slaves of Sin to Slaves of God

Romans 6: 1-23

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? 3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, which just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin. 8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! 16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? 17 But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. 18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. 19 I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.

20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. 22 But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

CONTINUE TO MORE SCRIPTURES BELOW

A Warning to Christians who continue in sin

Hebrews 10: 26-39

²⁶ If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, ²⁷ but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. ²⁸ Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay,"^[a] and again, "The Lord will judge his people."^[a] ³¹ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. ³² Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you endured in a great conflict full of suffering. ³³ Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. ³⁴ You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. ³⁵ So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. ³⁶ You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

³⁷ For, "In just a little while, he who is coming will come and will not delay."^[a]

³⁸ And, "But my righteous^[a] one will live by faith. And I take no pleasure in the one who shrinks back."

³⁹ But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved.

CONTINUE TO MORE SCRIPTURES BELOW

Righteous Living and False Resurrection Teaching – kjv

2 Timothy 2: 15-24

¹⁵ Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. ¹⁶ But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. ¹⁷ And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; ¹⁸ Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. ¹⁹ Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. ²⁰ But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. ²¹ If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work. ²² Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. ²³ But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. ²⁴ And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

My Comments:

In this letter from Paul to Timothy, Paul tells him (especially in versus 21-24) how to live righteously while in this world and to be a faithful servant and teacher of God's word. He also speaks of false teachers who have said the resurrection has already past. This false teaching may have been a spiritual only resurrection of believers when Jesus was resurrected. Paul does not say exactly what the false doctrine was but it caused Christians to believe there would not be a spiritual body resurrection when Christ returns. That belief would destroy our hope for and faith in the Gospel of the coming Kingdom of God. Paul indicates that a future Resurrection is foundational in God's plan of salvation for man. False teaching of the scriptures is the reason for Paul encouraging Timothy to be a teacher approved by God by working hard at studying the scriptures and rightly dividing the word of truth. Paul also declares that Christ knows all that belong to Him and everyone who speaks of Jesus of Nazareth as Christ should turn away from iniquity and a sinful life.

CONTINUE TO MORE SCRIPTURES BELOW

The Law, Grace and Sin - kjv

John 6: 1-23

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? ² God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? ³ Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: ⁶ Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. ⁷ For he that is dead is freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: ⁹ Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. ¹⁰ For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. ¹¹ Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. ¹² Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. ¹³ Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. ¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. ¹⁵ What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. ¹⁶ Know ye not, that 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? ¹⁷ But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. ¹⁸ Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. ¹⁹ I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. ²⁰ For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. ²¹ What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. ²² But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

My Comments:

1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" KJV Grace is the undeserved and freely given forgiveness of God for our sins through our belief in Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ and Passover Lamb of God who died once and for all, for our sins and arose from death to life after three days and three nights. The ten commandment laws of God were given to the Hebrew people and ultimately the whole world through Moses after they were freed from bondage in Egypt. Jesus summarized the ten commandment law in Matthew 22: 37-40 saying "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. (1st four) This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (last six commandments) On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

When one becomes a Christian they enter into a crucified death with Christ symbolized by being submersed in water at baptism, and into His resurrection and eternal life symbolized by being lifted up out of the water when baptized. The new Christian will be given the Holy Spirit and one or more of its gifts to glorify God and do good works for God's Kingdom. As Christians we cannot continue in our sins just because we have been forgiven by the Grace of God. The sinful person we were before accepting Christ should now be dead and we should now be living a new life guided by the Holy Spirit of God and focusing on the coming Kingdom of God and His righteousness. We must keep in mind that Jesus also said "For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven". Matthew 5: 20 NRSV

CONTINUE TO MORE SCRIPTURES BELOW

The Seal of God - kjv

Revelation 7: 1-4 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. ² And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, ³ Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. ⁴ And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

Exodus 31: 16-17 Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. ¹⁷ It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.

Deuteronomy 6: 4-9 (regarding the 10 commandments - Deut. 5) Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: ⁵ And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. ⁶ And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: ⁷ And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. ⁸ And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. ⁹ And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

Ezekiel 20: 8-12 But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. ⁹ But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt. ¹⁰ Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. ¹¹ And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. ¹² Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them.

Ezekiel 20: 19-20 I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; ²⁰ And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God.

Mark 2: 27-28 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: ²⁸ Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

Ephesians 4: 30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Revelation 14: 4-5

These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. ⁵ And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

(Comments are on next page.)

My Comment:

The seal of God is having the commandments of God in your heart and fixed in your mind. According to the scriptures above, the only commandment involving a time, to "remember the seventh day Sabbath and keep it Holy" sets us apart from the world deceived and ruled by Satan, and presents us as virgins to God being completely separate from false religion and the ways of this world. Jesus said "The Sabbath was made for man" as it was established after the creation of man, so it was not just for the Hebrew people. Ancient Israel was commissioned by God to be a Holy Nation and deliver God's law and plan of Salvation the world. Israel fell into false religion and Idolatry and failed to accomplish God's purpose for them. But a remnant of faithful followers of God and His Christ, Yahshua Jesus has always survived to ensure God's righteous ways would be taught to all people willing to listen until God's plan of Salvation as written in the Holy Scriptures is completed. The apostles and early Christians continued to rest and worship on the seventh day Sabbath and there is no scripture in the entire Bible that changed God's commandment from the weekly rest and worship on the seventh day of the week. The change to the first day of the week or Sun Day which the early Catholic Church claimed was the Lord's Day or Resurrection day was made by the pagan Roman Emperor Constantine in 321 AD and soon after was made official Catholic Church doctrine. Therefore, Sun Day worship is a tradition of men that rejects the commandment law of God. Concerning the traditions of men, Jesus said "Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition." (Mark 7: 9) And in Mark 7: 13 He said "Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye." During the dark ages of history the ruling church leadership in Europe persecuted and killed and tortured Christians who had possession of a Bible or even quoted from the Holy Scriptures. Only Catholic doctrine and tradition was allowed to be freely expressed. The book of Revelation describes a time when that persecution will be repeated at the end of the age which is near.

