What the Churches Don’t Want You to Hear!

Based on the Gospel of Mark in total context
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Bible Teachings

1. Some Sounds of Sound Faith.
3. A Cup of Water.
4. What the Churches Don’t Want You to Hear!

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LEVEL 1: BABES IN CHRIST

You Must Crawl Before you Can Walk!

1. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation, old things are passed away, behold all things become new.” (II Corinthians 5:17)

2. “For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” (Hebrews 5:13,14)

3. “These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward when tribulation or persecution arises for the word’s sake, immediately they stumble.” (Mark 4:16,17)
PREFACE: “Snatching, Stumbling, and Falling Away”

Like many medical diagnosis, this perspective of churches and denominations today is not particularly pleasant to hear. However, the challenge of the Falling Away introduced in THE SOUND OF A SOUND FAITH demand an explanation of the seeming contradiction of “Once Saved Always Saved” and the perspective that most church members will be victims of the Falling Away. This book on SOME MORE SOUNDS is built on the basic Bible convictions of the first book, but tries to explain in a practical way based on the parable of the Seed and the Sower, the actual process of church members falling away, not from the churches as church attendance may actually go up, but rather from Christ, God, and the Bible. The Falling Away and the process by which it happens as sin abounds and the love of many waxes cold is hard to explain. The Falling Away of the magnitude to call it THE Falling Away only happens twice in history, once to the children of Israel in the wilderness and once before the Second Coming of Christ. It is especially hard to explain simultaneously the sound doctrines of the Security of the Believer and the Falling Away, yet they are both true. The secret of success like in all Bible study is to find the Authorized Public Interpretation {API} from Jesus and the Apostles. By that I mean to look at real Bible on how much like the physical birth where 9 months is required to the spiritual new birth like Jesus said. This is so much unlike the instantaneous new birth of the fundamentalists and others, which is at the foundation of the only approximately 25% of the wheat in local churches and denominations as compared to the 75% of tares. {By the way, I apologize for not being able in this book to cover the subject thoroughly, and the reader is referred to the later book of TOLERATION OF THE TARES. This book tries to develop the proper “leave them alone” attitude of Jesus.} We also in the sequel to this book, TOLERATION OF THE TARES, need to utilize the outline of Mark which we diligently develop in this book.

Color, which you will not find in most Bible commentaries, is used to set apart the Bible quotes and immediate comments to the general flow in black letters. The Bible quotes are given in the pleasant color of green, and the immediate comments are given in the pleasant color of blue. I think this will help you in the reading of it along with the 12 point print and double spacing. The CD version of SOME MORE SOUNDS will have sound and animation.

1. Things, Things, Things: God or Mammon

“Things” is a difficult word. It can mean so many different things. It has 10 distinct meanings in the dictionary, each with multiple levels of meaning. It can mean “a matter of concern” as in the phrase “many things to do”. It can mean a “deed, act, or accomplishment” as in the phrase “do great things”. It can be used in the sense of “possessions, effects as in the usage of “pack your things”. And on another level that is less tangible it is “whatever may be possessed or owned or be the object of a right, and on still another level it can be “an article of clothings” as in I don’t have a thing to wear. With still another definition it can be “an object or entity not precisely designated or capable of being designated” as in the phrase “use this thing”. Likewise depending on the usage of the word it can have the definition of “detail or point” as in the phrase “checks every little thing”. Thing or things can be far more abstract as an “idea or notion” like in the sentence he says the first thing that comes into his mind; thing or things is also used in the sense of something individual
like “not a living thing in sight”. You have heard it used in the sense also of “the proper or fashionable way of behaving, talking, or dressing” as in this is the thing. And then the tenth definition is as “a mild obsession or phobia” as in he has a thing about driving.

The word “thing” in the Bible also has different meanings. Most are familiar with the quote of Romans that “all things work together for good to those who love the Lord and are the called according to His purpose.” Things there refers back to the context of how God is working for the good of the called, the Holy Spirit and Christ are also working together for the good of the called. Here the things are good.

In another context, that of I John 2:15-17 “things” is bad. “Love not the world; neither the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. {God, the great originator and controller of the new birth will not allow it to happen. He will not allow His love to be in anyone who does not give Him “exclusive loyalty” to borrow a phrase from Thomas McComiskey in THE MINOR PROPHETS. I also remember so well from a Contemporary Philosophy of Living class the supreme attribute of character from Josiah Royce of “loyalty”. I think loyalty in our contemporary jargon best describes the top love that King James struggles for in usage of the word “charity”.

All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father but is of the world. The world passeth away and the lust thereof but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.”

Another bad usage of “things” is found in the parable of the seed and the sower that was told by Jesus. Jesus first told of the seed of the Word that fell among thorns which immediately sprung up then the thorns choked it out. And then Jesus explained this as when an individual hears the Word of faith and of God, and explains the thorns that choke it out as “the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things”. You noticed that “other things” with cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches that choke out the word of faith.

I think you would agree that Jesus is primarily concerned about objects or possessions here, and this is the usage of the word things on which we try to concentrate as perhaps the number one diversion of people living by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. Things as objects or possessions dominate lives. Recall it was the very good and moral rich young man that walked away from Jesus when Jesus told him to give all his possessions to the poor, then come follow Jesus. The young man walked away according to the Scripture “because he had great possessions.”

At least this young man realized it. How many young men and women are walking away from Jesus who do not realize that they are so occupied with objects and possessions that Jesus has been ignored by default. The words of God has lost much of their effective meaning in their lives simply because they are too occupied with possessions—“things” if you would—to even think about God and Jesus.

The word that Jesus used in the Sermon on the Mount to describe “things” is the word “mammon”. What you have in this Sermon is the contrast between the things of God and the things of mammon, things created by man and by the world.

There is nothing wrong with “bread” but if man lives by bread alone then he can not also live a balanced life of every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. The temptations of Satan to stop the ministry of Jesus centered around the things of this world, and the sad fact is that Satan really has the ability to control these things of the world. If you allow these things to control your life it is sadly the equivalent of allowing Satan to control your life. While the things themself, like money, are not evil, the things become the root of all evil. In fact money would fall into the category of mammon as “all things created by man” “Mammon” is the word used by Jesus for things. Is it a surprise to you that while we hear
so much about Jesus and the teachings of Jesus and about God, we do not hear the word "mammon" mentioned much. The answer is simple: businessmen do not want any bad connotations attached to the buying of things. Mammon which literally means things of man’s creation is not bad within itself. Mammon is much like money. In fact when the word mammon originated it applied most significantly to money. Well, mammon and money are not evil per se, money and mammon are the root of all evil. It is the root of all that diverts a man effectively from God; it is the root of all that causes man to live more by bread than by the words of God; it is the root of what chokes out conversion with the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things.

Jesus in His teachings of the Sermon on the Mount described it this way, and we have never been able to see the real meaning to the extent of a practical application in life.

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” (Matthew 6:24)

We hear this and we go into self-denial: “No, that is an archaic teaching that came before this age of technological things and world-class education and the development of a social conscience. I can love my things without hating God; and I can love my God without hating things. I can be loyal to the accumulation of things without despised God, Jesus, and the Bible; and I can be loyal to God without the despising of my education, status from men in business, my house, and my other things. Extremes are not necessary, we say to ourselves. I can be moderate in the things of God and I can be moderate in the things of men’s creations.

Well, the words of Jesus stand firm; and they stand unchanged down through the centuries as recorded in the Bible. “You can not have two masters”. {You can not escape the conclusion that God demands and deserves, and it is for your own benefit, exclusive loyalty. If it were for eternal life alone it would be worth it, when you consider the length of eternity compared to the short boot camp here on earth; but it is also a life style here on earth which Jesus calls no less than the “abundant life”. This abundance is some times misunderstood, and privately interpreted as the prosperous life of the middle class; but one such abundance is the privilege each day of casting every care on God the Father. “Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time, casting ALL YOUR CARE upon Him, for He cares for you”.

Well, the reply might come, we just do not understand what God meant when He gave Jesus those words to teach. Yes, we do! The meaning is right there on the surface. I recall from many of my good Bible teachers, one at Ouachita Baptist University who said, “just let the Bible say what it means...let the Bible say what it wants to say....” AND WHAT THE BIBLE IS TRYING TO SAY IS THAT EITHER MAMMON OR GOD WILL DOMINATE YOUR LIFE, AND WHICH IS TO DOMINATE IN YOUR LIFE IS YOUR CHOICE.

Generally, you would have to agree with me, it is the case that those all wrapped up in things, also do not have the motivation of “service” for God in the first place. Where they have missed the boat, and it is an eternal miss, is the meaning of service for God and in the placing of service for God in first place. This is as basic as the first three of the Ten Commandments. It was summarized by Jesus as: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, mind and soul, and Him only shall you
serve.” {Notice how the “Him only shall you serve” rings again of the exclusive loyalty; and how this summary from Jesus is as old as the Old Testament. In fact Jesus is quoting here from the Old Testament.}

One might respond, “This is simple and we know all these things, because we are church members.”

No, you don’t as indicated by the popularity among Bible believer’s of the philosophy of Joel Olsten as given in his best selling book YOUR BEST LIFE NOW. In one chapter alone on the good life, Joel mentions “things” twenty-three times. Also the so-called “Women of Faith” with their popular challenge for women to live the extraordinary life now—supposedly a Bible and Christ ministry—offer you a catalog of things to buy which are called “women of faith resources”. Now, what in the world does a ministry of Christ and the Bible have to do with the selling of sweaters, and necklaces, and purses, and all sorts of things. In the case of Joel and the ladies of faith, they are promoting immediately the very mammon that diverts from the service of God.

2 “Cares of This World, Deceitfulness of Riches, and Other Things”

These few words from Jesus, “cares of this world, deceitfulness of riches, and other things”, where do you think they come from. Yes, they come from the parable of the seed and the sower that Jesus explained later to His disciples to illustrate how many church members and others miss out on a real conversion. The people of Jesus’ day were very religious, like most people in the United States, they have heard the seed of the Word of Christ.

While we real southern baptists would like to blame the current Falling Away condition of the churches on the fundamentalists for their superficial and shallow practices on the new birth, human nature has dictated the four distinct responses to the Word of the Gospel. {Like most of their other Bible it is based on a hunt and peck method of understanding, but they are not alone on instant new birth.} We must admit from the parable of the seed and the sower that from the very beginning of the Gospel of the kingdom with Christ, 25% of the people who hear the Word of the Gospel have it immediately SNATCHED away by Satan. Since their will on the matter and their human spirit is comparable to wayside soil, have the seed of faith instantly SNATCHED away by Satan. How does Satan do that? Well, unfortunately he has direct access to the human spirit if not countered by the work of the Holy Spirit here on earth. Although it is hard to say in this day of the type and measure of “tolerance” we have in this country from the American Democratic Faith, {like the religious leaders to whom Jesus spoke saying “you are of your Father the devil”}, you can easily make a case from the Bible that all of those who have not been given the love of God in their life, are controlled by Satan. And while they may think their influence toward the wayside soil is in the interest of God, just like the religious leaders of Jesus’ day thought they were doing the work of God {remember how Paul thought before conversion that he was doing the work of God as he hauled Christians off to prison}, those religious leaders who sowed that seed, especially if they are liberals, can assist Satan in the immediate SNATCHING away of the seed sown by the wayside. You see, really, such liberals and fundamentalists, are the wayside, anyway.

You know if you were looking about you today for the most influential men in the world who lead {the man of sin of II Thessalonians} in the Falling Away, it would be a toss-up between a Muslim leader like Bin Laden and a fundamentalists leader like Bush, Falwell, Stanley, and LeHaye. While Bin Laden based on the Muslim classic teaching of destroy the infidels like the potential for a world-wide rebellion that can easily led to the final great battle of Armageddon in the middle east, it is the fundamentalists leaders like Falwell and Stanley, as they took over control of the Southern Baptist Convention 20 years ago—by the way, the largest Protestant denomination in the world with influences all over the world—with their fighting spirit that have
caused all the wars, contentions, and divisions among Southern Baptist in Texas, and no doubt in the whole world. This bad spirit of such fundamentalists was expressed by W.A. Criswell approximately 20 years ago as he told Bill Moyer in a TV interview that “We will keep on fighting until one side or the other wins.” Well, that is exactly what happened: the fundamentalists kept fighting with the moderates, electing such fundamentalists pastors as President like Adrian Rogers and Charles Stanley with the rejection of Texas’ Baptists number one conservation-on-the-Bible and on evangelism candidate, Winfred Moore of the First Baptist Church Amarillo, until they established control over the convention, destroyed the reputations of other conservatives with the label of moderates which in their mind and their listeners’ minds meant liberals, caused the SBC to split into three conventions, drove other conservatives out of Southwestern Seminary, caused warfare between Baylor Theological Seminary, Texas Baptists, and SBC leadership; and the worst thing of all caused a bad spirit of contention to fall over the whole Southern Baptist Convention. {I must add now that the only hope for the SBC is if the real Southern Baptist rise up to re-take control of the SBC. The real Southern Baptist are those who were southern Baptist during all the time the fundamentalists with their Bible Baptist churches and little seminaries withdrew in approximately 1920 for the Convention, then when approximately 20 years ago decided to come back in force, taking control. Of course, some of the real Southern Baptists are also those influenced more by Texas Baptists and other conservatives who did not fall prey to the bad fighting spirit of the fundamentalists.

It is unpopular to say now; even dangerous, but when I was a youngster growing up in Southern Baptist work in Texas, we called such men “fuedamentalists”; because they liked to fight and you knew what they were against more than what they were far. However I must add that the extent to which the world is into the Falling Away now, even in the United States where leadership has been for generations of the “Fulness of the Gentiles” and of the spreading of the Gospel, is going to work against the real Southern Baptists taking control, and it will work in favor of the contentious attitude of the fundamentalists. (It is like J. Vernon McGee {by the way who started out as one of them with his training at Criswell’s Dallas Baptist Theological Seminary} says, “I wish the fundamentalists could learn to contend for the faith without being contentious.”

It is that contentious spirit which dominates their evangelism to the detriment of any real contending for the faith that they do, even as the attitude is more important than the deed to Jesus.

We must interrupt these tirades in order to look briefly at something really fundamental. That is the Scripture that is the most important for the gist of this whole book, SNATCHING, STUMBLING, AND THE FALLING AWAY. We must have a basis for this gist in the Word of God, and it must be exegesis—reading out the meaning from the Bible, rather than the isogesis practiced by fundamentalists, the hunt and peck method of reading meaning into the Bible. Well, here it is from Jesus Himself. It is the explanation of the parable of the seed and the sower that Jesus gave specially to His own disciples after He had given the parable itself to the multitude. {It is part of what I like to call the API for the “Authorized Public Interpretation” of the Bible. It is the authorized interpretation that comes from Jesus and the Apostles, by way of God and the Spirit.}

Mark 4:13-20

“And He said to them, ‘Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? {We will discuss it later, but it is the unique privilege of the real disciples of Jesus to understand the spiritual matters given in parables.}
“The sower sows the word. {I think you understand word as word of God, or the word of the Gospel, or the word of faith.} And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately {immediately, see how quick Satan is: he is quicker than the fundamentalists}...and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. {You see how Satan SNATCHES the see right out of their hearts, and this is the prime way He goes about seeking whom he may destroy.}

“These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness.” {Did you get the full impact of these words, “they immediately receive it with gladness”? And there is hardly a church in the land or an evangelists, fundamentalist or otherwise, who would not conclude this is instantaneous salvation, that a soul has been born again. You have to admit that when someone immediately receives the word with gladness, they will show the symptoms of joy and salvation; but we are told the rest of the story, how they only endure for a while and how they stumble. Of course, they are still on the church roll; and you while the pastors are counting their ten thousands, you do not hear the rest of this story.}

“...and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arise for the word’s sake, immediately they stumble.”

Just two short statements here that may interrupt the flow on the explanation of Jesus to continue with the last, two remaining kinds of human-response-soil:  (1) “endure for a short time”, perhaps for the approximately 40 years typical of the first Falling Away by the children of Israel in the wilderness; and (2) “Immediately they stumble” from persecution and lack of root; but even here you see some amount of time as the church member goes about their life, because it does take some amount of time for persecutions, tribulations, and a lack of growth for roots.

“Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.”

{I must add the comment here that it is the wrong done today by the heaped up Bible teachers with itching ears who parade the Gospel of Prosperity, formerly called the “Gospel of Wealth and the corrolary of success” in the history of American Thought, thus right there in the church worship creating the very thorns of cares of this world, deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things that choke out the very word of Jesus and the Gospel. And if you don't get it in the worship service, you can get it from their best-selling books or on television. Oh yes, these are dangerous times: it is called the time of the Falling Away as sin abounds and the love of many waxes cold; and the greatest danger of all is the silence of the pulpits on the Falling Away, the same silence that proves this is a time of intolerance toward sound doctrine.}

“But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.”

{I like the pattern here: hear the word and “accept it”. This is what makes citizens of the kingdom of God and Christ; this is what causes men and women and young people to become members of the body of Christ, the church written in heaven called the Church of the Firstborn;
this is when a person passes from tares to wheat and from an alien to a child of God; and this is the point at which the hearer and acceptor can claim the words of Paul for themself, “Nevertheless the foundation of God stands firm, having this seal: the Lord knows his own, and let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” If they are so busy brining forth the 30 times fruit, the 60 times, or the 100 times fruit they will not have time for the iniquity, nor the inclination of the Falling Away.}

3. Jesus of Nazareth and Salvation

If you wish to do some exegesis from Scriptures on the subject of CHRIST, it is almost impossible to take any passage of Scripture and not also discuss SALVATION. If you wish to do some exegesis from Scriptures on the subject of SALVATION, it is almost impossible at the same time not to discuss CHRIST. It seems that God wanted it that way in the writing of His book the Bible. I think that what we are really look at is that the life of Christ and God’s provision of salvation for men is impossible. You know how often the Bible talks about man at Creation as being the “first Adam” and how likewise Christ is the Second Adam. The first Adam brought sin, death, alienations from God, and lack of salvation while the Second Adam, Christ, brought righteousness, life, restored fellowship with God, and provided eternal life through faith.

The First Sermon by the Apostle Peter after the Ascension of Christ back to heaven is typical of this pleasant exegesis of Bible passages. With our simplistic minds, we would like to utilize it to discuss what Christ is all about, or we would like to utilized it to discussion what salvation is all about. Yet it seems that we can not have one without the other, and that is the way it should be. Truth is a circle which spirals about the mind and character of God. You can not have one truth without the other, and one truth leads to another. We comprehend something of this in the famous teaching of Jesus about Himself as “the way, the truth, and the life.” Jesus said of Himself, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but by me.” Jesus is the way to God the Father, to the Father’s house of many mansions, to heaven and eternal life; Jesus is the very personification of truth—if you look at Jesus you look at salvation; and Jesus is the life—a more meaningful kingdom of Christ centered life now and an abundant eternal one for the future.

Peter starts this sermon with an explanation of the historical coming of the Holy Spirit in power on the earth by quoting these events of the First Day of Pentecost after the Ascension as the fulfillment of a prediction by the Prophet Joel in Joel 2:28-32. Granted that we normally like to latch onto the “end time” events in Joel 2 and Acts 2, I would hope that we can more focus on the words of salvation. If you look at Acts 2:17-21 and Joel 2:28-32 as a survey of world history as God is making it—and indeed it is starting with the historical event of the Holy Spirit coming to take the place of Christ on earth and with great power all the way to the end of time with the “great and notable Day of the LORD”—then the longest period of time is the period referred to as “whosoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved”.

“And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.”

This is one verse of Acts 2:21 and of Joel 2:32. There is some additional information in Joel 2:32 that Acts 2 and the Apostle Peter do not quote. Joel 2:32 adds in that one verse that this salvation of God will come out of Jerusalem, and it adds that salvation will be for a remnant of Jews and Gentiles.

Now, at this point the Apostle Peter has the same pleasant dilemma that we have. Peter has explained what is happening on this first Day of Pentecost, but now he needs to
explain specifically, as Joel does in 2:32, how salvation comes out of Jerusalem. How do you think Peter does that? Exactly Peter does it with an extensive discussion about who Jesus of Nazareth is. How quickly we pass from salvation to Jesus of Nazareth! And yet you will find that Peter’s subsequent 18 verse explanation of who Jesus of Nazareth is is also an explanation of salvation.

Let us look at those 18 verses as quickly as we can. First, a brief of what the 18 verse explanation of Jesus of Nazareth and the salvation of God contain: (1) First Peter sets forth his version of the Gospel of how Jesus of Nazareth was proven to them to be the Son of God by God the Father, how His purpose was to be delivered to death by crucifixion according to the plan of God, and how God raised Him from the dead; (2) Then Peter supports the fact of the resurrection with a quote from the Prophet David in Psalms 16:8-11; (3) Then there is an explanation by the Apostle Peter of what the Prophet David has written, by the way we should know that this is part of the Bible training and understanding that Jesus imparted to Peter; (4) Then Peter transitions back to how David foretold the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ; (5) Peter transitions from the Ascension to the events of that morning (6) And then there is another quote from the Prophet David as recorded in Psalm 110:1 to reinforce these teachings about the Resurrection, Ascension, and the sending of the Holy Spirit; and (7) Lastly the dynamic conclusion of Peter’s message. We will look at this six point message as quickly as we can. The Apostle Peter would never make it as a good preacher in this day and time. Everyone knows that you should have either three points and a poem or you should have only a four point message.

1. How impressive is Peter’s version of the Gospel of Jesus. It within itself is a short message.
   a. God approved Jesus of Nazareth, His work and His teachings, by the “miracles, wonders, and signs” that God gave Him to do. [A clue for Mark.]
   b. The Great Maker of History, God Himself, determined according to His foreknowledge and purpose, that Christ would be delivered to Crucifixion.
   c. This predestination of God did not eliminate the personal responsibility of the Jewish nation of their false accusations and their handing over Jesus for crucifixion by the Roman government.
   d. God raised Jesus up from the dead. It was, according to Peter, impossible for God to do otherwise for His own Son. It was not possible that the very Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth, should be held bondage by death itself.

The quote from the Prophet David of Psalms 16:8-11 proves that the Resurrection of Christ was part of the eternal plan of God. A person might casually read Psalms 16 thinking that David is only talking about himself and his own spiritual struggles and death; but it should become obvious to the reader when he comes to 16:10 that it is a discussion of the very Son of God. What else could it be when you read in verse 10 about the “Holy One of Israel”. Of Israel and of the world, there has always been only ONE Holy One, one without sin and that is Christ. Okay, here is the quote from Psalms.

“I (recall that the I is really Jesus of Nazareth talking and thinking out loud)...I foresaw the LORD (LORD in capital letters like that is always God the Father)...I foresaw the LORD always before my face, for He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. (You see how this is faith in God on the part of Jesus....Therefore, Jesus continues, my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. For you will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will you allow YOUR HOLY ONE to see corruption. You have made known to me the way of life; You will make me full of joy in Your Presence.” (Acts 2:25-28 and Psalms 16:8-11) Peter explains David. David is dead so that he could not be talking about himself, and further
Peter ways, his tomb is right here in Jerusalem with us. But you see that David was speaking as a Prophet, Peter and the Scripture call David a Prophet and that is how we know that He was. Prophets speak for God and foretell events. That is what the Prophet David did in Psalms 16:8-11 as he foretold the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. Peter states in unmistakeable terms that David wrote details of the resurrection of Jesus: (1) how God would not leave the soul of Jesus in Hades; and (2) how the body of Jesus after death would not see corruption. Then comes Peter’s bottom line on the Resurrection: that God raised Him up from the dead, and how all the apostles and disciples saw exactly what happened. They saw Jesus of Nazareth dead and buried then on the third day they saw Jesus of Nazareth alive and well.

Truth gets in another circle here with the preaching of Peter as He explains how the Coming of the Holy Spirit relates to the Resurrected and Ascended Christ. It goes like this: (1) God had already promised the Holy Spirit to Jesus to take His place on earth, continue His work, and accomplish far more than Jesus alone could do—in fact you will recall that Jesus also passed this promise on to the disciples to encourage them as they all face the prospect of the cross together; (2) When Jesus Ascended back to the right hand of God the Father, He became the recipient of the promise; and (3) The Ascended Christ Himself sent the promise of God from heaven to earth, that event was being sent with signs and wonders on the first day of Pentecost after the Resurrection.

Thus Peter has made a smooth transition from the Ascension of Christ to the very events of that morning. The tremendous sound from heaven like a mighty, rushing wind; the tongues of fire sitting on top of each of the eleven disciples; and the speaking in other languages from the Holy Spirit. (By the way we might believe as real the present day attempt to imitate the speaking in real languages, if the same imitators could simulate the tremendous wind from heaven and the tongues on top of the speakers. They can not because those signs came from heaven, from God and Christ!)

The dynamic conclusion of Peter’s Message.

a. Israel, you crucified Jesus of Nazareth; but God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ. Christ was the understood Old Testament word for the Messiah, the provider of salvation; and Lord is the master.

b. The convicting power of the Holy Spirit was at work. The listeners said, “What can we do about it?”

c. Peter replied “Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins; then you too will receive this gift of the Holy Spirit. You must separate the gift of the Holy Spirit from the events of the historical coming of the Spirit. The gift is exactly that which Jesus detailed in John 14-16 while the peculiar events of that day is the sound, the cloven tongues, and the speaking in other languages.

d. Furthermore the baptism is not a baptism of water. It is the equivalent of the new birth and beyond. Notice the word is “be baptized” as something that is being done to you by the Spirit of God, not something you can do.

e. Peter goes back to salvation. Back to that part of Joel 2:32 that he was attempting to explain when He got off on a necessary discussion of who Jesus of Nazareth is. He says that the promise of God as recorded in Joel 2:32, again in Acts 2:21, is a promise to three groups of people: (1) It is to the listeners on that day of Pentecost; (2) It is a promise to their children; (3) It is a promise to all subsequent history of peoples for as many as God Himself will call.
4. Traditionalism (FUNDAMENTALISTS) AND THE NEW BIRTH.

The subject is simple and straightforward: HOW THE FUNDAMENTALISTS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE FALLING AWAY. Actually, there are many ways that the fundamentalists have contributed to the Falling Away; but this study from the Bible is on specifically HOW THE FUNDAMENTALIST’S CONCEPT OF THE INSTANTANEOUS NEW BIRTH HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE FALLING AWAY. As a text we will look at one verse from Jesus’ parable of the seed and the sower, Mark 4:16. [correlation with Mark should be from Mark 4, details of parable of the sower and maybe more]

“These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness.” (Mark 4:16)

Now, look at that “with gladness”. Matthew says “receives it with joy”. Now a fundamentalist with his “pick and chose” method of Bible study, if he noted the wording carefully at all, would say that this is instantaneous new birth. The hearer of the Word receives the seed of the word with gladness or joy. “That is salvation!” “That is instantaneous new birth.” Well, we know better. We know from the explanation of Jesus that this is the Seed of the Word which falls on stony ground, but after a short period of time this so-called believer no longer endures. “After a while” are the words of Jesus to explain the short time this believer lasts after receiving the Word with great joy and exuberance, perhaps even shouting. Jesus further explains that when tribulation or persecution come on account of the Word, this person stumbling. Stumble is another word from the Falling Away. A lack of enduring is another word for the Falling Away. You can see that it takes time for this would-be believer to intercept persecution and tribulation. But all during this time of persecution at work and at play, at large from the church, the fundamentalist churches are carrying him on the church roll as a born-again believer.

Let us briefly look at the facts of the New Birth as taught by Jesus and recorded in the third chapter of the Gospel of John. (1) There is a distinct difference between the physical birth and the new birth. Jesus said, “that which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” This immediately separates Bible faith from the American Democratic Faith where everyone born in the United States is automatically by birth or by environmental influence a Christian like Prime Minister Begin expressed when he said “we Israelis are born Jews like you Americans are born Christians.” Not so to be born and raised in America is only to be born and raised under the American Democratic Faith. It is a marvelous set of values, freedoms, and traditions; but it is not salvation, nor is it the birth of the Holy Spirit. (2) By comparing the spiritual or new birth to the physical birth, Jesus teaches us that it takes time to be born again just as it takes nine months to be born physically after the seed is implanted in the womb. That is the problem with the fundamentalists who are in reality traditionalists who have made a religion out of the traditions of the Scofield Reference Bible. They try to appear literal by saying “you must be born again”; but then they distort the original meaning by their doctrines and practices of instantaneous salvation or instantaneous new birth. They look at a person during a revival meeting or even in personal evangelism with their little equations for salvation; they see the seed fall among thorns or on stony ground; they see the immediate with joy springing up on the part of the hearer; and they say, “how marvelous is the work of God for a new soul has been born again.” Not necessarily so; because the new birth just like the physical birth that Jesus compared it to takes time. Perhaps not nine months. Maybe longer or shorter; but there is some period of survival time from the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things that the planted seed of faith must survive before it is a real new birth.

5. SOME MORE SOUNDS and Peacemaking.

SOME MORE SOUNDS...is a continuation of SOME SOUNDS OF SOUND FAITH which tries to stop the trend, at least for a few people, of II Timothy 4:1-4, "The
Time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but out of their own desires shall they heap up teachers having itching ears, turn away from the truth, and be turned into fables."

1. The goal of SOME MORE SOUNDS is to extend the influence of Christ and to prevent the Falling Away.

2. The second goal of SOME MORE SOUNDS...FROM John Mark is to promote the grand theme that "God is the great Maker of History", the title of volume 1a of the LEARN CHRIST FROM THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS commentaries.

   (1). God makes history with the Bible. The Bible tells that God makes history. According to the Apostle James, "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning (of time)."

   (2). God makes history with the Bible by making the history of the Bible. The approximately 40 Prophets and Apostles God chose to write books of the Bible over a period of approximately one thousand years were carefully chosen in their historical context, running from the Prophets Job and Moses in the writing of the Old Testament to the Apostles Paul and John in the writing of the New Testament. Old Testament quotes in the New Testament provide internal proof in the Bible itself of God's plan and control in the writing of the Bible. John Mark records 16 of those quotes, and SOME MORE SOUNDS... is organized around those 16 Old Testament quotes.

   (3). God makes sure that you will get the proper interpretation of the Bible by providing in the Bible not only the quotes from the Old and New Testament, but also by providing in the Bible itself the proper interpretation of the quotes. We have only begun to appreciate what the Apostle Peter meant when he wrote, "no Scripture is of any private interpretation, but Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." God wrote it and God interpreted it properly, all in one book of two testaments.

   a. These Holy men of God, prophets in the Old Testament and Apostles in the New Testament, were carefully chosen by God at specific intervals of history and moved by God the Holy Spirit to write consistently with the mind and heart of God.

   b. God assured that what the Prophets wrote would be consistent with what the Apostles wrote, and both consistent with what Jesus brought to earth of the teachings of God. John Mark with his record of the teachings, character, and works of Jesus is a short 16 chapter example of that working of God in history. We might call this the "authorized interpretation", the opposite of "private interpretation" which is forbidden by the Bible.

   In this day and time when the number one excuse for neglect of the Bible is "there are so many interpretations", it should be comforting to comprehend that God not only gave the "Scripture" but also in the same Bible, the proper interpretation. This was more of God's planning as the Great Maker of History to counter what He knew would be the Satan-given-excuse to the world for not living by "every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God", as Jesus said, as well as living by bread, at which we are far more adept.

Peacemaking

In this age of the Falling Away, just before the Second Coming of Christ
and as a precursor to the Second Coming of Christ, the meaning of “Blessed are the peacemakers...” has been stolen like the real meaning even of Christian and of so many other words in the Bible. The world, Satan, and teachers of “itching ears” (II Timothy 4:4), with skillful exercise of the techniques of “isogesis” (the reading of meaning into the Bible as contrasted to “exegeis” which is the faithful reading out of the original meaning), use the word in an “of this world” sense to apply to any politician who seeks to promote peace in the nations of the world, independent of any faith in Christ.

Peace and real peacemaking is only with Christ as the mediator according to the Word of God in Ephesians chapters 1 and 2. This applies to peace between man and man and to peace between God and men. Christ must be at the center of peacemaking efforts between man and man and between God and man.

“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.” (Ephesians 2:14-18)

If we are to truly extend the influence of Christ, the true Biblical employment of a peacemaker, then Christ must be personally involved, and the extensive “how” of this issue is the story of this book. John Mark, the author on the human side of the Gospel of Mark, extended the influence of Christ when under the inspiration of the Spirit of God when he wrote about the life and teachings of Christ. Of course, above all Mark extended the influence of Christ in faithful recordings about the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. It is the death of Christ, with faith in that death as a substitute atonement for our sins, that provides salvation for the world, and for us in particular; it is the resurrection of Christ which provides an example of life after death and provides the foundation for the hope (reasonable expectation) of eternal salvation; and it is the Ascension to the right hand of God the Father which provides both assurance of the forgiveness of sins (“He ever lives to make intercession for our sins”) and more assurance of eternal life as He promised that in the future we would be where He is.

“Young John Mark did all that!” one might say. Well, yes, and so did Matthew, and Dr. Luke, and the Apostle John. So also did the Apostle Paul in the book of Romans, sometimes called “The Gospel according to Paul”. (I would remind you that “Gospel” always assumes the Gospel of Jesus Christ, although not always expressed in the Bible as such; and in such cases where the reference is to “the gospel of the kingdom”, it is decidedly the Gospel of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. {Some things belong more to Jesus than to God like the kingdom, the only real Church, the Assembly of the Firstborn written in heaven, and the Judgeship to separate the living from the dead, and general Lordship; but they have been ordained to Jesus Christ by God, and will be turned over to God at the end. First, all things are placed at the feet of Jesus, subject to Him; and then all things will be delivered to God the Father, in order that all glory will belong to God.}

However, there are in the nature of inspiration and the whole history of the writing of the 66 books of the Bible, unique characteristics of the personality of
John Mark and in the research and development of the Gospel of Mark. (See F.F. Bruce on THE BOOKS AND THE PARCHMENTS.) For one thing John Mark, unlike most of the New Testament writers, was not an Apostle. He was an eyewitness of much of the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God. Most conservative Bible commentators agree that it was John Mark, with an unnamed reference to himself in the tradition of the Apostle John doing the same in the Gospel of John as the writer, who as a young man about twelve years of age fled naked from the Garden of Gethsemane when the arrestors of Jesus grabbed the scant clothing that he hastily threw on the way to following Jesus and the Apostles to the Garden.

It is very possible that the Last Supper just before the evening excursion in the Garden was held at the home of John Mark's mother.

John Mark's mother was the sister of Barnabas, the famous missionary with the Apostle Paul, and one sometimes called an apostle in the book of Acts; although not the twelfth apostle selected by the other Apostles after Judas fell by transgression. There is a lot of evidence of human personality in Acts: Barnabas had pre-eminence in the first church as he sought out and promoted the new convert Saul, then Barnabas and Saul brought John Mark back from Jerusalem to Antioch with them (Acts 12:25) and then took him on the first missionary journey, but Mark deserted the mission at Pamphylia, "not going to the work" as we read in Acts 15:28; and then on the second missionary journey when Paul objected to taking Mark, there is a personality conflict between Paul and Barnabas, Barnabas taking John Mark with him, Paul taking Silas. The record does not tell us more than "the contention was sharp between Paul and Silas."

We can only speculate as to why John Mark turned back at Pamphylia. It was important to Paul, but Barnabas either wanted to give John Mark another chance or Barnabas consider insignificant the desertion at Pamphylia. Do you look for the problem at Perga in Pamphylia (Acts 13:13)? Did John Mark simply return to Jerusalem because he was homesick, or did he wish to confer with Simon Peter, who in his epistle calls him "my son"? Whatever, Paul took it seriously as an indication of John Mark's lack of dedication; but we also know that when later in prison in Rome, Paul asked for John Mark saying that he was "profitable to me for the ministry". Paul did give John Mark another chance; and I think, from speculations based on the internal evidence of various scriptures, that it was a chance equal to almost the one given by Paul to Dr. Luke. There is much evidence that Paul was chosen to be the Chief Editor of the New Testament—that was his prime ministry and the one he had in mind when he noted John Mark as profitable to that end—so when Paul requested Timothy to come before winter, bringing the books and parchments with him, two of those manuscripts were for Dr. Luke to write Luke and Acts, and one of the manuscripts was for John Mark to use in the writing of the Gospel of Mark.

You can tell that John Mark made a marvelous recovery in the eyes of the Apostle Paul, likewise in the esteem of the Church of First Century Christianity. Above all, and what is most important, John Mark proved a person interest in extending the influence of the life and teachings of Jesus; He
showed extremely strong convictions on Jesus; He illustrated his willingness to be used by the Spirit of God in the writing of the shortest of the four Gospels. This personal recovery by John Mark, the opposite of the challenge of our generation of the Falling Away, is a co-emphasis with the influence of Christ in this presentation. Is it as dramatic as what happened in the life of Demas, personified when Paul wrote, “Demas hath forsaken me having loved this present world? I don’t know, but it seems very similar. We hope that Demas also had a marvelous recovery in being rescued from his love of this present world, no doubt a similar experience to what happened to John Mark; but even more importantly in all these cases and others in the Bible, we can see hope for rescue of victims of the Falling Away.

You know, loving “this present world” does not sound so serious, but it really is. Many might say, “well, they are young...wait until they grow up”; and indeed it no doubt worked in the case of John Mark, but perhaps not in the case of Demas, certainly not in the case of all of the children of Israel in the wilderness except for Caleb and Joshua. Love of this present world will not mix with the love of God. Mammon is the things of this world which man himself has created, and the Bible represents the bread God has given man, every word of which proceeds out of the mouth of God. Christ is the teachings that He received from God and delivered in the Sermon on the Mount, by the way recorded in Mark as well as the other Gospels, in there Christ demands, and God demands, that a definite choice for priority be made for God and God’s righteousness over the mammon of man.

It is not an either/or as to whether mammon and bread of life will both exist in human life: it is a matter of which will have the priority--mammon of God--to the extent of servitude. Christ is talking about motivation. What is your primary motivation? To seek the mammon of men like a house, and land, and degrees, and career, and position, and even wealth or pleasure? Or to diligently seek after the Bible and the words of the Bible as every word that proceeds out of mouth of God, and to seek first after the kingdom of God and after God’s righteousness?

6. Threads or Sounds of Doctrine and Authority in Mark.

There are certain threads or sounds that repeat often in the Gospel of Mark. One such sound is that of DOCTRINE and AUTHORITY. There are others that you will expect to see in a study of the 16 chapters of Mark: the teachings of Jesus on certain subject matters as the Falling Away, the teachings of Jesus on love of this world versus love of mammon, the teaching and preaching of Jesus on the Gospel, the miracles of Jesus, the death and resurrection of Jesus; and so on. It is hoped to limit to the study to eight of these and stay focused on them throughout Mark. This is not a attempted commentary on Mark. Many good commentaries on Mark already exist.) God plays with the wisdom of the world and of the university scholars as He chooses to save those through the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe (“When in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those that believe…”); (4) The wisdom of this world of the universities and books (except a select few) are foolishness with God, and not many mighty or noble or wise are called to a proper spiritual understanding; and (5) It is necessary to face up to the fact that true Bible faith in Christ is a minority endeavor as “many are called but few are chosen”, and “broad is the way that leads to destruction and many go that way” while “narrow is the way that leads to eternal life” and few there are that take that way of life. It is the
simple difference between the majority and the minority that we are talking about.

This applies to the United States also. You can hardly make a legitimate case that this majority and minority thing of the Bible applies to the whole world apart from the United States. Even as it applied also to Israel, the originally chosen nation of God, in the days of Christ, it also applies to the currently chosen nation of God, the United States, during this age of the fullness of the Gentiles. What we have in the United States, to use the words of some of the American Studies scholars, is an AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC FAITH. It can be summarized as spoken by former Prime Minister of Israel Begin, “You Americans are born Christians just as Jews are born Jews.” Neither is true, but it takes a close study of that part of the Word of God called the book of Romans, by the Apostle Paul and the Spirit of God, to understand it. That will be explained in the third chapter, “God’s Watershed of History: Choice of a Beloved and Foolish Nation”. Suffice it to say for now as Paul, “not every Jew is born of Israel”, nor is every child of God born of Israel, and there is a spiritual Israel. In other words, until the fullness of the Gentiles age is complete, there will be more children of God from among the Gentiles, the United States leading the way, than from among the physical nation of Israel. {Enjoy it while you can.}

Second to the proper attitude, it is necessary to work hard to understand the Bible. Jesus uses the words “asking”, “seeking”, and “knocking”. Another way to say it is that those who search after the truth from the Bible are the ones most likely to find the truth. One of the so-called “beatitudes” describes the way God will bless those who seek the truth of the Bible, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” Many like to talk about this as happiness or the beatitudes. No, it is the blessings of God; and if God Himself blesses you beyond that of the sun and rain, beyond that of the majority on the earth, it is indeed a blessing. God can and will bless you by understanding of every word that proceeds out of His mouth if you will develop the right attitude and put out effort in knowing the truth. We live among many who desire the instant spiritual blessings of salvation and special insight; however there is never and has never been a quick and easy way. Many point to the salvation of Paul on the road to Damascus as an example of instantaneous salvation; but there would not have been a salvation experience of the road except for the extended time of that preceded it in which “he kicked against the pricks”. And still his salvation was not complete as indicated by the physical blindness (a sign of incomplete spiritual insight), until Ananias assisted him with more truth from the Ascended Christ. Even so Paul was not yet ready to preach. He must spend time in the Arabian Desert with the Ascended Christ, and then go back to Tarsus to reread the Old Testament in the light of what Christ had taught him.

Paul teaches about the yearn in Hebrews for the sound doctrine of the Word of God as the equivalent motivation of a new born baby desiring to have milk. All know of that yelling and screaming and crying of the baby for milk, and the person who yearns with that intensity after every word from the mouth of God as recorded in the Word of God will be rewarded in like manner
as a mother cares for her child. Someone besides Jacob must wrestle with the angel for a spiritual blessing, and that someone is the person, having established a proper attitude, who seeks to know the truth of God and Christ, the truth of the Word of God which is divine in origin, absolute in authority, sufficient in message, and high fidelity in communication.

There is far more to the little book of Mark that we can reach in this series of messages; however since it is a pivotal book of the whole Bible which will be explained now, it is hoped that a life-time interest can be generated in the book of Mark that will be both an inspiration and a source of sustenance during a life that is lived more than by bread alone, a life that is lived by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. You can start your spiritual pilgrimage of life, or sustain it, no better place than with Mark and in particular with the teachings of Jesus in Mark.