CONTINUE TO MORE SCRIPTURES BELOW

Fruits of the Spirit - kjv

Galations 5: 1-26

¹³ For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. ¹⁴ For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. ¹⁵ But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. ¹⁶ This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. ¹⁸ But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰ Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹ Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, ²³ Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. ²⁴ And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. ²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

My Comment:

When we believe that Yahshua is the Messiah who was crucified for our sins and rose to life from death, and we choose to turn away from sin (breaking God's righteous laws) and follow His ways of righteousness, God forgives us and rescinds the penalty of death upon us for our sins. After baptism we can receive the Holy Spirit to guide us into God's righteous ways. We should not abuse this freedom from the death penalty by backbiting and fussing with other members of the congregation. Always keeping an attitude of following Christ, the word of God, and responding to His Spirit will keep us from responding to the lust of the flesh and fulfilling its desires. Fulfilling the desires of the flesh will keep us from being fruitful unto God and His Kingdom. If we are continually led by the Holy Spirit, we are no longer subject to the penalty of death required by the law for sin because the Holy Spirit will not lead us into sin. Yahshua said "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets". (Matt 22: 37-40) Paul mentions only the second commandment here because he was evidently made aware of strife between some members of this church. Paul then lists for a warning many of the attitudes and practices of the flesh that will keep us away from the presence of God and keep us from entering His eternal Kingdom. Then he lists the contrasting traits and fruits of the Spirit which are in harmony with the righteous, universal laws of God. If we are truly converted Christians, we will have figuratively crucified our own selfish flesh person with all of its desires and lusts. So if our minds and hearts are continually determined to be led by the Spirit, we should follow through by walking in the way of Christ every day and not seeking glory for ourselves, provoking arguments with each other or envying other members' spiritual fruits or positions in the church.

The Parable of the Sower - kjv

Matthew 13: 3-23

³ And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;
⁴ And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:
⁵ Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: ⁶ And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. ⁷ And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: ⁸ But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. ⁹ Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. ¹⁰ And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? ¹¹ 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. ¹² For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. ¹³ Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. ¹⁴ And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. ¹⁷ 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.

Interpretation by Jesus:

Matthew 13: 18-23

¹⁸ Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. ¹⁹ When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. ²⁰ But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; ²¹ Yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. ²² He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. ²³ But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

My Comments:

As Christians we must be aware of things that can lead us away from the presence of God. This parable of the sower is a warning to everyone who hears the Gospel of the Kingdom and the redeeming power of Christ's Passover sacrifice as the lamb provided by God for our sins, and believes in Him. If we don't seek to earnestly and completely understand God's plan of salvation as given in the old and new testaments of the Bible, we are susceptible to believing the lies and false doctrines of that old dragon, Satan. Babylonian doctrines infiltrated the early church and eventually dominated the church pushing out and persecuting Christians who chose to follow the Gospel spread by the apostles. Also, as new believers we might be overjoyed at the forgiveness Christ's sacrifice provides

when we believe and repent, but if we do not continually grow in the faith of God's promises for His children, we will be tempted to turn away from Him when people ridicule and persecute us. The spiritual concepts conveyed in God's plan of salvation for mankind must be deeply rooted in our minds and hearts to make us strong for the time when we will be persecuted falsely for Christ's sake. Christians can also become unfruitful by seeking after wealth and worrying about money, jobs, household, health and everything in this world ruled by Satan. We must tend to them but seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and trust Him to provide our needs. Lastly, Christ is conveying to Christians that if we continuously study and gain understanding of God's plan of salvation of Mankind as given to us in the Bible, we will avoid failure and temptation and become fruitful unto Him and His Kingdom at many levels.

[CONTINUE TO MORE SCRIPTURES BELOW](#)

The Ten Commandments

Exodus 20:1-17

20 And God spoke all these words:

² "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. ³ "You shall have no other gods before^a me.

⁴ "You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷ "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

⁸ "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

¹² "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

¹³ "You shall not murder.

¹⁴ "You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵ "You shall not steal.

¹⁶ "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

¹⁷ "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

My Comments:

Some people say the Ten Commandments were done away with or nailed to the cross. Some also say it is impossible to keep the commandments and we are being legalistic if we try to keep them. But I believe it is imperative for Christians to keep the commandments because they define sin and if we continue in sin we are not part of Christ. "Everyone who has been born of **God** does **not sin**, because His seed remains in him; he is **not** able to **sin**, because he has been born of **God**." (1 John 3:9) The commandments also define for us how to love God with the first four and how to love our fellow human beings with the last six. It is possible to remove sin from ruling your life if you truly turn your will over to Christ and receive His Holy Spirit. Jesus said "with God all things are possible". Matthew 19:26

The Potter and the Clay

Jeremiah 18: 1-10 KJV

The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, ² Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. ³ Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. ⁴ And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. ⁵ Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ⁶ O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. ⁷ At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; ⁸ If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. ⁹ And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; ¹⁰ If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.

My Comments:

God sent Jeremiah to a potter's house to show him an allegory representing the house of *(all)* Israel. The pot, or vessel as described in verse 4, currently pertained to Judah since Israel, the northern kingdom had gone into captivity about two hundred years earlier and had lost their identity. The pot being described as a vessel would represent God's intention for all Israel to carry His law and plan of salvation and to eventually show God's salvation to the whole world. However, the vessel being made by the potter when Jeremiah arrived was blemished so the potter made another one that was acceptable to him. Then God revealed to Jeremiah that the potter and the clay represented God, the nation of Israel and the kingdom of Judah. And God declared that He could destroy the now adulteress or blemished kingdom of Judah for its evil just as He had allowed the northern kingdom of Israel to be destroyed. But God also declared that He would repent and turn from His judgement on a nation if it would turn from evil. And if a nation that God establishes does evil and will not obey His word, He will turn away from the goodness promised to that nation that He offered for their benefit.

[CONTINUE TO PREVIOUS WEEKS' SCRIPTURES BELOW](#)

The Man of Sin

2 Thessalonians 2: 1-13 KJV

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, ² That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as (if) from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. ³ Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; ⁴ Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. ⁵ Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? ⁶ And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. ⁷ For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. ⁸ And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: ⁹ Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, ¹⁰ And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹ And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: ¹² That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. ¹³ But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

My Comments:

2-7 Do not worry or let your spirit be troubled by communication from someone posing as the apostles that the return of Christ is now here. To help keep you from being deceived know that the antichrist will not be revealed until there is a spiritual falling away in the church and the world. (*Sin will abound like in the days of Noah.*) You have been foretold that he will exalt himself above God claiming to be God. You who are in Christ should know that the spirit of truth will withhold the antichrist from view until God's determined time that he be exposed. His hidden iniquity already infiltrates the church of God and will be allowed to continue spreading along with the true Gospel of the Kingdom until Yahshua Christ removes the spirit of truth from the world and the sinning church. 8-13 When the antichrist is finally revealed to the church and the world Yahshua will shortly come and destroy him with His true word, the sword of the spirit, and the glory of His coming. Jesus will destroy the antichrist who does the works of Satan with power, miraculous signs and false wonders. He will use all possible deceptions and unrighteous means to deceive the people that rejected the truth of salvation through Christ and the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. God will cause the deceived people of the world to become delusional so they will believe the lies of the antichrist. For this reason those who will not believe the truth but continue to love sin and unrighteousness will be condemned by God to the 2nd death. 13 But we are bound to always thank God for those who from the beginning He has chosen, who are saved by being made holy through His spirit and belief of the truth.

The Peace of God

PHillipians 4: 4-9 KJV

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.

⁵ Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

⁹ Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

My Comments:

In today's world where we are surrounded with hatred, greed, depression, and despair, we can still be joyjul knowing that the Kingdom of God is very near and Yahshua will soon return to govern this world with truth and justice. We should not be excessive in eating, drinking or any worldly thing, always keeping in mind the Lord will be here soon. Don't be worrisome about any good works you do in your life but rather pray continually with thanksgiving to God and let Him know the desires of your heart. If you do these things, the incomprehensible peace of God will keep your hearts and minds at peace with Him through His son, Jesus Christ. While living in this lost and deceived world, we should focus on things that are true, honest, just, pure, beautiful, virtuous and all good news. The God of peace will be with you if you give Him praise for the things He has taught you, the blessings you have freely received, and you live by Paul's example.

[CONTINUE TO PREVIOUS WEEKS' SCRIPTURES BELOW](#)

The Passover Meal and the New Covenant Passover Memorial

1 Corinthians 11:18-34 KJV

(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. Gospel of Luke 22:19)

¹⁸ For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. ¹⁹ For there must be also heresies among you that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. ²⁰ When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. ²¹ For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. ²² What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you, shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

²³ For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: ²⁴ And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. ²⁵ After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. ²⁶ For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

²⁷ Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. ²⁹ For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. ³⁰ For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. ³¹ For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. ³² But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. ³³ Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. ³⁴ And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.

My Comments: drh

18-22 By reading these scriptures we know that the Corinthian church established by Paul was keeping the Passover meal and commemorating the New Covenant commandment by Jesus to remember Him and His reconciling work with a new annual Passover ritual of breaking bread and drinking wine. Jesus changed Passover from being a historical commemoration to one that now reveals His connection to and fulfillment of the Passover as prophecy. Paul acknowledges the divisions he has been informed of at church gatherings and points out that those differences serve to point out which members attitudes are acceptable to God. Regarding the keeping of the new covenant Passover

meal on the day of Passover, he says that some come not to eat the Lord's supper but rather are eating meals just to satisfy their own hunger, even to the extent of leaving no food for others and some getting drunk on the wine. He stated that those actions are an affront to other members and they should eat their suppers and drink in that manner at home, not in the church. No praise would come from Paul for those actions. I do not believe that he is condoning drunkenness at home but realized that it would happen with some who were not strong in the faith.

23-26 Paul then explains the significance and symbolism in the Lord's supper at Yahshua's last Passover as given to him by Yahshua Christ. The broken bread represents Christ's physical body which was beaten, tortured and crucified. Eating the broken bread at the Passover dinner on the Passover day would serve to remind us of Christ and his willing sacrifice for our sins. The cup of wine to be shared among them represented the new blood covenant between God and those who believe and accept it, and also served to remind us of Christ and His sacrifice for our sins. Partaking of the Lord's New Covenant Passover on the Passover day is a way of proclaiming the truth of Christ's crucifixion and death until He returns at the end of the age.

27-29 Whoever partakes of the Lord's Passover supper with a wrong attitude is sinning against Jesus' body and blood sacrifice. Therefore it is wise and necessary to examine our motives for partaking or we could be bringing judgement on ourselves for not honoring it as representing His body and blood. Keep in mind these verses indicate that the early Corinthian church kept the Passover meal as a full dinner and the focus had shifted away from Jesus to the dinner itself.