Why do I call the Gospel of Mark pivotal in the Bible. For several reasons: (1) Even A. T. Robertson in his famous HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS using the Gospel of Mark to outline all of the other four of the Gospels; (2) If you have read any of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries, especially on the life and letters of Paul or on the Old Testament according to the New Testament, you are familiar with how God selected Paul to be the Chief Editor of the New Testament; and further how Paul after his conversion and time with the Ascended Christ in Saudi Arabia, while in what is sometimes called the seven silent years at Tarsus, re-read all the Old Testament writing a parchment of all the Old Testament quotes to be included in the New Testament (Paul himself wrote 14 of the 27 New Testament books and sponsored 3 others through Dr. Luke and John Mark); (3) When Paul left with John Mark a manuscript of those carefully chosen quotes for an Old Testament life of Jesus, he also gave to John Mark the testimony of Simon Peter which he recorded on another parchment (Paul life a manuscript with Dr. Luke with the testimony of James); (4) A careful study of all these Old Testament quotes in the four gospels show the book of Mark with a careful choice of quotes to be a sort of Appendix to the Gospels. In short, in the Gospel of Mark you have a condensed summary of the four gospels, of the Gospel according to Peter and Paul, and a condensed summary of the Gospel of the ages according to the Old Testament. Yet it is simple, straightforward, and a story of action with terse teachings of Jesus! That is worth a life-time of becoming acquainted with. (If you just happen to remember me and these words of encouragement, that will be another pleasant memory.) Furthermore I would suggest memorizing the model prayer from Jesus of Mark xx:xx as both an example and a guideline for daily prayers. These daily prayers are a vital part of the living by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

7. WHAT IS SOUND DOCTRINE?

1. What is Sound Doctrine? Since doctrine is another word for teachings, and of course for Bible believers the teachings of Jesus and of God, which are the same, then sound doctrine is also sound teachings from God Himself and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus made it clear often during His three years ministry on earth that His teachings or doctrines were not His own but belonged to God His Father, and furthermore that whatever God taught Him to say is exactly what He taught on this earth. Parenthetically, it should be stated at this point that sound faith is a subset of sound doctrine. Even as sound doctrine includes all that comes
from God and Jesus and all that can be known as truth about God and Jesus and their teachings, even so sound faith is a subset in that it is both beliefs and a process of confidence in that sound doctrine. *(This will be discussed more thoroughly from the Bible in the chapter on FAITH.)*

2. What is Sound Doctrine? Sound doctrine is synonymous with “the faith once for all delivered to the saints” (verse 3) of the book of Jude. It was delivered once for all by Jesus and the Apostles who recorded what He said in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; it was recorded once for all in the books written by the Apostles and Prophets; it has been sealed once for all in the history of the Christ faith in the book of 66 books, 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament, by the assembly of the Firstborn and their leaders as they have crystallized as the Holy Bible this book.

You see right here at this point at least half of the confusion is eliminated as on how to distinguish between sound doctrine and all the beliefs that clamor for recognition. At least half of all of the religions and denominations did not subscribe to the Bible as the Word of God, and therefore do not subscribe to this as the only sufficient source of sound doctrine. Then you can eliminate another one-fourth of so-called Christian denominations and religions who do not believe as stated in Jude 3, that the sound faith and doctrine was once for all delivered to the saints. They believe in the evolution of sound doctrine; they believe that they like the Prophets and Apostles of old are the recipients of special revelations from God. At the extreme of this spectrum are the Mormons who have replaced the single Bible of the faith once delivered with four Bibles, and also subscribe to constant new revelation from the Heads of the LDS churches. To express it in the words of the Doctrine and the Covenants any time the Head Prophet of the Mormon church speaks, it is Word of God. *(Later, I will discuss how this places two curses from the Holy Bible itself on the head of the Latter Day Saints.)*

And at the other end of the spectrum of the group who do not see sound doctrine and sound faith as “once for all delivered” are those people and groups who see knowledge of truth from God as sort of an evolution that comes as we learn more and as we acquire more scientific knowledge. As an example, and this is very subtle, is the religious person who will take God’s name in vain as excusable as if the words no longer apply, “the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain” as taught by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. Or the person that somehow sees God and His Word as outdated because this new generation is so much smarter than the last generation that lived. J.B. Phillips expressed it years ago when he wrote the book, YOUR GOD IS TOO SMALL. People did not believe that God understood radar or the modified Bohr Theory of the atom. Today people do not believe that God understands computers and genetics and information technology. You see we confuse some older Christ believers and what they understand with the God of this universe who understands and knows all things; and further who created the minds who can probe and invent these things and the fundamentals laws of the universe that make the understanding of these technical matters possible.

3. What is Sound Doctrine? **It is doctrine that comes from God through the work and will of the Holy Spirit of God.** Here, I must quote from the
Word of God itself as found in II Timothy 3:16,17:
“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for
reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness…” You see it came
from God is a gift from God for the profit of humanity in order that humanity may
come to know the way that God wants us to live (that is the instruction, another
word for teachings, and “instruction in righteousness” another way to correct
our behavior and beliefs.) As far as Scripture coming more specifically from
the work on earth of God the Holy Spirit, we turn to the teachings of Jesus as
recorded in John 14-16 where Jesus taught saying, “…when He, the Spirit of
truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth, for He will not speak on His
own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things
to come.” (John 16:13)

4. What is Sound Doctrine? It also helps to shift out the wheat from the
chaff of sound doctrine to know not only the origin of sound doctrine as from
God through the Spirit but that it must have come through an approved apostle
or prophet. How do we know who has been approved? Once again it is from the
Bible itself which tells of how Jesus chose both apostles and prophets. If you
believe about the Apostle Peter, then you believe that the Apostle Paul wrote
Scriptures as much the Word of God as those of the Old Testament Prophets
because Peter states that in his books, and so on epistle after epistle in the Bible
the approximately 20 writing prophets of the Old Testament are confirmed and
the approximately 7 writing Apostles of the New Testament confirm each other.

5. What is Sound Doctrine? It is the doctrine or teachings or faith taught
by the Holy Spirit of God Himself. Refer again to John 16:13 above, “the Spirit
of truth…will guide you into all truth.” Isn’t just a little bit of conviction and
certainty like this from the Bible, from the teachings of Jesus Himself, from the
book written by the Apostle John, and that has come to be believed by the great
cloud of witnesses of the Christ faith that have gone before (Hebrews 11 and 12)
worth a lot more than the tendency to wallow in he mud puddle of uncertainly and
doubt of looking at all the teachings and beliefs in the world. (Underlying all sound
doctrine and the efforts to know and do sound doctrine is the fundamental
belief based on the teachings of Jesus that the majority are wrong and the
minority is right, and this applies in the United States as in all countries of
the world.)

6. What is Sound Doctrine? It is life related—can not be learned apart
from the way life is lived—in that it must proceed from a deep-seated yearning to
know the truth, with the confidence that the truth is more likely to be learned
when it is passionately sought; can not be learned apart from a desire to know the
will of God; and can not be learned unless equal life priority is given to “every word
that proceeds from the mouth of God” to the life priority of making a living.

8. Some Obstacles to Learning Sound Doctrine?
1. Pastor James, the pastor of the first church ever, in Jerusalem immediately
after the life of Christ, and the half-brother of Jesus, had a lot to say in the little
book of James about truth, doctrine, and what causes obstacles to sound doctrines
in churches. It is very practical because Pastor James is dealing with the problems
in a very real church, the First. First of all the Apostle James says that the wars
and battles over sound doctrine in local churches (and denominations) come from
individual desires for pleasure and status. Once again I must quote from the Word
of God:

"Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust (for control, for recognition, for power, etc) and do not have. You murder (that includes anger and fighting) and covet (desire to have and be what someone else in the church has and is) and cannot obtain. You fight (in your home church) and war (in the denomination). Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures." (James 4:1-3)

Wow! It never can be said any better than that and never will be said any better than that. Don't look for some deep meaning that causes the splits in churches and the warfare in the Southern Baptist Convention, it comes out of wars and battles for pleasure. Crude, but true!

2. Another obstacle to sound doctrine in individual lives, in beliefs, and in the practices of churches is the lack of wisdom. Contrary to the old wives tale "that if the majority of the church votes to do something, it is right" is the teaching of Pastor James in the Word of God that where there is no real prayer there is no real wisdom from God and from above, and further where in any church there is "self-seeking" and "confusion" that is the sure sign that the wisdom from above has never come.

3. Another obstacle to sound doctrine is the "doctrines of devils". Do the devils, alias the fallen angels and Satan, really have doctrine? Oh yes, and that doctrine is subtle and often so close to the truth of Jesus that it is difficult to shift out from the truth. Recall the way Satan tempted Jesus Himself in order to divert Jesus from the real will of God. First of all, he quoted Scripture. Do not be deceived, every quoter of Scripture is not on the side of Jesus. In fact, it is very possible that Satan–especially in this time of intolerance toward sound doctrine–has as many people who quote Scripture as Jesus: the big difference being in the way they implement and interpret and apply the Scripture. For example, Satan tempted Jesus (Luke 4:1-13) on three fronts with unsound doctrine from Scripture: first, the temptation or obstacle from Satan was to live by bread instead of by the will of God; second, the obstacle from Satan was to worship Satan and to get the whole world rather than worship God; and third, the obstacle was to tempt God by leading Himself into futile tests of God Himself, a very common practice today in very popular churches.

4. The obstacle of seducing spirits. Along with the warnings of the Bible about doctrines of devils is also the warning of seducing spirits. Once again to quote from the Bible, the Word of God: "Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth." (I Timothy 4:1-3)

This was expressly told to Paul by the Holy Spirit of God. It is an inevitable prediction, called a prophesy, of what will take place in history: in fact is a
accepted burden of proof of this book on THE SOUND OF A SOUND FAITH that has already happened, the time of intolerance toward sound doctrine. It is generally referred to by Bible scholars as the Great Apostasy. The only reason I do not like that phrase as it seems like something to happen way out in the future instead of now!

The short and simple of the meaning is: that is the doctrines of devils that come to you, and which must inevitable come as long as there is a Satan and other devils, if those doctrines of devils do not present obstacles to your sound faith and sound doctrine, then the seducing or deceiving spirits can get you. The bad thing about a bad spirit is that it can be clothed in clothing that is very deceptive, say for example black clothing or sheep's clothing.

The last obstacle to be mentioned to sound doctrine is the most serious obstacle to most Protestant, non-Mormon believers: it is the wall of intolerant doctrine built up in churches and denominations by itching ears teachers, preachers, and people that protects them from the sound of sound doctrine. When the Bible says in II Timothy 4:3,4, about the time of intolerance toward sound doctrine and mentions how those of itching ears will "HEAP" to themselves teachers of itching ears, the "heaping" has the implication of extensive effort to protect against sound doctrine. For example the effort that the divorced in churches go to, who have not confessed divorce as adultery when there is remarriage, the effort they go to protect themselves from hearing the true words of the Bible and the teachings of Jesus on the matter. The "heaping" is like building up a vast wall of protection against sound doctrine. It reminds of what some of the New Jersey ladies who lost husbands in 9/11 were quoted as saying about the Bush administration, "they have built up around the White House a wall of secrecy." Well, the wall of intolerance toward sound doctrine is a wall for comfort, a wall built by itching ears.

9. The Silence on the Falling Away is a Message.

I am amazed at the lack of Bible teaching and preaching of a doctrine as fundamental and as important as is THE FALLING AWAY. The Falling Away, bar none is the challenge of this generation. While I would not expect secular educators and the newsman and newmakers of the world to mention the Falling Away, I would expect churches, evangelists, Bible teachers, and preachers on television to be talking about it. It is an amazing phenomenon of our time that while bible teachers and preachers talk about the end time events, they are not talking about the Falling Away, which according to the Bible, must happen before the end times; and which according the Bible is a sign of the coming end time. You can not have any last time events without first the Falling Away.

Why Is your favorite Bible teacher or preacher not talking about the Falling Away? Following are some possible explanations as to why your favorite Bible teacher or preacher is not talking about the Falling Away.

It is not popular to talk about the Falling Away. It is short of like the subject of "death": it is not a very popular subject for discussion, or even thought. Churchmembers, Bible toters, and others think that if they don't talk about it, perhaps it will go away. Can you not see the incongruous stance of looking for the Second Coming of Christ by overlooking the precursors to the Second Coming of Christ which according to the Bible in II Thessalonians is four fold: (1) An inevitable increase in sin or lawlessness in the whole world; (2) The withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from the earth scene; (3) The appearance of the man of sin, the son of
perdition, who is a very human incarnation of Satan; and (4) The Falling Away from God, Christ, and the Bible on the part of churchmembers. Now, although part of the Bible; you can see that it is not popular. This is a place that the fundamentalists who are really traditionalists in that they preach the same sermon today as delivered by their grandfathers and great grandfathers who were not in the Falling Away. How can they remain traditionalists and popular and preach the inevitability of the Falling Away before the Second Coming?

Second, not talking about the Falling Away is itself a sign of the Falling Away. If during the Falling Away, the most outstanding characteristic of the Falling away is a lack of sound doctrine, then you would not expect from the popular Bible teachers and preachers, the preaching and teaching of the Falling Away. Thus, what we have is within itself a proof of the Falling Away. The sad fact of the "will not endure sound doctrine" of the Bible is more a matter of what is left out of the messages than what is included. What you do not hear from popular Bible teachers is what you do need to hear. What are you hearing? Look at two recent best sellers which are telling you that if you want to attract a large number of people into a large, attractive building and called it a "church", then you have to do one of three possible things: (1) Preach and teach a unity and peace, not from sound doctrine or from the inherent unity which the Holy Spirit provides, but rather do so my making churchmembers subscribe to a church covenant which prohibits any disagreements among members, doctrinal or otherwise, that would disturb the fellowship (yes, this is where Saddleback Church and xxxx have made a significant contribution to the Falling Away); (2) Preach and teach along with a lot of pleasant stories and smiles of good public relations the living of a good life now by way of the Gospel of Prosperity and the corollary of success (yes, this is what Joel Olsteen is doing); or (3) Preach and teach the extra-ordinary life as a woman of faith where things are not things but are "resources" of the woman of faith (well, you know who these ladies are). You see you are already horrified because you recognize that to say these things in criticism of Joel Olsteen, Rick Warren, and the Women of Faith is unpopular; because those Bible teachers and preachers are very popular, even into the thousands and tens of thousands.

That brings us to the third point of why you do not hear preaching and teaching about the Falling Away: it would be self-defeating for any preacher and teacher of the Falling Away, who bottom line is really an advocate of the falling away, to preach against the very movement of which they are a part. You would not find tens of thousands in that vast congregation listening to Joel Olsteen encourage you in the Gospel of Prosperity if they preached about the Falling Away. You would not find thousands in Saddleback Church and tens of thousands wanting to duplicate their rapid church growth based on a false doctrine about peace and unity, if xxxx xxxx preached about the Falling Away. You would not see women by the thousands flock to hear women of faith, if they recognized the promotion of cares of this world, the deceitfulness of things, and other things as part of the Falling Away.

Fourthly, the bottom line is this: these so-called Bible preachers and teachers—any you will notice that you hear far more other stories than stories
of the Bible than you do Bible itself (it is called talking about the Bible rather than talking Bible)—are part of the “itching ears” heaping up of false Bible teachers and preachers that Jesus also predicted would be part of the Falling Away. I wish that we could separate the heaping up of teachers with itching ears from the false teachers and preachers; and perhaps, we can in that the itching ears teachers just want to give church members and others what they want. The itching ears teachers are smart enough to recognize what people want to hear because of what people really believe down deep in their lives, and that it what you are going to hear from them. During the Falling Away, that is what will increase the attendance from victims of the Falling Away: this is what will grow large mega-churches; and this is what will allow the sign of success as if it were really a work of God. Paul and Jesus explained to us the motivation of false Bible teachers and preachers: (1) They are in the ministry for money, greed, and self-profit; (2) Their goal is to make disciples after themselves thus promoting their own fame and effectively scattering away the flock from the influence of the local church; (3) The Gospel of Prosperity and Success has some sincere believers who have come not to see the distinction between the faith of the Bible and the American Democratic Faith. Somewhere along the line in the name of success in church work, they depart from the sound faith of the Bible, themselves not realizing when and how it happened! You would have to put these in the category of those who have their conscience seared with a hot iron. They can fleece the flock, even overthrow the faith of some as Paul talks about in II Timothy, and never flinch an eyelid.

10. The Bible and the Falling Away
How did we get into the Falling Away in this country with so many churches, Bibles, and preachers? Well, first of all that is what the Falling Away is. It is a falling away from God, Christ, and the Bible on the part of the very people who have seen the work of God and who at some point have been identified as the people of God. You can recognize it each Sunday. During this time of the Falling Away, the way most pastors and teachers are survivor as appointed leaders over congregations is by each Sunday in some subtle form or fashion, by convincing the people that they are the elect of God.

What we need here is a little firm foundation in Scripture as it comes from II Timothy in order to explain how the churches and other Bible totters got in this mess of the Falling Away. You will see it as we look in detail at God’s word as recorded in II Timothy. This short message has three points so that it will be easy to follow and to remember: (1) All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for church membership under Christ and for sound doctrine (the first we have bought or we think like the fundamentalists that we have bought the proper attitude of inspiration, but we have not as seen by the gap between church membership and Christ laid out in the verses above and in the lack of endurance of sound doctrine below); (2) A Form of Godliness with the power of God—the gap between Christ and church membership; and (3) Our theory of inspiration has not lead to sound doctrine.

First, the Bible has been accepted in this country as more an academic book than a book for practical teachings and practices. II Timothy 3:16: this is the pivotal scripture of the whole book of II Timothy, and you probably like myself have it memorized. Unfortunately while memorized, it has not been understood to the extent of implementation. That is clear from the horrors we see above it, in
the “perilous times” of II Timothy 3:1-9, and below it in the “itching ears” of II Timothy 4:3,4.

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness…” (II Timothy 3:16)

What do we do? We get off on the one word “inspiration”, whether it is verbal and plenary, and then we decide how much better we are than others churches and denominations on inspiration, never for all practical purposes coming to the applications and implementations of (1) doctrine, (2) reproof, (3) correction, and (4) instruction in righteousness. Once again look at the pivotal nature of this verse after the disintegration of the churches above where reproof, correction, and righteousness is not a part of church life, where in the “form of godliness or religion and worship exists without any internal and real power of God”, where the gap between Christ and churchmembership has become so large that now it is churchmembership without Christ, where church behavior has become intolerable being replaced by the self-expression and self-fulfillment of the ways of the world. And then below the pivotal verse of II Timothy 3:16 is the evidence that the real meaning of inspiration of Scripture as profitable for doctrine has not been heeded. In II Timothy 4:1-4 the itching ears teachers and preachers have taken over the world of Bible teaching and preached. They are literally “heaped up” as a major world movement in Christianity. You hear itching ears teachings in the pulpits, you hear itching ears teachings on television (boy, do you ever hear it on television), you hear itching ears teachings in vastly attended women’s conferences.

For our second point on the Bible and the Falling Away, let us go back up above the pivotal verse of II Timothy 3:16. (Perhaps you wonder why so much emphasis on II Timothy 3:16. Well, because it is a very positive statement and hope in the midst of so many negative aspects in churches and Bible teachings of the Falling Away. The Falling Away is very negative. That is the nature of the Falling Away. It is bad. It is bad enough when it happens to the world at large, but it is worse when the churches become havens of bad behavior and a den of thieves; and it is extremely bad when Bible teaching and preaching become dominated by itching ears teachings and the heaping up of itching ears teachers. What is the second point of the Bible and the Falling Away: churches have disintegrated without the “reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness” of the Bible.

Listen to II Timothy 3:1-9. It is hard to believe that the Word of God is here talking about churches. It sounds more like the description of civilizations of Romans 1 who have rejected God as part of their lives.

“But know this…” This is a good beginning to get the churches to listen, know this—you should know about your church behavior as part of the Falling Away...church attendance may go up like at the Lakewood Church in Houston, but you will see a Falling Away from God, Christ, and the Bible.

“...That in the last days perilous time will come...” The last days started with the Coming of the Holy Spirit in great power on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension of Christ, and it ends with the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from earth just before the Second Coming of Christ. Now the good
news here is that these perilous times come and go, sort of like revivals only
the opposite in nature. That is they come and go until church behavior becomes
synonymous with the wickedness of the world which happens during the Falling
Away. You decide for yourself if we are in the Falling Away based on what you hear
from Scripture, always remembering that you can not expect the Second Coming
without passing through the Falling Away.

“For men will be lovers of themselves...” Don’t you see that behavior in your
church. Men are far more wrapped up in themselves than they are in Christ.

“...lovers of money” How many men responsible for the robbing of thousands
of Americans in Houston and in other cities out of their 401K’s and other life
savings, do you think were members of churches. I am sure all of them. Either
at the First Baptist Church, the Second Baptist church, a Presbyterian and /or a
Methodist Church. Lovers of money tend to create despisers of humanity. You
are kidding yourself if you have not seen that behavior in your church!

“boasters” What can you say, there are almost as many loud mouth windbag
and boosters in our churches as in the rest of the world. In fact, one can hardly
tell the difference between the two environments. Yes, we tend to call it self-
expression and self-fulfillment. Ladies in this time of equality have become as
bad or worse than men. I think they are encouraged with such boasting behavior
by the “good life” from Joel Olsteen, “the everyday life” you know from who, and
the “extraordinary life” for so-called women of faith. How in contrast is the Bible
approved behavior of to “only brag or glory in Christ”.

“proud” Practicing the Christ of “God forbid should that I should glory save
in Christ and the cross of Christ” would eliminate both pride and boasting.

“blasphemers” Well, we have you here. We are confident that we have not
blasphemers of God and Christ in our church. Wait a minute, you have never heard
your church members at play or work when they take the name of the LORD God
in vain. That is blasphemy; and the practice is now rapart among church members.
Respect for God is very fundamental. Where you have that lack of respect for
God is the same place that you will have “the form of godliness (or religion) that
denies the power thereof.”

Well, I will not comment on the other traits of bad behavior in the churches.
Use your imagination as I simply read them, or use your memories. “...disobedient
to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanders, without self-control,
brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, loves of pleasure rathr
than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from
such people turn away!”

Okay, we have some more trash to go through in looking at the itching ears
behavior that is below the pivotal verse of II Timothy 3:16. We can almost feel
like the Prophet Jeremiah, by the way not at all a popular Bible teacher during his
days, who said the message given to him by God was both bitter and sweet.

Thirdly, the heaping up of teachers with itching ears has become both a
source of entertainment, a mass movement, and a haven of security and comfort.
Listen to these words form the Word of God. Each word and each phrase is so
packed with meaning. See if you don’t see a description of what is happening
right now?

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine (a new intolerance
in the Bible belt has developed over the last 20 years, an intolernce toward sound
doctrine or sound Bible teachings—oh, there is plenty of Bible talk, Bible teachings and preachers, perhaps more than ever before, but it is out of joint with the Bible itself, with Christ, and with God)...but according to their own desires (but according to their own desires, here is the motivation for intolerance toward sound Bible teachings, it is a matter of what Bible totters and Bible listeners and church members want to hear—they want to hear about the good life of prosperity, they want to hear about the extraordinary life of pride of life and lust of the eyes)...because they have itching ears (first comes the itching ears church members and then comes the itching ears Bible teachers, like the priest like the people)...they will heap up for themselves teachers (my how the heaping is a large nation wide movement that builds cathedrals, large mega-churches, grows seminaries, foster television and vastly attended metings—heaping is a good word as you just do not see an end of the growth of itching ears teachings)...and they will turn their ears away from the truth. (here along with the next phrase is the bottom line of the end result, Bible totters and church members turn away from the truth)...“and be turned aside to fables” (this is not something they do, but rather something that happens to them, they are turned into or become the victims of fables.)

11. Paul’s Ministry and John Mark

Paul left a manuscript for John Mark with 18 Old Testament quotes to use for an outline in writing the Gospel of Mark. It may come as a surprise to hear this, and to read from II Timothy 4:11 that John Mark should be brought by Timothy to Paul, imprisoned in Rome, because "he is useful tome for ministry". I do not have time to lay again that foundation now of how Paul’s chief minstry was not the missionary journeys—goodness, Paul had decided after John Mark departed from them on the first missionary journey that Mark was not profitable there—but the prime ministry of the Apostle Paul was as chief editor of the New Testament. Paul personally wrote 14 of the New Testament books and sponsored through Dr. Luke and John Mark three other New Testament books. {You can read more about this in the LEARN CHRIST Commentaries, especially in volume 1, “The Old Testament according to the New Testament” with an extensive introduction to how Paul was chosen by the Ascended Christ and instructed in Saudi Arabia on how to be the chief editor of the New Testament. Also you can read it in the second volume of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries, “‘Remember My Bonds’, the Life and 14 New Testament Letters of the Apostle Paul”.)

Now, we proceed to look at those 18 Old Testament quotes that Paul left to John Mark to complete Paul’s minstry in that the time of his death was imminent and Paul Himself would not have the opportunity to take this outline from the Old Testament to write a life of Christ. Also Paul left for John Mark and Dr. Luke the recorded testimonies of the Apostles Peter and James, the only other two that Paul spoke with after his conversion besides the Ascended Christ.

The first quote is about John the Baptist as the voice crying in the wilderness that makes preparation of the beginning of the ministry of Christ. It is actually two quotes, one from Isaiah 40:3 and another from Malachi 3:1. We are dealing with a lot of ministries here: the minstry of Paul as
the chief editor of the New Testament, the ministry of John Mark in using the
Old Testament quotes outline to write a life of Christ along with the recorded
testimonies of Peter and James, the ministry of Christ—and that is the primary
ministry that we are interested in as it is the ministry that provides salvation—and
the ministry of John the Baptist who had the awesome challenge of introducing
the nation of Israel to their Promised Messiah, the Christ, and to their Saviour.

John the Baptist, the voice of the one crying in the wilderness, appropriately
was much like the Old Testament Prophets with his coat of camel’s hair, his baptism
of the people of Israel in the Jordan River for repentance, his proclamation of
One to come much greater than Himself, and then his introduction as to who that
One was with His baptism in the river Jordan.

Especially this time of the year with the Christmas story we are so familiar
with this first quote in Mark, actually two quotes which begin with “As it is written
in the Prophets” (Mark 1:2), that we hardly distinguish between the parts from
Isaiah and the parts from Malachi. Normally we do get the new interpretation
that Mark places on it with the conclusion of Mark 1:1: “The beginning of the gospel
of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” It might think it strange that the conclusion of
the two quotes from Isaiah and Malachi are up front, but that is the nature of the
tense, action filled statements of the Gospel of Mark. And you might as well have
the challenge to faith placed right up front at the beginning. You hardly stop to
think that not only does this identify the ministries of Christ and John the Baptist
with the Old Testament Prophets of Isaiah and Malachi, but also with this Jesus
of Nazareth that John baptized. And Mark makes the statement right up front
that this Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of God.

Quickly, let us break down which parts of the quote in Mark 1:2,3 come from
Isaiah and which from Malachi. First, the quote.

"Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before
You. The voice of one crying in the wilderness: prepare the way of the LORD,
make his paths straight." (Mark 1:2,3)

The first part of this quote about the “messenger” and preparation of the
way is from Malachi 3:1. Here is the way it reads in Malachi. You can see how it
is a thorough description of the ministry of Christ Himself, and one with which
the nation of Israel was very familiar. After all this was the last message from
a Prophet of God to be spoken before the dark ages of before the time of Christ
had dawned into a new day of the Ministry of Christ.

“Behold, {the Prophet Malachi writes}, I send My messenger. And he will prepare
the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His
temple, even the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is
coming,’ says the LORD of hosts.” (Malachi 3:1)

I will not try to fathom the depth of the Trinity here as we see both
references to God the Father as the LORD of hosts, and references to the eternal
Christ that was with God from before the beginning in the “Me” of Malachi and
in the “Lord” of Malachi. Just let me say that both God and Christ are spoken of
here, God as the LORD with capital letters and Christ as he Lord with little letters.
Just allow it to suffice for the moment to say that in the life and ministry of Christ,
“God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.” (For more of the Trinity,
which by the way even know-it-all Stanford PHD Gene Scott admitted last week
on television that he like most does not understand the Trinity completely. But we
can know more than is generally know and from the Bible, and for what is in the Bible please refer to the 1a volume of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries on "God the Father". And it would help for more understanding of the Trinity to read all three volumes—1a, 1b, and 1c of THE OLD TESTAMENT ACCORDING TO THE NEW TESTAMENT, individually entitles respectively as "God the Father", "The Prophet Messiah", and as "The Great Maker of History")

You might say that the first part of Mark 1:2,3 is more about the Message of the ME of Malachi 3:1, while the second part of the quotes from Isaiah 40:3 is more about the Preparatory Ministry of John the Baptist, almost like another Old Testament Prophet Himself. Here is Isaiah 40:3, directly from the Old Testament.

"The voice (that voice is John the Baptist and the people of Israel recognized it as such) of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth; the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.” (Isaiah 40:3-5)

Let us quickly break down the historical facts of this Isaiah 40:3-5 passage as talks about the work of John the Baptist: (1) "the voice of one crying in the wilderness": all that we read in Mark and the other gospels tells us that John primarily kept his ministry isolated to the Jordan River and beyond in the wilderness; (2) John's preaching of "repentance for sins" and baptism for the repentance of sins along with his message of the shortly to come "Lamb of God" that would take away the sins of the world was preparatory for the public appearance of Jesus Christ—it was much like an ad campaign run today for the public appearance of some idol or hero, and just like today it was know and heard by the whole nation; (3) John's work was sort of like that of a Civil Engineer (much better, I might add than that of the dam builders in New Orleans) as John had the ministry of constructing a highway in the desert for Jesus Christ {I think that was just the beginning of the highway since how often do you see both valleys and mountains in a desert}, but John's construction job for Jesus Christ included building up or raising the valleys and knocking down or lowering of the mountains); (4) furthermore the construction work had to include making the highway straight and smooth—the crooked places had to be straightened and the high and low places made smooth {which I would say was John's function as a continuation of the Old Testament Prophets to make clear an understand of the exact implications of the prophecies and the outstanding nature of what was about to happen in history}; (5) "the glory of the LORD shall be revealed", the word LORD is for God the Father since it is all capital letters; and we know from the rest of the Bible that Christ was the glory of God the Father, and that in the life and death of Jesus Christ the world saw exactly what God the Father is like in the Person of the Son; (6) "and all flesh shall see it together"—well, we could camp out here but suffice it now to say that one way or another since the life and death of Christ on earth the whole world of flesh, the world over, has seen and heard about Christ.

Quickly we must in closing comment on what the Message and Ministry
of the Christ was in the first part as quoted from Malachi 3. Listen to it again: "Behold, {the Prophet Malachi writes}, I send My messenger. And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,' says the LORD of hosts." (Malachi 3:1)

Here is the message and ministry of the Promised Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God:

(1) The Lord, yes this same Jesus Christ is also Lord, and He is the Lord whom they seek. Once again we could camp here but you have heard it often of how all humanity longs to know and see God and His Son, and beyond that especially in the nation of Israel was built up the expectations of the Prophet Messiah like Moses and the Son of David who would establish a kingdom. (We will not talk now of how most Palestinians wanted a kingdom exactly like the united kingdom of David and Solomon that extended across the immediate world, but I would like to add since this is an introduction also to Mark and the ministry of Jesus, the words from Mark 1:14,15—

"Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.'"

Jesus waited until the messenger was out of the way, John the Baptist, to deliver His message. Jesus came into Galilee. Here is the preaching of Jesus Christ Himself about the kingdom of God. In this day and time when churches of all denominations under the influence of the Falling Away are going to pieces, we should emphasize not only that the kingdom of God moves on but also that the church itself of which membership is most important is written in heaven and that only a few from each church or denomination are citizens of heaven. The message of Jesus Himself, like any good message, had four parts: (1) ”the time is fulfilled”—this was the exact moment and time in history for which God had made so much preparation of the world, the nation of Israel, the revelations in the Old Testament prophets, and in the rescue and preservation of the seed of Abraham; (2) "the kingdom of God is at hand”—hey Israel, you are so close to the establishment of the very kingdom of God, listen and watch; (3) repent, Jesus echoes the ministry of John the Baptist of repent and be baptized for the remission of sins; (4) but Jesus adds "and believe the gospel"; and that gospel if the subject of the book of Mark that we will continue for quite a few messages.

12. God the Father, the Great Maker of History

Before we can proceed with the Old Testament quotes in Mark, the further development of the importance of Jesus coming to His temple as part of His ministry and further His preaching of how the kingdom of God is at hand, it would be helpful to first consider how God the Father is the Great Maker of History. I was surprised when after the writing of the first two sections of volume 1 on "God the Father" and on "The Prophet Messiah" as I saw that a third section would be required and that it should be based on the Apostle James quote from the Old Testament as recorded in Acts. During the writing of the first two sections I had become increasingly aware, especially from the Prophets, how many ways God the Father is the Great Maker of History. Of course in the volumes 1a and 1b, I had sought often to seek the full meaning of what James implied when he said, “Known unto God are all His works from the beginning...” The implications of that
statement from Pastor James is that since God knows all His works from the
time, and the implication is also that God has revealed much of His works
beforehand of all of history. Thus the title, “God the Father, the Great
Maker of History.” In preparation for 1c on “The Great Maker of History”,
I tried to make a list of ways that God has and does influence the course of
history as we know it now and as we will know it in the immediate future. I
was amazed at the size of the list, and I will try to introduce those ways God
influences the history of man and the universe.

First however, we should look at the quote in Acts from Pastor James, and look
briefly at the context to see what James is talking about. As encouragement,
let me tell you that what you will find in the message from Pastor James is
words about the Temple of David and words about how in the kingdom of God,
already established on earth, that God will save Gentiles as well as Jews. Here
are the words of Pastor James and the quote of Amos 9:11,12 as found in Acts
15:14-18.

“Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of
them a people for His name.” {by the way, that taking by God from among the
Gentiles a people for His name is the ongoing work of the kingdom of Christ}
“And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: ‘After
this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen
down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up; so that the rest mankind may
the seek the LORD.... {Recall how that from Malachi the message and ministry
of Christ would be that all flesh would see the LORD and find the LORD whom
they seek, well here in the “rest of mankind may seek the LORD, the Gentiles,
you see the beginning of that fulfillment which is completely fulfilled in the
words of Paul in Romans during the Fulness of the Gentiles). ...Even all the
Gentiles who are called by My name, says the LORD who does all these things.’
Known to God from eternity are all His works.” (Acts 15:14-18 and Amos
9:11,12)

“Known unto God from eternity are all His works” is the conclusion of
Pastor James about the quote from Amos 9:11,12. It is also the conclusion of
Pastor James at the Great Jerusalem conference as Paul and Barnabas tell
the results about the Gentiles of the first missionary journey. It is also a
conclusion based on the experience of the Apostle Peter as the Holy Spirit
directed him to deliver the gospel of Jesus to a Roman centurion, Cornelius,
at Caesarea Philippi.

So on my list of the ways that God the Father makes history, I will start
with the three ways given in this context that God makes history. Namely in
(1) rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem as a sign of the establishment of the
eternal temple of Jesus and God, not make with hands. (2) Establishment of
the kingdom of God as a growing and inevitably established forever kingdom
of both Jews and Gentiles. And (3) God’s plan from the very beginning was not
only to chose Abraham as the progenitor of Christ and Israel but also was to
bring in the Gentiles to find a peak at the Fullness of the Gentiles.

Sorry that I will not have time to elaborate on each way that God made and
still makes history from the long list, but the list is too long. I would only hope
that you can only get the full impact of James' conclusion that “known unto God are all His works from eternity.” It is really from eternity to eternity that God has planned out and mapped out all of the significant events of history. \{I would recommend that you read volume 1c of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries for an elaboration of this list of how God works in history.\}

The Kingdom.
The tabernacle and temple.
Salvation of Jews and Gentiles.
Creation of the World.
First Commission to Man: Replinish and Control the Earth.
Establishment of two camps: Seed of Christ and of Satan (“you shall bruise His heel and He will bruise your head.”)
God’s curse on man, women, and the universe.
Call and blessing on Abraham.
Choice of Abraham’s Seed and Palestine as the place for the Lord Jesus Christ.
Showing the world in Christ what God is like.
The Salvation of God, and God revealed in Old Testament, and then most fully in the Lord Jesus Christ.
The Spirit of Christ at work in Old Testament making known the ways and plans of God.
The Destruction of Cities and the World.
The confounding of languages in order to force the replinishment of the earth.
Creation of the Bible, writing.
Creation of the Bible, collection. (the Canon)
Preservation of the Bible.
Evidences, Apologetics, and Philosophy of Religion.
Preservation of the World, Consist through Christ.
Sending of the Holy Spirit in Great Power and then the Withdrawal of the Holy Spirit, the Last Days beginning and end.
Training and Commissioning of Disciples to take Gospel to all the world, then will the end come.
Establishment on earth of Christ’s kingdom.
Second Coming of Christ.
Old world passing away and the whole universe becoming new.
Establishment of the Assembly of Christ as above it all!
Continuation of the beginning of sorrows: signs in the heavens above and the earth beneath.
Day of the LORD and Lord.

13. “All Flesh Shall See Him” (First and Second Quotes in Mark)
Previously we established how Paul left one outline for Mark as a guide to write by on the 18 Old Testament quotes that we presently find in Mark, and how Paul also left for Mark to write by the testimonies of Peter and James to the life of Christ. Of course, John Mark as a young man of about 13 years of age had previous experince himself with the life of Christ since it was he who followed Jesus and the twelve out into the Garden of Gethesemane, who also in turn fled naked when grabbed by a gurad after the capture of Jesus.

Previously we also looked in detail at the first quote as found in Mark 1:2 and 3. We have not as yet looked at the second quote which is from Isaiah 6:9,10 and which is found in Mark 4:12. Also we did not look, which is what we will do in this
message is to summarize how the twin quotes from Mark 1:2 and 3 as taken from both Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1 were used by John Mark along with the testimonies of Peter and James and personal experience to write the three intervening chapters between Mark 1 and Mark 4. The assumption is made, and hopefully will be supported in this message, that what we found in Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1 will summarize much between Mark 1 and Mark 4. In order to do this it is necessary to summarize the salient points of both Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1, and to do so under the beginning conclusion of Mark 1:1. Recall that conclusion: “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” And we will add to that in order to make our outline, “according to Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1”

Thus THE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD ACCORDING TO ISAIAH 40:3-5 AND MALACHI 3:1. Here is the way we previously developed the outline of both. “the voice of one crying in the wilderness”: all that we read in Mark and the other gospels tells us that John primarily kept his ministry isolated to the Jordan River and beyond in the wilderness. John’s preaching of “repentance for sins” and baptism for the repentance of sins along with his message of the shortly to come “Lamb of God” that would take away the sins of the world was preparatory for the public appearance of Jesus Christ—it was much like an ad campaign run today for the public appearance of some idol or hero, and just like today it was know and heard by the whole nation. John’s work was sort of like that of a Civil Engineer (much better, I might add than that of the dam builders in New Orleans) as John had the ministry of constructing a highway in the desert for Jesus Christ {I think that was just the beginning of the highway since how often do you see both valleys and mountains in a desert, but John’s construction job for Jesus Christ included building up or raising the valleys and knocking down or lowering of the mountains). furthermore the construction work had to include making the highway straight and smooth—the crooked places had to be straightened and the high and low places made smooth {which I would say was John’s function as a continuation of the Old Testament Prophets to make clear an understand of the exact implications of the prophecies and the outstanding nature of what was about to happen in history}. “the glory of the LORD shall be revealed”, the word LORD is for God the Father since it is all capital letters; and we know from the rest of the Bible that Christ was the glory of God the Father, and that in the life and death of Jesus Christ the world saw exactly what God the Father is like in the Person of the Son.

“and all flesh shall see it together”—well, we could camp out here but suffice it now to say that one way or another since the life and death of Christ on earth the whole world of flesh, the world over, has seen and heard about Christ.

(7) The Lord, yes this same Jesus Christ is also Lord, and He is the Lord whom they seek. Once again we could camp here but you have heard it often of how all humanity longs to know and see God and His Son, and beyond that especially in the nation of Israel was built up the expectations of the
Prophet Messiah like Moses and the Son of David who would establish a kingdom. 

{We will not talk now of how most Palestinians wanted a kingdom exactly like the united kingdom of David and Solomon that extended across the immediate world, but I would like to add since this is an introduction also to Mark and the ministry of Jesus, the words from Mark 1:14,15—

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The message of Jesus Himself, like any good message, had four parts: (1) "the time is fulfilled"—this was the exact moment and time in history for which God had made so much preparation of the world, the nation of Israel, the revelations in the Old Testament prophets, and in the rescue and preservation of the seed of Abraham; (2) "the kingdom of God is at hand"—hey Israel, you are so close to the establishment of the very kingdom of God, listen and watch; (3) repent, Jesus echoes the ministry of John the Baptist of repent and be baptized for the remission of sins; (4) but Jesus adds "and believe the gospel"; and that gospel if the subject of the book of Mark that we will continue for quite a few messages.

Let us try to simply this outline from Isaiah 40:3-5 and Malachi 3:1 before we verify that it does outline the first few chapters of the Gospel of Mark: (1) John the Baptist, the voice crying in the wilderness; (2) the Message of the Voice; (3) The building up and knocking down of John's construction work like that of a Civil Engineer; (4) The making straight and smoothing Civil Engineer work of John the Baptist; (5) The glory of the LORD revealed in Jesus Christ; (6) All flesh will see God together; (7) It is the same God that has been sought by all humanity; (8) First part of the message of Jesus is that the time is fulfilled; (9) The second part of the message of Jesus, and we would expect to find this echoed often in Mark as well as in the first few chapters, is that the kingdom of God is right here; (10) The third part of the teachings of Jesus would have to do with repentance; and (11) the fourth part of the teachings or message of Jesus would have to do with faith in the Gospel.


(1). Well, indeed as we might expect we find in Mark 1:4-8 the voice and life style of John the Baptist as the voice crying in the wilderness. John baptized in the wilderness and John preached in the wilderness a baptism for the remission of sins. All of Judea, the province around Jerusalem went out into the wilderness to hear John. {much like today we might travel some distance to hear an evangelist; or there was the time we did it for men like Lester Roloff and even John R. Rice and Hyman Appleman. Now indeed it is more like for women of faith with their faith resources to sell as they talk about everyday life, the extraordinary life or even the good life now.} Also all of Jerusalem went out to hear the voice of John the Baptist in the wilderness.
(3). It was there in the wilderness at the Jordan River where these crowds of attendees were baptised, confessing their sins. You see, already the work of a Civil Engineer by John of building up and tearing down has started. Verse 6 describes John as much like an Old Testament Prophet: John was clothed with camel’ hair and a leather belt. The dress was simple, cheap, and so was his diet: He ate locusts and wild honey. John ate was available there in the wilderness. Contrast this evangelists of all evangelists with the rich life style of most evangelists today. While John dressed like an Old Testament prophet to be accepted, evangelists today dress like the best of the world; and would you not think that it is also to be accepted of the world?

(2). The message of the Voice. Okay verse seven gets us to the preaching of John the Baptist. He baptized for the remissions of sins, but what did John preach. “There comes One after me,” John preached—there is me, John said, and then oh there is one to follow much greater than me. Well, the people of Judea and Jerusalem were quite impressed with John the Baptist, and yet he foretold another One to come immediately that was much greater than him.

(4). We see in the baptism for repentance and in the faith of the great One to come, the Civil Engineer work of John, tearing down and building up, smoothing and making straight. How great was this Jesus to John? He was so great that John was not worthy to stoop down and lose the strap of His sandal. Then John gets back on the subject of his baptism, the subject of a previous verse, and this is where you begin to see some of the greatest of Jesus of Nazareth. “I baptize with water”, John said, “but Jesus will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

So what do we expect next according to the outline of Isaiah and Malachi? Well we expect to see (5) the glory of the LORD revealed. Look at the context in Mark 1:9-10, that is exactly what we see. “It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens paring and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, ‘You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Mark 1:9-11)

You see how that is a revelation of the glory of God the Father as shown in His Son, Jesus of Nazaeth. As soon as Jesus was baptized the glory of God lite up the heavens, the clouds parted; and the power of God and from God like a dove fell upon Jesus. The glory of God for Jesus was further revealeed as the voice of God said from heaven, “This is my beloved Son.” God said, “I am well pleased with Him.” Yet the glory of God through Jesus, that it also His sinlessness, has to be revealed in the bad times as well as the good; and therefore the record tells us in Mark 1:14-15 that the very Spirit which descended on Jesus in special power and glory also drove Jesus into the wilderness. It is ironical that the very place that John lived and came from is where Jesus went now, the wilderness. Jesus was there 40 days. It was a wilderness in the sense that the wild beasts were there where Jesus went; and the wildest beast of all, Satan, was there to tempt Jesus. However, the glory of God on earth had legions of angels to help Him, and the angels ministered to Jesus. It was quite
a spiritual gathering: Jesus, angels, Satan, and the wild beasts.

(The details of the temptation of Jesus by Satan are recorded in the other Gospels, which we will want to look at extensively, especially about the reply of Jesus to Satan when Satan tempted Jesus to turn the stones into bread, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.” It was for Jesus a matter of timing just like for us today when tempted away from spiritual endeavors like prayer and Bible to become more enamored with the making of a living. Later, after the approved time of spiritual awakening of 40 days, the angels came to minister bread, and I’m sure something quite better, to Jesus.)

What we have remaining of the outline from Isaiah and Malachi, the first part of the outline from the Apostle Paul if you would is: (6) All flesh will see God together; (7) It is the same God that has been sought by all humanity; (8) First part of the message of Jesus is that the time is fulfilled; (9) The second part of the message of Jesus, and we would expect to find this echoed often in Mark as well as in the first few chapters, is that the kingdom of God is right here; (10) The third part of the teachings of Jesus would have to do with repentance; and (11) the fourth part of the teachings or message of Jesus would have to do with faith in the Gospel.

What we have remaining in chapter one of Mark is the following events from the life of Jesus: (1) Jesus’ preaches the gospel of the kingdom of God in Galilee, 1:14,15; (2) Jesus choses four fisherman to be His apostles, 1:16-20; (3) Jesus by casting out an unclean spirit, the equivalent of demon possession or domination, proves that His doctrine or teachings have power as well as truth, 1:21-28; (4) Jesus heals the mother-in-law of the Apostle Peter (by the way at some point in here, and I would think above in the finding of the fisherman in the boats, the part of the outline from the testimonies of Peter and James come into play since they were among the four apostles selected, and you know it was here in the healing of the mother of Peter’s wife), 1:29-32; (5) the healing of many sick as the whole city of Capernaum—by the way it was also where the demon spirit was cast out and Peter lived, and even close to the Sea of Galilee where Jesus called the fisherman, 1:32-34; (6) Jesus preaches throughout all Galilee after a early morning of prayer, 1:35-39; and (7) Jesus heals a leper, 1:40-45.

15. Mark 2 is somewhat easier.

(1) Jesus forgives and heals a paralytic, 2:1-12; (2) the call of another apostle, the Apostle Matthew, a former tax collector, 2:13-17; (3) Jesus questioned about fasting with responses with short parables about the bridegroom and fasting, and also about new wine in old or new containers, 2:18-22 {and already we notice that the transition by Mark writing is beginning to be made toward the second quote which is about “parables” and from Isaiah 6:9,10}; and then (4) in the conclusion of Mark 2, in verses 23-28, there is the teaching of Jesus about the Sabbath Day, not in a parable, and vastly encompassing for religious life. Really a better division of Mark, and one perhaps more in keeping with the original intention of Mark as well as the outlines given him by the Apostle Paul, would be to include the events of that same sabbath Day as recorded in Mark 3:1-6 with the events in the corn field. In the first of Mark 3 is where Jesus healed the withered hand of a man. What a way for a man to go down in history, as the man with the withered hand that Jesus healed!
**16. SNATCHING, STUMBLING, AND FALLING AWAY (A Reconciliation of The Falling Away and the Security of the Believer)**

Introduction: Both are Sound, Undeniable Bible Doctrines. The Bible teaches the Falling Away. It comes from the Apostle Paul in II Thessalonians. We get it from Jesus in the “because sin shall abound, the love of many will wax cold”; we read of it in II Timothy in “the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine”, and before that in the same book we get it in the improper church behavior of a “form of godliness that denies the power thereof”, of I Timothy in the verse “that the Spirit speaks expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith”. The Bible teaches the security of the believer in many diverse places. In I John in the “and this is the record that God hath given unto us eternal life”; in II Timothy as Paul talks about the overthrow of the faith of some then adds that the “foundation of God stands firm, having this seal, that God knows His own and let every body who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity; in the famous “I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day”; and on and on.

Let me say preliminarlity and in a more positive fashion that the Falling Away is not to be confused with the Falling Down. Falling Down would be considered as falling from grace which can not happen, but Falling Away is a falling away, not from church, but from God, Christ, and the Bible. A whole church can, and many churches and denominations, do fall away from God, Christ, and the Bible. Then some churches never fall into God, Christ, and the Bible. Preliminarily let me also state that this is not an attack on young people or the younger generation, since if the second falling away—the falling away which is the greatest challenge of our generation—if the second falling away is like the first falling away that is the primary subject of the book of Hebrews, then all young people below 21 years of age are safe. Let me state up front, before Scriptural proof, that the reason we have trouble wrestling to our own destruction with security of the believer and the falling away is that we do not face up to this reality: many church members who claim to have experience salvation and the new birth have not experienced salvation and the new birth. That sounds simple to say but it is the real obstacle to understandable of the seeming dilemma. The dilemma is caused by a failure to face up to the reality.

I want you to look again at how realistic the Apostles and Jesus were on this matter; and the fact that you very seldom hear about these realities, although carefully recorded in the Bible, is within itself a sign of the Falling Away. You have read and read Ephesians quite often, but have not noticed that Paul questions the salvation of the church members at Ephesus in the statement, “This is not the way you learned Christ; if indeed you heard Him and were taught by Him.” You see Paul is also tell church members today, “This is not the way you learned Christ if there is no difference between you and the other Gentile Americans around whom you live. You may not have heard Christ for yourself, and you may not have been taught by Christ yourself.” The reason that Paul suspected the new birth and salvation of some—the living like other Gentiles around them. Paul’s big “if” about learning Christ. Everyone wants to claim to be a disciple of Christ, yet Paul questions if some church members have ever even started the learning process much less continued. John 14 in three questions from the disciples and with three answers from Jesus explains what it is realistic to hear Jesus and to be taught by Jesus Himself. There is no such thing as falling from grace, and that is what Paul is dealing with in Romans 5 in the if you do fall from grace you are crucifying a second time Christ on the cross, and that is impossible. It is as much impossible to fall from grace or stated another way to
fall from the new birth and salvation as it is to place Christ back on the cross. Although Christ clearly laid down the analogy in John 3 between the physical birth and the spiritual birth, we still look for instantaneous new birth knowing full well, the mothers better than anybody, that it takes at least 9 months for birth to happen. We want it instantaneously as the seed is first being planted, because it looks good for the evangelists and the pastors, and we are very, very conscious of numbers and show. A careful look at Jesus’ parable of the seed and the sower, opens up the Bible realities of new birth and the Falling Away. Especially when you look at the fact that one of the unfruitful seed deliveries, that on stony ground, states that “he immediately received it with joy”. Now, you know if you were in a church service or anywhere that someone “immediately” received the words of the Bible with joy, you would say, and everyone would say, and there would be common agreement, that this person was born again and saved. Well, the Bible says that after a period of time because that person had not root, it died; and the Bible says that when persecutions or tribulations, in other words hard times, when they came the person stumbled.

The seed of the Word of God sown by the wayside can be summarized as SNATCHING. This never goes anywhere, because Satan comes and snatches away the Word before it can develop into the new birth. This would describe the vast number of people that either never get interested in the Bible, Christ, or God, or who join the church then go no further.

The seed of the Word of God sown on stony ground can be characterized as STUMBLING. Here there are two problems given by Christ for this stumbling. They have no root, which by the way is a matter of personal choice, and they start a dying away process of the little spirituality that was planted in their life by word or example. Or they after a period of time in response to hard times and persecutions for the sake of the Word of God start to stumble. It is hard to tell, but perhaps there is some hope for the stumblers.

The seed of the Word of God sown among thorns is perhaps the best description of what is happening in the Falling Away. YOU PROBABLY NEVER THOUGHT OF “MAKING A LIVING” AS A THORN THAT CAN CHOKE OUT OF THE SEED OF THE NEW BIRTH. The cares of this world choke it out, according to Jesus. YOU PROBABLY NEVER THOUGHT OF THE GOSPEL OF WEALTH AND THE CORROLARY OF SUCCESS AS A THORN THAT CAN CHOKE OUT THE SEED OF THE NEW BIRTH. It really, to be more specific, chokes out the initiation and completion of the nine month spiritual birth process. The deceitfulness of riches choke it out, according to Jesus. YOU PROBABLY NEVER THOUGHT OF THE “LUST OF THE EYES, THE LUST OF THE FLESH, AND THE PRIDE OF LIFE—ESPECIALLY THE PRIDE OF LIFE—AS A THORN OR THORNS THAT CAN CHOKE OUT THE SEED OF THE NEW BIRTH. “Other things” choke it out”, according to Jesus. Christ told disciples to: “deny self, take up the cross daily, and follow Him.” Denial of self each day would certainly be the opposite of self-fulfillment and self-improvement so dominant in the books of current Bible teachers. Taking up the cross daily would be the opposite of comfort and security.

17. “Righteousness by Faith” (Romans, Luther, and Gene Scott) Reconciled with Faith Without Works is Dead (James, Inspiration, and the Canon)

Even as both the “Security of the Believer” and “The Falling Away” are both sound Bible teachings taught over and over in the Bible, so also are the “righteousness of faith” of Romans and “faith without works” of James. In fact the “righteousness by faith” of Romans 4 is closely related to the “security of the believer”, and the “Falling Away” is closely related to “faith without works”. This will become clearer as we look at some selected passages from Romans and also from the book of James. You will recall the famous passage of Romans 1:17 that was the basis of the Great Reformation under the leadership of Martin Luther away from the Roman Catholic churches’ emphasis on works for salvation: “The just shall live by faith.” And perhaps
you have heard recent messages on television on the same subject of righteousness by faith, apart from the deeds of the law from Dr. Gene Scott, the Stanford PhD and pastor of the University Cathedral in Los Angeles, California. Then I think that most are familiar with the famous words of the Apostle James in the book of James when he wrote both “faith without works is dead” and “the devils believe in God and tremble.” In this message, we will look at a few of these verses from Romans on righteousness by faith, and then look in the book of James at a few on “faith without works is dead”; however first we need to consider something very important about the nature of the Bible itself as a unique Book that requires special techniques for reading.

Hermeneutics, the Science of Biblical Interpretation. Many conservative Bible scholars like Bernard Ramm have written good books on the “how” of Biblical interpretation, and most generally all Bible students have at least one course on Biblical interpretation. I apologize for the word “hermeneutics” which makes the understanding of the Bible seem more difficult than normal, and to put it simply this collection of techniques for the understanding of the Bible is nothing less than the principles that the Bible itself lays down for understanding. I think you have noticed how in many school textbooks, there is an introduction on “how to read or study” that particular textbook. Well, the Bible is a very unique God-given textbook or guidebook for living, and consequently the God-given methods for understanding are given in the Book itself, not in the introduction, but rather in the books as an integral part of the books. Let us briefly look at some of those principles.

The Bible can not be understood apart from the Spirit of God. Jesus taught in parables during His life so that the insight of the spirit of God was required to understand them, and today you might think of the whole Bible as a gigantic parable in that the help of the Spirit of God is required to understand it. The second principle is closely related to this: since the Bible was written by God through the Holy Spirit as the Spirit directed Holy Men of God to write, it can be only understood by the help of these co-authors. In other words you need the help of Paul in reading the 14 New Testament books from Paul coupled with the help of the Holy Spirit. How do you get that, it brings up to another principle?

By comparing Scripture with Scripture. What God wrote in Romans through Paul and the Holy Spirit will not contradict what God wrote in James through the Apostle James and the Holy Spirit. And what James said in the book of Acts will help us understand what James wrote in the book of James; what Paul wrote in Romans is helped by what he wrote in the other 14 books; what Peter says about the Scriptures from the Old Testament and from the Apostle Paul helps us understand Paul and other New Testament books; and the hundreds of quotes from the Old Testament in the New Testament, not only establish the validity of the books, especially when quoted by Jesus, but also establish the meaning. That brings us likewise to the matter of how in James and Peter and Paul we can discern the teachings of Jesus that were taught to them directly. {Paul received his from the Ascended Christ out in Saudi Arabia immediately after his conversion on the road to Damascus.}

Lastly, I will mention from the vast field of study about the Bible that when you look at a whole book of the Bible, like Romans or James, the sum of the whole is much greater than the sum of the individual parts. It has to be this way since any one book of the Bible was a act of God through the Spirit revealing truth to His own people through holy men of God. In other words the truth from God is not the same as the market place. Like Dr. Gene Scott does you can not take the languages of Greek and Aramaic as spoke in the market place and comprehend all that was intended by God in the revelations of a single
Some select passages from the book of Romans.

1. As you look at the complete context of Romans 1:17 you can appreciate more what it is talking about.

“For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “the just shall live by faith.” (Romans 1:17)

By the way, “the just shall live by faith” is a quote from the Old Testament Prophet Habakkuk, and it is another way of saying that “the justified shall live by faith”. You might say it another way: as the manner in which salvation starts, by faith, is the manner in which salvation also continues, by faith. Always in the New Testament when the Old Testament is quoted, it is explained; and in this case the explanation is also at the beginning. {It really requires the whole book of Romans to completely explain what Paul understood Habakkuk and God to mean as the Ascended Christ explained it to him.} The end goal of faith is the righteousness of God, declared righteousness and actual righteousness. It starts in initial faith as a seed of the righteousness of God is planted in the individual life, called the new birth; and then it continues daily like Paul writes in Galatians, “and the live which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God”; and finally it is the completed righteousness of God through faith at the Second Coming of Christ when “we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is.”

2. And I left out a principle of Biblical interpretation that I must include here. As the Apostle Peter wrote: “NO SCRIPTURE IS OF ANY PRIVATE INTERPRETATION, BUT HOLY MEN OF GOD WROTE {OR SPOKE} AS THEY WERE MOVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.” Generally it is a habit to focus on the second part, “holy men of God wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” and neglect the first part which is a very fundamental principle of biblical interpretation, “no scripture is of any private interpretation”. In the neglect of the bible today, the prime excuse is that there are many interpretations of the Bible so that surrounded by confusion many would-be searchers after truth give up.

Well, let me tell you something you can immediately throw away well over half of that confusion with the principle of “the natural man receives not the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know they for they are spiritual discerned.” A PHD or ThD or self-appointed scholar or Bible teacher does not automatically with a degree or self-appointment either receive the new birth or receive spiritual discernment from God. Establish that as a fundamental principle taught in the Bible itself and you will take care of a very large part of the confusions about interpretations.

Then go way beyond that; and let Paul and the Spirit through Paul interpret the Old Testament, and the Old Testament explain and set up and interpret Paul; and Peter interpret Paul; and Jesus and Peter and Paul interpret James; and on and on until you have Jesus, all the prophets and all the apostles established the proper interpretation of the Bible which is not private. Oh yes, there are many that would like to make private interpretations of the Bible in order to justify themselves or justify the way they act and believe. It is like one scholar said, “It is not what I don’t understand about the Bible that bothers me, it is what I understand and have difficulty doing.”

3. Let us jump over to the righteousness of God by faith in Romans 3:21,22. It is somewhere in here, either Romans 3 or Romans 4, or a combination of both where Dr. Gene Scott has preached approximately 257 sermons. Some of them are very good on faith: one of those if you heard it was on how Peter was the only person other than Jesus that ever walked on water. You can sense a tremendous faith from Scott; although it is hard to sympathize with his agreement with Martin Luther than the book of James is a book of straw, and it is hard to sympathize with Scott calling James a “jerk” because “faith without works” seems to contradict
the righteousness by faith.

“But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.” (Romans 3:21,22)

You see here how the single interpretation is being locked down. The righteousness apart from law, being the equivalent of the righteousness by faith” was witnessed and spoke of in the Law of Moses and in the Old Testament Prophets. Moses wrote about it in the first five books which Jesus often called the Law of Moses. Moses wrote of righteousness by faith in Genesis; Moses wrote of righteousness by faith in Exodus, Moses wrote of righteousness by faith in Leviticus, Numbers, and Deutoronomy. The four major Prophet of the Old Testament—Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Jeremiah—wrote of the righteousness of God by faith; and the 12 minor prophets including Hezekiah with his “the just shall live by faith” wrote of the righteousness of God apart from works of the law or righteousness by faith.

a. It is a specified faith and that is extremely important. It is not possible to possess some vague faith as a general principle or like the devils in the book of James to have a mental belief in the existence, power, and judgment of God. Romans 3:22 states “even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ”.

“Jesus” was His given name like ours is John, Mary, or Jerry. Of course even this came from God through an angel saying that “You shall call his name Jesus which means Jehovah God is salvation”. Jesus of Nazareth as we see in the book of Mark was designated by God Himself as the Son of God, by John the Baptist, by the miracles Jesus did and the words He taught, and primarily Jesus of Nazareth was testified to be the Son of God, the Promised Messiah of the Old Testament, by the Resurrection from the dead. Christ is another word for Messiah; and in all ways Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled the prophecies of the Messiah of the Old Testament.

b. “To all and on all who believe”. Here I really like some of the teachings of Gene Scott. Believe, especially in the original Greek, is not sufficient to convey the meaning of the “trust” required in the Lord Jesus Christ in order to receive the righteousness of God by faith. Dr. Scott has invented a word called “faithing” since the Greek language does not have a verb equivalent of the word “faith”. All who keep on faithing have the righteousness of God. If you read the Wuest Expanded Translation which came out years ago, it had some of that same meaning. “Keeping on believing and kept on having faith”. {We will not discuss right now how it is impossible not to keep on believing once you have really experienced the 9 month new birth, and how it is also impossible to ever start the righteousness by faith if you have not experienced the full 9 month new birth.}

c. Notice the sublety of the words: it is “TO” all and “ON” all that believe. That is not incidental, but fundamental. The TO refers to the inward gift of the righteousness of God which correlates with a real new birth, while the ON refers to the legal declaration by God that we are righteous in His sight. In order words, God looks at us who truely trust and experience the new birth and says that person is as righteous as if I am looking at MY SON HIMSELF AND WHAT HE DID ON THE CROSS!

4. I must quickly look at one more passage from Romans before I pass on into James. In it Paul is not only talking about the ignorance and stubborness of his own Hebrew brethren, today and during his time; but also you will find that the Holy Spirit applies it to people today, Gentile church members of all denominations, and some non-members and non-believers.
“For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness and going about to establish their own Righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God which is by faith.”

a. This “ignorance” of God’s righteousness is not a matter of a low IQ, or lack of academics, or even Bible. Most of the doctors of the law and the religious leaders of Jesus’ day and Paul’s were not ignorant of the Old Testament. They were like Paul, himself a lawyer, steeped in the Old Testament as the law of religion and the state. Yet like Paul before conversion, they had missed the TRUE INTERPRETATION of law, righteousness, faith, and the new spirit. Like many academics today like the so-called PhDs and Thds of the Jesus Seminar have caught the letter of the law and the Bible without the spirit. They are natural men, albeit very educated natural men and elite socially, who have not received discernment from the Spirit of God. Here we would apply the scriptures, “God has chosen the foolish things of the world in order to confound the wise.” And the scripture “when by wisdom the world knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those that believe.”

There is a certain inherent pride in man, egged on by sin and rebellion against God, which makes him want to be independent and self-made. A tendency, if you would, to establish his own righteousness and his own method and standards of righteousness. You hear it all the time. I believe in keeping the Ten Commands, or my religion is my conscience, or I just do the best I can.

We can not dwell long here, but it should not take long with the background from Scriptures that has previously been provided.

   “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.”

2. James 1:26,27.
   “If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, is his one’s religion is useless. Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.”


4. James 2:14 establishes the two kinds of faith demanded by the context, the kind of faith of Romans and the kind of faith demanded by the context here in James.
   “What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?”

18. OLD TESTAMENT QUOTES IN MARK
It was previously mentioned that there are approximately 17 quotes in the Gospel of Mark, and we previously looked at a few of these in the first few chapters of Mark. Since Mark is a short action Gospel of Jesus of only 16 chapters, it is an average of one quote per chapter; although the quotes are not evenly divided in Mark. Yet as previously discussed the quotes and the New Testament applications and interpretations of the quotes do have the set the sequence of events from the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. Recall how the Apostle Paul as chosen by Christ to be the chief editor of the New Testament left outlines for John Mark to follow which included the testimonies of James and Peter and a list of Old Testament quotes centered around the life of Jesus that Paul had not already used in the 14 books which he wrote.

1a. Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1 which told in Mark 1:2,3 of the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and of the kingdom. These two quotes, one from a major Prophet, Isaiah, and one from a minor Prophet, Malachi, established John the Baptist as the voice preparing the way of the Lord and then established Jesus as the One who would come with healing in His wings.
1b. The PROPER INTERPRETATION of Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1 in the statement of Mark through the Holy Spirit of “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”

2a. Isaiah 6:9,10 in Mark 4:12 which states how the Bible itself is a book of parables in that many will hear and not understand, will see and not perceive, and will not turn from sins to forgiveness. This is another way of stating a fundamental difference between the American Democratic Faith and the Faith of Jesus. While the American Democratic Faith places the emphasis on the majority, Jesus stressed the minority in the teaching that many would go the way that leads to destruction while few would go the narrow way that leads to eternal life.

2b. Jesus gave the PROPER INTERPRETATION in an explanation to the apostles of the parable of the seed and he sower.

“...And He said to them, ‘To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but to those who are outside, all things come in parables...’” (Mark 4:11)

I hope you got that (1) how parables are to those outside the kingdom of Christ in order to keep them in their confused state unless they will meet the proper conditions of God for understanding; and (2) “all things”, all spiritual things, come in parables: the Bible itself is a parable.

3a. Isaiah 29:13 in Mark 7:6,7 establishes the teaching of how many so called people of God would worship, trying to honor God in worship with their lips and the word of their lips while their hearts are far from God; and how their worship would be vain worship in that the worship would be more from the commandments of men than from the doctrines of God. Have you been there in those worship services? I have; and it is far more common than any church member wants to admit.

3b. The PROPER INTERPRETATION of Isaiah 29:13 by Jesus Himself, in the short form when Mark introduces the quote with the words from Jesus of “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written...” Not only did Mark have the outline of the quotes from Paul to remind him as he wrote, but also he as a young man had been there often with the apostles and Jesus, tagging along behind them and listening.

By the way, you that are sincere about all the interpretations of the Bible should start with the several hundred quotes in the New Testament from the Old Testament where Jesus or one of the Apostles give the only PROPER INTERPRETATION, and by the time you have completed that study you will be so deeply into the proper meaning of the Bible that it will be very difficult for you to go wrong. If you need a guide on this, I would advise the securing of volume 1 of the Old Testament According to the New Testament which lists many of these quotes.

4a. Here in Mark 7:10 there is a quote by Jesus that is found in three places in the Old Testament—Exodus 20:12, Exodus 21:17, and Deuteronomy 5:16. As you might expect Jesus is establishing the validity of the law books of Moses called Exodus and Deuteronomy as he quotes from the Ten Commandments to Honor father and mother.

4b. The PROPER INTERPRETATION in Mark 7:9 and the whole context of how by the traditions of their interpretations they had for all practical purposes rejected the commandments of God. That sounds like today. If you want to justify yourself, simply find an interpretation, tradition, or teaching that will help you rationalize it.

5a. Isaiah 66:24 in Mark 9:44,46, and 48. You are beginning to see that a favorite of the Apostle Paul which he left for John Mark was from the Major Prophet Isaiah. Indeed, even in the Old Testament Isaiah has been and is considered as the Prophet of prophets.
Mark 9:44, 46, and 48 is unique in that Jesus quotes the very same words from Isaiah 66:24 three times. Three times Jesus quotes “Their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.”

5b. It is important that we know the proper interpretation of this; however we may never know exactly what the “worm” is unless it is the soul or the DNA, but evidently it has to be some fundamental entity of the inside and physical body that still has feelings like the feel of intense heat. Let us see how Jesus gives us the PROPER INTERPRETATION in Mark 9 where Jesus twice calls this “hell” and mentions how hell is a fire that will never be quenched. The other day I heard a learned and foolish preacher of a large church of deceived church members talking about how hell is not real. The torment, he said, is so great that the fire feels like real fire....well, if it feels like fire and hell, perhaps it should be considered as hell. And that is what the Prophet Isaiah and Jesus, the Prophet Messiah, taught!

6a. Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 in Mark 10:6-9 where Jesus re-establishes the God ordained pattern of marriage as God set it up at the beginning, that of one man and one woman with children for life.

6b. Listen lawyers and divorce courts, listen America where now over 50% of marriages end in divorce. Listen to the proper interpretation of marriage as given by Jesus Himself, in Mark 10:6-9.

“But from the beginning (the life time permanence of marriage is no after thought, but from the beginning it was the plan and command of God) of the creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh, Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”

Jesus is not condemning any divorced person or gay person here, but rather is laying down the plan and commandment of God. It is one thing to be divorced and/or to be gay, but to shake the fist in the face of God and His commandments is another matter by trying to deny the truth.

7a. Exodus 20:12-16 and Deuteronomy 5:16-20 in Mark 10:19. As you might expect here, again Jesus is dealing with law in the Ten Commandments and the ignorance of the doctors of the law. This time he summarizes all the commandments, and even this summary involves an interpretation that we need: the first four commandments are summarized as “there is only one that is good and that is God”; then comes no adultery, no stealing, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, and honor father and mother.

7b. The proper interpretation in Mark 10:24 from Jesus is “how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God”. After Jesus took the rich young ruler above beyond the quest for eternal life and beyond the commandments which he claimed to keep, and when Jesus recognized that his possessions were most important to him, and having told the young ruler to give what he had to the poor to eliminate the obstacle to salvation, the young man when away sorrowly because the Bible says, “he had great possessions.”

8a. You are probably relieved to come to the more devotional, less instructive book of Psalms in Psalms 118:26 as outlined by the Apostle Paul and recorded by John Mark in Mark 11:9.

“Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD! Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” (Mark 11:9,10) Each sentence of phrase is terminated with an exclamation mark. This is an emotional peak in Mark as it talks of the triumphant and popular entry of Jesus into Jerusalem as the end approached.

8b. The proper interpretation in Mark 11:9a is that the whole multitude were repeating the words of the Psalmist about the Prophet Messiah and the expected re-establishment of the kingdom. At least, for the while Jesus was popular, much of that popularity was based on false
expectations of the kingdom of God and Jesus as a large materialistic kingdom of Israel like under David and Solomon.

9a. Back to Isaiah, Isaiah 56:7 in Mark 11:17, but it is another double quote from the Old Testament, also being found in another major prophet, that of Jeremiah, and in Jeremiah 7:1. This is the famous quote from Jeremiah’s temple message that the lonely prophet preached every day for years as he made the trek from his Anatoth home over to the Temple in Jerusalem to preach a very unpopular message. The Prophet Jeremiah reluctantly taught the people that they were like a hideout for thieves in that they would live during the week in ignorance of the ways and commands of God, then come to the temple on the sabbath saying “we are safe” because we are in the temple of God and in the city of God.

9b. The proper interpretation, once again by Jesus Himself, is found in Mark 11:17 with the quote from Isaiah and Jeremiah.

“Then He taught {in the temple at Jerusalem after over turning the tables of the money changers}, saying to them, ‘Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations? But you have made it a den of thieves.’

19. SOME MORE PROPER INTERPRETATIONS IN MARK.

I hope you appreciate the way the messages have developed up to this point as we have discuss first how the Bible is “of no private interpretation”, in other words thee is only one proper interpretation or understanding; how confidence was expressed even at he beginning in the messages of sound doctrine; and finally in the Old Testament quotes in Mark where Jesus Himself gives the proper application and interpretation of many Old Testament quotes. Once again, if you are sincere about the confusion of many interpretations, denominations, teachers, and churches, start with the PROPER INTERPRETATION of the 17 Old Testament quotes in the book of Mark. Previously we looked at nine of those seventeen, and now briefly we will look at the other eight.

Who is going to be the ultimate judge for you of the PROPER INTERPRETATION? You, yes you have the ultimate freedom of choice and responsibility, and no one else. You must read the quotes from the Old Testament for yourself; you must read the PROPER INTERPRETATION AND UNDERSTANDING AS GIVEN BY THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, then you must decide for yourself if you believe it. Of course, the belief has to go beyond that to faith or trust in the Lord Jesus Christ!

10a. Psalm 118:22,23 in Mark 12:10
11a. Exodus 3:6,15 in Mark 12:26
12a. Deuteronomy 6:4,5 and Leviticus 19:18 in Mark 12:30,31, more about the law as you would suspect from the Law of Moses in the first five books. Perhaps you wonder why Jesus dealt with the law so often.

13a. Psalm 110:1 in Mark 12:36; and again you will notice that next to the Law and Isaiah, the Psalms from David are favorites of Paul and John Mark. Also they were somewhat restrained by what Jesus quoted when in his ministry as remembered by young John Mark and reminded by the recorded testimonies from James and Peter.

14a. Daniel 11:31 and 12:11 from Mark 13:14 and here we have a quote from another of the four major prophets. Already from Isaiah, also Jeremiah, and now Daniel. This is the famous “abomination of desolation” of Daniel, quoted by Jesus in His great discourse on eschatology or “end times” While eschatology is not a Bible word, rather a word developed by Bible scholars to describe all the end time events like the Second Coming of Christ, destruction of the old heaven and the old earth by fire, creation of a
new heaven and earth with the lowering of the New Jerusalem to earth, the final judgment
with eternal heaven and an eternal hell. The study is large and much of it is in the book of
Revelation, perhaps the most mis-understood and mis-interpreted book of the Bible. There are
two main reasons for this: (1) Bible students take eschatology and the book of Revelation out
of the total context of the Bible—you can tell when a Bible teacher or preacher is about to go
wrong on the book of Revelation when it sounds so differently from the rest of the Bible {Jesus
outline the book of Revelation in Matthew 24 and this shorter passage of Mark 13 so that if
would-be interpreters would stay consistent with what Jesus taught, there would be much fewer
tangents, and the Scofield Reference Bible notes as a short-cut to would-be Bible sermons and
teaches, and the tendency to accept those notes as The Word has not helped}; and (2) Remember
Jesus’ interpretation of the parable of the seed and the sower, also where he quoted from Isaiah
to explain parables as hearing without understanding—the famous teaching by Jesus that “all
things” spiritual are spoken in parables. Well, the book of Revelation, also Matthew 24 and
Mark 13, are gigantic parables in that the same biblical interpretations are required to understand
them as with any other parable. It was that way in the time of Isaiah, it was that way in the time
of Jesus, it was that way when the Apostle John wrote the book of Revelation, and it is still that
way today. If a Bible teachers heart is not in the right place or if they try to give the appearance
of Bible knowledge that they have not secured in the correct manner, you will know it by the
weirdness of the things they teach on Revelation.

What you want to read is volume 3 of THE LEARN CHRIST commentaries which is a
study guide to the five books of the Apostle John which, of course, includes the book of
Revelation. All five books are presented to remain in the total context of the Bible, and
to use the same principles of biblical interpretation, those laid down by Jesus and the rest
of the Bible, to understand the Gospel of John, Revelation, and the three little epistles
of John. The specific name of that volume 3 is “Christ for Individuals” because first
Revelation in the messages to the seven churches of Asia Minor, which had already begin
to experience their own Falling Away, and therefore certain individual church members
who had remained faithful needed an individual message for encouragement as they saw
fellow members falling by the wayside; “Christ for Individuals” because it is the Apostle
John with the guidance of the Holy Spirit who points out, particularly in John 14-16,
of how people individually hear Christ and are individually taught by Him; and “Christ
for Individuals” in that the Apostle John gives his last practical advice on an individual
separation from the world and the lusts of the world in the three little epistles, and also
provides the necessary teachings on the Security of the Individual Believer—eternal
security is an individual matter not a group characteristic.

14b. The abomination of desolation of Mark 13 and Daniel 11 and 12 was fulfilled
initially when in 58 A.D. the Roman General Titus with his huge army destroyed Jerusalem and
the Temple so that as Jesus predicted not one stone would be left on another and that the temple
activity of daily sacrifice would cease.

Now, as far as the double fulfillment which some people like to call it: I chose to call it the full
spectrum of fulfillment, in the next section we will look at that more carefully from Daniel 11
and 12 as centered around the meaning of “kingdom” in Daniel and the book of Mark. If you
study the Old Testament Prophets at all you have realized that in many cases there is a prediction
that is an immediate Day of the LORD on the people in that generation and then it fore-shadows
an end time similar event of much greater magnitude.

15a. Zechariah 13:7 and Mark 14:27 and here we have another of the 12 minor prophets
beyond Malachi. Zechariah 13 and 14 once again as centered about the DAY OF THE LORD has
a whole spectrum of meaning. It was the Prophet Zechariah who encouraged the re-builders of
the Temple as they came back from Captivity in Persia; but then tells of another scattering of the people after the death of Jesus, the same scattering of the people in 58 A.D. by the Romans as in Daniel; and then larger than this is the end time DAY OF THE LORD.

15b. Jesus in Mark 14:27-28 quotes from Zechariah 13:7 and explains it. “Then Jesus said to them, All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: ‘I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’ But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.” {Notice the usage of the word “STUMBLE” in reference to the apostles.} We know what Peter did in his thrice denial of Christ, and we know from Acts and the epistles of Peter of his marvelous recovery. I hope you noted that STUMBLED as the characteristic word of the Seed of the Sower when it fell on stony ground. The stony ground did not have any root to it; and therefore when tribulation or persecutions came because of the word, much like the early disciples had with the capture of Jesus, then they stumble. But the STUMBLING unlike the SNATCHING of the word immediately away by Satan and unlike the seed sown among thorns which is completely choked out by the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of sins, and other things, the STUMBLING leaves like the good fruit some hope for the future. However, I would not recommend stumbling too long, even 40 years like the children of Israel in the wilderness, as their is according to the Word of God a point of no return and therefore the Spirit always says “Today”.

16a. Isaiah 53:12 in Mark 15:28 and here we begin to wrap up on the quotes in Isaiah close to where we started with quotes in the Isaiah 40:3 of Mark 1. You have seen how many of those quotes, especially from Isaiah and the Psalms, are about the life of Jesus. This passage in Mark and Isaiah is a description of the crucifixion of Jesus, how He was crucified between two robbers. The very Lord of this universe, willingly of course and for the sins of the world, was killed by the mob and the religious leaders like a common criminal. He Who had done no wrong, only went about doing good, was killed on the cross like He was a nothing and a nobody.

And this is more a commentary on the human race than it is a commentary on the crucified Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps the most religious generation of all time, a nation where religious law was the law of the land, crucified Jesus through the permission of the Roman government.

16b. “So the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘And He was numbered with the transgressors.'” (Mark 15:28 and Isaiah 53:12)

17a. Psalm 22:1 in Mark 15:34. Now, how do you suppose that David in the writing of the Psalms knew the very words that Jesus would speak as He died on the cross, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?” which is translated, ‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’” Well, one reason is as Peter tells us that Jesus was active as the Word from the beginning in heaven inspiring the Prophet David and others what to say. That “spirit which gave them utterance” that Peter speaks of is the Eternal Spirit of Christ, always at work in the Old Testament. And it reminds us that Jesus was not the victim of the misguided religious or Satan, but rather planned from the aeons of heaven and eternity what He would say on the cross.

20. Kingdom and Kingdoms in Mark and Daniel.

From the beginning of the messages, we have sought to do peacemaking by extending the influence of Christ between God and man and between man and man. Another Biblical way to say this is by extending the kingdom of God and Christ. Perhaps you have never thought about it, but every time you repeat the model prayer, often called the Lord’s prayer,
you are praying that the influence of Christ might be extended, in the words “thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Believe me in heaven where Jesus the Risen and Ascended Christ sits at the right hand of God the Father the influence of Jesus is very large. It is as Paul wrote in Philippians that “at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father.”

You noticed that the gospel of Jesus itself and the gospel of Mark is a gospel of the kingdom of Jesus. Recall how the first two usages of kingdom in Mark in the very first chapter, Mark 1:14,15, are:

“Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

Although we want to look at the other places the “kingdom” is mentioned in Mark in order to determine which has priority the church, the churches, or the kingdom, we see in the very first verse that the gospel of Jesus is closely related to the kingdom, so closely that the gospel with faith and repentance is the God-ordained means whereby people become members of the kingdom. Well, you might say, “This is the same way that people become members of a local church”; and therefore you might be inclined to think that membership in the kingdom is quite the same as membership in a local church. Well, that is true; but the problem is that men have too much to do with local churches and denominations, and consequently many members can be on the church rolls without have become a member of the kingdom of God and Christ. In other words, kingdom membership is real: church membership can be pretence; and if you recall the SNATCHING, STUMBLING, and FALLING AWAY of the seed and the sower, you know that in many cases the new birth as required for real church membership never took place.

The word “kingdom” is found 19 times in the Gospel of Mark. We have already looked at the first two in Mark 1:14 and 15.

Mark 3:24 uses the word “kingdom” with the word “divided” which reminds us that while churches can and are often divided, the kingdom of God and Christ can not be divided. The only division of the kingdom of God and Christ is that part of it is presently in heaven where the will of God is done completely and part of it is still here on earth, the will of God is increasingly done less as the whole world progresses into the Falling Away. Yet as the world increasingly goes into the increase of lawlessness or sin which Jesus predicted, then the love of many in the churches will wax cold; simultaneously there is a heaping up of Bible teachers and preachers with itching ears who ignore sound doctrine; simultaneously church members heap up teachers and preachers who will tell them what they want to hear more than what they need to hear; and there increasingly becomes a rift between the churches and denominations and the kingdom of God and Christ.

I do not have time now to speak of the church, which is the body of Christ written in heaven, as to be distinguished between local churches. Suffice it to say that the word “church”, “ecclesia” in Greek, is found approximately 128 times in the New Testament. Most of those refer to the local church like the church at Ephesus or the church at Antioch or the church at Philippi. It is a local church intended by Christ to be a local assembly of believers which obviously will happen in reality less and less as we get deeper into the Falling Away. Approximately 20 of these refer to the church as the Assembly of Christ that is written in heaven, and this church as of all truly born again with the 9 month or so new birth is very similar to the kingdom of God and Christ.

Mark 4:11.

“And He said to them, ‘To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables’”; and then Jesus, you remember explains
the purpose of parables from Isaiah 6:9,10 as some, not kingdom members, may hear and not understand, may see and not perceive. Thus this passage gives us great insight into who are kingdom members and who are not kingdom members: those that are outsiders, outside the kingdom of God and Christ, do not understand parables of all the spiritual things given in the Bible. It is the privilege of kingdom members to understand parables and other Bible teachers, and it is the privilege of kingdom members to be called the real insiders although at their local church they may seem like outsiders. Ironical, huh!

5. In Mark 4:26 we have more explanations by Jesus of what the kingdom of God really is.

“And He said, ‘The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground {we know from the parable of the seed and the sower what happens to the seed that is sown in SNATCHING, STUMBLING, AND FALLING AWAY, but here Jesus is speaking primary of the seed that brings good fruit}...and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the fullrain in the head. But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.” And here Jesus is reminded us that the continued growth of the kingdom of God does not make history or the history books. Even as the corn continues to grow in some fields in Tennessee and the wheat in some fields in Kansas without our interest or personal knowledge or that of the daily television and news, even so does the kingdom of God continue to grow independent of your awareness. You may seek to make it the same as your local church or denomination, but the kingdom of God and Christ is far larger and far more consistent in growth.

This is not to say that the kingdom of God can not be grown inside your local church of denomination, but it is to say that even as the Assembly of Christ is far larger than your own local church, so also is the kingdom. What you should be more concerned about is whether there is evidence of kingdom growth in your own church, and if the characteristics of kingdom membership are similar to the characteristics of church membership that you see in your local church. If not, you may have to do like the Apostle Paul advised in II Timothy, as you see in your local church a pre-dominance of “a form of godliness that denies the power thereof”, you may have to disassociate yourself—“know not to keep company with them”.

6. Kingdom in Mark 4:30 where Jesus is trying to find something that the kingdom of God and Christ is like in order to promote understanding among His disciples. Jesus is trying in this parable to engender in the mind a mental picture of what the kingdom is like.

“Then He said, ‘To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it? It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than all the seeds of the earth; but when it is sown, it grows up and becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out large branches, so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade.”

Right now as then, there are many kingdoms which look much larger than the kingdom of Christ. There is the kingdom of the United States, the kingdom of China, and so on, all loom large and more real in our mind; however the kingdom of Christ which has been going on and growing for over two thousands of years must now be much larger than all these other more visible kingdoms. And there is much more to this parable. Even as the mustard seed is much smaller than other seeds, so the seed of the kingdom planted in hearts may appear small and insignificant at the time as compared to the seeds planted by large universities, by science and the intellectual achievements and philosophies of man, it,
being eternal continues to grow beyond the size of the universities, and governments, and states, and the philosophies and movements of men.

7. Kingdom in Mark 6:23 is a secular use of the word kingdom as it refers to the kingdom of King Herod, the King of Judaea during the time of Christ. You recall the story, how the daughter of Herodias, Herodias being angered by John the Baptist as he denounced publicly the marriage between Herod and Herodias, led her daughter when promised up to half the kingdom of Herod, to request the head of John the Baptist who was already in Herod’s prison for preaching against his marriage. This week I listened to the History channel on the life and contributions of Herod. The biographer lauded Herod’s achievements in building like a Caesarea in the large, sheltered harbor and other enterprises. He admitted during the end of his life how eaten with worms and dying a painful death they he became violent killing his brother to get his wife and killing many of his relatives, this same biographer announced how he doubted the killing of the innocents at the birth of Christ and failed to mention John the Baptist. This is a good example of SNATCHING, and how Satan is at work through so many of his educated servants to remove the seed of faith immediately as it is sown.

There are two Bible facts about Satan that we fail to appreciate: (1) Satan dominance or demon possession as we often call it, is not only the kind where we see abnormal or violent behavior, say like in the movies where some try to cast out demons, but Jesus made it clear that many of the religious leaders of his time “were of their father the devil”, so that there is a milder form of devil dominance, a form of all who do not commit to Christ and God as master, a form like that of the biographer of Herod to cast doubt on Scripture. Secondly (2) we fail to appreciate that “Satan like a lion goes about seeking whom he may devour” is more an inward and spiritual matter than a physical one. I know we have seen these movies where little demons come out to physically devour the bad people of the movies. But do not forget that Satan is really a lion who comes along SNATCHING away the seed of faith and of the Word of God before it can be even sown in the human heart!