30-34 Paul proclaims that some members' weakness and sickness and even death (sleep) was a result of God's judgement on them for not honoring Christ's body at the Passover meal. He said that these judgements are for discipline which could be avoided by examining our motives. So Paul separates the meal from the bread and wine commemoration by telling them to eat at home if they are hungry before going to the new covenant Passover commemoration so they would not be tempted by their hunger to dishonor Christ's body. Other matters were to be addressed after Paul's arrival.

CONTINUE TO PREVIOUS WEEKS' SCRIPTURES BELOW

False Teachers

2 Peter 2: 1-3 and 2 Peter 2: 13-22

¹But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. ²Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. ³In their greed these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping. ¹³They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their pleasures while they feast with you. ¹⁴With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed—an accursed brood! ¹⁵They have left the straightway and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Bezer, who loved the wages of wickedness. ¹⁶But he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey—an animal without speech—who spoke with a human voice and restrained the prophet's madness. ¹⁷These people are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them. ¹⁸For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of the flesh, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error. ¹⁹They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity—for "people are slaves to whatever has mastered them." ²⁰If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and are overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. ²¹It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. ²²Of them the proverbs are true: "A dog returns to its vomit," and, "A sow that is washed returns to her wallowing in the mud."

My Comments: drh

Just as Yahshua warned of false teachers in Matthew 24, Peter confirms there will be false teachers in the church (among you). Peter explains how they will sneak in their false doctrines secretly leading many away from the true Gospel of the Kingdom of God that Yahshua taught. Those false doctrines did enter the early church and have continued to lead people away from the truth ever since that time. And the false doctrines will continue until Christ returns to destroy the false Christian religion that will oppose Him at His return when the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11: 15 sounds.

Versus 4-12 (not shown here) describe the false teachers and their judgement of destruction and desolation and how God will protect the righteous just as he did in the days of Noah and Sodom and Gomorrah. Then Peter goes on to describe their continuous boastfulness, greed, lust, wickedness and how they seduce and entice Christians weak in faith using false doctrines such as Babylonian traditions, Arian doctrine, a gospel of Prosperity and others. Verses 20 – 22 describe how those who received the true Gospel of Christ and later become entangled in false doctrines by turning their backs on the commandments are like a dog returning to its vomit or a cleaned pig returning to wallow in the mud.

Listen to the original song "Come Out of Her" song #4 on The Gospel According to Merlin album on this website

False Teachers

Matthew 24:4-5 and Matthew 24: 21-27 KJV

⁴ And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

⁵ For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

²¹ For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

²² And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

²³ Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.

²⁴ For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

²⁵ Behold, I have told you before.

²⁶ Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.

²⁷ For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

My Comments: drh

Jesus first warned the disciples in verses 4 and 5 that many others would come preaching in the name of Jesus saying He is Christ (the anointed one) and this would happen very soon (and the time draweth near, Luke 21: 8 a parallel scripture to Matthew 24: 5, not speaking of the end of the age here) but they are not to follow them or their false doctrines or different gospel. ("For the mystery of iniquity doth already work" see 2 Thessalonians 2:7) Christian teachers with Babylonian and other false doctrines infiltrated the early church in Asia while Paul was preaching and writing letters to them. By the fourth century AD, many of the false pagan doctrines eventually became official church doctrine as the Roman Catholic Church tried to convert more pagans by giving Christian names to popular pagan idols and traditions. Some of those traditions such as the pagan aspects of Easter, Christmas and Sunday worship were passed on to the Protestant churches and will continue being practiced by them until Christ comes to destroy false religion which all had their beginnings with the Babylonian Mystery Religion. (Read Alexander Hislop's book "The Two Babylons") That is why all true Christians who desire to worship God in spirit and truth must "Come Out of Her" before Christ returns at the seventh trumpet. Listen to the original song "Come Out of Her" song #4 on my album The Gospel According to Merlin. It is located on the Music Albums page at the lower part of the page in this website.

Later in this Olivet Discourse Jesus warns of false Christs and false prophets. These imposters will be so convincing that they could possibly deceive even the chosen true Christians into following them. Many people will be deceived by them at the end of the age so Jesus describes His coming to help us discern the truth. It will not be a secret coming but for the whole world to see, and quickly like the speed of light flashing across the sky from a lightning strike.

The Power of the Gospel & The Condemnation of the Unrighteous

Romans 1:16-32 NET (Paul writing to Roman Christians)

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is God's power for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith, just as it is written, "The righteous by faith will live."

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of people who suppress the truth by their unrighteousness, ¹⁹ because what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world his invisible attributes—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, because they are understood through what has been made. So people are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they did not glorify him as God or give him thanks, but they became futile in their thoughts and their senseless hearts were darkened. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for an image resembling mortal human beings or birds or four-footed animals or reptiles. ²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the desires of their hearts to impurity, to dishonor their bodies among themselves. ²⁵ They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served the creation rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. ²⁶ For this reason God gave them over to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged the natural sexual relations for unnatural ones, ²⁷ and likewise the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed in their passions for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in themselves the due penalty for their error. ²⁸ And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what should not be done. ²⁹ They are filled with every kind of unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, malice. They are rife with envy, murder, strife, deceit, hostility. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, contrivers of all sorts of evil, disobedient to parents, ³¹ senseless, covenant-breakers, heartless, ruthless. ³² Although they fully know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but also approve of those who practice them.