When Jesus told Satan, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God,” the implications of truth from God and the implications for the way men and women are to live were vast. For one thing, in these simple words of “every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God”, Jesus was establishing the place of pre-eminence in both our physical and spiritual life that Bible Scriptures are to have. We are to treat this Bible of 66 books with respect for every single word as if it comes directly over the radio from God to ourselves, because indeed every word of it has come from God Himself through “holy men of God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit”. “All Scripture”, Old and New Testament “are given by inspiration of God; and are profitable for doctrine {yes there is that dreaded word which loses some of the dread when you know that it really means the teachings of God and from God}...”it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfected...” In other words that the man or woman of God may learn to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God as effectively and efficiently as they have learned to live by physical bread.

Going to work every day is so engrained in us, partly because we like to eat and have a place to live, that men and women for the most part do not need to be encouraged to live by bread. It comes far more natural than that of living by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. We get up and go to work every day; we get up and go to school every day in order to have an education to work and to earn our daily bread. Bread, of course, is the symbol of food on the table: it is also a symbol of security and comfort. On the other hand to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God comes three ways: (1) It comes primarily from every
word that holy men of God, Apostles and Prophets, recorded as God Himself so graciously revealed from heaven many of His ways and thoughts and demands; (2) It comes also by prayer as the humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, as we pay proper respect to God, and as we seek, knock, and listen for guidance from God that are based on, and consistent, with His every recorded word; and then lastly; (3) the least effective method in this time of the Falling Away is to listen or read to and from others as they talk about the Bible.

The baptism by Jesus at the hand of John the Baptist marked the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry. He knew that before His crucifixion, He would have only 3 and one half years of teaching, preaching every word that proceeded from the mouth of God. His purpose of going directly into the wilderness was to have communion with God the Father and to develop the proper plan and mind-set to complete His ministry in such a short time. Along comes Satan to do battle with Jesus. Satan knew much of the ministry of Jesus from Old Testament scriptures; and in fact, Satan himself quotes from Scripture to tempt Jesus away from His intended ministry. Indeed Satan was there in the Garden of Eden with Adam, Eve, God the Father, and Jesus the Word, as God announced that Jesus would someday bruise the head of Satan and Satan would bruise the heel of Jesus. Satan wished to stop this madness right then and there. What was required was a major diversion from the 40 days of fasting and prayer in which Jesus was engaged. Satan said during the 40 days of hunger, “Here are stones, turn these in bread that you may eat.” It was pure and imple an effort by Satan to divert Jesus from what was best. There was nothing wrong with turning the stones into bread: Jesus had that power and more over all the physical elements as the One who in the first place with the mediator of Creation; and further Jesus could summon legions of angels to minister to Him as he did after sufficient priority was given to spiritual matters for 40 days.

Now, what is the message for us: It is not that we must fast and pray for 40 days; because for one thing, we do not have the same ministry as Jesus. But the message is that we must establish and maintain the priority in our life for some kind of contact the words from God in the Bible, and we must establish some kind of prayer life that acknowledges God and listens.

1. What are ways that we can live by bread alone? Let us spell it out so that it is obvious; and I use one of the teachings of Jesus to illustrate how that so many things like making a living, taking care of the family, providing adequate food, clothing, and shelter—all things good within themselves—become less than our best when not included with respect for every word of God. Recall how Jesus compared the end of time and His Second Coming with the Days of Noah when the whole earth was destroyed with a Flood. Jesus said, “Men will be eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage” right up to the end, completely indifferent as to the great truths of God. You see, there is nothing wrong with getting married and having a marriage feast—God and Jesus taught the importance of proper marriage and Jesus honored the institution of marriage with His presence and help at the marriage feast at Cana—there is nothing wrong with eating and drinking, they are essential for the sustenance of physical life; but the point Jesus is making in that all these routines of life—education, making a living, providing a home and transportation, and even many extra comforts—so occupy and dominante our lives that no time or effort is expended, or little, to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

Recall again what happens to the little bit of seed from the Word of God falls into our lives if we do not think and act upon it? It is given in the parable of the Seed and the
Sower which I have tried to summarize as “Snatching, Stumbling, and Falling Away”. The Falling Away is the most serious, of course, and that is where the seed of the words from God are completely choked out. What had the capability then and now to choke out that spiritual seed in our lives? Three were numbered: (1) cares of this world—and I am sure you know what they are such as paying the bills, getting a better home and education and income and status and more comfort and security—all good things but which can choke out the world; (2) Secondily, the deceitfulness of riches and here we must keep this in perspective that Jesus is not teaching that all of us want to be rich—and recall that now in the United States the affluent middle class {which you would have to admit is often the primary goal of all} is much richer than the average of Jesus’ day}; and (3) “other things”, Jesus said, choke out the word.

Wow, other things, that is a broad category. What did Jesus mean? Well, we are not left in the dark on this matter as we consider also other words that proceeded out of the mouth of God and as recorded in the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus dealt extensively with things like food, clothing, and the cares of security for tomorrow; and what we find is that Jesus includes all these under the title of “mammon”. All that comes from man, all the creations of man which divert us from the dominance from God and Christ are called “mammon”. And God does not leave us in the dark on these “other things” in many of His words which were revealed throughout the Bible including in the little epistle of John where the Apostle John writes, “Love not the world (here is you another all inclusive word to define the other things, the word “world” with the word “mammon”), neither the things that are in the world {you see how the things that are in the world is the same as the “other things” that choke out the seed of the Word of God). This we have from every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God through the Apostle John a more precise definition of “world” or “mammon”. “For all that is in the world {here it comes}, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life are not of the Father but of the world, the world passeth away and the lust thereof but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.”

1. The lust of the flesh is of the world, mammon, and other things. It is an overwhelming desire to take care of physical pleasures and comfort.

The lust of the eyes is of the world, mammon, and other things. It is seeing these creation of man, all that man makes and sells, and having a beyond want to lust and desire to have these things. The pride of life, and here is where so many of us fall into the destructive nature of “other things”. Pride of life is lauded by the world: pride in nation, pride in family, pride in work achievements and status, pride in sports, and we could go on and on with the many facets of life and the pride of life that choke out of the Word of God, that prevent if you would or at least eliminate a priority for every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

**Things and the American Democratic Faith**

At some point later we must again summarize the American Democratic Faith as contrasted to the Faith of the Bible as including “personal gain” over “Christ gain”. Politicians and other leaders have through the ages of American history sought to define this materialism as an aspect of the American Democratic Faith. Even the framers of the Declaration of Independence implied in the “pursuit of happiness” as an inalienable right some materialistic concepts. Indeed in the first writings it was, “life, liberty, and the pursuit of property” as the inalienable rights of men. And throughout American history this fundamental right of the American Democratic Faith has been promoted in the “chicken in every pot”, in the good life of LBJ, and so on.

**22. Some More Sounds on the “Kingdom” from Mark and Jesus**

We have our local church and our own denomination (which would include a local assembly that is interdenominational or non-denomination like Community Churches which expand into a larger organization or affiliation which is nothing less than a denomination)...with this local
church, our own denomination, and the church of Christ written in heaven, why do we need to worry about the “kingdom of God and Christ”? Isn’t the kingdom of God the same as our local church? Hardly! It is important to see that while God has chosen often in the past to work through local churches and even denominations, that the local church in this time of the Falling Away has become more “mammon” than of God since local churches and denominations have become more the creations of man than of God and Christ.

Part of our problem, I think, is that we are victims of history and culture. We begin to think of the local church as established by Christ and maintained by Christ even though we know that the denominational administrators are running them for their own benefit as are the local leaders of pastors, elders. Deacons, and even self-appointed groups within the church. Look again at the approximately 128 times that the world church is used in the New Testament, and in particular the approximately 100 times where it refers to the local church. The local church, like at Jerusalem, Antioch, and in particular in the seven churches of Asia Minor was more a temporal assembly of like-minded believers which did not last generally more than 50 years. The kingdom of Christ, on the other hand, and yea the Assembly of Christ written in heaven have lasted since the time of Christ and will last forever.

Let us quickly summarize what we previously looked at on “kingdom” in Mark from the total 19 times that the kingdom is mentioned in the Gospel of Mark, most of those times by Jesus Himself. First of all, we established our goal of peacemaking by extending the influence of Christ between God and man and between man and man—of course also between men and women; and we further agreed that along with the teachings and miracles of Jesus, an understanding of the “kingdom” would help to extend the influence of Jesus. It can go into the churches where people are heaping up teachers out of their desires to extend the kingdom through the influence of Jesus; it can go into the pulpits of fundamentalists and liberals where itching ears Bible teachers are giving the people what they want more than what they need, are tickling their ears in order to draw a massive crowd in attendance to extend the real kingdom influence of Jesus; and it can go into the television where the itching ears teachings of something that sounds different and unique is often heard to extend the real influence of Jesus’ kingdom; and it can so into the Bible conferences many miles away where women of faith attract many to personal profit from their women of faith resources of trinkets and things.

Okay, what have we looked at so far? (1) Mark 1:14 established the life of Jesus as primarily preaching “the gospel of the kingdom”, and can we do any less than make that our primary goal in preaching and teaching? It may not give us personal gain and a personal following with the status, convincing ourselves that we must be right and that we are doing something extraordinary, when in fact we are riding the waves of the Falling Away when church members will not longer endure sound doctrine, when they years to promote teachers with itching years, when they seek teachers to agree and promote their own desires, just before they turn away from the truth and turn into fables as the Mormons and Catholics did years ago {Yes, my tolerance of the American Democratic Faith, which I also love, goes beyond to the intolerance of convictions based on the Bible} of the faith of the Bible and of Jesus; and yes, I do believe that Jesus is the only Son of God, that Jesus is the only way of salvation, and that the Bible of 66 books as we know it is the only Word from God!

(2). Notice in Mark 1:15 what Jesus came preaching and Jesus, which is also what we should be teaching and preacher as following the example of our Master and the Master
Teacher. Contrast this, if you would, with the unique and weird teachings that you hear each Sunday from pulpits, what you hear over radio and television which most often is a promotion of the American Democratic Faith more than the Faith of Jesus and the Bible; and what you read in those resource books of the extraordinary life. The Gospel of Mark records the extraordinary life of Jesus; Jesus preached an extraordinary Gospel of the kingdom of God; and we should do likewise. How long has it been since you heard a message on the kingdom of God as part of the Gospel. Perhaps sometimes you do hear the repent the repent and believe words which are part of the Gospel; but I am almost certain that you have not heard, and do not hear, that the kingdom of God is part of the Gospel. When we leave out the teachings of Jesus and the Bible on the kingdom, we are leaving out part of the Gospel, and we are in effect ignoring part of the every word which has proceeded out of the mouth of God.

It is not what we do hear from the Bible during this time of the Falling Away that is so dangerous, it is what we do not hear. Recently I heard the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Dallas lamenting how much Bible there was at his church, yet how little significant had happened in that church for many years.

Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom. Jesus said, “the kingdom of God is at hand”. If Jesus preached the kingdom of God is at hand two thousand years ago, what should be we preaching two thousand years later about the kingdom of God. “Oh, that is old stuff,” one might say. “We have gone beyond that to “getting it” which is something much better; we have gone beyond that to the local church that Jesus established more in the middle of His ministry at Caserae Philippi; we have even in some cases gone strickly to the Assembly of the Firstborn written in heaven.

Have you every noticed that when we get in trouble, it is with fundamentals. It is true in sports, it is true in our work life and education, and it is true in our spiritual and church life? And the fundamental here is that we should be preaching the gospel of the kingdom. It is the gospel of the kingdom that will spread the influence of Christ more than the influence of some faith-healer, TV evangelists, or even certain denominational leaders. One big reason is that the kingdom takes our eyes off what man can make and do here on earth, including the establishment and maintenance of large church buildings and attendance, and it puts our eyes and focus of how the will of God is done in heaven that can be extended to the doing of His will here on earth.

(3). From Mark 4:11 we need to know that the real outsiders are not those outside a local church with all the answers, but rather the real outsiders who those inside local churches, and leaders, who have not come to understand the mysteries of the kingdom. Being very religious they are, much like the Doctors of the law and the other religious leaders that oppossed Jesus; but having eyes they see not and ears they hear not. Their lips honor God but their hearts are far away from Him. There are essentially three keys this day and time to attracting crowds where it is in a local church like at Saddleback or Lakewood. These three are nothing new as Satan has been using them for ages, it is only that we are hearing new ways of itching ears. For a pastor to be successful, a very worldly concept, in this time of the Falling Away, he must convince his people that (1) they are the elect of God, (2) he must have some unique message in the itching ear category; and (3) he must effectively convince the people that he has a solution. You see, these three current methods of pastors and other Bible teachers are the reason that you are not hearing about the Falling Away. How can a pastor that leads the elect of God face up to the fact that some, perhaps many, of his congregation are members of the Falling Away; how can a pastor admit that it is his unique itching ears teachings of the Falling Away that is attacting and keeping the crowds that come to hear him; and lastly how can the pastor face up to the fact that his unique solution is [1] not so unique if it really correlates with the Bible, and [2] is not really the solution if the majority of his hears are also those of the Falling Away who listen to what they
want and will not endure sound doctrine. Is the pastor and other Bible teacher really promoting from what people want and are really able to endure...promoting from this all the way to the turning away from the truth and turning into fables.

At this point, we should start a Table that list the “kingdom” teachings of Mark as ways to extend the influence of Jesus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location in Mark</th>
<th>Taught By</th>
<th>The Teaching</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mark 1:14</td>
<td>Paul, Mark, and the Holy Spirit</td>
<td>Jesus preached “the gospel of the kingdom of God”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark 1:15</td>
<td>Jesus Himself</td>
<td>Part of the Gospel is that the kingdom of God is here!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark 3:24</td>
<td>Jesus Himself</td>
<td>Divided kingdoms are worse than divided churches and denominations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark 4:11</td>
<td>Jesus Himself</td>
<td>(1) if you desire to define a real disciple of Jesus, it is one who understands the mysteries of the kingdom; and (2) the real outsiders not those in the church who do not understand the kingdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark 4:26</td>
<td>Jesus Himself in the parable of the growing seed</td>
<td>The kingdom of God grows unseen by history and by much religious activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark 4:30</td>
<td>Jesus Himself in the parable of the mustard seed</td>
<td>The kingdom of God and Christ will ultimately be larger than any other religious, political, social, or intellectual movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark 6:23</td>
<td>Herod the Great</td>
<td>Unfortunaely then and now, this is the kind of kingdom thinking—of a material kingdom—that dominantes our thoughts</td>
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<td>Mark 9:1</td>
<td>Jesus Himself</td>
<td>Jesus defined the time of the establishment of the kingdom as later in the lifetime of many of His disciples, at that it would come with power which you know to be the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension of Christ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark 9:47</td>
<td>Jesus Himself</td>
<td>Entrance into the kingdom of God is the only other alternative to hell, so horrible that the worm never dies and the fire is not quenched, and that there should be so much priority for every word from God as the loss of physical vision. {NOTE: this is not a recommendation for the loss of an eye, it is a sacrifice of pleasure, security, and comfort that lands a place in the eternal kingdom of Christ rather than in hell}</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark 10:14</td>
<td>Jesus Himself</td>
<td>The kingdom of God is a kingdom of little children under God the Father. “Our Father” is essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark 10:15</td>
<td>Herod the Great</td>
<td>The kingdom of God must be received in faith and sincerity like a little child receives truth in humility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark 10:23</td>
<td>Jesus Himself</td>
<td>It is hard for a rich man, a wise man, or any man of status and achievement to enter the kingdom of God, a concept we still do not learn in our respect of persons concepts and ways, and even our world-like motivations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark 10:24,25</td>
<td>Jesus Himself</td>
<td>It is so hard for a man of many possessions to enter the kingdom of God that Jesus compares it to a camel passing through the eye of the needle. You might ask why: because cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things choke out the Word of Faith. Rich men are not eliminated from Faith, the fact is that like camels passing through the eye of the needle, there will be very, very few.</td>
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Mark 11:10  The Crowd at the Triumphant Entry of Christ into Jerusalem

Seeing Jesus coming humbly on a donkey, the people still sought in Him a kingdom like that of David where they prospered greatly and ruled the known world. Carroll sees this as the beginning of the 3 1/2 years of Daniel where Jews no longer entered the kingdom, approximately 100,000 of them being saved in that period and then no more until the Fulness of the Gentiles is complete.

Mark 12:34  Jesus Himself

A person who hears and heeds religious teachings can be so close to the kingdom of God, yet miss it because of their cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, and other things like the rich young ruler who sought to keep the commandments, but went away from Jesus sorrowful not willing to make the choice of God over mammon.

Mark 13:8  Jesus Himself in the great teachings on eschatology of Mark 13 and Matthew 24

Jesus, realistically, uses kingdom and nation in the manner we most often think as countries; but against each other as the signs that will continue to happen from the time of Jesus to the end. The beginning of the sorrows continues through all the phases of biblical history of eschatalogy and revelation right up to the end. Carroll teaches that each nation has an angel, some good and some bad but all under the power of God, who seek contrary gospels like Michael for Israel and the angels of the Persians another goal.

Mark 14:25  Jesus Himself

Here the kingdom of God is the completed kingdom of God, when the kingdoms of this world become synonymous with the kingdom of heaven, and Christ has the Lord’s Supper with His original disciples again. Those who foolishly think of the Lord’s Supper as a sacrament that saves and forgives sins, do not see the redeemed of heaven taking the Lord’s Supper with Jesus.

Mark 15:43  Mark, the Apostle Paul, Peter and James, and the Holy Spirit

Joseph of Arimathea was one of the few who entered through the eye of the needle into the kingdom of God, although a member of the most hypocritical Sanhedrin of Jesus time.

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I hope you read carefully the teachings in the right most column. Or you will go back to do them. And did they help to extend the influence of Jesus in your own life?

23. Understanding of the 35 Recorded Miracles of Jesus Extends His Influence

Here, since we are still interested in how to extend the influence of Christ, we will look at the 35 recorded miracles from Jesus the same way we previously looked at the teachings of Jesus on the kingdom which also intends the influence of Christ. And when we say there are only 35 recorded miracles in the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John we must recall what John wrote at the end of his gospel.

“There are many other signs which Jesus did which are not written in this book, which if they were all written not even he world could contain the books that should be written; but these are written in order that you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you might have everlasting life.”

I would hope you would note the differences between these miracles from Jesus, and the so-called miracle performers today we see on television. No doubt, Jesus the Ascended Christ as part of His ministry does chose some to be healers as well as evangelists and preachers; however because of the outstanding differences between these performers and the miracle healings of
Jesus, we would think that the ones done unseen are most likely those with the true calling from Christ. And we must see also that Jesus continued the healing ministry as He saw God the Father do it from the Creation of the world. God the Father works in the secret place, and God the Father answers the secret prayer of the closet for healing.

Of course we will not be looking at all 35 of the miracles, only those listed in the book of Mark; and before you bemoan the few number in Mark, recall that John in the Gospel of John built his whole biography of Jesus around only seven miracles. {By the way in the Table below we will insert the miracles of Jesus in the proper chapter sequence between the kingdom teachings, and they will be shown in the color read for additions.}

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mark</th>
<th>Miracles of Jesus in Mark</th>
<th>Sign-Teachings of Jesus: Kingdom and Miracles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:14</td>
<td>Jesus preached &quot;the gospel of the kingdom of God&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:15</td>
<td>Part of the Gospel is that the kingdom of God is here!</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:16-20</td>
<td>Jesus out-fishes the fisherman-disciples who have been shucked all day in their fishing, and calls them to be fishers of men in His kingdom service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:21-28</td>
<td>Jesus Healing of the Demoniac in Capernaum: This amazed the religious leaders because of Jesus authority in doctrine which was a doctrine with the power to heal. I think what we see today is a claim for the power to heal which does not include any authority of doctrine, or adequate doctrinal support. Definitely what you do not see is the casting out of devils and demons, because Satan can not cast out Satan, and it would be too dangerous for these impostors as the demons would disclose them or jump on them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:29-34</td>
<td>Jesus Heals the Mother-in-Law of Simon Peter. It was so routine and without fanfare for the Son of God, the former co-creator of the universe. He comes into the house routinely heals the mother in law of Peter, and gets up to graciously serve them a meal. That was much better than the putting on an expected show of jumping and shouting like we see today, a jumping and shouting that is a matter of learning by the examples of others. Well, that is what you are suppose to do when you are slain in the spirit, by the way not at all a Bible phrase or a practice of Jesus during healing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:40-45</td>
<td>Jesus heals the Leper. This is a good place to note the approachability of Jesus, then and now as the leper came beseeching him, and yet Jesus showed compassion although the man was so irritating to publish abroad the healing which restricted the future activities of Jesus to the desert places.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:1-12</td>
<td>Jesus heals the paralytic &quot;the power of the Lord was with him to heal&quot; (Luke 5:17-26)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:1-6</td>
<td>Jesus heals the man with the withered hand The doctors of the law and other religious leaders were watching to see if He would heal on the sabbath. Jesus taught them and the others about doing good or harm on the sabbath day, and taking care of the sheep that is in the pit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:19-30</td>
<td>Jesus heals the blind and dumb man in order that he can see and speak, and the scribes from Jerusalem of doing these miracles by the power of Satan.</td>
<td>When they accused him of being in league with Satan, he said that all sins will be forgiven men except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit: in other words it is not what is spoken in front of men, but it is the personal unbelief to the work of the Holy Spirit that condemns.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:24</td>
<td>Divided kingdoms are worse than divided churches and denominations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:11</td>
<td>(1) if you desire to define a real disciple of Jesus, it is one who understands the mysteries of the kingdom; and (2) the real outsiders not those in the church who do not understand the kingdom.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:26</td>
<td>The kingdom of God grows unseen by history and by much religious activity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:30</td>
<td>The kingdom of God and Christ will ultimately be larger than any other religious, political, social, or intellectual movement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:35-41</td>
<td>Jesus performs the miracle over nature of causes the wind and waves to become calm.</td>
<td>It caused faith, even fear, as the disciples pondered who is this that nature obeys. They had not as yet come to see Him as the Word active from the beginning in Creation, with the power to make the universe.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:1-20</td>
<td>Jesus heals the crazy man that is demon possessed and lived in the tombs. In the tombs all night the man was crying and cutting himself; and it was impossible to chain him as he was so strong as to break the chains.</td>
<td>His name was Legion since many devils were inside him; however the man ran to worship Jesus and the devils cried out how He was Jesus, the Son of God, asking if Jesus had come to torment them before the time—look at how much doctrine the devils know, and tremble. Jesus commanded the devils to come out of him, and per the devils request not to be sent out of the country, he sent them into a herd of swine. Now here, Jesus tells the man to publish what happened to him.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:21-43</td>
<td>Jesus while on the way to heal the daughter at the request of Jairus, the woman with the issue of blood is healed automatically as she touched with faith the helm of the garment of Christ.</td>
<td>The woman had this malady for 12 years which drained all her money while the physicians had done her no good, and she knew as she touched his garment she would be made whole. Jesus to her, “Your faith has made you whole.” Can you imagine any of these current faith healers even allowing themselves to be touched by the crowd, and have you ever heard of one case where the touch of the person unknowingly of the healer, without the fanfare of the slaying of the spirit, has caused healing. Once again when Jesus healed the dead daughter, which He called sleeping, he charged the people there not to make it known; and charged them to give her something to eat. Did they do it? No!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:23</td>
<td>Unfortunaelly then and now, this is the kind of kingdom thinking—of a material kingdom-that dominantes our thoughts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:30-44</td>
<td>Jesus performs a miracle of bread provision with fish. Jesus feeds the five thousand men with five loaves of bread and two fishes.</td>
<td>The disciples gathered up 12 baskets of barley loaves that were left over. When Jesus or God as far as that matter do a miracle they do it right, not one that is rescinded latter because of lack of faith.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:47-52</td>
<td>Jesus walks on the Sea that is so rough that the experienced disciple-fisherman have trouble rowing; and Peter also walks for a short time on the sea.</td>
<td>Jesus says it only takes faith. However in the boat they worshipped Jesus, and said that indeed He is the Son of God.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:24-30</td>
<td>Jesus heals the daughter of a Greek Gentile. The unclean spirit in the daughter was called a devil.</td>
<td>Jesus challenged faith from the woman as He said bread must first be given to the Jews, and she replied in faith that even the dogs eat of the crumbs under the table.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:31-8:9</td>
<td>Jesus heals the man deaf and with a speech impediment, and then feeds the four thousand with seven loaves and a few fishes.</td>
<td>It took two touches, the first after a test when the man saw others as tree walking, and a second from Jesus when he saw all things clearly; and this time the charged was heeded not to publish the matter as the man went directly home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:13-26</td>
<td>Jesus heals a blind man at the pool of Bethsaida. This time the man was brought to Jesus, and Jesus besought just to touch him, knowing that it would bring healing.</td>
<td>The more Jesus charged people to secrecy about the healing, the more they published it; but the people decided that “He has done all things well”.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:1</td>
<td>Jesus defined the time of the establishment of the kingdom as later in the lifetime of many of His disciples, at that it would come with power which you know to be the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension of Christ.</td>
<td>Jesus defined the time of the establishment of the kingdom as later in the lifetime of many of His disciples, at that it would come with power which you know to be the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension of Christ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:14-29</td>
<td>Jesus heals the demoniac boy which the disciples could not heal. Notice how many of the demon possessed were young.</td>
<td>Jesus criticizes the faithless generation for not being able to heal in such cases. All the observers were astonished at the majesty of God, for only that kind of power could come from God Himself.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES ON THE TABLE INSERTIONS for the Miracles of Jesus:**

Did you notice how many miracles Jesus performed in just the first chapter of Mark? That is a testimony of the extent to which Jesus went about with compassion and doing good; it is a testimony to how many more miracles Jesus did which were not recorded; and it is a testimony to how the Gospel of Mark is a book of Action. Even in the first chapter, Jesus was baptized; Jesus was 40 days in the wilderness, tempted of Satan, with the wild beasts, and the angels ministered to him; Jesus call disciples and Jesus taught, Jesus preached and Jesus performed several miracles in the very first chapter of the 16 chapters of Mark. A very notable characteristic of Jesus’ healing, quite in contrast to the notiriety of those today, is that Jesus demanded secrecy from those He healed in order that He could do His real work of teaching and preaching, and self-sacrifice.

**24. Characteristics: Kingdom Citizens and Church Members.**

It is only legitimate since the kingdom is far more important and eternal than the local church to compare what church members are like with what they should be like as identified characteristics of kingdom citizens. Although we have focused on Mark, we must turn to Matthew 5-7 an the correlation in Luke 6 for the greatest teachings on the kingdom and of kingdom citizenship characteristics. You may recognize this as the famous teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

We will find it easier to establish the characteristics of citizens in the kingdom than
we will of church members. Indeed we must separate between what Jesus and the Apostles expect of church members, and since today there is a large gap between Christ and church membership which is growing synonymously with the Falling Away, we must also look at characteristics of what church members today are really like. You may think that is also impossible since we would have to use the prejudiced opinions of contemporary observers. Not so, Paul tells in II Timothy of the characteristics of church members when they have fallen away from God, the Bible, and Christ; and tells us two things generally about such: (1) that they have a form of godliness that denies the power thereof, they are religious in other words without the power of God working internally in them; and (2) if you are a sincere and real believer in the gospel of the kingdom of God, you are to stay away from such church members, not having company with them. If you do not believe this, then look at the words of God and the Apostle Paul of II Timothy 3:1-9.

We will first briefly look at the characteristics of church behavior during the Falling Away from II Timothy 3:1-9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The church member characteristics during the Falling Away, II Timothy 3:1-9</th>
<th>Kingdom Characteristics from the Sermon on the Mount</th>
<th>What church members should be like as taught by Jesus and the Apostles from the New Testament</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. lovers of themselves: this has taken the form of self-development, self-fulfillment, or personal gain as in the American Democratic Faith, and also of cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches along with other things.</td>
<td>&quot;For I say unto you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.&quot; (Matthew 5:20)</td>
<td>&quot;God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Jesus Christ by whom I am crucified and the world is crucified unto me.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. lovers of money: yes, this is the motivation of many in churches, for personal profit; and you know that many of the robbers of 401Ks of the last few years were church members.</td>
<td>Anxiety over the cares of this world is eliminated with the faith that God will provide food, shelter, and clothing.</td>
<td>&quot;All that is gain for me, I count as loss for Chrsit.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. blasphemers: in the church, yes, if they have the habit of taking the name of God in vain.</td>
<td>&quot;But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes’ and your ‘No’, ‘No’. For whatever is more than this is from the evil one.&quot; (Matthew 5:37)</td>
<td>&quot;Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers&quot; (Ephesians 4:29)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. unforgiving</td>
<td>&quot;forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace&quot; (Ephesians 4:3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. unholy</td>
<td>&quot;Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God&quot; (Matthew 5:8) and I might add in His kingdom.</td>
<td>&quot;My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality.&quot; (James 2:1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. unloving</td>
<td>&quot;Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.&quot; (Matthew 5:42)</td>
<td>&quot;Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.&quot; (Galatians 6:2,3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. slanderers</td>
<td>&quot;Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him...&quot; (Matthew 5:25)</td>
<td>&quot;Thou shalt not bear false witness.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. without self-control</td>
<td>&quot;Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect&quot; (Matthew 5:48) and thus Jesus for kingdom members requires a perfecting love on the way to perfect like God and Jesus themselves show.</td>
<td>&quot;that you should no longr walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of the mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart&quot; (Ephesians 4:18)</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. brutal</td>
<td>&quot;But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in dange of the judgment.&quot; (Matthew 5:22)</td>
<td>&quot;with all fowlness and gentleness, with long-suffering, bearing with one another in love&quot; (Ephesians 4:2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. despisers of good</td>
<td>You are the salt of the earth...and you are the light of the world&quot; (Matthew 5:13,14) if you are a kingdom member, and practice kingdom characteristics.</td>
<td>&quot;Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.&quot; (Romans 2:1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. traitors</td>
<td>&quot;Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves...Therefore by their fruits you will know them.&quot; (Matthew 7:15-20)</td>
<td>&quot;Honor your father and your mother that your days may be long upon the earth.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. headstrong</td>
<td>&quot;The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light.&quot; (Matthew 6:22)</td>
<td>&quot;For they think that they will be heard for their many words.&quot; (Matthew 5:7)</td>
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<td>17. haughty</td>
<td>&quot;But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.&quot; (Matthew 6:3,4)</td>
<td>&quot;Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.” (I Corinthians 10:12)</td>
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<td>18. lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God</td>
<td>&quot;Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many willsay to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many words in Your name? And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!” (Matthew 7:21-23)</td>
<td>&quot;who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness” (Ephesians 4:19)</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. having religion without real faith as real faith includes the inward power of God</td>
<td>Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” (Matthew 4:6) This would fill the emptiness inside.</td>
<td>&quot;But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have herd Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus” (Ephesians 4:20,21)</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Such people are the type to be turned away from turning away from type even they are the majority of a church as they were at 6 of 7 of the major churches in Asia Minor, and as they will be today in many churches of the Falling Away</td>
<td>&quot;Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.” (Matthew 7:13,14)</td>
<td>&quot;But adulterers and fornicators and in ineffimate know not to keep company with such.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. They come into home with their subversive teachings and take captive women that seek learning without the real learning of Christ.</td>
<td>&quot;Therefore whoever hears these saying of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock...&quot; (Matthew 7:24)</td>
<td>&quot;that you put off, concerning your former conduct according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man, which was creted according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.” (Ephesians 22-24)</td>
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<td><strong>22.</strong> Like the outsiders not part of the kingdom and like those who can not understand the mysteries of the kingdom, these church members are always learning without coming to a knowledge of the truth.</td>
<td>“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” (Matthew 5:9)</td>
<td>“The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit because they are foolishness unto him.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>23.</strong> These kinds of church members not only will not endure sound doctrine but they resist the truth like Jannes and Jambres.</td>
<td>“Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.” (Matthew 5:11)</td>
<td>“Not only believe but oppose those who do believe.”</td>
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<td><strong>24.</strong> Men of corrupt minds like Jannes and Jambres.</td>
<td>“But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!” (Matthew 6:23)</td>
<td>“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who made Himself of no reputation, and became obedient unto the cross, even death.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>25.</strong> Men disapproved by God and Christ of the faith like Jannes and Jambres.</td>
<td>“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” (Matthew 5:7)</td>
<td>“Nevertheless the foundation of God stands firm having this seal: the LORD knows His own, and let every one who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”</td>
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<td><strong>26.</strong> Their follies will be revealed during the times of revival up until the time of the Falling Away, and then they will be in the majority.</td>
<td>“Do no give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.” (Matthew 7:6)</td>
<td>“Because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will wax cold.”</td>
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</table>

**NOTES for this Table:**

1. The challenge is now to find good characteristics from the Bible of Jesus and the Apostles that can counter and match these 26 bad characteristics of church members. One approach would be to use a Bible concordance to attempt to match the key words in the first column or to match a synonym of a word. We should quickly summarize from Matthew 5-7, the appropriate characteristics of the kingdom of God and Christ members.

   (1). The blessed members of the kingdom of God and of heaven are the “poor in spirit” which include the poor, the humble, and those absent of self-pride (Matthew 5:3).

25. **Lack of Sound Doctrine on the Teachings of Jesus and the Bible.**

There are two extreme sources (causes) of the lack of sound doctrine in any local church: (1) One is to be expected, and the one about which you hear most often, it is that church members are in growth transition to become more like Christ; and (2) then there is the second one generally covered up by the first one with excuses like “at least they are trying”, etc, and that is when church members and churches as in II Timothy 4:1-1 have come to the point when “they will not longer endure sound doctrine.” Between these two extremes are other causes for the lack of sound doctrine which correlate with the Snatching, Stumbling, and Falling Away of the parable of the seed and the sower. And one other should be mentioned, that is the case of the good soil where the Seed of the Word of God brings much fruit in varying degrees—some thirty-fold, sixty-fold, and one hundred fold. So what we will really discuss know is five causes of unsound doctrine, alias unsound teachings {and I hope you remember that unsound living like in the 26 previous bad behaviors of church members is as much unsound doctrine as other teachings of Christ): (1) The seed sown by the wayside where the birds immediately snatch it away, and how this is a parable of Satan as he and his demon angels go about the world snatching and destroying; (2) The seed sown in the soil of the human heart where it is on stony ground {more about it later but the soil is the inward person of spirit, will, heart, and mind) and the first thing that happens is that there is no depth or root; and (3) The second thing that happens when the seed in sown on a stony heart is that it causes Stumbling, like with no root, as persecutions and tribulations come because of the convictions of the Word; (4) We must discuss three causes for the Falling Away as seed is sown among the thorns, the first of which is the “cares of this world”: (5) The second cause of the Falling Away from the seed sown in the heart among thorns
is the deceitfulness of riches, which by the way does not mean that you want to be rich, it simply means that the attractions of possessions like thorns choke the motivations for Faith to grow; (6) The third cause of the choking out of seed faith from the thorns is “other things”, and I think by now we know that to be identified by the Apostle John in the little epistles of I John as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life {and by the way to lust is nothing more or less than to covet, forbidden by God years ago in the 10 commandments} What we are after here is not more description of the problem and problems, but solutions based on good sound Bible.

We should briefly, however, describe the environment in which we live, and the environment in which we must function with our faith. Many years ago, a professor at Southwestern Seminary that I did not like particularly made a wise statement that has stuck with me, “There is always a tension between making a living and making a life that lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. It is also a tension between what we are and what we want to be in Christ. The religious writer and psychologists Harry Fosdick referred to it years ago as “Being and Becoming”; and since then Wayne Oates, the former professor of religious psychology at Southern Seminary as also written extensively of the tension in the life of both being and becoming more Christ like. We have to admit that we are not nearly what we need to be in growth toward the full stature of Christ, but that we keep progressing each day and year toward becoming more like Christ.

Another factor of the environment in which we live is that unless I am deceived by the signs, we are already deep into the Falling Away. And even if we were not in it, the Falling Away which according to the Word of God in II Thessalonians must precede the Second Coming, then the Falling Away for which much fewer believers look than the Second Coming...I say the Falling has to be closer than the Second Coming. How can you be planning and looking for the Second Coming without looking and planning for the Falling Away that precedes it? The very fact that preachers are not talking about the Falling Away is the best sign that we are in it. Why? Because a characteristic of the Falling Away is that church members “will not endure sound doctrine”; and since the Falling Away is very sound doctrine, taught over and over by Jesus and the Apostles in the Bible, and practiced for 40 years by the children of Israel in the wilderness, then this silence on the Falling Away is of itself evidence of the Falling Away.

Another aspect of the terminal phase of the last days is that many false teachers and Bible preachers will be heaped up. Have you ever seen a time when the heaping up of Bible teachers was so rapid and so big? Every where we see on TV, on radio, in the book stores and with advertisement of another man or women who is a teacher of the Bible with some unique message.

If you collect what the Apostle Paul told the Ephesian elders with what Paul wrote to the young preachers in Titus, I and II Timothy, also with what Jesus taught and Jude wrote and the Apostle John, and yes the Apostle Peter, you will find several reasons that itching ears teachers and preacher arise, and in turn the itching ears quite often turns in false teachers and preachers.

First from Jesus. {I will look at the shorter form on eschatology in Mark 13 rather than Matthew 24 for the sake of brevity.} The first period about which Jesus teaches as signs of the times begins with a caution of “Take heed that no one deceives you.” (Mark 13:6) Did you hear those words of Jesus? The fact that Jesus says “take heed” means that the possibility exist that there will be deceivers, and the possibility exist that temporal believers can be deceived. This would certain fall into the category of seed by the wayside
where Satan immediately snatches it up; but being deceived would also have to apply to the Stumbling where deceivers in the pulpits steer you away from taking root in your faith, or at least do not promote such, and where you are not prepared to deal with the persecutions and tribulations that inevitable come from convictions on the Word. One obvious way is when preachers and teachers fail to tell you that “all that will godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution,” as Paul wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and they fail to give you the Biblical approach of believers will be in the minority. Why? And while jumping ahead this is one way to tell when there is the possibility that while a Bible teacher may sound good, and they must sound good in order to be wolves in sheep’s clothing (in other words what you must see from them is the clothing of the sheep, and the wolves’ motivation are far more subtle than the appearance) the way to tell is if they are overwhelmed by their popularity. It becomes obvious that they are giving people what they want to hear, rather than what they need, in order to attract and keep thousands as listeners. Remember the Old Testament saying “that Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands.” Well, this popular and false Bible teachers are slaying in some cases thousands and in other cases tens of thousands.

Paul wrote in II Timothy as preparation for what he would say later on bad church behavior and on the unsound doctrine of the Falling Away... that is, in preparation for those passages, he wrote of how right there in his time, “those with unsound teachings on the Resurrection of Christ were overthrowing the faith of some.”

We truly get inside into false teachers from the Apostle Paul as he called the elders of the church at Ephesus to come assembly with him. {Read it for yourself in Acts 20:17-38 if you wish.} By the way, if false teachers and preachers existed in New Testament times, and they had effect on deceiving others what do you thing is going to be the environment in this time when we are much closer to the Second Coming. Paul warns the Ephesian elders of what is definitely going to happen shortly after the end of his life, using much the same words as did Jesus in His warning to take heed. Paul says, “Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which he purchased with His own blood.” (Acts 20:28) Then Paul gives two motivations of itching ears and false teachers: (1) Like wolves do to sheep, they scatter the flock which is nothing less than Bible teachers taking the loyalty of a church member away from he local church and putting it on some self-appointed, not called by the Holy Spirit, Bible teachers; and (2) Paul said the motivation of false and itching ears teachers, that came up from in a local church and you are seeing that story in this day and time as Bible teachers are coming out of Houston and elsewhere to attract crowds says two things about them (Acts 20:30). (a) They speak “perverse things” in other words it is unsound teachings and doctrine but which is wrapped in the clothing of sheep; and (b) Their goal is to feed their own ego and provide religious status for themselves by drawing disciples to follow them thereby taking away those disciples from loyalty to the local church, and I might add also loyalty to Christ, the Bible, and God. {Lack of loyalty to God, Christ, and the Bible is what the Falling Away is all about: it is not a Falling Away from church, as church attendance will actually go up as people are attracted to what they want to hear; and it is away from the works of God that church members have seen up to 40 years; and I might mention that this is not a criticism of youth as the youth of less than 21 years of age are safe as in the wilderness. They have not had time to see the marvelous works of God and Christ, and then fall away from them.

We should go back again to Jesus in Mark 13 on false Bible teachers with itching ears. As the phases of the last days pass well beyond the beginning of sorrows, although the signs of the beginning of sorrows like wars and rumors of wars, etc continue into the other phases...as the last days progresses toward a termination, Jesus foretells that “false Christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.” The elect are safe from this deception, although Jesus and Paul warned the elect to take heed to themselves and the doctrine; for in doing do they would both save themselves and those that hear them.”

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Many at this time have not taken that heed to themselves and their hearers, and they are daily in vast meetings and on television performing “signs and wonders” to deceive the Stumblers, the Snatches, and the victims of the Falling Away. What do you think “signs and wonders” from Jesus means? Well, it means exactly what the Apostle John meant when he wrote of the signs and wonders that Jesus performed during His life in order to convince the world that He was and is the Son of God. Remember them from Mark: the teachings, the miracles, the character, the resurrection and the Ascension! Would it surprise you to hear the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles from false teachers? No, that is exactly what they must do in order to put a sheep-clothing cover on their teachings. However, by way of encouragement, there is always some weird, non-biblical twist to their teachings that can be detected if you are alert, if you take heed like Jesus and the Apostle Paul said. It is just that you must wade through a lot of smiles, stories, and meaningless chatter in order to get the point of departure from sound doctrine. An example in point is the teachings of Joel Osteen and many others who continue the Old fashion “gospel of wealth and the corollary of success”. In other words who like Norman Vincent Peale and Charles Schuler and Zig Zeigler, and too many other deceptive teachers too numerous to name, they preach and teach a gospel of prosperity. Once again I am getting ahead of the message, but you must read carefully Olsteen’s popular, best-selling book about the “good life now” in order to come to the chapter where “things” is mentioned 23 times; and where scripture from the Old Testament is perverted to include physical prosperity in a passage that is talking about spiritual prosperity. You see what chance do the listeners to Olsteen and these others have if they are lead to choke out the little seed about Christ which these do plant, if the message of cares of this world, the deceitfulness or riches, and other things is allowed to choke out the Word.

Later we must develop the many ways that people respond to the Seed of the Word, for now we will close with a quick look at the book of Jude. Let me remind you that if false prophets and teachers existed in the time of Jude, and John, and Paul, and Jesus, what do you think is going to happen in this day and time of the Falling Away?