My Comments: drh

I used New English Translation (NET) to help better clarify some of the statements made by Paul.

16-17 Paul declares his faith in Christ and the Gospel that he preaches openly without shame because it is an expression of God's power to bring salvation to all who believe and accept Christ's sacrifice for the covering of their sin before God. He admits that the Gospel and Salvation goes first to the Jews, but then also to the Greeks (Gentiles). The gospel reveals to us what God's righteousness is and the phrase "from faith to faith" perhaps meaning from first to last (of our journey through faith in God).

18-20 The wrath of God against all ungodly and unrighteous people knowing the truth of their sins is revealed from heaven by God through Jesus Christ. Paul speaks of unrighteousness people (such as pagan Rome, Egypt, Babylon etc.) who suppress the truth by lies and deceit, that are condemned to the wrath of God. The justification of wrath on them is revealed from heaven and they are without excuse because all of creation clearly reveals God's power and divine nature and can be understood simply by observing His creation.

21-23 Considering the people should know God according to vs.18-20, but do not glorify Him or give Him thanks and they allow their minds to become useless and their hearts without compassion and

love, they become fools, worshipping lifeless idols, (man-made images of God's creation) even though they claim to be wise. (Modern day idols can be automobiles, boats, buildings, sports, organizations, statues, governments etc. and even churches. They are man-made things we are devoted to and allow to rule our time, finances, work, and emotions other than God)

24-25 So God allowed their uncleanness to run its course through the lusts of their hearts dishonoring their bodies with each other. These are the people who change the truth of God into a lie and serve images of creation more than the Creator Himself who lives forever.

26-31 Paul lists in detail all the uncleanness these ungodly people are given over to for the destruction of their souls by the fullness of their sins.

32 The people are aware that God will righteously judge the wickedness of their sins with death but they love and take pleasure in their sins anyway.

(Listen to the song "Taking A Train to the Kingdom of God" on the Gospel According to Merlin. It is located on the Music Albums page at the lower part of the page in this website)

CONTINUE TO LAST WEEK'S SCRIPTURES BELOW

Come Out of Her

Revelation 18 KJV

And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. ² And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. ³ For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. ⁴ And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. ⁵ For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. ⁶ Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. ⁷ How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. ⁸ Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. ⁹ And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, ¹⁰ Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. ¹¹ And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: ¹² The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, ¹³ And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. ¹⁴ And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. ¹⁵ The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, ¹⁶ And saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! ¹⁷ For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, ¹⁸ And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! ¹⁹ And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate. ²⁰ Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. ²¹ And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. ²² And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; ²³ And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. ²⁴ And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

My Comments: drh

Babylon means confusion. Revelation 17:3 refers to Mystery Babylon the Great as a woman. Biblical symbolism refers to church or a religion as women. Therefore we can surmise that this Babylon is a false religious system that has created and spread spiritual confusion with false Babylonian doctrine and spiritual fornication through idolatry on a worldwide scale (see Rev. 17:2). Her traits of selfish pride and vanity are described in detail along with the colors of her elaborate clothing. Her unbelievable wealth is also described and the despicable ways she obtained it. Revelation 17:16 says the ten horns (kings or rulers) on the beast (antichrist government) will hate the whore (Mystery Babylon), make her desolate and naked, and eat her flesh and burn her with fire. That destruction is described here in chapter 18 in detail. Also according to Revelation 17:6 this Babylonian Mystery Religion will be drunk with blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus. Revelation 17:9 states "And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated." This false Babylonian religion is located on the seven heads of the beast (antichrist government) which is a place with seven mountains (hills - NIV). Rome is the city famously known as the city with seven hills or mountains. The seven heads are seven successive resurrections of an empire that has ruled over Rome and Europe since it was healed from a deadly wound received in 476 AD when the pagan Roman Empire was ended by the invasion of the barbarian Arian Christian Herulli under King Odoacer and the boy emperor Romulus Augustus was deposed. See the "Beast of Revelation Diagram" located on this page of the website. It only appears on desktop format because it is a large spreadsheet. The final seventh head has not come into power yet but it will rule over Europe and the west for three and one half years at the end of this age just before Christ returns to rule the whole earth. As before during the Holy Roman Empire's 1260 year reign from Justinian who installed Vigilius as Pope with "papal supremacy" in 538 AD until Napoleon imprisoned pope Pius VI in 1798, the beast (Rome) will enforce with penalty of economic or physical death, Roman Catholic Sunday rest & Worship and their false Babylonians doctrines only to be observed. Read Alexander Hislop's book "The Two Babylons". The "Venerable Day of the Sun" was first proclaimed the official Roman lawful day of rest by Constantine the Emperor in 321 AD. Later at the Church Council of Laodicea in 364 AD the Roman Catholic Church outlawed resting or "Judaizing" (observing God's 4th commandment) on the 7th Day Sabbath established by God when He sanctified it and declared it to be a sign. See Genesis 2: 2-3. Deuteronomy 5: 12-14, Exodus 31: 17, Ezekiel 20:12. The Roman Catholic Church claims to have the only authority on earth and heaven to have transferred the holiness of the Sabbath to the Babylonian worshipped Sun day, the first day of the week. The fourth commandment was not changed by Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath, and it was not changed anywhere in the scriptures by the apostles who continued observing and preaching on the Sabbath. Therefore Sunday worship and rest is a tradition of men and Jesus declared in Mark 7: 7-9 "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. ⁸ For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. ⁹ And he said unto them, Full well **ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.**"

Although we are no longer under the sacrificial laws of the Old Covenant because they were fulfilled by Christ, all ten of the Ten Commandments are still valid and necessary today if we want to live in the ways of God, the Father. There are also other Roman Catholic traditions of men kept by Protestant Christians today.

See instructions for God's commandment laws in Deuteronomy 6: 8-9 & Mark 10: 17-27. Also listen to the original song "Come Out of Her" song #4 on my album The Gospel According to Merlin. It is located on the Music Albums page at the lower part of the page in this website.

A Nation Worthy of God's Vengeance

Jeremiah 9: 1-9 - King James Version (KJV)

¹Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!

²Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for **they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men.**

³And they **bend their tongues** like their bow for lies: but they are **not valiant for the truth** upon the earth; for they **proceed from evil to evil**, and they **know not me**, saith the LORD.

⁴Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for **every brother will utterly supplant**, and every neighbour **will walk with slanders.**

⁵And **they will deceive every one his neighbour**, and **will not speak the truth**: they **have taught their tongue to speak lies**, and **weary themselves to commit iniquity.**

⁶Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit; **through deceit they refuse to know me**, saith the LORD.

⁷Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, **Behold, I will melt them, and try them**; for how shall I do for the daughter of my people?

⁸**Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth, but in heart he layeth his wait.**

⁹Shall I not visit them for these things?

saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

My Comments: drh

These scriptures from Jeremiah were referring to the kingdom of Judah before they were conquered and taken captive into Babylon. He has great sorrow for the people of Judah for their sins against God and each other and even wishes to leave them and go into the wilderness. But he did not leave. Jeremiah details the sins that he sees the people committing and their disregard for truth. We are seeing much of this in the United States of America and the world today, and these scriptures become very significant to us because verse 9 states that God will be avenged on such a nation.

God's Mercy, Salvation, Judgement and Kingship

Psalm 67 - King James Version (KJV)

¹God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.

²That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

³Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

⁴O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

⁵Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

⁶Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us.

⁷God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

My Comments: drh

King David appeals to God for mercy on His people and to bless them by revealing Himself to them so they may learn God's way of eternal life and give that knowledge to all the earth. And that the salvation from sin and sickness His knowledge brings will fill the earth. King David knows that God inhabits praise and God will answer the prayers of those who love Him and praise Him so he encourages the people to praise God for His blessings. David then looks forward to the coming Kingdom of God on earth when God will reign through His Son, Yahshua Christ. It will be a joyous time for all the nations of the world because Yahshua will be their judge and He will judge righteously and will reign over them with the ruling authority of God Himself. King David sees the coming Kingdom of God as reason for all the people to praise God. And when that kingdom comes God will bless the earth with the wonderful fruitfulness of all its natural bounty and all people and nations on the earth will respect and give reverence to the power and the glory of God Almighty.

God's Law, Sin and Grace

Romans 6 - King James Version (KJV)

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? ² God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? ³ Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: ⁶ Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. ⁷ For he that is dead is freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: ⁹ Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. ¹⁰ For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. ¹¹ Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. ¹² Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. ¹³ Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. ¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. ¹⁵ What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. ¹⁶ Know ye not, that 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? ¹⁷ But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. ¹⁸ Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. ¹⁹ I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. ²⁰ For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. ²¹ What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. ²² But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

My Comments: drh

According to 1 John 3, to sin is to transgress the law, for sin is the transgression of the law. A believer who truly accepts the doctrine and way of Yahshua Christ and loves God is no longer under the law because God's laws are now written in their heart, (Jeremiah 31: 33 & Hebrews 10: 16-22) meaning they love God's law and they have freely chosen to sacrifice their own way (v.6 our old man is crucified with Him) and become one with God's way of eternal life. In effect, they have become one with the lawgiver. That person is no longer ruled by sin and therefore is no longer under the penalty for sin (breaking God's law) which is death. If we truly repent (turn away from a sinful life) and believe Yahshua was crucified and raised from the dead by the power of God, we will be forgiven of all our confessed sins (1 John 5: 4-5), as defined by the laws of God which were previously contrary to our nature and condemned us, before being blotted out by His crucifixion, thus taking away that condemnation by His forgiveness so we can be born again spiritually with a heart that is in one accord with God's eternal law. Grace is His forgiveness for sins we have committed and repented of when we believe in the Gospel of the Kingdom and Yahshua, the Son of the Living God. Receiving God's grace and turning from sin, we are then able to receive God's free gift of the Holy Spirit after baptism and eternal life through His Son at the Resurrection. To continue sinning without true remorse and true repentance will earn us the wages of sin which is death of our spirit, the second death. (Revelation 21: 8)

The Good Shepherd

Psalm 23 King James Version (KJV)

23 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

³ He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

⁵ Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

A shepherd's reading of the Twenty Third Psalm

We are as sheep of the herd belonging to our God with His son Yahshua (Jesus) as our shepherd. Occasionally a herd of sheep needs to be led into far off pastures to graze and be exercised before being brought back to the safety and comfort of their home. Only a good qualified shepherd can take them out and bring them all back safely and satisfied. "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." Ezekiel 34: 23

I am as a sheep belonging to Yahweh with His son, Yahshua who is my shepherd. He will provide all of my needs. He takes me to beautiful green pastures where I can be fed and rest in peacefulness and comfort. He leads me away from dangerous rushing waters to the safe and calm streams where I am refreshed and restored with its cool and clear water. He always leads me along the safe and right paths for the sake of His name as the Good Shepherd.

Even though I walk through the valley where the death of innocents throws its eerie shadow over the land, I will not fear any of its evils because Yahshua is here with me. His rod of strength and staff of guidance give me comfort and peace. He calmly sets up a place close by me in this dangerous valley for His afternoon meal while wolves and other predators who want to destroy me and consume my flesh look down upon me with selfish desire from the surrounding hills.