“For certain men (this does not exclude women as men in the Bible is very generic including both men and women)…for certain men have crept in unnoticed {you didn’t notice did you, you have been gullible enough to think that anybody who had the courage to preach and teach had to be right}…for certain men have crept in unnoticed {you might ask, where did they crept in; well, they crept into the local churches and the television pulpits and into your living rooms and into your hearts and loyalties};…certain men and women have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation {it is all part of the works known of God and of the Falling Away, not that God planned it, but that he knew it and warned about it; and what is their condemnation, well we read about that later in Jude}…ungodly men {does that not remind you of II Timothy, the form of godliness without inward power and the 26 bad characteristics of church behaviour—by the way this group is bound to have their leaders that are more aggressive, more brutal, that love money and self more, and love the pleasure of status and admiration more than the whole truth of God};…ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Jude 4)

These Bible teachers and leaders turn around what Paul condemned in Romans when he wrote, “Let us sin that grace may abound”. Paul said don’t do that; and if you do you are presuming on the grace of God. You are attempting to crucify again the Lord Jesus Christ which is impossible, but by doing show you are showing disrespect for Christ, His sacrifice, for God and for the Bible. These are those who read too much into their instantaneous new birth experience which does not last; and those who count on the Security of the Believer without allowing for the Falling Away. {If you don’t remember the Security of the Believer versus Falling Away discussion earlier, please read it again.}

26. Seven Responses to Every Word from the Mouth of God and Guidelines for Help

Remember the six responses to the seed of Faith and of the Word of God: (1) The seed sown by the
wayside which immediately Satan snatches away {we have called it the SNATCHING which can also have help from false teachers and preachers, at the two extremes of fundamentalism, charismatic, and liberalism, the liberals being more dangerous in this category; (2) the Word from God that is sown on stony ground where the hearer develops no root in their life of faith; (3) the Word sown on stony ground where persecutions and tribulations cause stumbling {these later too we have referred to as STUMBLING}; (4) The Word sown in a heart where there are many thorns of diversions including the cares of this world; and (5) the deceitfulness of riches in the gospel of prosperity and the American Democratic Faith; (6) The other things of covetousness of the flesh, eyes, and the pride of life; and then (7) the response of the hearer of the Word from Christ’s ordained fruits of righteousness come either thirty times, sixty times, or one hundred times.

Now, you must realize that in this parable from Jesus Himself that the soil—one either wayside soil, stony, among thorns, or good soil— is the human heart which has the freedom of choice. Satan cannot force a snatching away from the wayside soil unless that person from which the seed of faith is snatched allows it; and so on through the other kinds of soils that that are the freedom of choice of different persons to the Gospel. Jesus is just telling all what can happen, and what in reality will happen when listeners hear some of the Word of God and of faith.

1. SNATCHING. There is almost no cure for snatching. This seed sown by the wayside would correspond to the majority who go the broad way that leads to destruction: the gospel of the kingdom is preached to them as it goes into all the world before the end time, but it is only in order that they can refuse it, and God can after the end judge them properly based on what they did with His Son, Jesus Christ.

The STUMBLING caused by no root obvious has the cure of growing roots in the individual believer’s life.

The STUMBLING cause by persecutions and tribulation because of Bible beliefs has several cures. There must be an overwhelming conviction not to go with the crowd. That the majority go the way of destruction and few go the narrow way to life eternal. There must also be an overwhelming conviction that persecutions and tribulations come to believers for no wrong which they do, God does chastise His own children, and the difficulties are allowed by God to come in order that the believer may grow to be more like Christ.

The Falling away caused by the cares of this world likewise has several cures. Watch the examples that you chose in the local church and at large. Be careful for nothing, but put every care on God and Christ as instructed to do so, waiting for God to either change it or give you more wisdom to deal with it. {IT IS NOT TRUE THAT THE CLOSER YOU LIVE TO CHRIST, THE LESS CARES AND MORE RICHES THAT YOU WILL HAVE. THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE IS MORE THE OPPOSITE!}

6. The Falling Away caused by the deceitfulness of riches is obvious: don’t do that, in other words don’t seek after things to the extent that they become more important that the Word of God and a spiritual emphasis; chose the Master carefully, God of Mammon; and Learn Christ properly by seeing Him with the spiritual eye and hearing Him like wise, the Christ who promises that He and the Father will come into the human heart to sup with you personally.

7. The Falling Away caused by the other things of covetousness of the flesh, the eyes, and the pride of life is once again cured by a definite choice of life style where Christ is made the Master over Mammon, where Christ is learned personally and unlike the rest of the Gentiles; and where the American Democratic Faith does not crowd out the faith of the Bible and Jesus.

Well, we are really at 8 because we added to the list of responses, the seed sown by the wayside and the seed that is fruitful. Fruits of righteousness in our lives needs no cure: only encouragements to keep going; and these encouragements we will do with certain very helpful Scriptures. Parenthetically, you should apply the characteristics of bad church behavior to the false and heaped up Bible teacher of
today, to see if they really apply to their lives and messages: (1) men will be lovers of themselves—
man, does that every apply have you ever seen some many teachers and preachers all wrapped up
in themselves, and excusing that self-centeredness in terms of this is part of the call of God which
it is not; (2) lovers of money, wow, what can I say they all ask for money as a way to receive
the blessings of God—last week one of these false Bible teachers used an Old Testament verse to
courage people next January to receive the blessings of the first fruits by send those first fruits of
the year to them—which is definitely a teacher of the exegesis of scriptures for the benefit of their
personal gain; (3) boasters—wow, do you ever hear the boastings of the great works they do for God
in the extraordinary life, in writings, and in the things they provide for you—all of these going back
to getting money for you in order to promote their personal gain; (4) proud—yes, you can see the
pride oozes out of the messages without apology as they are popular and suppose that they being
well-to-do have been blessed by God rather than Satan who promises who give the whole world to
those who will worship and serve him; and (5) Blasphemers—yes, I have personally heard these
Bible teachers take the name of God in vain; however this is also done with false claims under the
name of Christ are made which are not shown, the matter of “and let every one that names the name
of Christ depart from iniquity {Why indeed do they expect you to accept them in the name of Christ
as you do not know that Christ chose them for that ministry, if they are liscensed and ordained
or sponsored; but they expect you to accept them for their boldness and much speaking, for their
attractiveness, and for they subly to tell you what you want to hear}....
“These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only
themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn teress
without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming up their
own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.” (Jude
12,13)
Now, be honest when you listen to some of these heaped up teachers of the time of the Falling
Away, don’t you hear the raging wind and see the foam? You get the picture, and you can apply
the Word of God on bad church behavior to many of these heaped up teachers so as not to have any
thing to do with them: (6) disobedient to parents, don’t you doubt that they really learned these
 teachings from their parents; (7) unthankful unless you send them money; (8) unholy—if you listen
careful some of those things that they encourage you to do, noting the response of the audience,
while bodacious are downright unholy, quite unlike Christ and God; (9) unloving—this is the main
thing that you can not see in some body remotely teaching to you without seeing you and asking
for your money in return: they really don’t care about you; (10) unforgiving; (11) slanderers—like
Jude said they speak evil of those things which they do not understand as often they are amateurs,
albeit aggressive amateurs in the faith; (12) without self-control—you especially see that among
the charismatic where they present the lack of self-control to simulate emotion, not taking heed to
Paul’s admonition to “let all things be done decently and in order” and the admonition to “speak
in the church only for edification, exhortation, and comfort—while many times this false Bible
teachers and only comforting themselves with a crowd response and much hand-waving {it is much
like a young engineer at work telling of how Jakes was teaching somebody how to speak in tongues,
giving them certain words to use not in a real language}; (13) brutal—oh yes, you will notice that
in word and deed they can be brutal if anything seems to threaten them or their so-called ministry;
(14) despisers of good—what do you think that they think of the minister that labors quietly and
tirelessly without popularity and prosperity; (14) traitors—yes, to Christ, the Bible, and the kingdom
of God—respect for the authority of the Word of God is not one of their strong points, spiritualizing
is but not exegesis {to make a list is not to do exegesis when it is spiritualizing}; (15) headstrong,
uh, do you not see headstrong—I am going here right or wrong regardless of what anyone says,
and you will like it; (16) haughty—yes, that comes with the headstrong behavior you see from them; (17) lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God—I would think that you might see in the good life, and the extraordinary life, and the resources for women of faith, and many other approaches, a love of pleasure more than a love of God; (18) a form of godliness—yes, that look and act religious especially with their tongues, but where are their hearts—that denies the power of God; (19) they are obviously the kind that should be turned away from, at least to the extent of no support and no loyalty which is taken away from your local church where the pastors labors without prosperity, fame, and status; (20) there is an age-long history of gullible women who with time and money on their hands seek learning, being taken captive by false teachers {one reason that you hear of so many women preachers and teachers now who have focused on the homes where women live and work}; (21) They promote a learning of the Bible which never gets to the real truth of God; (22) Like Jannes and Jambres they resist the God ordained leaders like Moses, and all the truth that comes from these God-ordained, Christ chosen, and Holy Spirit promoted leaders; (23) they are men and women of corrupt minds who conscience has long ago be killed as the word in their hearts was choked out; and (24) they are disapproved concerning the faith—well, just the lack of obvious approval tells you that perhaps they never had any approval from God in the first place even if they can boast and show pride in so many converts where the new birth was received with great joy, and looked like salvation, but the STUMBLINGs and Falling Away of time choked out any good seed, if the seed was good at all.

27. NOTHING BUT THE CURES AND ENCOURAGEMENTS.

Nothing But Encouragements and Cures for the Falling Away, the Snatching, and the Stumbling

If you made it this far, that is commendable; and I apologize that we had to go through so much slop in order to keep here. I promise you that this section will be NOTHING BUT ENCOURAGEMENTS AND CURES FOR THE FALLING AWAY, THE SNATCHING FROM SATAN, AND THE STUMBLING.

1. SNATCHING. There is almost no cure for snatching. This seed sown by the wayside would correspond to the majority who go the broad way that leads to destruction: the gospel of the kingdom is preached to them as it goes into all the world before the end time, but it is only in order that they can refuse it, and God can after the end judge them properly based on what they did with His Son, Jesus Christ.

However, one possible way to alleviate the snatching work of Satan, his angels, and servants (the world if you please) would be by more awareness of the authority of the Bible as the Word of God. There is among us far too little respect for every word that proceeds from the mouth of God; and without the prerequisite respect, there does not come the subsequent recognition of the practical authority of the Bible.

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God”, Old and New Testament books has not sunk into us. It just has not dawned on us that God is trying to talk to the whole world of His creation through the books of the Bible. The world of religions and denominations offer many substitutes for the process of sanctification. Sanctification is the process after the new birth whereby the believer grows more into the stature of Christ. Doctrines of devils and seducing spirits like the “sacrament” of the Roman Catholic Churches, and other denominations who did not break with church history and tradition in favor of the Bible, advocate a substitute for the Bible doctrine of sanctification. This substitute offers the false teaching that in the sacrement the bread actually becomes the body of Christ and the wine the blood: and this is where forgiveness occurs, continue salvation, growth, and sanctification. NO, it is by prayer, Bible, and seeking to live out in life every word of the Bible. Yes, that is often a trial and error method which can be compared to stumbling, and we will look at that next. First some last words on the advice of the
Scripture, “that the man or women of God may be matured, grown into the full stature of Christ”—what some would like to believe is an easy way, a way that can be administered by a select few that call themselves ministers of priests, really comes through Bible, Bible, and more Bible.

The STUMBLING caused by no root obvious has the cure of growing roots in the individual believer’s life. I can think of no better way to get into the “cures” and “encouragements” for stumbling than by looking at where the word is mentioned in the New Testament, because often the cure is mentioned with the stumbling.

(1). If you walk in the daylight, you will stumble less, Jesus taught; and yes, more in parables where it has additional spiritual meaning.

“If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.” (John 11:9,10)

If you study carefully the context, you will see that the disciples try to keep Jesus from doing what He should do because of the expected opposition. Jesus is saying that in order to do the will of God—and certainly you do pray “thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven—in order to do the will of God you must keep your eyes on Jesus as the light of the world. The light of the world which is Jesus must be inside you first, before you can keep your eyes on it. Yes, we are back again to what it means to learn Christ in Ephesians: what it means when Paul says “if indeed Christ you have heard Him and been taught of Him.” And the how as I have said many times comes from the answers of Jesus to three significant questions form the Apostles as recorded in John 14.

The first question and answer respectively are: (a) Where did Jesus go when He left this earth and what is the way to Him and the Father? And the answer is that Jesus Himself is “the way, the truth, and the life”; (b) Show us God the Father?

“He who has seen Me has seen the Father, so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’ Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves” (John 14:9-11)

(c) Lord, how will you manifest yourselves to us and not unto the world? (John 14:22)

Answer: “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.” (John 14:23)

Thus this is a lot better, and even more mysterious, than some magical that get be worked with the bread and wine actually turning into Christ’s body and blood for salvation.

(2). And we should also always remember that salvation starts in the new birth and continues in santification and ends in the new body at the resurrection by FAITH. Like we are told in Galatians 2:20, “and the live which I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

(3). Hebrews 12:12-17 mentions the process of stumbling without using the words in some cases, and you know how this twelth chapter starts with a looking toward Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith; yet considered that God like a Father who are his own children will chastise, does bring difficulties or challenges into our lives in order to promote holiness.

“Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for you feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed. Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord; looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.” (Hebrews 12:12-17)

(a). As difficulties come in life, even persecutions and tribulations for Bible
beliefs and expressions, the comforting words of faith in the Bible can strengthen hands and arms, feeble knees.

(b). The advice of the Scripture—“the profit for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness” if you would—can show the way to the preventive measures of straight paths that will prevent stumbling.

(c). These same words of Scriptures can provide the healing of weaknesses.

(d). Without the peace of Christ as contrasted to the peace which the world provides, which is the peace that God makes between God and man and between man and man, there is no inward or later physical seeking of God—“Blessed are the pure in heart {made so by the righteousness of God through faith alone}, for they shall see God”.

(e). “Fall short of the grace of God” by the substitution of another means of grace and salvation which is by works more than by continuing faith, and fall short in works of what is demanded when the real new birth is there with proper sanctification.

(f). Roots of bitterness spring up among believers as the great spiritual birthright of believers is profaned by the desires and temporal needs.

The Falling away caused by the cares of this world likewise has several cures.

(1). The number one cure for the cares of this world, a characteristic of kingdom members in the Sermon on the Mount, is given by Jesus as faith that God like He takes care of the birds and the lillies will provide your needs.

(2). The second cure for the cares of this world centered around the anxieties of the future is to concentrate on today, letting tomorrow take care of the things of itself.

(3). A third cure, also a characteristic of the in-group of the kingdom is to “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness”, and God Himself will take care of adding these other things to you.

Watch the examples that you chose in the local church and at large.

Be careful for nothing, but put every care on God and Christ as instructed to do so, waiting for God to either change it or give you more wisdom to deal with it. {IT IS NOT TRUE THAT THE CLOSER YOU LIVE TO CHRIST, THE LESS CARES AND MORE RICHES THAT YOU WILL HAVE. THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE IS MORE THE OPPOSITE!

4. The Falling Away caused by the deceitfulness of riches is obvious: don’t do that, in other words don’t seek after things to the extent that they become more important that the Word of God and a spiritual emphasis; chose the Master carefully, God of Mammon; and Learn Christ properly by seeing Him with the spiritual eye and hearing Him like wise, the Christ who promises that He and the Father will come into the human heart to sup with you personally.

(1). The cure for the deceitfulness of riches is to make God master instead of any of the mammon creations of man.

(2). Another cure for the deceitfulness of riches is also a kingdom member characteristic, lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven instead of here on earth. How you do that is part of the challenge of the Christian calling.

5. The Falling Away caused by the other things of covetousness of the flesh, the eyes, and the pride of life is once again cured by a definite choice of life style where Christ is made the Master over Mammon, where Christ is learned personally and unlike the rest of the Gentiles; and where the American Democratic Faith does not crowd out the faith of the Bible and Jesus.

Well, we are really at 8 because we added to the list of responses, the seed sown by the wayside and the seed that is fruitful.

Fruits of righteousness in our lives needs no cure: only encouragements to keep going; and these encouragements we will do with certain very helpful Scriptures.
28. CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

How much more do you hear about the local churches and denominations today, than you hear about the kingdom of Christ; yet it was the opposite in the teachings of Christ. Only once does He mention the church, and that is not about a local church but rather about the total body of Christ, the one written in heaven, the general assembly and church of Christ the Firstborn. Why do people talk about and consider “church”, “churches”, and denominations more than Christ’s kingdom? One one thing Christ’s kingdom has no church roll. You can not clearly identify the members of the kingdom of Christ as you can the members of the First Baptist or First Presbyterian Church, and consequently you can not number the contemporary members of the kingdom as you can gloat over the ten thousand or so members of Preston Road Baptist Church. You can not say of the kingdom members that they must be doing something right since there are so many members, like you can say of a 10 thousand member local church that they must have something. There is a very mercenary aspect in that the people of a local church, since they pay the pastor a salary, or in some cases the denomination pays the salary, they think that the pastor should be working for them and the local church or denomination more than he should be working for the kingdom of Christ. It other words souls saved and souls helped which does not service the ministry of the local church or promote the numbers of the local church or denomination is not the pastor doing the work of the ministry. How often have you been invited to a local church or to hear a local pastor, and compare that with how often you have been invited to be a kingdom citizen or to enhance your member characteristics in the kingdom of Christ. It is our propensity for numbers of the American Democratic Faith that leads us to think that large universities and large churches are more worthy than small churches, or more worthy of consideration than is the kingdom of Christ.

I. It was very important to Jesus of Nazareth that people hear that His teachings came from God the Father. Jesus said to the people listening, “These are not my teachings, but I am only repeating what I heard from God the Father.” The Gospel of John presents this best, and in these words.

(1). The teachings of Jesus are bread of life which the Father has given to the Son to pass on to kingdom subjects (John 6:27).

“Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.”

(2). The teachings of Jesus are based on the will of God, made clear to Jesus before entrance on this planet, that He should collect around Himself those disciples of the kingdom that God has given to the Son, and that He should lose none of them; but for the first time collect all of them in a physical and complete organization as Christ raises them up “at the last day.” Someone asked me, “does time cease at the Second Coming”. Well, since it is the last day of 24 hours; thus when the days cease then the time of hours, minutes, and seconds has no meaning. Certainly time must lose meaning with the prospect of on-going eternity as promised by God and Jesus, eternal punishment for the wicked and unbelievers and eternal reward for the believers. (The kingdom members if you would!)

“This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lost nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.” (John 6:39)

Now be sensible, how would you identify the “all God has given to Jesus” except as the kingdom of Christ and of God. It certainly could not correlate with your church where some are the wheat and some of the chaff; nor your denomination where the same is true.

(3). Jesus referred to His teachings as doctrines from God with the authority of God, and further promised that any kingdom subject would be able to recognize the doctrines that came from Him and God as contrasted to the doctrines which have another source, that is from man and from Satan.
“Jesus answered them and said, ‘My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him.’” (John 6:16-18)

A little exegesis, or reading out the meaning here, is in order: (a) The doctrines or teachings of Jesus did not exclusively belong to Jesus, but had their source in God the Father, and were teachings based on the mind and character of God which Jesus received from God the Father; (b) An established principle of how to understand the Bible (the parables of the Bible itself if you would) is A WILLINGNESS TO DO THE WILL OF GOD {you see nothing about education or degrees or status as a scholar; and here the Bible and Bible learning is unlike any other subject of learning}; (c) Here we see a taste of false Bible teachers and preachers as those “who speak from himself” and “seeks His own glory”—what is the source of the itching ears teachers who ears itch because they are stopped up and can not hear: Their teachings have no authoritative source, only the source of their own imagination; and they seek their own status or glory rather than of God the Father as Jesus did; (d) this speaking from one’s self and seeking one’s own glory is called “unrighteousness”, although we know that they claim, like the Pharisees and Saducees, and other religious leaders to do it in the name of God.

II. So much more important is it to know about the kingdom of Christ and God more than about a local church or denomination, that we should spend some time considering the most single important source of Jesus’ teachings of the kingdom in the Sermon on the Mount, and primarily the most thorough presentation in Matthew 5-7. {I think right here it would be wise to use the thorough treatment by A. T. Robertson in A HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS.}

First the subject according to Robertson of the Sermon on the Mount is “PRIVILEGES AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE MESSIANIC REIGN {this by the way is another way of saying the kingdom of Christ}...CHRIST’S STANDARD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. You can, I believe still purchase a copy of this helpful book. I will not try to list the details of the verses as you read them for yourselves, and you can recognize the similarity to the characteristics of kingdom members that were previously put in a table for comparison with good and bad church behavior characteristics. I will, however, list where the outline subject is covered in the Gospels, for you will see that Luke gets into it as well as Matthew:

1. Introduction: The Blessings and the Woes of kingdom membership which are privileges of the Messiah’s subjects. (Matthew 5:3-12 and Luke 6:20-26)

2. The Theme of the Sermon: (1) Christ’s Standards of Righteousness in Contrast with that of the Scribes and Pharisees, the religious leaders of Christ’s time. (Matthew 5:13-20) (2) Christ’s Ethical Teaching Superior to that of the Scribes (both of the Old Testament and the Oral Law) in Six Items or Illustrations. (Matthew 5:21-48)
   a. Murder.  
   b. Adultery.  
   c. Divorce.  
   d. Oaths.  
   e. Retaliation.  
   f. Love of Enemies.

3. The Practice of Real Righteousness unlike the Ostentatious Hypocrisy of the Pharisees, as in Almsgiving, Prayer, and Fasting. (Matthew 6:1-18) {NOTE: All of these are characteristics of worship and personal devotion life—the subject of many heaped Bible teachers today which also pervert the real righteousness into ostentatious hypocrisy only enhanced as no other age in history by the American Democratic Faith characteristic of a dominance by “tolerance”. Therefore would you not expect to see Pharisees and hypocrites today in public worship.}

4. Single-hearted Devotion to God, as Opposed to Worldly Aims and Anxieties. (Matthew 6:19-34) 

5. Captious Criticism or Judging Others. (Matthew 7:1-6 and Luke 6:37-42) {NOTE: The only legitimate and authoritative source of criticism, or judgment, is judgment based on the same Scriptures by which we are judged. Opinions, no matter how authoritatively made with

And this brings us back to parables as examples and influence of the teachings of Jesus, and you will note how most of these have to do, not with churches and denominations, but with the kingdom.

29. Parables of the Kingdom of Christ.

While there are 52 parables in the four Gospels, we certainly do not have time for all 52; but we once again will focus on the shorter form and action of Mark where there are much fewer; and again as often in these messages, we will call attention to the kingdom nature of these parables.

I. And before we look with a little more detail at the parables of Mark only, I would like to introduce this message with another borrowing from Robertson’s HARMONY OF THE GOSPEL, a section which he calls “THE FIRST GREAT GROUP OF PARABLES”.

1. Introduction to the Group, beside the sea of Galilee. (Mark 4:1,2 and Matthew 13:1-3, and Luke 8:4)

Once again Jesus had to use the boat that He and His disciples had reserved as a rescue from the press of the crowd. This time Jesus taught from the boat on the sea while the crowd was on the land.

Parables to the Crowd by the Sea.

Recall this is the first great group of parables, the first large body of Jesus’ teachings where He wanted the kingdom members to understand without the doctors of the law understanding. And what do you thing is first on the list of the great group of parables? Yes, the parable of the seed and the sower with the SNATCHING, STUMBLING, AND THE FALLING AWAY; and of course, above all the seed of faith planted in the hearts by hearing where the fruit of the new birth is actually produced with a continuation in the sanctification of more fold.

(1). The Parable of the Sower. (Mark 4:3-25, Matthew 13:3-23, and Luke 8:5-18)

(2). Parable of the Seed Growing of Itself. (Mark 4:26-29)

You would have to say that this is an emphasis of the Gospel of Mark since Mark only mentions it, and wouldn’t you know it, it is a parable about “the kingdom of God”.

“And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how. The earth beareth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle, because the harvest is come” [see Joel 3:13]

(a) This teaching of Jesus is also of no private interpretation: Jesus get it from God the Father and the Father made the teaching or truth known to the Prophet Joel as recorded in Joel 3:13. It is a reference to the Judgment after the Second Coming of Christ when the tares are separate from the wheat, member of the kingdom from non-members.

“Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow—for the wickedness is great”. (Joel 3:13)
{NOTE:  It must remind one of how during the Falling Away just before the Second Coming and the end of the last day, Jesus said that because sin or lawlessness will increase the love of many will wax cold.  Who are the many?  Certainly not kingdom members but certainly church members!}

(b) We do not see the full marvels of the salvation experience that creates kingdom members.  Like the marvel of seed growing when planted, with sun and water, etc, so the kingdom members grow through first the new birth, then the Christlikeness called sanctification, and finally at the Return of Christ, the body resurrection.

(3).  Parable of the Tares.  (Matthew 13:24-30)
The moral of this story or teaching from Jesus is clear:  those not really born again in the churches are to be left alone until the time of Final Judgement less any attempt by disciples to ferret them out might out harm the true members of the kingdom.  “Let both grow together” Jesus says.

(4).  Parable of the Mustard Seed.  (Mark 4:30-32 and Matthew 13:31-32)
(5).  Parable of the Leaven and many such Parables.  (Mark 4:33-34 and Matthew 13:33-35)  Jesus found that His congregation by the Seashore could not take unlimited parables.  “And with many such parables, {like the parable of the leaven that the woman hid in 3 measure of meal that leaven all the bread, or caused it to rise that Matthew records}... spake He the word unto them, as they were able to hear it:  and without a parable spake He not unto them:  but privately to his disciples he expounded all things.”  (Mark 4:33-34)  Matthew adds:

“All these things spake Jesus in parables unto the multitudes; and without a parable spake he nothing unto them:  that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet {which Prophet, the Prophet David which we can tell by finding the words in the book of Psalms}, saying, ‘I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world [see Psalms 78:2].”  (Matthew 13:33-35)

{NOTE:  You can tell that Jesus had talked over this hidden mystery of the kingdom with God the Father from the very beginning of the foundation of the world!}

To the Disciples privately in the House.

(1).  Explanation of the Parable of the Tares.  (Matthew 13:36-43)
a.  The good seed is sown by the Son of God, and the field where the seed is sown is the world.
b.  The good seed is the sons of the kingdom.  It is generic it means that the good seed is the sons and daughters of kingdom citizenship.  The tares are the sons of Satan, and the sower of these evil seeds is the Devil.  The harvest is the end of the world and the reapers are the angels.  As tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so this also will happen to the tares at the end of the world.  The Son of God sends His angels at the end to gather out and away from the kingdom of Christ: all things that cause STUMBLING, all them that do iniquity:  these will be cast into the furnace of fire where they shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.  Then shall the righteous shine like the sun in the kingdom of the Father.  [see Daniel 12:3]  Let him that has ears, let him hear; that is, if the ears are not itching because they are stopped up in order that they may not hear.

(2).  The Parable of the Hid Treasure.  (Matthew 13:44)
(3).  The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price.  (Matthew 13:45-46)
(4).  The Parable of the Net.  (Matthew 13:47-50)
(5).  The Parable of the Householder.  (Matthew 13:51-53)
It would appear that even as the Apostle John builds his Gospel around only seven miracles, that Mark builds his Gospel around a few of the 52 parables, and those tell much of the kingdom. And wouldn’t you know it that even as John chose seven, a magical number in the Bible, Mark chose the number 12, also magical. There are 12 parables in the Gospel of Mark which affords within itself an outline of the Gospel of Mark.

1. The Three Parables about the Ways of the New Kingdom. (Mark 2:18-22)
First, Jesus teaches unique periods of spiritual concern and emphasis where living by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God becomes so the focus that fasting comes natural in order to ignore the needs of living by bread alone. This, of course, is only for dedicated disciples of Christ like the first disciples and apostles. Jesus taught them to enjoy His fellowship now, like the bride for the bridegroom, and that they could fast for his fellowship later when He went back to the Father. Jesus taught not to sew a piece of un-shrunk garment on an old garment which had already shrunk as it would tear. Jesus did not seek reformation from religious traditions as represented by the Pharisees and the disciples of John the Baptist who fasted, Jesus sought a new way of faith, salvation, and kingdom membership. This also is represented in the putting of new wine into old wine skins where it is spilled and bursts. New wine, like that represented by the faith and gospel of Jesus, requires a completely new wine skin of the new birth, sanctification, and the new body at the Resurrection.

Parables about the kingdom of Satan. (Mark 3:19-30)
Satan leads his followers like the religious scribes to accuse others, even Jesus, of being lead by Satan when their behavior is different. Jesus said that Satan can not cast Satan, so that if you can find a faith healer that actually cast out Satan then you have found a real one. Jesus established the principle of the immutability of kingdoms: a divided kingdom falls. Jesus applied to this to other institutions such as houses so that we can also apply it to other institutions such as churches and denominations. As they are divided, they fall! Jesus taught that if Satan would rise up against Himself, he would also fall—however, Satan is too smart to do that; and until the end, when Christ casts Him into the lake of fire and brimstone with all his angels and disciples. Jesus then emphasizes that it is not the words of blasphemy that determine eternal fate: it is the inward response to Jesus through the Holy Spirit that either brings forgiveness or eternal condemnation. Famous Parable of SNATCHING, STUMBLING, and the Falling Away, the Parable of the Seed and Sower. (Mark 4:3-25)

Well, I think you understand it by now! The seed sown by the wayside is where the Word of God and of faith is planted in the human heart, then Satan—who goes about the world for that very purpose and his fellow demons and disciples—immediately snatches it away; and the cure is don’t let him do that: you have freedom of choice, you must decide for yourself, and just one little cry for help to God in the most rudimentary of all prayers will prevent Satan from doing his dirty work. Something like, “Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief”, or “God, forgive my sin of unbelief.”

The stumbling comes from no root in the Bible and Christ, and comes from an insufficient response to persecutions and tribulations which must come when one stands up for the truth of Christ and the Bible. The cure for this is to recognize the inevitability of persecutions, to recognize that the majority will go the broad way that leads to destruction,
and the be aware that God chastizes His own like a Father those that are not bastard children.

The Falling Away can not come into your life as it will inevitably overwhelm the world and the churches, if you do not allow yourself to: (1) be motivated by your own desires, wants, or wishes than more by the Bible; and (2) if you do not developed an intolerance for sound doctrine. The warning should be to you if you tend to turn away listening from any sound of sound teachings of Christ and the Bible.

Parable of the Seed Growing of Itself. {Mark 4:26-29)
Do not count of what the world around consider as important as you will not see often and hear often of the seed of the kingdom as it grows. The kingdom of Christ will not be in the history books, or on television, and less and less even from the pulpits and church members as the Falling Away grows full. However Christ’s kingdom will continue to grow, unseen and unheard!

Parable of the Mustard Seed. (Mark 4:30-32)
Like the mustard seed is the smallest of all seeds, so the kingdom of Christ is so much smaller from the visibility standpoint of the world than was the Roman kingdom, or the nation of Israel, or the kingdom or nation of the United States. Each day and each year, for thousands of years, it has grown—the members of which are written in heaven on the only true church roll of the Assembly of the Firstborn—and those thousands and thousands will be assembly at the end of time in the New Jerusalem with the new heavens and the new earth.

Parable of the Leaven. (Mark 4:33,34)
On this occasion of Jesus’ teaching about the leaven, the only part that Mark records is about the subject of parables itself.

And with many such parables He spoke the word to them as they were able to hear it {spiritual hearing and growth are part of the living and time process, and unsound doctrine because it has not yet been grown into is to be distinguished from a mind-set of the Falling Away where there is actually an intolerance for sound doctrine as personal desires take over as the primary motivation}

And when they were alone, He explained all things to His disciples.” (Mark 4:33,34)
You will have to get alone with Jesus, during prayer, and even Bible reading, in order to have all these things explained to you; and I hope that you realize that the way Jesus works personally now is through the presence and work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus also taught them as recorded in John 14-16 after He taught the way to really see Jesus and be taught by Him.

(1). God and Jesus dwell in the human hearts today through the inward presence of the spirit of God and Christ, the Holy Spirit.

“If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.” (John 14: 15-17)

(2) This Helper, the inward Holy Spirit, teaches parables and other spiritual things, and even uses the memory of the teachings of Christ, to recall spiritual things.

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.” (John 14:26)

(3). When you sense conviction of sin, or of the need for righteousness like Jesus, or of eternal judgment about which the world seldom whispers, it is the inward work of the Holy Spirit; and when there is real revival, it is because the Holy Spirit is collectively at work in a special way.

“And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of
judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more {the main way of see God and righteousness if by looking at Jesus, today looking at Jesus in the words of the Bible}; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.” (John 16:8-10)
That this ruler of the world to be judged includes the President of the United States, the kings and governmental officials of all other countries is true; but primarily is the favorite title for Satan, the prince of the air or the ruler of the world. As he is judged in completeness and finality, all unbelievers will be judged in finality.

The Parable of the contrast between Stomach and Heart. (Mark 7:1-23)
Jesus tried to make it clear what was wrong with the religion of the Pharisees and scribes after their criticism of the disciples eating without a ritual of cleansing of hands. Here is the sequence of these verses—(a) The Pharisees and all the other Jews in that time, according to the traditions of the elders, wash their hands in a special way; (b) When they come from shopping, they will not eat without that ritual; and there are many other little rituals they hold to like the washing of cups, pitchers, vessels, and couches; (c) These religious leaders asked Jesus why His disciples did not also hold to the traditions of the elders {you see here was more effort to put the new wine in old wineskins, the unshrunk garment on the old garment}; (d) Jesus taught how this was foretold by the Prophet Isaiah as people who honor God with their little rituals and lips while their hearts are far away from God {Isaiah 29:13}; (e) And Isaiah warned of a vain worship that many could an would practice throughout time {more so, of course, during the Falling Away} while they were (f) teaching for doctrines the commandments of men {sound familiar as a characteristic of the Falling Away “when they will no longer endure sound doctrine} and with the substitution of “desires” is the commandments of men for justification; (g) Jesus said that such religious people and leaders lay aside the commandments of God, replacing them with the “traditions of men” {does that not sound like the heaping up process of teachers with itching ears, heaping out the commandments of God and heaping in the traditions of men—caution about accepting only what is traditional, or old, or what could come from traditions of men}; and (h) Jesus said that they reject the commandments of God in order to keep their traditions.

(1). Jesus gives a specific example of a tradition passed down that replaced the commandments of God to honor Father and Mother. They were so religious that what they would have given to parents, they gave to their religious establishment, with great fanfare I might add, so that only a note went to their parents saying, “The support for you was given to charity.”

(2). Jesus taught that it was true that nothing which comes into a man’s stomach can defile him spiritual: the things which come out of the heart is what defiles a man.

(3). Jesus explained later to the disciples that what comes out of man’s heart are: evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; and don’t those remind you of the bad behaviors of church members listed in II Timothy where there is a form of godliness {religion if you please} without the inward power. Could some of the bad church behavior come from the hearts of church members, not born again? These things defile church members, defile the churches, and defile the name of Christ. They promote a lack of loyalty to Christ, to what churches should stand for; and eventually this extends to the pastors that are run off {heaped away}.

The Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard. (Mark 10:17-31)
Once again Mark does not record the parable itself of the laborers and the vineyard, but rather derives from it some of the conclusions about the kingdom: (1) many that are first now in Christ’s kingdom, that take the first place and the upper status will be last, and the last first; (2) there are none who give up houses and relatives now for the sake of the Gospel who will not be compensated in this life and the life to come; (3) How hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God; and (4) When the disciples wondered who then could be saved if not the well-to-do moral majority, Jesus told the disciples that all things not possible to man are possible with God.

The Parable of the Withered Fig Tree. (Mark 11:20-24)
Now right up to the time of the end of Mark, you will see in the actions of Jesus and the parables and other teachings an emphasis on the Fig Tree as a very symbol of the nation of Israel itself. More importantly, it is also a representation of any where and in any nations or church where the seed of the Word has been sown without the tenfold, thirty-fold, and one hundred fold fruit. Why was Jesus so concerned for this particular fig tree. He was not. It was a parable of the ultimate rejection in three and a half years of the Jews of the nation of Israel, a rejection not to be reversed until the Fulness of the Gentiles is complete. This only assured the preservation of the United States as the world leader among the Gentiles in the spreading of the Gospel of Christ, but for which we now see more signs that this protective umbrella has been moved: indeed the time of the Fullness of the Gentiles may be nearing completion. We eagerly look for some revival among the Jewish people.

The Parable of the Wicked Winedressers. (Mark 12:1-12)
We must remember that at this point Jesus has not yet been killed; however Israel as representing “God’s people on earth” had killed many of the Old Testament Prophets when they faithfully spoke the Word from God. So Jesus in this parable speaks of the wicked windressers who would not allow the owner to make His profits from the fruit. They killed servants sent by Him and they killed His own Son. What will the Father do after the crucifixion of Christ? He will wait a few years and then He will cut off that nation of winedressers from even the ability to see and hear spiritual truth.

““The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.” (Jesus quotes from Psalm 118:22,23)
You see, more of the withered fig tree. The Jews are rejected in a few years as the Gospel is preached increasingly to the Gentiles. The building becomes the new spiritual temple of the kingdom or the church, the building not made with heavens, eternal and in the heavens.

Another Parable of the Fig Tree. (Mark 13:28-31)
Again the fig tree: you know that when you see the leaves come on the fig tree that summer is near; even so Jesus having listed all the signs of the end time, refers to these as the leaves which foretell the imminent spring of God. And you will come a lot closer to understand how all these signs of the end time started happening in the lifetime of Jesus disciples, although they grew in magnitude later: (1) the beginning of sorrows of deceitful preachers, wars and rumors of wars, earthquakes, famines; (2) the persecutions for Jesus sake, the preaching of the Gospel to every nation, the abomination of desolation with the destruction of the temple and the daily sacrifice of Daniel along with all of Jerusalem as the sorrows continue and grow; and (3) tribulation more than the world has ever seen—the great tribulation as contrasted to the very end time last tribulation caused more by natural things as fire and the dis-integration of the universe.

Parable of the Porter. (Mark 13:32-37)
Jesus said it is like a man going on a trip, leaving his house into the care of servants and the doorkeeper, demaning to “watch” since the exact hour of return would not be known. The angels do not know that Day of the Lord, only God the Father knows.
31. SOME MORE UNDERSTANDING OF THE SOUNDS OF THE MIRACLES OF JESUS

In this message we continue to add to the “kingdom” teachings of Jesus and Mark, the miracles of Jesus. You are probably amazed at how many of the 35 recorded miracles of Jesus are listed in the little 16 chapter book of Mark. One would almost think that in the testimonies of Peter and James which Paul left for John Mark to write the Gospel of Mark and for Dr. Luke to write the Gospel of Luke, they were listed by the miracles of Jesus. Certainly in the minds of the Apostles Peter and James, although they themselves never wrote a biography of Jesus, when they taught and preached the miracles must have stuck in their minds far more than any other aspect of the ministry of Jesus besides the resurrection, also a miracle performed on Jesus by God, and the Ascension of Jesus back to the right hand of God the Father. We know that the miracles were the basis that the Apostle John used to write the Gospel of John; however John carefully chose only 7 of those miracles and wove the biography of Jesus around them. Of course, the young John Mark would have some of his own memories of these miracles, and the stir it caused in the small country of Palestine. You have previously seen how that step by step this performance of miracles, as the work of God and only possible by God, was what led the disciples like Peter, James, John, and consequently also John Mark to come to accept Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God, also as the Promised Messiah of the Old Testament who would save His people from their sins.

We still do not fully appreciate the full implications of who this Jesus of Nazareth is and was: how the very Word Himself of Creation could humble Himself to be born of the virgin Mary, by the power of God—just imagine He the Word who when the Father said let their be light, and stars, and dry land, etc was the mediating cause to make it so. No wonder He could walk on water which He and God the Father made; still the wind which He and God the Father created; and patch up the broken bodies that He and the Father made as the crown of creation.

It is at this point in Mark, chapter 9, that less of the 35 miracles are recorded by John Mark and more of them by Dr. Luke. It would be interesting to know which outline, or the personal experience of John Mark or even the leadership of the Holy Spirit, was determinative in this little bit of history, the outline from (1) Peter, (2) James, (3) the Old Testament quotes from Paul, (4) John Mark’s own personal outline from being part of the history of Jesus on earth, (5) or even an agreement between John Mark and Dr. Luke with the collaboration of the Apostle John as Dr. Luke and John Mark survived and researched and wrote at the home of John and Mary in Ephesus. It would be quieter, of course, while John was in exile on the isle of Patmos. And here we see another check and source of the writings of the three Gospels of Mark, Luke, and John—that of Mary’s testimony—and of course, the tax collector and Apostle Matthew with so many quotes and miracles from Jesus would have written by now His account of the life of Jesus so that became part of the research.

Dr. Luke was in a way speaking for all of them when he began the Gospel of Luke with the following words.

“Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled {you see right here how the narrative of Dr. Luke as well as the other biographers of the narrative on earth of the life of Jesus was based on the fulfillment of Old Testament Scriptures}...just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us {obviously Matthew,
and Peter and James through the recorded testimonies by Paul, and John where Luke and John Mark wrote)... it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first {Dr. Luke had some personal experience and even more personal understanding}... to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus. {this narrative from Luke had a very simple beginning as a testimony from Dr. Luke to a ruler—of course, a possible sponsor and publisher, but even as Paul had much greater things in mind for Luke and Mark as part of the New Testament Canon when he left the manuscripts and parchments for John Mark and Luke, so also did God Himself, the Great Maker of History, have in mind a complete book of 66 books that would authoritative, as from God which it is, to be an immutable standard for the Gospel and all truth from God as the Fulness of the Gentiles was carried out, and the salvation of approximately 100,000 Jews before the three and one half years was complete, with the salvation of no more Jews, after Jesus triumphant entry. {This was part of the message given to Daniel of the history from Daniel’s time to the end that made him so sick as he learned the fate of most of his own people.}

Six of the miracles as far as recording are skipped in Mark while Luke and John record them, and then in the tenth chapter of Mark, both Matthew, Luke, and Mark record the healing miracle of Jesus on blind Bartimaeus and his companion. {It pays to keep good company, especially when that companion is about to be healed by Jesus Himself!}

We must list some of the miracle of Jesus’ own resurrection, especially the appearances of the Risen Jesus that Mark records.

The appearance of the Risen Jesus to Mary Magdalene, Mark 16:9-11, though whom He gives an oral message to the disciples. The appearance of the Risen Jesus to two disciples, Cleopas included, on the road to Emmaus, Mark 16:12,13.

The appearance of Jesus to all of the first disciples {the eleven remaining} except for Thomas as they ate supper in a locked room, Mark 16:14 {NOTE: Once again you notice the condensed, action filled nature of the Gospel of Mark as, contrasted to the other records, it takes only 6 verses in Mark 16 to mention these three appearances. “Is there no end to these appearances and the testimonies that would come from them of disciples,” the Jewish leaders who had Christ crucified must have thought. They needed to counter this faith in the Resurrected Christ, so they invented {would religious leaders really do this in order to protect truth as they saw it and their own positions} a story when they heard the testimony of the Roman Centurion as to what really happened at the tomb as he saw it, the tale would be that some disciples came to steal His body.} Jesus had appointed a place and time of meeting with His disciples before His crucifixion. Jesus always planned ahead as He did at the beginning of His ministry when He had the ship ready on the shore of the Sea of Galilee as an escape from the pressing crowds}, and we are told only that it was a mountain in Galilee where over 500 disciples witness the Risen Christ, Mark 16:15-18. {It is only the Apostle Paul who records the appearance of Jesus to the Apostle James, in I Corinthians 15:76, before He appeared to the 11 with Thomas present: James, as the future leader in Jerusalem and pastor of the first local assembly, would have given this info to the Apostle Paul in His testimony, also Paul would have heard something himself from the Ascended Christ in Saudi Arabia.}

Mark 16:19,20 records the last resurrection appearance of Christ at Mount Olivet, between Jerusalem and Bathany, with the witness of the 11 remaining disciples that He led to that pinnacle as a launching pad for His Ascension back to heaven and to the right hand of God the Father, where He ever lives to make intercession for our sins and is preparing to come back
a Second time to get us.  {And by the way, this is the last two verses of the Gospel of Mark.}

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<td>Entrance into the kingdom of God is the only other alternative to hell, so horrible that the worm never dies and the fire is not quenched, and that there should be so much priority for every word from God as the loss of physical vision.  {NOTE: this is not a recommendation for the loss of an eye, it is a sacrifice of pleasure, security, and comfort that lands a place in the eternal kingdom of Christ rather than in hell.}</td>
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<td>M a r k 10:14</td>
<td>Jesus Himself</td>
<td>The kingdom of God is a kingdom of little children under God the Father. “Our Father” is essential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M a r k 10:15</td>
<td>Herod the Great</td>
<td>The kingdom of God must be received in faith and sincerity like a little child receives truth in humility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M a r k 10:23</td>
<td>Jesus Himself</td>
<td>It is hard for a rich man, a wise man, or any man of status and achievement to enter the kingdom of God, a concept we still do not learn in our respect of persons concepts and ways, and even our world-like motivations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>M a r k 10:24,25</td>
<td>Jesus Himself</td>
<td>It is so hard for a man of many possessions to enter the kingdom of God that Jesus compares it to a camel passing through the eye of the needle. You might ask why: because cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things choke out the Word of Faith. Rich men are not eliminated from Faith, the fact is that like camels passing through the eye of the needle, there will be very, very few.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:46 - 52</td>
<td>Jesus on the way out of Jericho, heard blind Bartimaeus addressing Jesus as the son of David, crying out for mercy; and when Jesus could not quite the man quiet, He sought the disciples to bring him: then Jesus told the two blind men that their faith had made them whole.</td>
<td>Is it possible that it is the faith of the attendees at miracles healing conferences that heals them more than any special powers that come from men like Bennie Hin? And is it not also possible that God like before Jesus came is till healing secretly from His secret place. You can see here how more selective Mark and Luke were to tell only of Bartimaeus while only Matthew tells that there were two blind men.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M a r k 11:10</td>
<td>The Crowd at the Triumphant Entry of Christ into Jerusalem</td>
<td>Seeing Jesus coming humbly on a donkey, the people still sought in Him a kingdom like that of David where they prospered greatly and ruled the known world. Carroll sees this as the beginning of the 3 ½ years of Daniel where Jews no longer entered the kingdom, approximately 100,000 of them being saved in that period and then no more until the Fulness of the Gentiles is complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:12 - 18</td>
<td>Jesus being hungry and finding no fruit on the Fig Tree curses the tree.</td>
<td>This at first may seem almost beneath Jesus; but the choice by Jesus at this particular time corresponds with the last 3 and one-half years that the Jews have for salvation until the Fulness of the Gentiles if complete.</td>
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<tr>
<td>M a r k 12:34</td>
<td>Jesus Himself</td>
<td>A person who hears and heeds religious teachings can be so close to the kingdom of God, yet miss it because of their cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, and other things like the rich young ruler who sought to keep the commandments, but went away from Jesus sorrowful not willing to make the choice of God over mammon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M a r k 13:8</td>
<td>Jesus Himself in the great teachings on eschatology of Mark 13 and Matthew 24</td>
<td>Jesus, realistically, uses kingdom and nation in the manner we most often think of countries; but against each other as the signs that will continue to happen from the time of Jesus to the end. The beginning of the sorrows continues through all the phases of biblical history of eschatology and revelation right up to the end. Carroll teaches that each nation has an angel, some good and some bad but all under the power of God, who seek contrary gospels like Michael for Israel and the angels of the Persians another goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M a r k 14:25</td>
<td>Jesus Himself</td>
<td>Here the kingdom of God is the completed kingdom of God, when the kingdoms of this world become synonymous with the kingdom of heaven, and Christ has the Lord's Supper with His original disciples again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:43 - 52</td>
<td>In the Garden before the arrest and subsequent crucifixion of Jesus, Simon Peter cut off with a sword the right ear of Malchus, a servant of the high priest; and Jesus while remanding the disciples, touched his ear and healed him.</td>
<td>Jesus did not want a kingdom that would be won by war and the sword, like the kingdom of David that his own people wanted; and He reminded the disciples now He could call 12 legions of angels from the Father for rescue, of course one or one legion would be sufficient; and certainly 12 would be enough for a revoluation and the re-establishment of a physical kingdom like that of David.</td>
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Joseph of Arimathea was one of the few who entered through the eye of the needle into the kingdom of God, although a member of the most hypocritical Sanhedrin of Jesus time.

16:2-8 About sunrise Sunday morning, Mary and the other women find the empty tomb with the young man angel seated there to tell them that Jesus has risen. The young angel had instructions from Jesus to pass to the 10 Apostles and Peter, to remind them of the appointment on a mountain in Galilee.

16:9-11 Yet at this point the other disciples did not believe: it was an awesome miracle for One who was crucified and dead as they had witnessed to be three days later walking around and well. Not recognizing the resurrection appearance of Jesus, the two disciples in response to the question from Jesus rehearsed their own short biography about the life and death of Jesus as they saw it.

16:14 Jesus appeared after death to Cleopas and another disciple on the road to Emmaus. Jesus chastized them for not believing the testimony of those who had already witnessed His resurrection, saying it was caused by harness of heart and unbelief. You see, like this, they still just did not know what Jesus was capable of doing as the Son of God and Lord of the Universe.

16:15-18 You would think that no one records the name of which Mount to prevent it becoming a shrine, since Jesus desired more a looking for His second coming than a looking for the mount.

Mark 15:43 Jesus Ascension back to heaven as witnessed by many disciples was certainly His last miracle as only the Son of God could defy the gravity He created by flying back to heaven.

32. “We Are Safe”

One message that you must gain from Daniel even if you do not understand much of the Book is that God has little regard for the temporal nature of any kingdom or nation as compared to the only permanent kingdom of His Son. Sinclair Ferguson and Lloyd Ogilvie in THE COMMUNICATOR’S COMMENTARY on Daniel express it this way.

“The heavenly messenger had already advised Daniel that the Persian Empire {the nation that conquered Babylon where Daniel was first taken Captive and had been since capture in Jerusalem along with the remaining Jewish nation} would be followed by that of Greece. The ‘mighty king...who shall rule with great dominion’ (Daniel 11:3) is clearly a reference to the ‘goat’ of chapter 8. That Alexander the Great should be described in these animal terms may seem strange enough to the secular historian; that his life should be summarized here in a few words may seem to defy explanation. This prophecy, however, has it center in God’s reign and its ultimate focus on God’s people. {God’s reign, of course is through the kingdom of Christ established at Ascension of Christ, growing, but not to be completed until the Second Coming of Christ, and then on earth the will of God will be done as completely as in heaven as the two locations are melded into one with the New Jerusalem on earth and the new earth and new heavens, and with Christ overrule and obliterating all other governments of kingdoms and nations on earth, turning the reigns over to God the Father in order that God the Father may receive all the glory} In the light of that, the great empires and emperors of history are as a drop in the bucket to God (Isaiah 40:15). Even one who ‘shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will’ (11:3) is dependent upon God for the ability to exercise that will.”
You see when Christ comes again there will be no United States anymore; there will be no kingdom of Israel except in the sense of the new Israel of all born again believers of all ages. There will be no nation of Iraq, no nation of Iran, and China, and no union of European countries which I suppose could be called a kingdom. What was ordained to happen as Jesus established His own kingdom on this earth will indeed happen in fact at the Second Coming.

“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father.”

Here is the final sequence as heaven and earth are united under the kingdom of Christ.

“Then comes the end {after His second coming}, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. For ‘He has put all things under His feet’ (Psalm 8:6). But when He says ‘all things are put under Him,’ it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. Now when all things are made subject to Him, the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God {the Father} may be all in all.” (I Corinthians 15:24-28)

1. The end of this universe as we now know it happens synonymous with the Second Coming of Christ.

At this time Christ delivers the “kingdom” to God the Father after He establishes complete rule on earth just like in heaven. No doubt some of this will come through war, some through destruction of the earth by fire, and some will happen as just a wave from Christ as in the case of the man of sin who is immediately vanquished.

At the Second Coming all things are made subject to the complete Lordship of Jesus Christ—all rulers and Presidents, all kings and kingdoms and nations, and all governments or organizations of all kind. The SBC convention will be wiped out as an administration among men, and Civil Service organizations, and the Presbyterian “Church”, and on and on with any man-made organization that you can think of.

**The American Democratic Faith**

You see then that something we know consider so important as our heritage and our national faith, the American Democratic Faith, will be wiped away with all other kingdoms and movements like pragmatism, communism, socialism, Muslimism, Buddhism, and so on. Granted that there will be some elements of the faith of Jesus and of the Bible in the American Democratic Faith, however very small, and these will be overwhelmed at the body of Christ and the kingdom of Christ, which are permanent-written-in-heaven establishments.

1. The power of the majority of the United States government and all its States’ governments will be elimination at the Second Coming. The principle of teaching Jesus established on earth as the majority go the way of destruction and the minority the narrow way to life eternal will become a dominant principle of the fulfilled Kingdom of Christ on earth and in heaven. In the fulfilled kingdom of Christ at the Second Coming there will be no “tolerance” for other beliefs, religions, Bible, and movements like the toleration of the American Democratic Faith. It has been a marvelous government, without parallel on the earth and no doubt blessed by God in His permissive if not His directive will, but it has gone far beyond the principles of the kingdom, the characteristics of kingdom members if you would, that demand Christ as the only way of salvation, God the Father of the Bible and of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the same God who made it all...the American
Democratic faith in tolerance has increasing ignored the single Bible God ordained as contained every word which He spoke; and most of all, with the increase in tolerance of the American Democratic Faith, and increase in sin and lawlessness in the world of which the United States has not been immune, has come a corresponding lack of tolerance toward the sound doctrine of the Word and words of God. Along with tolerance of almost any belief—where we have come to stand for nothing and fall for anything—has come an intolerance toward sound doctrine. This world-wide movement of the American Democratic Faith as part of the Falling Away is still most adequately described by “the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but out of their own desires {many of those desires are expressions of the American Democratic Faith} shall they heap up to themselves teachers and preachers with itching ears {notice how many of these heaped up and popular, even dominating teachers wave the American flag}, turn away from the truth and turn into fables.” Lest you think it can not happen, you look carefully how the Mormons with their four Bibles competing with the Bible from God have established DOCTRINES and COVENANTS very counter what Jesus set up for His kingdom, and how the Roman Catholics years ago fulfilled the prophesy from Paul as “the Spirit speaks expressly in the latter times how some will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; commanding to abstain from meats which are wholesome and forbidding to marry...” {And I feel sorry for you if toleration and unwholesome respect for the majority has so clouded your mind and heart that you can not see the connection to the long ago established practice of Roman Catholicism to abolish meat, except fish on Friday, and to forbid the priests to marry, this also being a cause of much of the degradation of sin and lawlessness among this catholic denomination. If they were do that, what else are they capable of?}

When Christ comes with the establishment of His full kingdom, the peace of the world will be replaced with the peace of Christ which only provides real peace between God and man and between men and men. “Peace on earth and good will toward men” planned and intended with the birth of Christ will come into full fruition. When Christ establishes His kingdom war and competition, so much a part of the American Democratic Faith, will be replaced with real peace.

“WE ARE SAFE”, the Temple Message of Jeremiah

Although a little shattered at 9-11 and causing additional thoughts after Katrina and other hurricanes, and earthquakes, and fires which are legally recognized as “acts of God” though the messages of the Old Testament Prophets on the same subject are not admitted or clearly understood, it is still that the people of the United States like the people of Jerusalem and during worship in the Temple are saying to themselves and each other, “We Are Safe”.

Well, even if you survive the Falling Away and the physical tribulations of the before the Second Coming of “fire, and wind, and vapor of smoke”, you will not survive the burning up of the whole earth along with the heavens by fire. Your business, your governments, your movements and institutions will not survive as Jesus sets up the complete reign of His kingdom. It is only a matter of time. You might say, “Well, we are a good kingdom and they are bad kingdoms”. It does not matter has all kingdoms and nations will come under the rule of Christ.

The Prophet Jeremiah told the people of God of his day, and the same message echos through the pages of the Bible to us and our country today, that they were like a den of thieves, and Jesus quoted that to echo the emphasis. Yet we still fail to appreciate that the main point is that the people of Jerusalem and the Temple—supposedly God’s people though already victims of a Falling Away for the most part—these people were living any way that they wanted to during the week, so of like thieves who go through the country robbing, killing, and murdering and then go to a hideout called “a den”; from which they will again after some time of secure feelings go out to do more. You see that is what God’s people were doing during the time of Jeremiah. God
saw it and gave Jeremiah the message to preach to these people directly from Him—how God had sent their worship of other gods which are not gods, how they had mistreated the people in the land, and so on. Well, let’s read it directly from Jeremiah 7.

“The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh: ‘Stand in the gate of Yahweh’s house and proclaim there this word. Say {God directly tells Jeremiah to say this, giving him the words, and do you think these word any less apply to us and our churche-temples and our nations today}...Say, Hear the word of Jahweh, all you of Judah {Judah was all that was left of the nation since Israel to the north had already been taken into Captivity}...who come through these gates to worship Yahweh! {you are about to get God’s own perspective of their weekly worship} This is what Yahwek of Hosts, the God of Israel, has said: Reform your way of life and your actions and I will allow you to remain in this place. Do not put your trust in the words of the Lie and keeping saying, ‘This is Yahweh’s temple, Yahweh’s temple, Yahweh’s temple! {Does that no sound like people today in large and small churches saying, ‘This is the house of God’, and the ministers saying, ‘these are the people of God!’}

Only if you truly reform your way of life and your actions, if you really act justly with one another, do not oppress the resident alien, the orphan, and the widow, shed no innocent blood in this place, and do not run after other gods to your own ruin, then I will let you remain in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers of old for all time. But look, you are putting your trust in the words of The Lie to no good purpose. Can you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn sacrifices to Baal, run after other gods which you have not known, and then come and stand before me in this house which bears my name and say ‘We are safe!—just so that you may continue doing all these abominable things? Has this house which bears my name become a robbers’ cave in your eyes....” (Jeremiah 7:1-15)

America, in your vast land of the free and home of the brave, and in your many churches through the land, YOU ARE NOT SAFE. You are not safe from the world wide movement of the terrorism of Muslims, you are not safe from hurricanes like Katrina, you are not safe from earthquakes, you are not safe from drought and winds and fires—you are not even safe from Tsunamis and temperature and climate changes caused by the disappearing Ozone layer, and you are not safe from “fire and wind and vapor of smoke”, the world-wide signs in the heavens above and the earth beneath during the Falling Away and just before the end at the Second Coming. Some of these signs and workings of God, according to the Old Testament Prophets, Jesus, and the Apostles are on automatic control, others are direct interventions by God through angels to get the attention of the world. Indeed that is is what signs are: they point to something besides themselves. They point to heaven and a watching for the end with the return of Jesus.
LEVEL 2:  GROWING IN CHRIST.

1. “But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus...”  (Ephesians 4:20,21)

2. “that we should no longer be children, tossed to and from and carried abut with eery wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--Christ...”  (Ephesians 4:14,15)

3. “Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.”  (Mark 4:20)
The nations of the whole world stand before Jesus at the End of the Age, and what does Jesus use as a basis to separate the sheep from the goats, a cup of water. It is certainly scary enough to think that our eternal welfare can depend on a single act of kindness like a drink of water, or a free meal, or visitation of the sick and needy; and that it is our treatment of the “least” in the kingdom of God that is most important; but beyond the significance of our eternal welfare in hell or heaven, is the respect and treatment of kingdom members, Christ’s brethren, that He demands of us. You will find in this study of “A Condensed Version of Mark with Comments” that Jesus fervently sought out the least in the kingdom in order to do them acts of kindness. Certainly among the least were the fisherman He chose to be His Apostles, a tax collector like Matthew had little respect in the kingdom, then there were the Gentiles where He healed their children, and the woman of Samaria at Jacob’s well that He engaged in a conversation about the welfare of her soul. It was the little children, of whom He said “don’t stand in their way of getting to Him”, and who He made examples of the simple faith necessary for kingdom membership; it was the blind man along the road, the leper that was shunned by society, and we can go on and on; and we will go on and on in the chapters to follow from Mark, always using Mark as only a condensed guide to the rest of the Bible, taking from the whole counsel of God in the Book, what will help in the understanding of the Giant Parable called the Bible.

And we are also surprised that it takes so little to get into the kingdom of heaven—a cup of water, a meal, or a single visit or act of kindness for the less important person in the kingdom. Surprised that the great wisdom of the universe could find nothing more as a criterion for final judgment, and separation of the goats from the sheep, as simply a cup of water. Like Naaham, the leper, we would look for some famous body of water to cleanse in instead of the muddy waters of the Jordan. But there we are: It is from Jesus Himself, and we dare not neglect what He is teaching us!

Although the parable of the tares has been alive and well since Jesus taught it over two thousand years ago, there are implications of it for today that are not comprehended. For example, the tares in the kingdom and churches have leaders, and those Bible teaching and preaching leaders are to be treated with the same distant respect as the tares themselves. When the Apostle John tried to stop some disciples from work for Christ, those who had been disciples of John the Baptist, the bottom line of what Jesus told them was, “let them alone”. Increasingly we are seeing more and more heaping up of weird and unusual Bible teachers and preachers, which we do not wish to label as false prophets and teachers; and in an effort to treat them with the toleration demanded in an American Democratic Society, we have hit on the “itching ear” label of II Timothy 4 in order to explain what is happening in this time of the Falling Away.

The distant respect of “Leave them alone” might be considered in the same category of the “forget about them” that I heard from one southwest seminary professor in reference to the fundamentalists like James Robinson. {I will explain later the differences between a fundamentalists and conservatives on the Bible; however, may it suffice for the moment to say that they are not the same.} This was approximately 20 years ago at the climax of the period in which the Bible church fundamentalists took control of the Southern Baptist Convention led by men like Adrian Rogers, Charles Stanley, W.A. Criswell, and from a distance, Jerry Falwell. It was a majority movement, very similar to the moral majority,
where certain community traditions took precedence over real Bible. It must remind one of how the religious leaders of scribes, Pharisees, and Saducees of Jesus’ day were labeled as “teaching for doctrines the commandments of men”. In the nature of church and denominational history it had to happen, but the shock of seeing it happen in the once most conservative and evangelistic denomination up to that point in history, made us seek explanations of the fundamentalists takeover in other terms. {See some of the books written in the last 20 years with multiple attempts to explain what happened.}

However, I would maintain that the distant respect of “leave them alone” for these fundamentalists and other leaders of the tares is more like the “don’t associate with them” of II Timothy 3, the roll call of bad church behaviour, or the “do not keep company with such who are believers” of I Corinthians. I hope you recall, or will check, these two Bible references on “non-associate” and “non-companionship” in II Timothy 3:1-9 and I Corinthians 5:9-11.

“I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone name a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.” (I Corinthians 5:9-11)

A few explanations about these Bible verses which may or may not be obvious: (1) the policy of Paul and John, which by the way they got from Jesus and the Holy Spirit can be generalized as “in the world, but not of the world”. Paul said when I said “not to keep company” with certain people, I meant not to keep company with certain believers who are churchmembers. There had been so misunderstanding of what Paul wrote in a previous letter: some people thought Paul meant not to keep company with the people of the world who were sexually immoral as a habit of life, or who were covetous, extortioners, or idolaters. No, Paul is writing now: if were to not keep company with such people in the world, you would have to get out of the world. So you see a summary is “in the world, but not of the world”. {What the Apostle John means in the “not of the world” of I John will be discussed in a later chapter, or perhaps you can read of it in SOME MORE SOUNDS…..Snatching, Stumbling, and the Falling Away.} (2) Here is the bottom line according to the Spirit through Paul, if you know any believer or church member who practices as a habit of life these bad behaviours, which by the way is much like the bad behaviour characteristics of church members of II Timothy 3, then you are not to even eat out with them or eat in their homes and have them over to eat in your home. (3). Stop right here, I am not calling these fundamentalists, or even the heaped up itching ear weirdos on television, things like “sexual immorals”, or “drunkards”; but in the getting around the toleration of the tares in favor of a A CUP OF WATER for the least brethren in the kingdom, we will find that they do fall into the category of “covetous” for money, disciples, and status—much like the bad church member characteristic of “lovers of money” and “lovers of self”, also the “extortioners” as they do seek and get extorted money under the disguise of more noble ends, and later in this book we will even make a case for idolatry for them.

The sad reality, according to Jesus in the parable of the tares and the wheat is that Satan has put the tares into that part of the kingdom called the local church, even beyond that to the church and denominations; and Satan has done that in order to cause offences against the least in the kingdom. We must persevere against this most deterrimental of all influencec in order to get past these that take the first places in the kingdom in order to serve the least in the kingdom with at least a cup of water.

You see in itching ears Bible teachers what we are addressing is the kind of bible
preachers who talk a great deal about Christ, God, and the Bible. You do not wish to call false prophets and teachers anyone you hear talking a lot about God, Christ, and the Bible. And those are the people that Jesus told John to “leave alone”. Jesus elaborated, “For no one can speak lightly of me that is active as one of my disciples.” You see, it is not those who speak against Christ that is the subject of a cup of water versus toleration of the tares, it is those who are constrained to guard carefully their words about Christ because in order to create the very impression that they know they are creating.

Conservative, Not Fundamentalist

Fundamentalists will not admit that it is possible to be conservative on the Bible without being a fundamentalists. Like so many people in the world who operate more on appearance than reality, they claim to be the only conservatives; yet with their “pick and chose” Bible interpretation method, they are only conservative on what they “pick”, quite liberal in what they chose to ignore, especially on the current realities of the Falling Away. Since it is difficult to simultaneously claim to have all the answers, as the fundamentalists do, they ignore the parts of the Bible that teach that the Falling Away must happen before the Second Coming. Listen, do you not hear them on the Second Coming, and you do not hear them on the Falling Away. This silence on the Falling Away is within itself proof of the Falling Away. If you think about it for a while, you will realize that one of the most outstanding characteristics of the Falling Away, besides as sin abounds the love of many waxes cold from Jesus, is the intolerance toward sound doctrine. There is no more intolerance of sound doctrine than to leave it out completely as if it were not part of the Bible itself. You see, what they do is to pick what is convenient for them to preach, and ignore what does not serve their purpose. A case could be made that this kind of pick and chose method of interpretation is worse than liberalism.

Here I should remind fundamentalists that “all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable”; and to ignore part of is to cheat church members and to overlook “every Word that comes out of the mouth of God.” The time has already “come when they {the “they” in II Timothy 4 is obviously church members and other believers, but in the “tares” category} will not endure sound doctrine”, yet any Bible teacher can not ignore certain sound doctrines because they are not profitable to him or her personally or not profitable to the organization that he or she represents. YOU JUST CAN NOT IGNORE ANY PART OF THE SOUND DOCTRINES OF SCRIPTURES. {By the way the soundest doctrine of all is the kind of respect for all persons that must include the least in the kingdom, and the sound doctrine of giving them a drink of water. What is truly being said by the example of the life of Jesus, and the teachings of Jesus, is that our treatment and graciousness toward the least brethren in the kingdom really is the evidence of our right to be among the sheep at the Final Gathering.}

Even the “proof text” method of Bible interpretation and teaching that they often practice is fraught with the “pick and chose” method when a verse or passage is not considered in the total context of the text. This is the age old principle of hermeneutics called “exegesis” versus “isogesis”: exegesis is to read the meaning out of the Bible, while isogesis is to come to the passage with some pre-conceived meaning or motivation to read meaning into it. A case in point is the pastor of a large fundamentalist church and seminary in Memphis, Tennessee who wanted to preach an applicable message on the first Sunday of the year 2000, and he wanted that message to have some sense of urgency about end time. So in his passage from one of the Gospels was the simple sentence that “after six
days Jesus and the disciples went” some certain place. Yes, you got it this fundamentalists spun and spiritualized the six days to be the equivalent of the last days on this earth. There was no need for this: there is Matthew 24 on eschatology, the book of Revelation, the teachings of Peter on the earth will melt with fervent heat, and Paul’s book of II Thessalonians with the end time teachings that include the Falling Away, revelation of the man of sin, and the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from the earth, with the clarity that these things must happen before Christ comes again. Is he worse than a liberal? I think so, because he is preaching and teaching something under the guise of from the scripture, it is not in that passage at all.

Can a person talk about Christ, God, and the Bible, be in the church or be a church leader, and still not be “wheat”? Yes, that is the gist of the Parable of Tares that was told by Jesus. You see we have isolated our concepts of church membership from the realities of the Bible, The Bible, time and again, faces up to the reality that many can be in the churches, denominations, or even claim kingdom membership, who have not learned Christ. Paul looked at the Gentiles in Ephesus and the church members at the Ephesus church: then he noted that he did not see any differences. The behavior of the church members was the same as other Gentiles in Ephesus. Paul wrote in Ephesians, “This is not the way you learned Christ, if indeed you heard Him and were taught of Him.”

Wow, did you miss that in reading the book of Ephesians. I am sure that you did not hear it from your fundamentalists preacher; for in this time of the Falling Away, the preachers that survive in their positions do so primarily by: (1) convincing their congregation or audience that they are the elect of God; (2) that by joining in with them you are engaged in the real work of God; and (3) that they have “THE SOLUTION”, and that if you join them, with or without the new birth, you are part of the solution. Later in the book we will deal with what it means “to hear Jesus” and “be taught by Him”. Let me say now, however, that it is the opposite of the famous instantaneous new birth {or born again} concept of the fundamentalists. It is amazing how these evangelists can take the analogy of Jesus between physical and spiritual birth with the obvious statement “you must be born again”; then fail to realize that the new birth may take the same 9 months or longer as does physical birth. Does that make sense to you? That is it takes at least 9 months to be physical born, or in that ball park for a normal birth, then it must take some period of time for the spiritual birth, eliminating many who claim to experience an instantaneous new birth. {You see another case of pick and choice from the fundamentalists.} In the parable of the seed and the farmer that was told by Jesus, the individuals who were compared to the seed sown among thorns instantly received it with joy, but later as time passed the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things choked it out. Now, you know in most churches during revival and in any assembly if a person were noted to instantly received the Word of God with joy, that person would be labeled as “saved” without waiting to see if the 9 month new birth would be completed. There actually are some very large churches who would assist the new convert with their examples and messages to accept the “things” of the cares of this world to the extent that their messages actually serve to choke out the Word. This in the old fashion jargon was called “putting a live bitty under a dead hen”. What has changed now is that while the “dead hen” generally in the past was considered to be some lithurgic church members, now in this time of the Falling Away it is the Bible teachers and preachers that are the dead hens. And they are very good at it. They talk about Christ, God, and the Bible so how can they be a bad example. Remember it is what is not said that is as important as what is said; and it is the thrust of the message more than key words. Does their influence exert itself in the direction of the cares of this world for personal gain and prosperity, for the deceitfulness of riches, or other things?

The American Democratic Faith
At first I thought it strange that an authority on the history of American Thought would call his book THE MAIN DOCTRINES OF THE AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC FAITH. However though the years as I have pondered what Bible teachers and believers substitute for the faith of the Bible and of Jesus, it has dawned on me that the substitute is an American Democratic Faith. I use to gainsay what former prime minister of Israel said about Americans and Jews. What he said was that “we in Israel are born Jews just like you Americans are born Christians.” At first it sounded ridiculous, but that the two kinds of faith have been mixed should be obvious. I think there are some overlaps because it is obvious that during this time of the Fulness of the Gentiles, the period during which the Jews are blind to the Gospel, the United States has been the undisputed leader in the spread of the Gospel to every nation. This is another way of saying that God has indeed used the United States to help in the spread of the Gospel to every nation. Some of us also reluctantly accept the observation by a foreign student of the US who said “to be an American is more a religion and a character than a set of beliefs or a matter of citizenship.” More often you will hear from mister average citizen what I heard as a young pastor visiting with a man up the valley in Arkansas when I asked him if he was a believer. “Yes”, the indignant reply was, “I was born in this country!” And, “Did you think I am a heathen?”

Quickly I would mention five obvious differences between the American Democratic Faith and the Faith of the Bible and Jesus. (1) The majority is king in the American Democratic Faith while it is the minority in the Bible that goes the narrow way that leads to life eternal. You will note that the schools as the chief custodians of American culture, government, and society do most of their work in terms of the priority for the majority. Always, in the Old Testament, and in any movement or country in history, there has been a “remnant” of real believers, definitely a minority type word and concept. Quite often in the Old Testament, God preferred a dedicated minority to a majority. Jesus taught the parable of the broad and narrow way, clarifying that the many that go the broad way to destruction are the majority and the few that go the narrow way that leads to eternal life are the minority. One might contend that the United States is completely different from the world in which Jesus taught in that now in our country and in our time, the majority of US citizens go the narrow and right way and the minority of US citizens go the broad and wrong way. Perhaps, if it were ever true of this country, in this time in which our country has also become part of the world wide Falling Away movement, it is no longer true. As far as real faith in God, Christ, and the Bible there is little difference between citizens of America and citizens of any other nation, and you can make a much better case for that conclusion.

We might put it this way for simplicity and agreement: While the emphasis in America is on the priority for the majority, the emphasis in the Bible is on priority for the minority.

What difference does it make? Well, without this Bible concept of priority of the minority, you will be more influenced by the world. Satan, the prince of this world, runs this world whether it is in the United States or elsewhere, and consequently he uses the majority of this world in order to deter and destroy faith in Jesus and the Bible. {By the way if you claimed that the majority in American go the narrow way that leads to life, then maybe you would be inclined to think that Satan only works in other countries. You could have the simplistic concept that all evil is in Korea, Iraqi, and I forget what the other country is.} What difference does it make? Well, without this Biblical majority-minority concept for now and in this country, you will have trouble accepting the Scripture, “all
that will godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution”, and this is not limited by any means to physical persecution. The politically correct in churches, government, and society can separate you as a member of that Jesus minority.

The greatest danger of all is that you can subject yourself to Bible teachers and believers that have already become victims of the Falling Away. You will tend to become like them, and you will listen to what they do teach and preach even though long ago they came to the point where they would not endure sound doctrine, “they out of their own desires heaped up teachers with itching ears”, turned away from the truth and turned into fables. {One word of caution, look for Bible teachers and believers that are preaching (1) the Falling Away and (2) A 9 month of so new birth, and shun the progenitors of silence on the Falling Away.}

(2) A second major difference between the American Democratic Faith and the faith of the Bible and Jesus is on the concept of “toleration”. So much that believers know to be true they will not even speak, for the fear that they will seem non-tolerant and therefore non-American. An extreme example is that the Presbyterian Church a few years ago voted whether to decree that a stop should be made on the claim that Jesus is the only way of salvation, because it seems too intolerant. I don’t know how the vote came out, but the very fact that a so-called Bible believing denomination would have to vote on such a fundamentals Bible belief about Jesus and salvation is within itself intolerable.

A Condensed Version of Mark?

As you read this book, you may think there is a lot of other Bible to be simply a condensed version of Mark. Yes, there is; and that is the point. What we can understand of Mark, in the very nature of revelation and illumination, is “profitable for doctrine, etc” only as it is kept in the total context of the Bible; and what we truely understand of Mark is true only to the extent that it is consistent with the Authorized Semi-Public Interpretation of the Bible. The same God put the truth in Moses and John, Ezekiel and Revelation, Daniel and Mark. The Bible when you come down to it is a reflection of the consistent mind and character of God; and above all in the characteristics of God we must see stability, consistency in God who is “the same yesterday, today, and forever.” What you will find as you spend more and more time in the Bible is that you come to understand more as you also understand more the Great Author of the Bible. It is like living with a loved one here on earth, the more you listen to them and see and hear the consistency of their character, the more you can even predict what they are going to say on other ocassions. For example what God had to say in Daniel, and what God has to say in the many explanations of Old Testament quotes in Mark and other books of the Bible, lead to more understanding of the Christ and God we serve.

It will become more clear to you as you get away from the “kingdom” concepts of Darby and the 1000 year temporary reign of Christ on earth concepts of Scofield, those concepts effectively propagandized by the Scofield Reference Bible and Tim LeHaye, that with Jesus, Paul, and the first century Christians, we have seen most of what we are going to see in a spiritual movement from the Jews. God gave them one year and the Messiah was cut off, as recorded in Daniel, to make things right with Him through faith-salvation in Christ, then the abomination of desolation was complete. “What profit is it then to be a Jew?” Paul asks and explains in Romans. And the answer comes back, “because to them were committed the oracles of God.” Wow, what a marvelous job, sometimes in spite of the majority movement among the Hebrews, did the Jewish people do in protecting and promoting the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. Paul was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, also a Roman citizen, and formerly a persecutor of the church, before the Ascended Christ decided that He needed a dedicated scholar and lawyer of the Jewish nation to write 14 book so the New Testament and sponsor with his influence and manuscripts three more, setting the pattern which Jesus gave to him in Saudi Arabia.
of quoting with an interpretation in the New Testament of the Old Testament truth. So much of where fundamentalists (today’s incarnation of Darby and Scoffield, their hunt and peck method of Bible interpretation with superficiality of Bible more dangerous, with their fighting spirit, than even their concepts from Darby and Scoffield) see in the Old Testament a period of peace and prosperity with a material kingdom in Israel is the “consummation” of Daniel. It is the time, at the end of time, when the kingdoms of this world become really the kingdom of Christ; it is the time when the new Jerusalem is lowered down from heaven and all government is established there over all the multitudes which no man can number of every nation, tribe, and people; and it is the time when the new heaven and new earth are established by God for ever and ever, as the old heaven and old earth pass away, and there is no more sea. It is going to be difficult for you to break free if you have been a victim of such fundamentalist teachings. One thing you will notice is that you are not hearing about the Falling Away from such fundamentalists that have taken control of the Southern Baptist Convention. There are two reasons for that: (1) it is difficult to stake a claim on having all the answers like Jerry Falwell, Tim LeHaye, and Charles Stanley—co-founders of the Moral Majority, and still admit that the Falling Away has come to fulfillment under their watch; and (2) they remain in power my convincing their audience that they are the chosen of God, therefore it is hard for them to say to the other Tares, you are Falling Away from God, Christ, and the Bible. Indeed, Falwell believes as he says that Rick Warren’s heresies in the name of church unity, LeHayes fictions, along with his political and social power are waves of spiritual revival, while indeed these efforts, including the takeover of the SBC by his group, are the very unsoundness in doctrine and spirit that has percpitated if not induced the Falling Away. Certainly they have enhanced the Falling Away. Why are they so silent on it. That within itself is proof! Won’t it be amazing if these who have made themselves “first” in the kingdom of God, taking by force the prime seats at the feasts, are found to be the “last” when we come to the fulfillment of the kingdom of God. And if they are among the tares, we will not see them at all! Like the Jewish people of the first century, and about whom Paul wrote in Romans 1, they have tried to take and mantain the moral high ground. While they would present themselves as teachers of the law, they need some one to teach them again what are the first principles of Bible and a proper spirit.

Although as we look for the two things to be fulfilled before the Second Coming as Paul laid out in II Thessalonians—the falling away and the man of sin; and while many times based on Daniel, we may lean toward Osama Bin Laden as the man of sin and of perdition; though sometimes we lean toward the Pope as the final anti-Christ which will be the man of sin, sometimes it seems that the fundamentalists have been the most dominant influence in the Falling Away. I am sure it is our lack of understanding that forces us to speculate between men like Falwell, men like Osama Bin Laden, and men like the Pope for fulfillment of the man of sin. And the fact, as Daniel was told, that our complete understanding of the last events is still somewhat sealed up, leads us to believe that we are still major steps from the Falling Away. Just remember, that like Satan himself, who was an angel of light, the man of sin and perdition must appear to be very right and righteous to be a wolf in sheep’s clothing and in order to deceive many. As sin abounds, he must be a leader in the waxing cold of love. The love must diminish under his leadership, and the Gospel of the kingdom of Christ will have to be replaced with something else, like maybe the Gospel of the Moral Majority.

**Book Bottom Line: Spiritual Terrorism**
"He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.'" (Matthew 13:28)

Can You buy those words from Jesus Himself? That there is spiritual terrorism within the churches. We are concerned about physical terrorism in our country when we should be more concerned about the spiritual terrorism in our churches and the kingdom at large. Our problem is that we can not tell the difference between wheat and tares even when they come out from being underground: we do not know the difference between a Christian and a non-Christian, between a false Bible teacher and a true Bible teacher; and even when we do suspect a church member, a church, or a denomination, or their leaders we are so indoctrinated in the American Democratic Faith as to put tolerance ahead of dis-association from them as recommended by the Bible. Do you get what Jesus is saying, "the enemy is within" the kingdom and the churches. Satan has put many tares in our local churches in order to subvert the real work of the kingdom of God, and many of those tares are leaders with itching ears.
“All Things Come in Parables” (Mark 4:11)

Jesus in these words of Mark 4, “all things come in parables” establishes an important guideline for understanding the Bible. Perhaps, you never realized that parables go beyond the approximately 12 parables that we considered in SOUND MORE SOUNDS, or even beyond the approximately 52 total parables from the four Gospels. Also perhaps you have never realized that the “come” in Mark 4:11 is a word carefully chosen by Jesus. Why did He not say “all things are spoken in parables”? Or why did He not say, “all things are delivered in parables? The reason is that Jesus is talking about a method that God uses to communicate to His Creation in the revelations of the Bible. In short, “come” is the equivalent of “are inspired”. The phrase is easily the equivalent of “all things are inspired in parables.” And what that means is also in the verse context of Mark 4:11.

“And He {Jesus} said to them (the 12 apostles} to you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables....” Below is a little exegesis of this verse.

(1). Disciples {the 12 were unique disciples much like 500 more, but who later except for Judas became apostles} are allowed to understand all the hidden mysteries of God.

(2). These mysteries are also hidden to disciples until they are revealed by Jesus, the Prophets, or Apostles.

(3). This very process of spiritual understanding or not spiritual understanding is a process of parables.

(4). You see this as you realize that all outsiders to the kingdom of God hear all spiritual matters in parables, the “all things” of Jesus words. Paul wrote much more on the subject after his revelations from the Ascended Jesus in Saudi Arabia, and later recorded the same in I Corinthians 2. First Paul recorded how disciples understand the Bible of spiritual things and then how the natural man {not born again, and the same as “outsider”} can not understand spiritual things.

(1). How disciples understand the Bible of spiritual things.

“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.” (I Corinthians 2:12)

The contrast is between the spirit of this world, the spirit of the natural man, and the Spirit of God, shown with a capital letter for Holy Spirit. The difference between the natural man and the believer is that God can work internally on the human spirit that has been born again. It is His Spirit internally working on our spirit.

(2). The non-born again, natural man-outsider does not have this internal advantage

“But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, because they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (I Corinthians 2:14)
It is like in the Ephesians introduction of learning Christ to the three answers of Jesus in John 14-16 of the three questions from three Apostles. The introduction of Ephesians to the “how” to Learn Christ is given in the words of Ephesians 4:20,21. **“But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus...” (Ephesians 4:20,21)**

In short the process of Learning Christ, the same as being a disciple, is (1) to hear Jesus and (2) to have been taught by Jesus and (3) as the truth is in Jesus. Jesus had explained that internal process of new birth and salvation to the apostles as John recorded it in John 14-16. The answer of the new birth or how to learn Christ is very practical as our approach needs to be today to prevent more tares in the kingdom. This Jesus-taught approach to the new birth required for spiritual understanding is far from the contemporary instant new birth concept that has accumulated so many tares in churches generating the Falling Away. Here is a summary of the three questions from the disciples and the three answers from Jesus. (1a). First Thomas asked Jesus where He was going and what was the “way”. (1b) Jesus answered that He was “the way, the truth, and the life”; and further that there was no way anyone could come to God the Father except through Him. God is just not approachable except through Jesus Christ! But how approachable God is, beyond human ability to know, see, and hear, if a person only comes through Jesus. Did you notice how Jesus referred to Himself as “the truth”, reminding you of Paul’s reference in how to learn Christ of “as the truth is in Jesus.” (2a) The second question is from Philip, echoing the age long question of “Show us God the Father.” (2b) The answer of Jesus is “He who has seen Me has seen the Father” (John 14:9). (3a) And the third question completes the specifics of how to learn Christ, what is really required in the new birth. Judas, not Iscariot, asked this question; and no doubt, the same Judas or Jude who wrote the book of Jude with his tremendous defence of the “faith once delivered to the saints”. In short I think he learned very well and personally this answer of Jesus the third question. “Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world.” (John 14:22) That is a good question. How do we see Jesus like Paul specified as necessary in order to really learn Christ, since we know that Jesus ascended back to the right hand of God the Father. Is it that only those alive during Jesus short life of approximately 33 years are able to see Him? Or how can we be taught by the Ascended Christ? (3b) The answer of Jesus can open our eyes on how to learn Christ, how to really be born again, and how to pass from being an outsider to the kingdom of Christ to being a citizen of the kingdom of Christ. Here it is: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.” (John 14:23) You don’t have to make the trip to heaven in order to see Jesus. You don’t even have to have a special hearing device in order to hear God the Father and Jesus. All you have to do is to love God and Jesus, then He and the Father do the rest. They take up residence in your heart. Jesus uses the very comforting words, “we will come and make our home with you.” Wow, you become a residence of the eternal God the Father and of His only begotten Son. That is the new birth. That is salvation. That is the only, real way to learn Christ and to be a disciple of Christ. That is the only way to start the process of a spiritual understanding of the Giant Parable called the Bible.