After the long hot day's journey, He will lead me back home and through the gate where He will pour cool oil upon my head and give me refreshing water from His overflowing cup that quenches my thirst completely. I know that the goodness of this day will continue for the rest of my life because of His love and mercy and I choose to live in God's household forever.

David Hughes (inspired by the book "***The song of our Syrian***" guest by William Allen Knight)

Old and New Wine

Luke 5: 33-39 kjv (parallel verses Matt. 9: 14-17 & Mark 2: 16-22)

³³ And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink? ³⁴ And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? ³⁵ But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days. ³⁶ And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old. ³⁷ And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. ³⁸ But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. ³⁹ No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.

My Comments: drh

This teaching from Jesus was a result of some observers (John's disciples in Matt.9:14) noticing Jesus' disciples did not follow certain stringent customs and rules of the Pharisees also followed by John the Baptist's disciples. In particular, their ascetic lifestyle, practice of fasting and praying publicly was insinuated to be necessary for Jesus' disciples as well as John's disciples. Jewish fasting was practiced as mourning for sins, or sincere regret and making amends for wrongdoing by denying self. Jesus made the point that being with the bridegroom (of His church) before the wedding was not an appropriate time to mourn or in this case to fast. Jesus also pointed out that fasting was not wrong because His disciples would fast when He was gone from their physical presence. The question they asked was valid considering the Pharisees and even John's disciples did not recognize Jesus as the Messiah at that time. John appeared to need more convincing when he asked through his disciples from prison "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" Matthew 11:3 Strong's Concordance shows the Greek word translated bottles in KJV should be leather bottles or wineskins. New wineskins (usually goat skins) were flexible and old used wineskins were stretched out and brittle. Since new wine was not yet completely fermented, it would release gases causing new wineskins to stretch and old wineskins to burst. A similar example of how a new unshrunk piece of cloth being used to repair a tear on an old already washed and shrunk garment would cause the garment to tear again when washed and dried. The new wine represents Jesus' new teaching regarding the Jewish religion and their ways of keeping the Old Covenant "handwriting of ordinances" and worshipping God. His teaching allowed healing and doing acts of goodness on the Sabbath. He taught that "For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the *tradition of men*, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things you do...Full well you *reject* the commandment of God, that you may keep your *own tradition*". (Mark 7:8-9) Jesus' authority to forgive sins or transgressions of the law was a particularly important new teaching that the Pharisees would not accept because they did not believe He was the Son of God. If the Jews accepted Jesus' new ways and new approach to their religion but tried to hold on to and incorporate them into the old doctrines and traditions of men taught by the Pharisees, they would be harmed or damaged spiritually even to the point of destruction. A good analogy of this would be in a Jewish marriage where one of the two spouses is converted to Christianity and the other remains devoted to the Pharisees' teachings. The result would be a difficult marriage at minimum and possibly the complete destruction of the marriage. Add children to the analogy and the difficulties would be even worse. In verse 39 Jesus shows that John's disciples at that time and the Pharisees did not fast because they still believed the "old wine" of their traditions and doctrines was better.

The True Church

Revelation 3: 7-11 kjv

⁷ And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; ⁸ I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. ⁹ Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. ¹⁰ Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. ¹¹ Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

My Comments: drh

Jesus here is speaking to a church that is in the future from the time it was written down by John from his vision of the revelation of Jesus Christ. The church in Philadelphia at the time of John's vision is used as an example to describe and speak to this future church. Christ declares His own righteousness in God's sight and that He is true and that He holds the key of David meaning He fulfills the promise made to King David that his throne would last forever and He (Christ) has authority to rule on that throne over the kingdom of God from the New Jerusalem. He opens and shuts doors for whoever He chooses that no man is able to change or interfere with. Yahshua approves of the works done by the people in this church and opens a door for them. They are small in number but have kept God's word and have spoken God's truth boldly in Yahshua's name without fear. This church was persecuted and slandered by those professing to be Jews (the people of God) in the first century AD and will be by them and also false (Babylonian) Christians until the tribulation, but eventually God will set this Philadelphia church in high authority over them when they will come to know God's love for them. The people of this church will be kept from the temptation of Satan's great deception to worship him during the world's tribulation at the end of the age because they kept the word of His patience. *"To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life."* (Romans 2:7). However, they must continue in their good works and faithfulness until Christ comes to avoid losing their crown of eternal life.

HIDDEN SINS OF THE MIND OR IMAGINATION

Matthew 5: 17-30

¹⁷ Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.
¹⁸ For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. ¹⁹ Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. ²¹ Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: ²² But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother **without a cause** shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. ²³ Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; ²⁴ Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. ²⁵ Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. ²⁶ Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing. ²⁷ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: ²⁸ But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. ²⁹ And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. ³⁰ And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

Re: Matt. 5: 22

Raca, (Smith's Bible Dictionary)

A term of reproach derived from the Chaldee reka , worthless. ("Raca denotes a certain looseness of life and manners, while fool, in the same passage, means a downright wicked and reprobate person.") "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." Psalm 14:1

My Comments: drh

Yahshua greatly emphasized that He did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it. *Matt. 5: 17* "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John." *Matt. 11: 13* He also pointed out that to even sin in your mind or with your imagination was still wrong and against God. The scribes and Pharisees were hypocrites and Yahshua pointed out their hidden (mental) sins. In *Matthew 23: 27* He said "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." Yahshua also declared that if our righteousness was no better than them, we would not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Other sins of the mind Christ pointed out were imagined hatred for someone without cause and imagining adultery. These may be hard sayings but anyone who desires to be a true Christian must repent and turn away from all sins, hidden (mental) and in the flesh. All sin leads to death of the spirit called the second death.