**Daniel is Full of Parables**

I would like to illustrate from Daniel how the Old Testament Prophets are also full of parables. What we often like to call double or triple meaning in the Prophets is really one parable with two or three applications. Take for example, the story of the king of the north versus the king of the south in the last few chapters of Daniel. There are no names given. And yet we can easily apply the same parable to three distinct periods of history, as God intended for us to do in the ASI, one during the Greek Empire, one during the Roman Empire when General Titus destroyed
Jerusalem and the Temple, and one near the end of the time as applied to the man of sin, the son of perdition. Remember that even the names of the Empires are not given as in the nature of parables. Recall how “a man” owned a vineyard and when going into a foreign country, let it out to tenant farmers. The owner and farmers have not names. No doubt, as God observes from heaven, the same event happens many times; and so true is the story and the pattern that God so often sees from heaven about His creatures, that why should He put names. God Himself is no respecter of persons anyway. He hardly stands in awe of a General Titus that later became a Caesar, nor of an Alexander the Great that conquerors the world and cries for more territory to conquer even as His disposition of the Pharaoh of Egypt was simple for Him. It fulfilled His purpose of bringing the children of Israel back to the promised land for the birth of Jesus. It also fulfilled His purpose of using the Jews as custodians of the oracles of God in the Bible, and thus God as the Great Maker of history just did it. {So much of what goes on in this world is determined by the Great Maker of history in world history, in the acts of nature, in the works of the Bible and of the Spirit, yet we hardly stop to think about His control of human history.}

The same in the book of Joel where there parables about a plague of locusts. We know such plagues did and do happen as a course of history. Well, there are at least three applications of this one parable of locusts in Joel: a actual seemingly natural plague of locusts which ravished the land and under the control of God in an effort to bring the people back to Him; the invasion of an army against the land once again under the control of God, an army that can be compared to locusts; and then at least a third in the Final Day of the Lord. {A day of the LORD in the Old Testament is a day of true justice and judgment which can refer to punishment by nature, by an invading army, or the wrapping up of events on earth with the disintegration of the sun, the moon, the stars, and the elements melting with fervent heat. Make no mistake, however, that the great final DAY of the LORD and Lord is easily distinguished from the others as there will always be some reference to the destruction of the sun, the moon, the stars, and of the consequences to the earth.}

The problem is that we have heard so much malarkey on eschatology and the book of Revelation based on Darby and Scofield, that we have become confused about what is actually in the Scripture and what is not. How easy it is to mix up the Scoffield notes in the Bible with the actual Scripture! And since so few fundamentalist actually quote Scripture when they dogmatically tell you of the end times, it becomes hard to separate the wheat from the chaff.

Daniel among the Prophets best illustrates both God’s foreknowledge of and control over the history of the world. When you read and study the book of Daniel, you begin to appreciate more fully the statement of Pastor James at the Great Jerusalem Conference. “Known unto God are all His works from the beginning.” This tells us that God both has plans for this world, and universe, which He has ordained to happen from the beginning of time until the end of time; and further that He makes sure those plans will happen. The plans involve nations, kings, kingdoms, the angels of nations, pharaohs, governments, and all kinds of social and political organizations where men think they are exercising the real control. What you will also find in Daniel is that the events here on earth, and in particular between nations, is very closely related to the spiritual warfare that goes on at a much higher level between good and bad angels of nations, between Christ and Satan, and between God and the dominant opposition to His will. {“Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth” will not come quickly or easily until the very end of time.}
The three cycles of Daniel {three that we can identify, remembering that a parable can have unlimited applications} are much like the repetitive cycles of the book of Revelation and the repetitive cycles of Matthew 24 from Jesus on which they are based. What you will find in Daniel, Revelation, and Matthew 24 is much like the scan of a radar trace where from a distance the preliminary scan only picks up the peaks, then on a second and closer scan more detail is filled in, and then finally with a closeness much detail is filled in.

The First Great Sweep in Daniel starts in Daniel 7:9 and ends in 7:13, not many verses so this is like a distant sweep that hits only the peaks. The first sweep starts where it should with God, “the Ancient of Days” seated on the great white throne above the clouds where a thousand times thousands ministered to Him and ten thousands times ten thousands stood before Him. The vision we should get here as Daniel did is of real power. Oh, by the way, the court to decide on the fate of nations and kings was in session at that point to make a ruling. Daniel wondered what all that power around the throne would do as they listened to the pompous words from the “horn”. What Daniel saw was the beast slain with his body destroyed and given to the burning flame. Recall that the vision of Daniel in a dream, during the first year of the reign of the Belshazzar, king of Babylon, was of four beasts; and the last of the four more terrible than the others with 10 horns, and then a little horn coming out from among them. It is this little horn, the man of sin and perdition of the final days who speaks the pompous words. {You see once again the nature of parables in Daniel where the four beasts are the successive kings of four conquering kingdoms—Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome, and that the ten horns are 10 Caesars of the most powerful of the beastly kings.} Here we can allow secular history to help us in the interpretation since the details of each of the four kingdoms help us to identify them from what really happened in secular history. Never forget, however, that these four beasts except for a detailed description remain in Daniel as unnamed parables like the owner with the vineyard.

In the first sweep of Daniel 7:9-13, we know the little pompous horn to be man of sin and perdition of II Thessalonians because: (1) God and the great judgment court are seated for final judgment; (2) The books are opened, mentioned also in Revelation as the books of final judgment; (3) the thousands and millions are surrounded around the throne of God for execution of the will of God; (4) the pompous words from the little horn remind us of how the final anti-Christ in the form of the man of sin will stand in the temple claiming to be God, which we learn from the last sweep of the five sweeps or cycles; (5) the description of the immediate slaying of the pompous little horn as its body is given to “the burning flame” which is obviously the equivalent of Satan, the beast, and the man of sin, the little horn, being cast into the lake of fire and brimstone of the book of Revelation.

With this for background, we can see how rapid and short is the sweep of the first cycle of Daniel 7:9-13, in only four verses going from the Court of God in session through four beasts, and then another beast and a little horn, and then in one long verse, the verse 13, we have the establishment of Christ’s Eternal kingdom.

1. Daniel 7:9a. The Subject of the first sweep as “THRONES WERE PUT IN PLACE.”
2. Daniel 7:9b-10a. The Ancient of Days take the throne of judgment seat, a God of white garments, hair of wool, a throne of fiery flame, and the wheels of mobility were a burning fire, and a fiery stream runs out from the throne to the universe. {It is easy to see final judgment in all this since we know from the Apostle Peter that the elements of the universe will melt with a fervent heat.}
3. Daniel 7:10b. Court was in session and seated for the final work, a court of ministers of a thousand thousands and a multitude to do His will of ten thousand times ten
thousand.

4. Daniel 7:10c. Judgment starts as the books of judgment of Revelation are opened.

5. Daniel 7:11. Pompous words from the man of sin with an immediate slaying and casting of the horn and Satan into the lake of fire and brimstone

6. Daniel 7:12. The rest of the beasts last longer than the little horn, and then their dominions are also taken away. God does and will reign supreme is the message here.

7. Daniel 7:13-14. The Son of Man appears before the Ancient of Days, and is given by God an everlasting kingdom.
   (1). This is obviously the Second Coming of Christ as He is coming with “the clouds of heaven”.
   (2). This is obviously Christ since He is “given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.”
   (3). This is obviously Christ and the Second Coming of Christ since “His dominion is an everlasting dominion” {Daniel 7:14}.
   (4). This is obviously the kingdom of Christ established by Jesus on earth during His first coming and now made complete, which “shall not pass away” like the other kingdoms of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome to be mentioned {of course, not by name} in the last four cycles.
   (5). Christ’s kingdom is “THE ONE WHICH SHALL NOT BE DESTROYED”.

Oh yes, we know the 10 Caesar’s of Rome will try to destroy that kingdom; we know the man of sin and Satan during the final half time will try to destroy it; but God has ordained that the kingdom of Christ is indestructible.

But you see how we go only the peaks in our first sweep. God on His throne in judgment, jumping to an emphasis on the judgment on the little horn and his beast with a brief mention of the short lives of the rest of the beasts, then many words on the final kingdom of Christ which can not be destroyed. We look for more details in the second sweep, even more in third—some the same and some different; and even more in the fourth; and finally in the fifth it is clear that we are definitely address the Falling Away, the man of sin, with the abomination of desolation that Jesus quotes from Daniel. And I believe that with this parabolic method in mind of Daniel and the rest of the Bible, especially the teachings of Jesus, I think we can proceed more quickly through the next four cycles or sweeps. Even as the first cycle or sweep is the actual vision that Daniel saw as recorded in Daniel 7:9-13, the second cycle is the interpretation of that vision in Daniel 7:15-27 for 13 verses, over three times the number of words as in the first cycle and, of course, with much more detail. The third cycle starts with a second vision, one about a Ram and a Goat, that came to Daniel during the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar; and it runs from 8:1 through 8:27, this time over twice the description as in the third cycle. While at the end of the second cycle about the first vision Daniel {first of Daniel’s own personal visions of the future} was so affected that, though silent, his countenance changed, at the end of the third cycle in his second vision Daniel fainted and was sick for days {Daniel 8:27}.

The fourth sweep runs from Daniel 9:1-27, starting with a period of fasting and prayer by Daniel during the first year of the reign of King Darius. {Darius was the Persian-Medes King that took over the kingdom from Babylon.} Much of this chapter 9 is a record
of the prayer of Daniel, of confession and intercession for his people. Like the disciples of Jesus wanted to know, as recorded in Matthew 24, what would be the signs of His Second Coming, Daniel prayed to know exactly what would happen to his people. And you will see this theme of “what will happen to my people” repeated in the last cycles, especially in the fifth where Daniel is told to rest and then arise to his inheritance at the Resurrection. {the last words of Daniel, Daniel 12:13}

You guessed it the fifth and last cycle has so many more details in the sweep that it takes several chapters to cover, starting with Daniel 10:1 and ending with Daniel 12:13. So many more of the valleys and detail topography will be filled in during this last and lengthy cycle as compared to the peaks of the first cycle. The fifth cycle was a vision of the Glorious Man which happened, once again while Daniel was in prayer and fasting for the fate of his people, and during the third year of the reign of king Cyrus of Persia. {Daniel 10:1-9}

A Preliminary Outline of Daniel 7-12 in order to pick up the peaks, sub-peaks, and even some of the details.

I. Thrones are Put in Place in the First Sweep, Daniel 7:9-14.
   2. The pompous words of the Man of Sin judged with his sponsor the beast, and the execution of justice in the flaming fire.
   3. The other beasts given a short dominion.
   4. The Second Coming of Christ and His everlasting kingdom that has been given dominion over all kingdoms.

II. The Four Great Beasts versus the Saints of God and their kingdom, Daniel 7:15-27.
   1. The four great beasts are the four Kings. {Remember that this is the interpretation of the previous vision, so here even like Jesus identifies the actors in the parable of the seed and the sower, so one of those standing near during the vision explains to Daniel that the four great beasts are four Kings.}
   2. What Daniel asked to understand the most about: the fourth awesome beast and the 10 horns, and especially the little horn that came up whose appearance was greater than the others and who spoke pompous words. {You see consistently, we have in the five cycles information about the man of sin and perdition of II Thessalonians.}
   3. This little pompous horn was making war against the saints of the kingdom, and he was “prevailing against them”. {You know this is the final great Falling Away of II Thessalonians during which Satan is released as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn from the earth.}
   4. The Ancient of Days comes, judges in favor of the saints, a theme repeated from the first cycle, and the time comes that the saints wholly possess the kingdom, as the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of Jesus and God.
   5. Okay, an explanation about the fourth beast, the 10 horns, and the little horn.
      (1). The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom—different, devouring, and trampling all other kingdoms on the earth. {Daniel 7:23}.
      (2). The ten horns are ten kings (actually Caesars as we see from later history in the Bible and in secular history).
      (3). “Another shall rise after them”, different from the first ones who will speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints, who will try to “change times and law”; and the saints will be given into his hand for “a time, times, and half a time”. {Daniel 7:24b-25}
6. The court of God is seated and takes away his dominion, destroying it forever.
7. The greatness of all the kingdoms on the earth shall be given over to the kingdom of the saints, the kingdom of the Most High who has an everlasting kingdom. He will have dominion over the saints and they will serve and obey Him. {this is a partial answer to Daniel’s repeated prayer and question, what is going to happen to my people?}

{Note that while you get some detail on the major peaks from the first cycle, in this second sweep you primarily get details on the four beasts, the 10 horns, and even more on the little horn. This little horn is undeniably the final man of sin of the Falling Away who under the supervision of Satan will try to change all history and all law, although it can like any parable also include more men before the final man of sin.}

III. The Second Vision of the Third Sweep, “the Time of the End” {Daniel 8:17} the Ram with two horns interpreted by Gabriel as kings of Media and Persia, and “the male goat is the kingdom of Greece.” (Daniel 8:21}
   (1). The ram with two high horns, the second one higher than the first that came up, pushed north, south and west conquering until a male goat with a very large horn from the West attached the ram, breaking the horns of the ram.
   (2). The male goat grew large and strong, the large horn broke off and four notable horns came in its place from the four winds
   (3). Out of one of the four notable horns came a little horn which great exceeding great and spread toward the south, east, and toward the Glorious Land. {Little have doubt that this is the Promised land of Palestine, whatever name it was called throughout history.}
   (4). “And it grew up to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground, and trampled them.” (Daniel 8:10) {Obviously we have a reference to the war in heaven against Satan as Satan and his angels, the fallen stars, are cast out of heaven, and already we begin to see what we will see more and more of in Daniel where the spiritual warfare above becomes one with the spiritual warfare here on earth.}
   (5). “He even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host; {the reference here is of the man of sin exalting himself to the Prince of the power of the air and this earth, since the host would refer back in the last verse to the host that is cast down out of heaven}...and by him the daily sacrifices were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down.”
   (6). An army is given, obviously by Satan, to this horn; and with this army, he opposes the daily sacrifices, cast truth down to the ground, and while he did all this, he prospered. {God let it happen!}
   (7). How Long between the taking away of the daily sacrifices and the “abomination of desolation”, destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem? The answer comes, “for two thousand three hundred days”.
2. The Interpretation by Gabriel in Daniel 8:15-26.
   (1). The vision refers to the “time of the end”, what shall happen in the later time of “the indignation”. It shall be at a definite time that God has appointed with echoes again of “known unto God are all His works from the beginning”
of James and the book of Acts, help from the ASI if you would.

(2). The ram with two horns are the kings of Media and Persia, the male goat is the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn between his eyes is the first king of Greece.

(3). Four kingdoms shall arise out of Greece, but not with that power.

(4). In the latter time of the Grecian kingdom, another king shall arise of fierce features, sinister schemes, welding the power of Satan, destroying, prospering, and thriving, destroying the mighty and the people of God {8:23-24—here you almost have a parable within a parable as this latter Grecian king is a prototype of the last man of sin. His characteristics of Satan sponsorship, the abounding of sin and transgression, and of himself as a man of sin carry all the way through a Grecian, a Roman, and then a final days son of perdition.}

(5). A long verse is given over to a detailed description of what this preliminary, parable like man of sin will do: (a) with cunning cause deceit to prosper as he rules; (b) exalt himself like a god in his own heart; (c) destroy many that prosper; (d) rise against the Prince of princes, obviously Christ, and we have another anti-Christ; and (e) he and his kingdom are broken by God without human help like war and politics.

(6). Seal up the vision because it has references to “many days in the future” {Daniel 8:26b}

3. The fainting and sickness for days of Daniel, 8:27.

{Once again you see a lot of focus on the atypical man of sin, or anti-Christ, which will be a final fulfillment with the last man of sin. Again it is like a parable, without names, that is a general-type story that applies to at least three kings—one of Greece, another of Rome, and then the last at the final days.}

IV. The fourth cycle or sweep as Daniel starts his quest for understanding and prayer again for “what will happen to my people” with Jeremiah’s 70 years of Jerusalem desolation, and Gabriel comes with an answer to his prayers.

1. The history of Daniel’s people, a history of disobedience and rebellion, from the wilderness to the destruction of Jerusalem, Daniel 9:1-19.

2. The intercessory prayer of Daniel, Daniel 9:1-20: “Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God....” (Daniel 9:20)

3. Gabriel started his trip from heaven to earth when at the start of Daniel’s prayer, God commanded him to move swifly. Gabriel came to give Daniel “skill to understand”, something that we must have in the ASI and in parable, often called in the Bible and by Jesus as “eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand”. Gabriel told Daniel that he was greatly beloved.

4. God has determined that the period of time will be 70 weeks for Daniel’s people and the holy city of Jerusalem as that amount of time is required by God in order to: (a) to let the transgression runs its course; (b) to make an end to the sins; (c) to make reconciliation to God for their iniquity; (d) to bring in an everlasting righteousness, which we know clearly know from Daniel and all the Prophets and the New Testament to be the plan of salvation brought to earth in fulness by Jesus Christ in His life and death; (e) to seal up vision and prophesy, in the life and teachings of Jesus and the
Apostles the seal is put on all Old Testament visions and prophesy as we come to understand what was forecast; and (f) to anoint the MOST HOLY.

5. From the Restoration {the return from exile and rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple} until the time the Messiah comes will be 7 weeks and 62 weeks, for a total of 69 weeks which leaves us one short of the 70 weeks.
   (1). The end of the 69 weeks is identified clearly as the Messiah being killed, not for his own sins, but for the people.
   (2). Then the city and the sanctuary will again be destroyed by the people of the prince to come, which we now know to be Titus and the Roman Empire.
   (3). A short description of the desolations and the war that ends Jerusalem and the Temple.

6. The one week after the 69 to complete the 70 weeks, Daniel 9:27.
   (1). For this one week, the last of the 40 years, and a one week or really one year after the crucifixion of Christ, God allows the covenant of the New Testament to be confirmed with “many for one week”, and we know that approximately 100,000 Jews were saved during this one year after the crucifixion of Christ, many on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension.
   (2). In the middle of that year after the Crucifixion of Christ, God brings an end to “sacrifice and offering”. {In other words an end to Temple worship.}
   (3). On the wing of these abominations of desolation caused by no more temple sacrifice and offering shall be “one who makes desolate”. Satan and men of sin will thrive on the wings of the desolation.
   (4). The end of the abomination that makes desolate is the “consummation”, and God has determined a precise time; and the consummation is poured out on the desolate, obviously a judgment on the desolate.

{Daniel got what he was asking for, what would happen to his people. We see that they will not fair so well even though the Temple and Jerusalem will be rebuilt. From the restoration to the Messiah comes will be 69 weeks; and there will be a temporary respite from the abomination of desolation for the Jews of one year, until here we see no hope for them at all as the abomination of desolation is consummated at the end of time and in judgment. Of course, we suspect from Paul and Romans that something must happen among the Jews after the fulness of the Gentiles is complete. We must allow, however, that this happening of Paul could simply be the eternal reward with the Gentile multitude of every Jew who believed right up to the last week of Daniel.}
Before we use the 12 parables of Mark for focus on the book of Mark, we should consider the influence of the Apostle Paul in the life of John Mark, specifically what role Mark played in the Ministry as mentioned in the chapter-title verse from II Timothy 4:11.

"Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry." (II Timothy 4:11)

It sounds like Paul is talking about the Ministry as if possessive of Christ’s ministry; and so it is, no doubt, that Apostles chosen and appointed by the Ascended Christ will tend to be that way. They take an authority given to them by none the less than the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Therefore He says: ‘When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men’ (Psalm 68:18)....And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastor and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ....”

Of course since we now Christ to be the “He” who ascended, then we automatically know that it was Christ who gave gifts to the total body of Christ in order to do “the work of the ministry”.

Paul’s Ministry

Before we get into the general aspects of the ministry as Paul laid it out in Titus, I Timothy, and II Timothy—the pastoral epistles as Bible scholars have come to call them, we should briefly consider what Paul specifically considered as His unique ministry. You would say, of course, we know he was an Apostle, also a missionary—the first great missionary of the Christian movement started by Christ, and a writer of 14 out of 27 books of the New Testament. Ah, the last is the greatest as we look back on the history of the Bible and the kingdom of Christ during the last approximately two thousand years. By far the greatest expanding influence of the Apostle Paul has been through the books He wrote with instruction from the Ascended Christ and from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. {Recall that one function of the Holy Spirit is to
And to think that this influence of Paul and the Bible was an accident of history or a coincidence not planned by God, the Great Maker of History; and not mediated by the Ascended Christ and implemented by the Holy Spirit would take far more imagination than simply admitting that the primary ministry of Paul was as Chief Editor of the New Testament. Indeed when you think of why another Apostle was needed beyond the original 11 left after Judas deflection, and you look at the capabilities of a Paul versus the capabilities of men like Peter, James, and Matthew, what you see is a Bible scholar, a lawyer of the religious law of the Old Testament, who simply needed his heart in the right place in order to expedite the collection of 27 books for the New Testament. What I am saying is that when Paul stated that “Mark is profitable to me for the ministry” that: (1) THE MINISTRY of Paul was primarily as Chief Editor of the New Testament; and (2) Paul considered Mark to be profitable in that he could write the Gospel of Mark. By the way, the Dr. Luke mentioned also in II Timothy 4:11 was profitable in the writing of the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts; and Luke and Mark continued the editing ministry of the Apostle Paul in that they took the books and the parchments Paul had written during the so-called seven silent years at Tarsus. Paul knew the end of his life was eminent; that he would not have time to complete his writing ministry of all 17 planned books; so Paul left with John Mark and Dr. Luke the research for the books of Mark, Luke, and Acts.

“Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas when you come—and the books, especially the parchments.” (II Timothy 4:13)

I will not repeat now the arguments for what was in the books and parchments except how they included the recorded testimonies to Jesus of Peter and James for Mark and Luke to use in writing the gospels, a log of the missionary journeys for Luke to use in the writing of Acts, and a parchment each for Luke and Mark of Old Testament quotes necessary to include in their Gospels, a sub-list of the many quotes that Paul recorded at Tarsus and did not have the opportunity to utilize in the 14 books he wrote. However, the reader is referred to the Bible commentaries of the LEARN CHRIST series for thorough treatment of the subject, especially in REMEMBER MY BONDS, The Life and 14 Books of Paul and CHRIST, PAUL, AND THE FALLING AWAY. You will also find some of it in SOME SOUNDS OF SOUND FAITH and the sequel of SOME MORE SOUNDS.

The Ministry

What we really wish to do in this chapter before launching into a condensed version of Mark with comments centered around the parables, is to provide specifics of the influence that Paul had on John Mark for ministry. Now, this is ministry in the largest sense of the word as the Ministry of Christ, in keeping with what Paul wrote in Ephesians as the “equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry”, and in keeping with how the work of the minister as entrusted to the total body of Christ as contrasted to the exclusive work of pastors and teachers and evangelists. Granted that the pastors, teachers, and evangelists are to be leaders in that ministry; and therefore what Paul writes in Titus, I and II Timothy is to the total body of Christ, the total kingdom of Christ if you would, by way of the leadership. In the name of true scholarship, we will try to complete an outline of all three of these books in this chapter, starting with II Timothy and working backwards.

II Timothy

Although like any book of the Bible where you can find many emphasis, I have come
through years of Bible study to see the book of II Timothy as primarily a theme on “How All Scripture, Given By Inspiration of God, is to be profitable to isolate bad church behavior; and how to survive during the Falling Away as the intolerance toward sound doctrine grows”. You might call the book of II Timothy “A Manual for Survival During the Falling Away”. Yes, that is a lot; however it is based on the three passages below, and you can easily see it for yourself.

1. **The Focal Point Itself: “All Scripture is Given By Inspiration of God”.**

Recently I read a sermon by B. H. Carroll on “inspiration” in which he stated that certainly the words of the Scripture were inspired in the original books; for without words the instructions would have no meaning. I think this sort of takes the wind out of the fundamentalists who think they have the corner on verbal inspiration, although they tend to confuse the original manuscripts with the 1611 King James English with incorporation of the Scofield Reference notes. Also I recently read the biographies of C.I. Scofield and the Irish lawyer turned Anglican minister from whom Scofield stole his dispensationalism. Scofield, once himself a lawyer in Kansas and member of the legislature, when later converted while serving a six month sentence in jail, became a minister with guidance from another dispensationalists named Brookes, was lead to take the pastorate of the First Congregationalists church in Dallas, and while there started a Bible correspondence course built around his dispensationalism that later he published with the Bible as the Scofield Reference Bible. Unfortunately the fundamentalists still see allegiance to these notes as a primary test of sound doctrine. And I am afraid the “Good Ole Gospel” of the Moral Majority founded by Falwell, Stanley, and LeHaye is more in the tradition of Darby, Brookes, and the Scofield notes than of the Gospel of Mark and Paul. A disciple of Scofield was first President of Dallas Theological Seminary; and you know the rest of the story, how W. A. Criswell, like Stanley and Adrian Rogers, not originally a Southern Baptist rather among those Bible Baptists who like to identify themselves as fundamentalists also became President of DTS while pastor of the First Baptist Church, and how with Stanley, Rogers, and Falwell lead the fight to take over the SBC. Criswell expressed the spirit of fundamentalists over 20 years ago, just before their takeover of control the SBC, in the words spoken on television to Bill Moyers, “We are going to keep on fighting until one side or the other wins”, the sides of course being the fundamentalists and the moderates. The moderates like Winfred Moore are still around and in control of the Texas Baptists (BGCT), but the fundamentalists control Southwestern Baptist Seminary and the SBC. Bottom line on this while it begs one of the prime thesis of the whole book expressed in the title TOLERATION OF THE TARES, is that if these fundamentalists had even considered such Bible conservatives as Moore to be tares, and that is really the way they thought and still thing—they consider any not in their group as liberals, not subscribing to the Scofield Bible notes on which they were trained as Scripture, then they would have done as Jesus advised, waiting until the Second Coming to weed moderates out of the kingdom. (Surely this is what Jesus included when He said that “the violent take the kingdom by force”.)

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (II Timothy 3:16)

Now this would exclude as a recipient of this “every word that proceeds out of the mouth of
God” those who do not need sound doctrine {those who will not endure sound doctrine exclude themselves}. It would exclude those who do not need reproof, although Paul has already given a horrible list in II Timothy 3:1-9 of bad church behavior that was in need to reproof. It would not include the bad church members above who would not stand to be “corrected” because they had a “form of godliness that denied the power thereof.” If a person were not “hungering and thirsting after righteousness” more than seeking bread and things, they also would not be inclined to come to the rest of Scriptures of “instruction in righteousness.” And certainly any member of the groups in such a church as identified in II Timothy 3:16, which I would identify as typical of churches today in the Falling Away, such a church member would not care for the maturity in Christ of “complete”; and rather than be concerned for equipment in every good work, would rather have the status and control of a Jannes and Jambres.

2. Bad Church Behavior and Attitudes of the Perilous Times.

If you go up in II Timothy from the “All Scripture” verse of 3:16, you will find in 3:1-9 the perilous times of bad church behavior. There are so many of these bad characteristics, that like the roll call of downward evolution of those who will not retain God in their thinking of Romans 1, you quickly tire of them and even desire not to talk about them in public as most preachers are doing now in this time of the Falling Away.

An Outline of II Timothy

Once we understand the three aspects of this primary thrust of II Timothy, the outline of II Timothy comes easy as follows. (1) The Holy Calling, 1:1-12; (2) “The Pattern of Sound Words”, 1:13-2:26; (3) Perilous Times for the Pattern of Sound Words, 3:1-9; (4) Sound Doctrine, the basis of the Sound Words, 3:10-4:4; and (5) Commissions and Cautions, 4:3-22. We will put a little meat on this outline from II Timothy before we proceed to I Timothy and Titus, outlining them and forcing the outline of II Timothy on I Timothy and Titus. We can do this without any injustice toward exegesis, because we still stand corrected step by step in our exegesis of I Timothy and Titus, and we are imposing an inspired outline on Scripture, only looking for the summarized influence of the Apostle Paul on the ministry of John Mark. {Books of the Bible can be outlined many different ways in order to communicate the truth in them.}

I. The Ministry as Starting with The Holy Calling, II Timothy 1:1-12.

1. This calling for Paul as an apostle and Timothy as a beloved Son in the faith are both according to the will of God.

   (1). Paul is an Apostle by the will of God.

   (2). Paul starts a repeating theme of the whole epistle, that of his own ministry from beginning to end, that he starts with of how he served “God with a pure conscience” like his forefathers. Paul has elaborated in other epistles like Galatians how the thrust of that pure conscience had to change from before conversion where he was a lawyer of the Jewish religion and after conversion where he became a servant of Jesus Christ.

   (3). Paul attests to the “genuine faith” of Timothy like that of his grandmother and mother, and of the ordination by Paul.

   (4). Paul gives credit to the work of the Holy Spirit both in his ministry and that of Timothy, working on our own human spirit, to promote courage, power, and a sound mind that Timothy is going to need for the pattern of sound words to follow, also the sound doctrine which most will not endure.
(5). This holy calling is righteousness by faith, given to us from before the foundation of the earth, and according to the purpose and grace of God in Jesus.

(6). Jesus revealed the holy calling with His appearance on earth, who abolished death at the same time bringing “life and immortality to light through the Gospel”.

(7). Jesus appointed Paul a preacher, an Apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

II. The Ministry as Holding Fast to a “Pattern of Sound Words”.

The Pattern of Sound Words goes beyond behavior to include a Pattern of Sound Attitudes and Behavior as you will notice by the context in which the phrase is used. And so immediately we see that “sound” speaks of ATTITUDES and BEHAVIORS. As sound words flow in sound doctrine, it is the same. Sound doctrines, almost synonymous with sound faith, is a matter of beliefs, actions, and attitudes. The argument might be discussed: is it the intolerance toward sound doctrine of chapter 4, certainly an attitude leading toward an action, that causes the bad church behavior and attitudes of chapter 3; or is it vice verse. Does the continued practice of bad attitudes and behavior in church membership bring on the intolerance toward sound doctrine? I would think that this latter is true; since for one reason the intolerance is easily identifiable with the Great and Final Falling Away, while the “perilous times” of bad church members are periodic in history, starting even at Ephesus in the lifetime of Paul and having come to dominant 6 out of 7 of the churches of Asia Minor, including Ephesus, by the time John wrote the book of Revelation.

It is not enough to hold to sound doctrine, alias All Scriptures, the example of Paul, Jesus, and the other apostles is to be followed with a certain “pattern of sound words”. Yes, you can even get your pattern of outline from the Apostle Paul.

1. The pattern of sound words has a basis in “faith and love” of Jesus. When you hear of a “faith” in Jesus without a noted absence of the love of Jesus; for example as in a fighting spirit, then you must question the very foundation of the pattern of sound words that you are hearing.

2. Keep the good pattern by the power of the Holy Spirit which dwells in us.

3. Do not be swayed by those of Asia, and others, who have turned away from the lack of popularity of Paul caused by his imprisonment.

4. Keep these teachings of the pattern of sound words going, from me to you to other men.

5. Since the pattern of sound words, and the identification with the unpopularity of Paul, will inevitably bring persecutions, learn to “endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ”. You know what it is to get soft mentally, often promoted by too much comfort and ease, and therefore the proper mental attitude that goes with the pattern of sound words is a “hardness” for the battle.

(1). This pattern of hardness prohibits entanglements with the world.

(2). This pattern of hardness demands competing with the correct rules of sound doctrine.

(3). This pattern of hardness demands continuing personal experience like a farmer eats the same food he farms.

6. Remember in the pattern of sound words you heard from me how Jesus, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to the Gospel which I preached, and this preaching of the Gospel is the reason that I am currently in prison like a common evil
doer.

7. The Word of God is not in prison, a subtle hint that near the end of the letter 
Paul is going to enlist John Mark, Luke, and of course Timothy and others in the 
continued spread of the Word of God. He knows about his work as the Chief Editor 
of the New Testament; he knows about the epistles he has already published and 
the others of the 14 to follow from prison; and he knows of the three that Luke and 
John Mark will write.

8. Paul endures imprisonment like the rest of his life in order to “shine like the sun 
by turning many to righteousness”, the elect, and in order that they too may obtain 
 eternal glory and salvation.

9. A Faithful Saying as Part of the Pattern of Sound Words.
   (1). If we die with Christ, we shall also live with Christ.
   (2). If we endure with Christ in our walk of life, we shall reign with Christ 
at the end.
   (3). If we deny Christ before men, Christ will also deny us.
   (4). If we are faithless, since Christ can not deny Himself in us, He remains 
faithful.

10. Repeat these words and remind others of this pattern of words, rather than many 
words which are not profitable; and many pattern of words that are not profitable follow in 
II Timothy 2:14-26.
   (1). Words to no profit are a pattern of words which cause destruction to 
the hearers.
   (2). If you are to have this pattern of sound words then you must diligently 
work with the Bible to do good sound Bible exegesis called nothing less than 
“rightly dividing the word of God”. You see, this is more of your pattern of 
sound words in the way you outline the Bible. Hermeneutics or the science 
of Bible interpretation is nothing less than the method here advocated by the 
Apostle Paul as “rightly dividing”. There is a right way to divide the pattern 
of sound word called exegesis for reading out the meaning, and there is 
a wrong way to divide the word called isogesis for reading meaning into 
it. God help the man or woman at the end who does not divide the Word 
rightly.
   (3). The Bible is wrongly divided when it includes in the message a pattern 
of words about “profane and idle babblings”. Just talk, and a big talker 
or wind bag, is not enough for the pattern of sound words; for this kind of 
cloud without water can be like those Jude contended with for the “faith”. 
The Hymenaeus and Philetus, the same as or in the same group of those 
mentioned in 1:15, so that while some may have only deserted Paul since 
he looked like a criminal, some had deserted the message of Paul given to 
him by the Lord Jesus Christ. It should not be thought a strange thing to 
you that in this Day of the Falling Away, as Jesus and His sound teachings 
are rejected, that also ministers faithful to the Word are also rejected. The 
ones who are not rejected, alias the popular ones on television, radio, and 
in the largest of churches are the ones that you should be worried about. Look at their patterns of words! Do they include a lot of “profane and idle 
babblings”?
   (4). Details of profane and babbling patterns of sound words like from
Hymenaeus and Philetus. {You see you may be listening to some like Hymenaeus and Philetus right now!}

a. These kind of messages lead to an increase in ungodliness like message promoting prosperity, the cares for the things of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches. This can happen if the Seed of the Word is sown in a church where the pastor himself promotes the choking out of the seed with cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things. I would lay before you the recent book by such a pastor of 10,000 people, with a book on the best seller list, that is a book largely about “things”.

b. A “straying from the truth” is a departure from the pattern of sound words, like those aforementioned, who say that the resurrection is already past. Can they do it in this day and time? YES! What these men were doing was preaching that the resurrection of Jesus, alias full salvation at the Second Coming of Jesus, had already happened in the lives of early Christians. In other words, then like today some were preaching that they were completely saved with initial salvation instead of waiting for the sanctification of maturing in Christ and waiting for glorification at the Second Coming. They wanted instant and complete salvation without waiting for Jesus to come back, and they claimed it!

c. This kind of pattern of words, alias preaching or ministry, “overthrows the faith of some”. You might include in that an inadequate concept of salvation as made synonymous with the real “baptism” of the Bible, not the washing of the filth of the flesh but of the answer of a good conscience toward God, like Paul had and Timothy, and that recognizes in baptism, not water baptism but spiritual baptism, the completion of salvation at the coming of Christ. Any and all inadequate concepts and ministries of salvation not consistent with that delivered to Paul and made clear in the book of Romans is an instrument of the overthrow of the faith of some. Here we would also include those of instantaneous new birth, who see the seed sown on stony ground, receive it with great gladness, calling this complete salvation, and for the sake of numbers and show in evangelism, add another number to their local church roll.

d. Futile, futile, futile; for the foundation of the pattern of sound words comes from God, having this twofold seal: God and Christ know their own in whose hearts they have taken up residence; and let every one who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity, that departure from iniquity being evidence the lives of Christians of a pattern of sound words.

5. All of these that do not depart from iniquity in the house of the church, like vessels of honor and dishonor in a great house, are not “tares”, some are only stumbling like in the parable of the seed and sower, without root and falling down because of persecutions and tribulations for the Word, and some are only on the way to the full stature of Christ, passing from ten-fold fruit to the one hundred-fold.

a. How to be among the vessels of honor: by cleansing from the patterns of dishonor, by participating actively in the process of sanctification—that is, the process of becoming more like Christ, by always being subservient to the Lordship of Jesus as Master rather than the world, those of the world, or aspects of the mammon of men, and by making preparations continually for every good work that the All Scripture of the Bible and the right attitudes
toward its corrections will promote.

b. Flee youthful lusts as contrary to the pattern of sound words, rather pursuing things that promote the pattern of sound words as righteousness, faith, love, peace, and the examples of which you see from servants of the Lord that have a pure heart. {You can also summarize the pattern of sound words with these words: righteousness, faith, love, peace, and peacemaking.}

c. Avoid foolish and ignorant disputes which generate strife, divisions in the churches, and in the kingdom.

d. A serving minister of Christ must be: gentle, able to teach, patient, and humbling correcting with the Word the opposition.

III. Perilous Times for the Pattern of Sound Words, II Timothy 3:1-9, a pattern that leads to bad local church behavior.

1. What are Perilous Times? Well, they can not be equated with the Falling Away that will come in chapter 4 as church members will no longer endure sound doctrine; for students of the Bible know all too well of what happened in the first century churches of Asia Minor, and of how 6 out of 7 departed partially from sound doctrine. We would have to say that perilous times existed in Asia at the time of the writing of II Timothy by Paul, they grew worse during the church ministry of the Apostle John in Ephesus, and that they can be considered in the light of the ups and downs of local church history, or even of the total body of Christ, and that they would be the opposite of the revival times that come to churches. If the revivals are the mountain tops of church experience, then the perilous times are the valleys.

2. Why are we so sure that these characteristics of bad behavior refer to church members since we recognize in some of them the list of heathen characteristics of Romans 1?

(1). The internal evidence of II Timothy 4:1-9, in particular the “have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof” indicates a form of worship and membership like of a church, but where the member does not have anything going for them internally of the power of God.
Chapter 3

THE PATTERN OF SOUND WORDS AND WORKS

“These are not my words, but are the words that I heard from God the Father.”

The pattern of sound words that Paul relayed in the pastoral epistles for “The Work of the Ministry” was based on what He learned from the Ascended Jesus in Saudi Arabia. Paul would not have been one to learn it any other way as a former leader of leaders of the Jewish religious law and movement. Of course, later as Paul records in Galatians, he did confer with Peter and James; and I think having received his instructions from Jesus in Saudi Arabia to be the chief editor of the New Testament, Paul during the so-called seven silent years at Tarsus recorded these testimonies to Jesus of Peter and James. You perhaps have never thought that while you were reading Mark and Luke that you were also reading the Gospel according to Peter and James. Then Paul had put in his fifteen cents to those two Gospels with manuscripts of the Old Testament quotations he did not have time to put in the 14 books he wrote. Lastly, do not forget the personal experiences of the young man John Mark. He was a young man who knew these disciples personally, especially Peter, and the young man who tagged along with Jesus and the disciples as for example when they went to the Garden of Gethsemane. {I am sure that Mark was not proud of being the young man who fled from the Garden naked rather than be taken captive with Jesus; and although his intellectual honesty demands a complete record of his personal experience in the matter, he like the Apostle John in his Gospel, uses a “certain young man” rather than his own name of Mark.}

I hope that you are not trying of looking at our books of the Bible in preparation for a condensed version of Mark with comments, because this is pattern of sound words is best summarized in the Sermon on the Mount as given in the book of Matthew. Mark does have a shorter version of Jesus’ Sermon in Mark 4, the great introduction to parables and a dominant action-oriented theme of Mark. Matthew records three chapters of the Sermon, and Luke records parts of several chapters. Subsequently in this book, although our intention is not to re-create Robertson’s harmony of the Gospels, or go beyond it, it will be helpful to consider why four biographies of the life of Jesus were needed; and in particular what was the distinct emphasis of each. To see the distinct emphasis of John Mark in Mark as guided by what Paul left for him and his own personal experience, will also help us later in a condensed version of Mark. Why did Mark write after the record from the Apostle Matthew already existed, a very thorough rendition of the life and teachings of Jesus with many Old Testament quotations. Matthew almost exceeded the Apostle Paul in basing his book so much on Old Testament quotations. Of course, Matthew had to in order to record the conversations and teachings of Jesus since Jesus always and ever quoted from the Old Testament. In fact, we would have to say that this pattern of sound words by quotations was gleaned by Paul, Matthew, and all the Apostles; and the Holy Spirit naturally as the implementor of Scriptures, Old and New, would remind Apostles of the Spirit of Christ and His teachings in terms of what He had inspired the others to reveal.

Let me smell out what we are after in the detailed look at the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew 5-7 in this chapter! Since we know now that the pattern of sound words of the Work of the Ministry is our attitudes and behaviors, we want to go back to the Chief Source, the author and finisher of our Faith, Jesus Himself, for His original teachings {for His original patterns of sound words, if you would}. I recall the famous book of Charles Allen of the First Methodist Church of Houston entitled, GOD’S PATTERN OF THINKING, in which he wrote about the Sermon on the Mount as well as about the Ten Commandments. Of course, much of Jesus’ clarification about Moses and the Prophets directed toward the mis-understandings of the religious leaders
in the Sermon on the Mount dealt with the Ten Commandments. The contributions I think that Allen made to us {and I would hope that would include the Bush family who were members during the preaching of those messages} was to re-emphasize the difference between thoughts and a pattern of thinking versus a legal behavioral violation of the laws of God. Jesus taught that you are guilty if you think adultery as well as commit it; if you think anger as well as commit murder; and so on through all of the Ten Commandments, the respect for God as God really is, the subject of the first 3 commandments, coming through stronger than any of the 10. Or on the more positive side, if you think God the master over mammon and think a priority of His righteousness over the things of this world; and you think going to extra mile with a extra cloak, then you commit love for God and fellow man. What Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount can be summarized as Allen did with a quote of the Old Testament verse, “For as a man thinketh in his heart so is he.”

We would desire to build on this Bible learning of the past in order to illustrate from the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7 how Jesus was communicating the thoughts of God and how His goal was to teach what God was like.

THE MIRACLES.

“God works and I work....The works that I saw God do, I do.”

Well, we are getting closer to a condensed version of Mark with comments in the same manner that the Holy Spirit made preparation for the writing of Mark, then later the Gospel of John, after Matthew and the letters of the Apostle Paul. Even as we close to look at the pattern of sound words in the teachings of Jesus as recorded in Matthew, so now we chose to look at the pattern of sound works as recorded by the Apostle John. You might also look at it this way: in the three chapters of Matthew on the Sermon on the Mount, we have a condensed version of the thinking of Jesus that He received from God, and in the book of John, we have a condensed version of the works of Jesus as He saw God do before He stepped a foot on this earth. The emphasis of the Gospel of John helps us here as John carefully selected only seven miracles from the many miracles of Jesus, and He wove around these seven signs the teachings and actions of Jesus. If John is the Gospel of Miracles and Matthew is the Gospel of Teachings, we might say that Mark is the Gospel of Action. You will notice in Mark both organization and plan. For one things, it took planning on Mark’s part, with help from Paul and later I will also discuss with possible help from John, to write a condensed Gospel of only 16 chapters. You see Mark, at his sat with Dr. Luke at the home of the Apostle John and Mary in Ephesus, surrounded by his own memories, the manuscripts from Paul, like John knew that “there are many other things {signs} which Jesus did, which if they had been written every one, even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.” If Peter had written a Gospel, if James had written a Gospel, if Paul had lived longer to write on all the Old Testament quotations, if over five hundred that saw the Risen Christ had written books, if every person every a Christian had written books, then the books would be larger than the libraries.