Use the helmet of salvation to protect your mind from sin. Combat those thoughts with ones like “Yahshua laid down His life for us and was crucified but was raised from death in accordance with God’s plan so that we could be saved from the penalty of sin which is eternal death of the spirit.” Or Psalm 119:37 “Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.” Or 119:35, “Make me to go in the path of thy commandments for therein do I delight”. Or 119:36 “Incline my heart unto thy testimonies and not to covetousness”. We will not be saved if we choose to continue in our sins knowingly. Always be aware that your heart (spirit) controls your body and your mind (imagination) so let God’s spirit guide your spirit rather than letting desires of the flesh control them. God’s Holy Spirit will not lead you into sin.

Regarding Matt. 5: 29-30:

Yahshua is speaking figuratively in saying pluck out your right eye or cut off your right hand if their sins are offensive to you as a Christian. This extreme exaggeration is for shock value to make us understand and remember the seriousness of the results of sin, even if it is in the mind only. For the heart (spirit) of a person is what decides to sin or be righteous according to God’s word. Obviously, to only do away with the right members of the body still leaves the left members to sin according to what the heart (spirit) chooses. So we can be sure that these verses are using the common technique of hyperbole which is exaggerating for effect.

Notice also how God showed Ezekiel the sins of mental imagery being committed by people of Judah before the destruction of the temple and Babylonian captivity.

Ezekiel 8: 7-14

⁷ And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall. ⁸ Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door.

⁹ And he said unto me, go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here.

¹⁰ So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed upon the wall round about.

¹¹ And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up. ¹² Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, **every man in the chambers of his imagery**? for they say, the LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth. ¹³ He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do. ¹⁴ Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the LORD's house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.

Spiritual Circumcision & Christ's Victory Over Death

Colossians 2: 8-17 King James Version

⁸ Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. ⁹ For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. ¹⁰ And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: ¹¹ In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: ¹² Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. ¹³ And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; ¹⁴ Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; ¹⁵ And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. ¹⁶ Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: ¹⁷ Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

DRH Comments:

Be careful not to follow after men who are puffed up with their worldly philosophical writings and discourse and promote manmade traditions but ignore God the creator and the gospel message of Christ in whose physical body God lived. In Christ we become complete, receiving the circumcision of God's spirit, believing that He is the Son of God and turning away from all sin instigated by our flesh. Though we were under penalty of death due to our sins, we are raised with Him to eternal life through God's plan of salvation through the which is belief in Christ, repentance, forgiveness, and baptism. If we truly repent (turn away from a sinful life) and believe Yahshua was crucified and raised from the dead by the power of God, we will be forgiven of all our confessed sins as defined by the laws of God, that were previously contrary to our nature and condemned us, before being blotted out by His crucifixion, thus taking away (nailing it to His cross) that condemnation of written law by His forgiveness so we can be born again spiritually with a heart and nature that is in one accord with God's eternal law. Christ's crucifixion also defeated the unseen controlling evil spirits and exposed their evil intentions against mankind. Since the evil powers have been exposed to us now, we should not let any of their followers judge us regarding foods, holy days and sabbath days for not submitting to their manmade traditions and harsh hypocritical ways that make void the commandments of God. The annual feasts with their sabbath days represent different aspects of God's plan of salvation through His son, Yahshua Christ. If the disciples had not been keeping Pentecost (Fifty Days) where Yahshua previously told them to, they would not have been there to receive God's Holy Spirit. Passover reflected Yahshua's crucifixion and death until he fulfilled it. Passover is now kept in remembrance of His crucifixion and death to atone for our sins. Other holy days are depictions of things to come that Christ will accomplish until all is accomplished.

³ Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law. Romans 3: 31

For those doing battle in the spiritual world

Ephesians 6:11-17 King James Version

¹¹ Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. ¹³ Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; ¹⁵ And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

DRH Comments:

Gird your loins with truth. Prepare yourself for spiritual warfare by seeking biblical, spiritual truth and remember Yahshua said “You shall know the truth and the truth will set you free”.

Having the breastplate of righteousness. Protect your heart by constantly choosing the right ways according to God’s word.

Shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Be ready to walk in God’s ways and according to His Spirit by growing in understanding of the Gospel of Christ which brings us peace so you can share it when needed.

Above all taking the shield of faith. Recall the promises of God and the promises of His protection for those who love Him and believe those promises as David did when he went up against Goliath.

Take the helmet of salvation. Guard the thoughts of your mind by focusing on God’s plan of salvation from sin and death through believing in your heart that Jesus Christ is the living Son of God and turning away from all sin.

Take the sword of the Spirit. The word of God will consume and defeat all His enemies. Let God’s Spirit to speak through you.

For those who mourn the fallen condition of this world.

James. 4:7-12 kjv

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. 9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. 11 Speak not evil one of another, brethren. 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. 12 There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?

DRH Comments:

These verses refer to being repentant from sin and refraining from frivolous worldly laughter and worldly joy such as laughter from Godless comedy or ridiculing, and joy from winning something worldly, personal worldly accomplishments or receiving worldly awards, money or gifts, etc. but not our joy of salvation through Christ.

Psalms 51: 8-12

⁸ Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

⁹ Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

¹¹ Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

¹² Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

Psalms 32: 1-5 Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

² Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. ³ For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.

⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up^[b] as by the heat of summer. *Selah* ⁵ I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity;

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Psalms 32: 10 Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the LORD. ¹¹ Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!