CHOICE OF CONTENT IN MARK

While all of the Gospel writers tell the same story of the life of Jesus, you are beginning, I hope, to see that the choice of content for each of the four is different. The outstanding example, of course, is with the last Gospel to be written, the Gospel of John, and how John carefully chose only seven miracles around which to weave the whole life of Jesus. John carefully relates to the miracles, the teachings and other works of Jesus. He uses “signs” to summarize all of these words, works, and actions of Jesus. You have began to notice
how thorough Matthew is on the teachings of Jesus, especially in the inclusion of Old Testament quotes used by Jesus. Well, what is the choice of content in Mark? We will begin to explore that in this chapter, not for the sake of scholarship or exploration per se, but in order to increase the influence of the life of Jesus in own lives. We should consider that the 11 of 52 parables chosen by Mark with a close look at the subjects of those parables may offer a clue; and since some claim that John Mark wrote a Gospel for the Romans, we will want to explore a “kingdom of God” emphasis that might allow the citizens of the mighty Roman Empire kingdom to consider the differences between the “gospel of the kingdom” and a physical and material kingdom. If the Romans had a per chance for organization and planning, and certainly they had that in their government, army, and their international policies, they would find such planning and organization in the book of Mark. For example, how Jesus planned ahead for the press of the crowds where He taught by having the disciples prepare a ship by the seashore to utilize for escape. Also how God, Jesus, and the Old Testament prophets in forecasting it, prepared for the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem that per cepitated His crucifixion when the popularity was noted by those in religious power. {The religious establishment, if you would, in contrast to the citizens of the kingdom of God who can not be established since they are poor, meek, and pure in heart as well as deeply blessed and happy.} Mark tells us how the disciples found the young burro on which never a man had ridden, tied to a hitching post, exactly as Jesus told them; and we must pause momentarily to consider why not a triumphant entry into Jerusalem on a chariot like David and Solomon would do, or why not on a massive white charger like a Greek or Roman conqueror might do. The humility of Jesus on the burro as contrasted to a large white charger or chariot symbolizes what Jesus and God wanted to communicate on the differences between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world.

We do not ever, ever forget the work of the Holy Spirit in the writing of the books of the Bible, nor do we forget the work of God as the Great Maker of History preserving and promoting His book. Those simple words from Jesus to Satan, recorded for our benefit, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God”, has several assumptions that we also need.

First, it tells us that Scriptures are words that come out of the very mouth of God. It is God speaking and man recording, and in between is the work of the Spirit of Jesus, the Holy Spirit.

Second, it tells us of the respect we are to have for Scriptures, a practical respect which demands that we put it on the same level as making a living. Hardly any citizen would deny the demand of work in order to make a living, and yet how many over look the demands that the Great Creator of the universe makes on the lives of His creatures.

Third, every word “proceeds” out of the mouth of God. It proceeded in the Old Testament through the law and the Prophets, and it continue to proceed to the end of the century out of the mouth of God in the New Testament through Jesus and the Apostles.

Fourth, the emphasis on “every word” tells us that we must honor every chapter, verse, and book of the Bible as the every word of God. This eliminates isogesis and demands exegesis even when that isogesis uses the “hunt and peck” method of biblical interpretation.

Fifth, also it bespeaks of the sufficiency of the word of God in that the “every” speaks of the thoroughness of the Word of God. God started speaking in the Garden of Eden at the beginning, God spoke many ways and in diverse manners in the Old Testament, and God has supremely spoken through His Son, Jesus Christ, and has designed the plan whereby those words in the Canon would be collected, preserved, and promoted. If you do not see God at work in history through angels, through the “signs in the heavens above and the earth beneath”, then surely you see God making history in the history of the Bible.

I. Choice of Content In Mark in Verses Found Only in Mark.
1. It is Mark that begins the actual ministry of Jesus after baptism and temptation in the wilderness, with Jesus’ preaching of “the gospel of the kingdom of God.” How often today from pulpits are you hearing about the gospel of the kingdom? Well, it was important to Mark and the Holy Spirit. Matthew does have a similar message for Jesus at the beginning of the Galilean ministry, after baptism and temptation in the “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matthew 4:17). This is similar to the repentance message from Mark, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel.” However considering the abbreviated nature of Mark of 16 chapters as compared to the 24 chapters of Matthew, Jesus’ message is much longer in Mark than in Matthew: (1) In Mark, it is repent and believe; (2) the message of Jesus begins with “the time is fulfilled”; (3) the message continues with “the kingdom of God is at hand”, much like Matthew except with “of God” instead of “of heaven” {no problem, here we see the two to be the equivalent as we carefully study Matthew 5-7; however we find in one complete sentence of two verses in Mark 1:14-15 that the “kingdom of God” is mentioned twice, once in a description of the Gospel that Jesus Himself preached and the second time in a description of specifically what that message was. {Granted that Jesus said all those words of the message content as recorded in Mark, Matthew and the Spirit did not include all of it at that moment in the writing. Somebody after reading what Matthew wrote in his gospel thought it important to record the whole message. Was it the Apostle Paul, Peter, James, or the Holy Spirit? No matter, as long as we see that all this preparation was at work in the writing, and as long as we get the complete message.}

   1. What do you get out of adding “believe” to “repent” in the original message of Jesus Himself? Actually since there is a measure of belief in repentance and a measure of repentance in believe, to exclusively use one of the words is not to leave out the total process by which individual salvation comes. Of course, Matthew had no intention of leaving out what was necessary in order to inherit the kingdom of heaven. “Believe” is not a common word in Matthew. It is far more common in Luke and John. (Luke 8:13; 24:25; John 1:12; 11:42; and 20:31) Also it is far more common in the books from Paul Himself (Romans 10:9; Philemon 1:29; and Hebrews 11:6), and from the Apostle James (James 2:19 twice).

   2. What do you get out of an emphasis of the “kingdom of God” over the “kingdom of heaven”?  

   3. What do you get out of an emphasis of “the time is fulfilled”? It is obviously a consciousness of history, and a particular time in history for the at hand-ness of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. One recalls a writing from the Apostle Paul as Mark would do also, “For in the fullness of time, God was born of a virgin...” The time was ripe where, in history and in the Roman Empire. The land of Jesus was strategically located between the North and the South of the vast Roman Empire which provided peace in their time. The policy of the conquering was to adopt the Greek culture for those conquered, and thus Greek customs, culture, and language formed a vehicle for communication of the Gospel. The roads helped. Paul and the other Apostles could easily travel from Palestine to Asia Minor even to Rome and Greece in order to establish churches and preach the Gospel. IT WAS THE TIME AND PLACE CHOSEN BY GOD FROM BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD FOR JESUS TO BE BORN, LIVE AND DIE ON THE CROSS FOR THE SINS OF THE WORLD; AND FOR THAT GOSPEL TO SPREAD OVER THE WORLD. In that case, I would think that the Gospel of Mark was more written for “among the Romans with the kingdom of God” than for the Romans.
We have yet to see how Dr. Luke and the Apostle John describe the beginning of the Galilean ministry. First, Luke who behind Jesus’ baptism and temptation puts the beginning verses of the Galilean ministry as follows.

"Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. And He taught in their synagogues, being gloried of all.” (Luke 4:14-15)

Luke does sound in content like Matthew when in the next verse and following, he gets to Nazareth in Galilee, and how when Jesus in the synagogue was handed the book of Isaiah from which to read, as was the custom for any teacher in the synagogue, how Jesus choice to read Isaiah 61:1,2. Of course, what started the people of Nazareth, many of whom he had grown up with, was when He said, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” (Luke 4:21) We need some appreciation for this context in order to proceed.

1. What was in Isaiah 61:1,2 from which Jesus read.
   It said that “The Spirit of the LORD {God the Father} is upon Me” {Jesus applied this to Himself, just as He originally wrote it in Old Testament times through the Prophet Isaiah. Isaiah then presented a summary of the ministry and message of Jesus Himself as originally given by Jesus through Isaiah: (a) God anointed Christ to preach the Gospel to the poor {this should give second thought to the rich of the well-to-do: the middle class American is in the same position today as the wealthy of great possessions because of mortgages and the installment plan}; (b) God sent Jesus to perform miracles of healing on the brokenhearted, the spiritual healing being given an emphasis on the physical miracles; and (c) Two ways to explain His ministry of salvation—the proclamation of liberty to captives and the recover of sight to the blind; and (d) lastly to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD {God the Father}. This “acceptable year of the LORD” in Jesus message of Luke should remind one of the “time is fulfilled” of Jesus’ message in Mark.

2. What did Jesus say about Isaiah 61:1,2?
   “And He began to say to them, ‘Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.’” (Luke 4:21)

3. What was the Reaction and Response of the people at the synagogue in Nazareth?
   They marveled at the gracious words that came out of His mouth.
   They said, “Is this really the son of Joseph and Mary who live here?”

4. Jesus catching the response and reaction, continued His message with a proverb about the physician healing himself: (a) Do here in Nazareth while we heard you did in Capernaum, after all this is your home town; (b) A Prophet is not accepted in his own country; (c) While there were many widows in the country when Elijah was sent to the Gentile woman in Sidon to help during the three and a half years of famine, God sent Elijah only to this one {you see, parenthetically what Jesus meant when He said that he performed miracles like He saw God do, as God did a miracle here through Elijah}; and (d). In spite of the many lepers in Israel during the life and ministry of Elisha, the successor to Elijah, God sent him only to a Gentile Syrian named Naaman.

5. How did the citizens of Nazareth in the synagogue worship react to this?
   As they listened to these things, they were filled with anger.
   They got up out of their seats quickly and with one accord forced him out of Nazareth, to a cliff on the edge of the city.
   Their goal was to kill Jesus by throwing Him over the cliff.

   Some reaction, and so soon in His ministry! You would wonder that the triumphant entry could come much longer after the beginning of Jesus ministry in Galilee. It was obvious
that Jesus did not know his place in the community, they no doubt thought, and His place in the kingdom of God, they thought. How were they most grievously insulted? Was it by the refusal to do miracles in his hometown, or because God rejected Israel in favor of certain Gentiles as recipients of His miracles. Wow, either one was insulting for a people who would not recognize Jesus of Nazareth as THE SON OF GOD. Does this mean that later in the life of Jesus, after His extensive ministry in all of Palestine, that they and others came to recognize Him as the Son of God? No rather as the son of David, and as the King who would established a kingdom of God like when Israel ran the world. Notice what the crowd said in Jerusalem during the triumphant entry as Jesus rode in on the young burro.

“Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that comes in the name of the Lord!” (Mark 11:10)

Not only could they not comprehend, since they did not have eyes to see and ears to hear, Jesus as the Son of God; but farther than that, they could not comprehend a kingdom that would not immediately restore the Kingdom Israel enjoyed under Saul, David, and Solomon. We are inclined to think that understanding on Jesus as Son and the nature of the kingdom of God, or a lack of understanding from the Old Testament, would go hand in hand. Those, though small in number, who accepted Jesus as the Son of God also accepted the kingdom of God as a spiritual kingdom that would grow until the Second Coming, then become a physical and spiritual kingdom with the new heaven and the new earth.

Now however, with an exegesis of what happened in Nazareth at the beginning of the Galilean ministry as given by Luke, we can see the similarities and differences to what is in Matthew. {Remember, it is exactly the same events: it only the choice of content under inspiration that is different.} The similarity is that they both quote from Isaiah, Matthew from Isaiah 9:1,2; but different in that in Luke Jesus is quoting from Isaiah, in Matthew he is quoting under inspiration from the Prophet directly without any reference to what Jesus said.

“Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and swelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying....” (Matthew 4:12-14)

Then Matthew himself quotes Isaiah 9:1,2. While Mark started the Galilean ministry with Nazareth, Matthew briefly mentions Nazareth without any detail, passing on to the next stop on the tour, Capernaum, by the Sea of Galilee and in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali. This region was that part of Galilee which was for Gentiles, so that in Isaiah 9:1,2 we have the prediction of the ministry of Jesus to the Gentiles: (1) The Gentiles seating in darkness saw in Jesus and His message a great light; and (2) Those Gentiles who sat in the very shadow and region of death saw the dawn of light. To see how enraged Jews still get over the blessings of God on Gentiles, I briefly relate to you a story about the famous Jewish Evangelist, Hyman Appleman, who was preaching at age 9 in the Queensboro Baptist Church of Shreveport, Louisana who I made my confession of faith. After being a lawyer and a medical assistant, Hyman when converted wrote a letter back to his family in the East, telling of the blessings of being a Christian. His father wrote back, “When you are so hungry that your belly is touching your backbone, I will throw only crumbs to you like I do for the dogs.” However, Hyman Appleman, while small in stature, only 5 foot 5 inches but with big jumps behind the pulpit, became a giant in spiritual work as one of the select few Evangelists of Texas back in the days when revivals could still happen, developed methods
in evangelism and messages that were examples for Billy Graham, and who with D.L. Moody, B.H. Carroll, Truett, and others is considered in the Christian workers Hall of Fame.

How do the quotes from Isaiah in Matthew and Luke differ. They both speak of the ministry of Jesus, in the Isaiah 9:1,2 of Matthew, it is the ministry of Jesus as “the great light” seen by the Gentiles, while in the Isaiah 61:1,2, it is the ministry of Jesus in more general terms, preaching to all the poor, healing all the broken hearted, all the captives, blind, and oppressed. Surprised, that Matthew, a Jewish tax collector, would provide at little more content on the Gentiles, than Luke, a Gentile and companion of the missionary to the Gentiles. On the other hand Mark, which is truly our focal Gospel for study in this book, tries to summarize all that Luke and Matthew have written of Jesus in the words: “Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,” AND “the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel.”

Gospel is a summarizing concept, so much more so is the “gospel of the kingdom of God”; the time is fulfilled is a summary of the fulfillment of many quotes in the Old Testament like Isaiah 9 and 61 where predictions are now coming to pass in the life and the kingdom that Jesus established; and repent and believe are summaries of the specifics of how to pass from liberty into light, from darkness into light, from captivity into freedom, for broken heartedness into healing; and the poor you will recognize as citizens of the kingdom as given in the Sermon on the Mount. And what we really glean from this in terms of the content of Mark is that even as Mark being only 16 chapters is a condensed version of the life of Jesus even as the content of the Galilean ministry is a condensed version of the beginning of the Ministry of Jesus in Galilee.
“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.” (Luke 4:18,19 and Isaiah 61:1,2)

It may seem strange to begin the chapter on “The Ministry of Jesus” from the Gospel of Mark with a quote from Luke; but I think that if Paul had lived long enough to complete all of his ministry as Chief Editor of the New Testament, he would have chosen just such a quote from Isaiah with which to outline the life and ministry of Jesus. At least the ministry of Jesus, if not the life; and indeed we will find that the whole life of Jesus was dominated by His ministry. When you think of what we know of Jesus besides the 3 and ½ years of active ministry which started with the baptism by John and the temptation in the wilderness, and shortly thereafter with the Galilean ministry, there is nothing except the incident at the Temple in Jerusalem as a 12 year old, temporarily lost to his parents and reprimanded by them as they found him talking with the doctors of the law in the temple, even there He said, “Don’t you know that I must be about My Father’s business?”

Mary and Joseph were startled as they had almost forgotten that while He was the virgin born Son of Mary, born as the power of God overshadowed her, He was only the adopted son of Joseph; and the shock was to be strongly reminded that His Father’s business was the business of God Himself. However, for you parents and children, the Scripture adds that from that moment until the turning of water into wine at Cana in Galilee, He went home to subject Himself in obedience to His parents. {It is Dr. Luke who also gives us the incident of the boy Jesus at the Temple with the teachers as well as almost all the details of the birth of Jesus, as you might expect in the emphasis of a medical doctor.} Luke records how that for three days, Jesus marveled the best of Jewish teachers with His questions and answers, and also tells us of how Mary and Joseph puzzled over all of the aspects of this temple incident.

Let us see why Paul might have given this quote to Luke and Mark as an outline of the life and ministry of Jesus, with a quick look at the aspects of this Ministry. Remember as we look at the aspects of how while many of the Prophets foretold details of the future Ministry of Jesus, it is the Prophet Isaiah who gives most details about this Messiah, which is Hebrew interpreted in Greek as Christ; and it is the Prophet Isaiah as perhaps the most respected Prophet of all Old Testament history, then and now. Indeed among the major prophets of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, Isaiah is considered the Queen of Prophets, sort of like a preacher’s preacher as Dr. R.G. Lee and George W. Truett were called, and as Joel Gregory, Charles Swindall, Criswell, and Adrian Rogers tried to imitate, rather proving the thesis of Dr. Lee in his famous sermon, “The Menace of Mediocrity”, where “wrens make prey where eagles dare not perch”.

The Ministry of Jesus as the Christ Outline by Paul and Isaiah 61:1,2.

1. “the Spirit of the LORD is upon Me” {always the capital letters mean God the Father as contrasted to the Lord Jesus Christ}. You must notice that Jesus Himself is talking in Isaiah 61:1,2, at least four hundred years before His actual birth, as recently proven by
the carbon dating of Isaiah in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Jesus read to His hometown synagogue and afterward said that today “I fulfill this verse in your audience”; and what did He fulfill. Well, the outline follows. First, “the Spirit of the LORD is upon ME”, Jesus refers to Himself as performing the work of the Messiah-Christ, starting with the acknowledgment from God Himself during the baptism by John (“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”), and then as after 40 days of fasting and prayer in preparation for the beginning of His ministry in Galilee, the Holy Spirit of God came on Jesus in a special way in order for Isaiah and Jesus to use the word “anointed”. This was not the commission or ordination of Jesus for the ministry, He came knowing that; but rather it is a special empowerment for the Ministry which does come in the New Testament to some, like Paul laying the hands on Timothy, Titus, and perhaps John Mark. Jesus simply in preparation for the Ministry accepted the baptism and witness of John the Baptist as to Himself as the light of the world, the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, and the One to come behind Him who sandal was not worthy to unlatch; and to further make preparation, He spent time with the Father for 40 days in the wilderness.

2. “because He has anointed Me to preach”. The Spirit of God, remember initial at baptism which came in the form of a dove, was not given just because Jesus was the Son of God; although that would be a necessary pre-requisite, but it was given from God the Father… {the Father is always the real source of the giving of the Holy Spirit in special ways} …in order that Jesus might PREACH. How about that, the primary beginning ministry of Jesus was as a Preacher to the Poor—though we often think of Him as a Teacher, as the Crucified Christ, as a Personality of such character as to reveal what God is like. {What better way to know what God is like than by looking at His only begotten Son.}

The Galilean

Look at the maps in the back of your Bible for the province Galilee, sort of like our small states or counties, in the Palestine of Jesus’ day, and you will find it far north, in terms of walking distance, from Jerusalem and the province of Judea. Galilee is famous for encompassing the Sea of Galilee which in turn dominated the lives of many of Jesus fisherman-disciples, and well known for such villages as Nazareth—Jesus’ hometown after birth, Cana—where Jesus and His mother were at the wedding feast and He turned the water into wine, Capernaum by the Sea where many events of the ministry of Jesus took place, Tiberias also by the Sea—where I have had the priviledge a the contemporary boat ramp of eating cheese and bread in an open air pub, and on the other side of the Sea—Bethesaida, Gergesa, and Gadara. The regions of Galilee and Samaria, which is in between Galilee and Judea you will notice, formed most of the northern kingdom of Israel when the united kingdom of Israel under Saul, David, and Solomon became the Divided Kingdoms, the north kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. {It can be confusing as you read your Bible where it writes of how “they went up to Jerusalem”, but this is because the altitude of Jerusalem is higher. You do literally drive up or walk up to Jerusalem from any direction. Remember that “a city built on a hill, or a mountain, can not be hid.

Of course, the citizens of Jerusalem and Judea looked on citizens of Galilee as the country bunkins and looked on Samaria as half-breeds. In the time of Jesus, a lot of extra effort was put into bypassing Samaria in order to go from Judea to Samaria, and you will recall from the Gospel account of John of how surprised the disciples were that Jesus went into the village of Samaria, and even talked to a Samaritan woman.

What you will find is that the Galilean Ministry content of Mark for Jesus is one of the very unique characteristics of the Gospel of Mark as compared to Matthew, Luke, and John. Previously we looked at Matthew and Luke. You will recall how that Matthew, starting the Galilean Ministry in 4:12,13 mentions first Nazareth then Capernaum “by the sea”, and only briefly, rather focusing on Isaiah 9:1,2 as a foundation for the Galilean Ministry to be covered
up through Matthew 15:21 where He and His disciples go north into the Gentile regions of Tyre and Sidon. Why does Matthew cover so much detail on the Galilean Ministry? Because for one thing he definitely has a bent for the Sermon on the Mount and the other teachings of Jesus, but also he himself was a tax collector in Jesus’ hometown of Nazareth of Galilee. This brief mention by Matthew of Nazareth on the way to Capernaum is not the same as the incident where Jesus was rejected by His hometown with an effort to kill Him. It takes Matthew until the end of chapter 13 to come to this incident.

**The Authorized Semi-Public Interpretation**

Have you heard of the ASI, the Authorized Semi-Public Interpretation of the Bible. No, that makes one other Bible doctrine that you are not hearing about from the pulpits in the land. The ASI would be the API, based on “no Scripture is of any private interpretation” since Public is the opposite of private; however it is obvious from the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles that only a small portion of the Public is allowed to know and understand the Bible, hence the Semi-Public in ASI.

Learn Christ from the ASI would be the same as the Learn Christ from the Apostles and Prophets, and this chapter is an attempt on just one book of the Bible, the book of Mark, to make clear what that ASI approach really is. We could beg the issue based on all the Old Testament quotes in the New Testament as listed and presented in the LEARN CHRIST commentaries; however, it might be more clear to present the ASI method for just Mark and the 18 Old Testament quotes in Mark.

Actually the 18 quotes in Mark from the Old Testament jumps to 25 when you consider that a verse or a few verses of Mark refers to more than one place in the Old Testament as a location for that quote. In the second and third verses of chapter 1 of Mark, there are actually two Old Testament quotes run together as if to say, “This is an Old Testament quote, and that is enough to say without telling you which of the 66 books or the chapter and verse.” Well, the chapters and verses did not exist when Mark wrote his gospel based on the books and the parchments that Paul left him, and it is rather difficult to tell if the 66 books as such were in the same format as we have them today.

Perhaps it would be wise before we go on in this chapter, to look at this example in Mark 1:2-3; and for thoroughness in order to progress the argument of this chapter, I will also add below what goes before as a lead-in to the quotes and then also add the authorized interpretation of the quotes as recorded in the verses of Mark after the quotes.

a. Lead-in to the quotes, Mark 1:1-2a. {The 2a is for the first part of the second verse.}

"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the Prophets:"

{You see that instead of saying like we do in this day and time, the quote if from Isaiah and Malachi, Mark simply wrote that the quotes are from the Prophets in general. Remember during the time of Christ and Mark, the Old Testament Scriptures had the two major divisions of the Prophets and the Law. Today we have the Prophets divided into the 4 Major Prophets and the 12 Minor Prophets, so called simply because they are smaller and harder-to-find books than the majors like Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and for the Law we have all five books by Moses, often called the Pentateuch, given separate as Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Another thing you might notice is how the quotes are introduced. Mark does not say, “This is a quote from the Prophets”, rather he writes, “As it is written in the Prophets”. This
is a method of teaching and introduction that he, Paul, and Matthew learned from listening to Jesus. Later we will look at the style of introductory words to all of the 25 quotes; and also how Jesus did it when He was often making quotes from the Old Testament, and those by the way, are a large part of the 25 quotes in Mark.

b. The first quote from Malachi 3:1a in Mark 2b.

“Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.” (Mark 2:b and Malachi 3:1a)

{It is important to note that this is not all of Malachi 3:1 that is being quoted, and we will discuss that next as we look at the total context of Malachi and Malachi 3:1.}

c. A quick look at what is actually in the Old Testament in Malachi 1.

{Now, do not expect all the words to always be the same in the Old and New Testaments. Remember the Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew at the time the Prophets spoke, later as the Scriptures were translated an effort in the Roman Empire at Alexandria, Egypt translated the Old Testament Scriptures into Greek, the total Old Testament being called the Septuagint. Now, I am not saying that you need Hebrew and Greek to understand the Old Testament. Many Greek and Hebrew scholars do not understand the Old Testament because they do not have access to the ASI method of interpretation, or because there larger goal of academic acceptance by way of historical criticism clouds just looking at the internal context in English, letting the Bible say what it wants to say. You must realize that a careful reading of the whole context in English has priority over the Greek and Hebrew language since the Greek language itself cannot contain the new truths that were revealed in the Bible. For example, the Greek of the market place would not have a truly equivalent word for the salvation of God, a truth that comes only from God. The context makes clear what that is!}

“Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,’ says the LORD of hosts.” (Malachi 3:1, the whole verse)

You see how this helps in the understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ. With the Mark 1a, the ministry of John the Baptist is introduced, which will later be elaborated on with the ASI in the rest of Mark 1. Also in the context of Malachi 3:1 we see that another “Lord” is coming besides the LORD of hosts that is speaking, in other words the Lord Jesus Christ is coming and the announcement is coming from the LORD God the Father. This Lord Jesus Christ is the “messenger” of the New Covenant, the new testament if you would based on the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. “in whom you delight” helps to understand the anticipaction of the people as they went out into the wilderness to hear John the Baptist preach, and then as they listened to and followed the Lord Jesus Christ.

d. The rest of the quote from the Prophets in Mark 1:3, from Isaiah 40:3.

(1). Isaiah 40:3 as recorded in Mark 1:3.

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the LORD; make His paths straight.’” (Malachi 3:1, the whole verse)

(2). Isaiah 40:3 ad recorded in Isaiah 40:3.

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness; ‘Prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”
You see some difference in the wording, but what is communicated is the same: John the Baptist is doing and John the Baptist is shouting with emotion in the wilderness to make preparation for the coming of the Prophet Messiah, make His paths straight or prepare a highway in the desert for Him are equivalent. And if you read the rest of Isaiah 40, especially the first five verses, it further predicts what Mark is going to write in chapter 1 of John the Baptist with his introduction to Israel of the Messiah, the One Who “will baptize with the Holy Spirit.” (Mark 1:8) {Later we will want to look at all of Isaiah 40 in more detail for what is to come in Mark 1 and the rest of Mark; however, now we need to look at all of the quotes in Mark as an outline for the life of Jesus. The way we will start is by looking at the manner Mark chose to introduce the 18 quotes.}
Chapter 5: Preface to the 18 quotes of Mark

I. “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the Prophets...” (Mark 1:1 and an introduction to Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3). {The next Old Testament quote does not come until Mark 4:12 so that we suspect that either all of the first three chapters or some where in between, say about 2 ½ chapters is the first subject heading developed. Let us see what a good title would be: Some like “The manner in which the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begins as predicted in the Old Testament, Isaiah and Malachi, etc, and as it was actually live by Jesus Christ.”}

II. “But when He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him about the parable. And He said to them, ‘To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables, so that “seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand; lest they should turn, and their sins be forgiven them.” (Mark 4:10-12 and Isaiah 6:9,10) {Jesus slides unto this quote from Isaiah smoothly with only “so that”. AND I SUSPECT IN LOOKING AT THIS INSIGHT TO PARABLES AS REVELATIONS OF THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND CHRIST, WE ARE LOOKING AT THE VERY CHOSEN BY PAUL AND JOHN MARK GIST OF WHAT MAKES THE GOSPEL OF MARK UNIQUE FROM THE OTHER GOSPELS! However, we will see about that as we progress through this whole book as a condensed version of the book of Mark. You will see also how this quote and subsequent teachings from Jesus on parables advances the ASI argument. By the way “argument” here is not used in an argumentative sense, that province is reserved for the practices and spirit of the fuedamentalists. It is used in the sense of developed a logical “prima facie case. But where do you think the next quote is? Yes, approximately 3 chapters later, in Mark 7:6,7, and it is still a third quote from the book of Isaiah. Since two quotes come in rapid succession, the next from Exodus and Deuteronomy on the Ten Commandments only three verses later, we will outline them together.}

III. “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written...(Mark 7:6,7 and Isaiah 29:13) and “For Moses said....” (Mark 7:10 and Exodus 21:17, also Deuteronomy 5:15) so that Jesus explains a class of people who can not understand parables or any spiritual matters correctly—He calls them hypocrites—and then Jesus based on the commandment about honor for mother and father gives an example of how the people of Isaiah’s day and of Jesus’ day were: (1) honoring God with their lips, not their hearts; (2) participating in worship that was worthless; and (3) substituting teachings of men in the place of a spiritual understanding of the Word of God. {You see how once again Mark, and Paul through Mark, and the Prophet Isaiah and Moses with the Semi-Public understanding and interpretation of the total Bible advance the arguments of the ASI, and understanding of such. I am sure that you have never stopped to think of this as a primary theme in your reading of the Gospel of Mark. It helps to answer the question as to how the whole nation of Israel could be wrong and reject Jesus, except for a few like the twelve apostles and the thousands saved on the first day of Pentecost after the Resurrection and Ascension. What you are going to find as we add
more understanding on Daniel when we come to exchatalogy and the day of desolation of Mark 13, is that Israel only had one year from the time they crucified Jesus until their desolation of understanding became full; and because of God’s punishment of spiritual blindness on them, they will not see again until the Fulness of Gentiles is complete, and often in the Scripture it looks not even then, except for those in eternity.

IV. “The worm does not die and the fire is not quenched”, three times Jesus extends this quote from Isaiah 66:24 in respectively Mark 9:44, 46, and 47; and no less an authority than Jesus labels this “hell”, so awful that it would be better to lose an eye on earth rather than find hell over the kingdom of God. Once again, it is a choice of priority: do you need to give up something here on earth that is as pleasurably to you as your right hand, then give it up, Jesus says, rather than go into hell. {And that is all the warning you need!}

{For progress on our outline notice that while chapter 9 of Mark is only two chapters from the last quote, it is almost three with the position of verses 44, 46, and 47. Also recall that the King James and New King James translators added the chapters and the verses, not John Mark.}

Does this quote and the interpretation by Jesus advance our GIST on spiritual understanding? Well, to answer this look at the incidents in Mark 9 that brought up this hell-fire quote from Jesus: (1) since in chapter 9, it is half the life and teachings of Jesus, Jesus as He does in the other gospels, brings us the reality of His coming crucifixion, which by the way “they did not understand this saying, and were afraid to ask Him”, so a lot of teaching and spiritual understanding remained to be done with His own inner-circle; (2) the need arose for Jesus to teach understanding of how greatest in the kingdom of God comes, from service and child-likeness because the disciples showed a lack of spiritual understanding in their disputes between themselves of who would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven; (3) the toleration of the tares of Mark 9:38-41 that we will consider later, but of which is still a teaching of spiritual understanding of status in the future kingdom; and (4) the discussion about hell actually is introduced by Jesus in Mark 9:42 on the basis on anyone who causes the stumbling of little children, a prohibition of which is similar to the cutting off of the hand. In short, all of these teachings from Jesus and based on the Old Testament, require a spiritual understanding of the mysteries of this new kingdom of God and of Christ. It is not like the kingdom of David or of Solomon. It is not like any earthly kingdom of which we know, or nation. It is so very, very different; but so very, very worth the attainment since it is forever. {Even Isaiah 40 in the total context has a low to say about the shortness of life and nations in preparation for the eternal kingdom to be established by the Lord Jesus Christ, a kingdom that is spiritual until it becomes material with the new heaven and new earth. How much so have we lost perspective with our pre-occupation with churches, denominations, and other organizations; and not a priority in thinking, speech, and spiritual understanding on the kingdom of God and Christ. It was not so for Jesus and the teachings of Jesus, and much of the gap which not is widening between Jesus and churches is lack of an adequate Bible-based, Jesus-based sound doctrine on the “kingdom”. Look at the ones today who are making themselves “first” with positions in large churches, on television, and with authoritative statements as if the kingdom of God belonged to them. Well, those are the persons who will be last, if they make it at all; and herein is much of the Gist of the TOLERATION OF THE TARES, and of the spiritual understanding of the nature of the kingdom of God.}
By the way, we need to join the next quote in Mark 10:6-9 and from Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24 with the subject heading of IV. Jesus in Mark 10:1-12 gives a lengthy discourse on marriage and divorce, once again when confronted by the Pharisees with a lack of spiritual understanding of what God had written on marriage in the beginning and how that is the way it still is: one man and one woman with children for life. They showed their spiritual ignorance with a reference to how Moses how allowed a write of divorcements which Jesus instantly accounted as because of their hardness of heart. You see the hearts far from God are also the hearts that are hard with the eyes that can not see and the ears which can not hear. You would think that Mark and with Paul’s backing had carefully chosen from Isaiah, Genesis, and other places in the Old Testament to present a thesis on “Spiritual Understanding versus Blindness”. And we are not saying that there is any conspiracy on the part of Mark and Paul to distort the life and teachings of Jesus. What we are saying is that the life and teachings of Jesus as they actually happened contain a large body of events and words, like a large bucket, from which each Gospel writer chose a distinct cup in order to make it clear. And if they had a certain axe to grind in their gospel presentation, it was an axe to grind given by the Holy Spirit. So we might re-word IV as following.

“IV. Priority of the kingdom over the alternative of hell, and priority of spiritual understanding over a hardness of heart.”

Further we must also modify it to include the Old Testament quote from Exodus 20:12-17 and Deuteronomy 5:16-20, which most of you recognize as more of the Ten Commandments, in fact a summary of all of the Ten Commandments, from which Jesus quoted in order to answer the question of the rich young ruler, “What must I do in order to inherit eternal life?” (Mark 10:17) Now, you see that indeed the subject of Mark as carefully chosen from the teachings of Jesus that happened at this juncture of His life, and they were many more than the select few of Mark as you can see by looking at a Harmony of the Gospels, ...that is, the subject is centered around the priority of life that puts eternal life in a priority position over hell. Unfortunately, the rich young ruler did not want to cut his right arm off, which in this case was the great number of possessions that he owned. The record (Mark 10:22) says that the rich young ruler became sad, and that he went away sorrowful because he could not give up his great possessions.

This is the peak of the public teachings of Jesus in Mark 10. You will see that from an introduction to parables and spiritual understanding in Mark 4 to interpretations from Jesus peaking here in Mark 10, for 12 of the 16 chapters of Mark, and about half the quotes, the deliberate choices of Paul, Mark, and the Holy Spirit, bring us to characteristics and choices of the kingdom compared to the world. From now on, two things will happen: (1) Jesus will teach more on the impending Crucifixion, (Mark 10:32-34, adding to that teachings on His resurrection, and (2) the teachings of Jesus will become more Semi-Public, directed only to the twelve, also in Mark 10:32-34. So not only is Mark 10 a peak on quotes and on spiritual understanding, but also an introduction to the final theme of the last part of the book of Mark, and by the way also of the main theme of the other half of the Old Testament, the Crucifixion and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and crowned with the Ascension. (Mark 16:19,20)

IV. Mark 9b,10:  Priority of the kingdom over the alternative of hell, and priority of spiritual understanding over a hardness of heart.”

We have naturally come to outline our fourth major heading, IV, as Mark 10 with the generalized subject as you read it above. And then we would add several subheads as follows.

1. Spiritual understanding requires an understanding of offences against the kingdom that cause you or a little child to stumble on the way to the kingdom and which should be cut off in the light of the nature of eternity in hell.
2. A concept of marriage and divorce which rebels against the will and plan of God is one example of a hardness of heart which prevents spiritual understanding.

3. A priority for possessions is another diversion from spiritual understanding and eternal life.

4. An understanding of the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus is necessary for spiritual understanding and eternal life.

The Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus as Predicted in the Old Testament

I think it would be far better to have two major headings of the Gospel of Mark as follows.

I. The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God with teachings on spiritual understanding of the mysteries of that gospel of the kingdom. (Mark 1-10a)

II. The Foundation for entrance into the kingdom of God by a spiritual understanding of the Gospel as based on the Crucifixion and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Mark 9b-16)

You know the divisions that would be under the I from Mark 1-10a as outlined by the quotes from the Old Testament, and summarized below.

1. Mark 1-3 with Isaiah 40 and Malachi: actions of the gospel and the life of Jesus as baptism, temptation, miracles, calling of the disciples, and some preliminary teaching where there was little spiritual understanding.

2. Mark 4-6, the teachings of Jesus in Parables and for spiritual understanding with Isaiah 6:9,10.

3. Mark 7-10a (with Isaiah 29:13), how a lack of spiritual understanding substitutes the teachings of men for the commandments of God, with the presentation of examples from Exodus 20:12, 21:17, Deuteronomy 5:16, and Isaiah 66:24 on hell, and all of the Ten Commandments.

V. The Crucifixion and Resurrection part of the Gospel of the Kingdom. (Mark 10b-16)

1. Jesus takes the twelve aside on the road to Jerusalem in order to explain how the Jew will kill Him and how He will rise again on the third day.

“Now {this is where the chapter division needed to be with the “now”}. They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. {They were amazed because he was going up to Jerusalem where many were trying to kill Him.} And as they followed they were afraid. {They anticipated that they also would be taken captive.} Then He took the twelve aside again {a little side-panel for Semi-Public interpretation of the crucifixion and resurrection} and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him {Began to Tell and Show the things that would happen from Jesus and as predicted in the Old Testament, therefore not an accident but in the plan of God, would be a good summary of all the rest of Mark, from Mark 10 be to the last chapter of Mark 16, and you already now that the last two verses of chapter 16, 19 and 20, are a short summary of the Ascension.} “

“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man
{incidentally a favorite reference to Jesus, the Prophet Messiah, as found in the Prophet Isaiah, Jesus starting to teach them fervently now of the nature of salvation through the Crucifixion with Isaiah as the background which all of them had heard and studied in the synagogues since a child)...will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.”  (Mark 10:32-34)

There the rest of Mark, 10b-16 is in outline form, except for some of the details that sat it up and attract the attention of these chief priests, scribes, and Gentiles that are to kill Jesus:

(1) the Son of Man as predicted in Isaiah will be betrayed into the hands of the chief priests, scribes, and Roman rulers, the details of the Garden and Judas’ betrayal come later (Mark 14);

(2) the condemnation to death by the priests and Sanhedrin (Mark 14:53-72 with the denial by Peter);

(3) the deliverance up to the Gentiles since under Roman rule the Jews could not put anyone to death (Mark 15); and

(4) the Resurrection, the appearances, the great commission, and the Ascension (Mark 16).  {Unless we miss our guess, there will be at least one major Old Testament quote and perhaps some supporting ones for each of these four sub-divisions of the Roman numeral II, on the Death and Resurrection. So here we will allow Jesus Himself to outline the last of His life even as He and God the Father did in the aeons of eternity while they planned this salvation program.}

The Crucifixion and Resurrection part of the Gospel of the Kingdom. (Mark 10b-16)

The Outline of Subsequent Events and Old Testament quotes Laid Out By Jesus Himself: Jesus takes the twelve aside on the road to Jerusalem in order to explain how the Jew will kill Him and how He will rise again on the third day.

Triumphant Entry and Curse on the Fig Tree and Temple: The triumphant entry into Jerusalem where the people finally notice that the kingdom is different from the kingdom of David, as Jesus comes in not on a white stallion but only a lowly donkey, and as predicted in Psalm 118:27. Jesus curses the fig tree, imparting spiritual understanding on the curse on Israel which will be consummated one year after the crucifixion of the Messiah. Jesus come to His temple as predicted in the total context of Isaiah 40, and further cleanses the temple according to the prediction in Jeremiah 7:11 and Isaiah 56:7, calling it a den of thieves where the outlaws have come to hide after living in all manner of unrighteousness the week before. Like in Jeremiah, the people of Israel were saying “We Are Safe” because they were in the temple of God and in the city of God, but the sins they committed all week made it impossible for them to be safe, and after one year from the Crucifixion, and as predicted in Daniel, they would become completely desolate of spiritual understanding and salvation.

Preparation for the betrayal and arrest in the questioning of Jesus’ authority: You see they really in Mark 11:27-33 were questioning the very authority of the Son of God, the co-creator of the Universe, and therefore of God Himself. Jesus told the parable of the wicked vinedressers, yes another parable to the public at large, to explain the beginning of what they were doing that would lead to an absolute rejection of the Son of God in His crucifixion. And you guessed it at the end of the parable of the wicked vinedressers, alias the leaders and nation of Israel, is another quote, this time on the builders rejecting the chief cornerstone selected by God from Psalm 118:22,23.

“Have you not even read this Scripture: ‘The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD’S doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.”  (Psalm 118:22,23)

The movers and the shakers of the parable of the vineyard beat and mis-treated all the servants
sent to the tenant farmers for some of the fruits of vintage-time, and the third servant was
killed. Some messengers of payment were bet and others killed; and finally with only one
son left, the owner sent his son, expecting respect from the tenant farmers. They killed
the son. What will the owner do, Jesus asked of the religious leaders who questioned his
authority. He will destroy the tenants, Jesus answers, and give the vineyard to others, which
is exactly what happened after the Jews delivered the Messiah to be crucified; at least, a year
later, and Israel, except for the approximately 100,000 saved in that year, remain desolate
until this day. These religious leaders, who thought themselves to be movers and shakers,
and in possession of the land rejected the very One whom God Himself had chosen to be
the chief cornerstone of the new spiritual temple. And in the tradition of the great Maker of
History, the one of whom Pastor James spoke as he said “known unto God are all His works
from the beginning”, the God who sent Gabriel to make known what shall be in the end
times, now tells the world through His Son that His life, death, and resurrection are “the
LORD’S doing”, that it is “marvelous in our eyes.” And by the way, this is the only time
that a parable, normally very general in nature, is sealed with an Old Testament quote, not
at all general in nature; and indisputably applying to the rejection of Jesus by the builders
of Israel, yet a historical plan and movement from God Himself. Thus the very parable
itself, and this is also a notable development, passes from a general nature without names,
to a more specific nature with the names of Jesus, Israel, and God the Father. This quote
becomes an interpretation of the parable of Jesus about the wicked vinedressers, and the act
of quoting itself from Jesus makes Jesus the interpreter of what He, God, and the nation of
Israel is about to do in the crucifixion.

Jesus, still in the temple—all from Mark 11:11, after the triumphant entry thru Mark
12 happens in the temple, though not on the same day—is questioned by the Sadducees
about the Resurrection: He quotes from the book of Moses, Exodus 3:6,15, to explain that
the living God is not the God of the dead.

And when challenged again, this time by a scribe, and after a summary of the Ten
Commandments which has been in the Old Testament all along, Jesus tells the scribe how
close he is to the “kingdom of God”, which unfortunately means that he is not there already
like the rich young ruler who walked away sorrowful. His summary of love for God and
for fellow man of the Ten Commandments is quoted by Jesus from Deuteronomy 6:4,5.

Jesus mentioned the scribe in His teachings in the temple, and how that some of
them say that Christ is the Son of David. You see, this is something that Jesus needed
to straighten out about His kingdom and about who He is. At the triumphant entry the
crowd chanted about the kingdom of David. Jesus quotes from Psalm 110:1, then asks if
David calls Him Lord how in the world could Jesus be the son of David, referring to the
words, “The LORD said to my lord”, or to LORD God the Father saying to the Lord Jesus
Christ to sit on my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. Jesus after the
Resurrection and Ascension, according to the Bible record, sat down on the right hand of
God the Father where He ever lives to make intercession for our sins; and at the end, the
real consummation of Daniel and the end times, those of Israel and of Gentiles that have
made themselves the enemies of Jesus will become His footstool.

It is when Jesus goes out of the temple, and as the disciples remark on the manner of the
large stones, that Jesus gives in Mark 13 the great discourse on the destruction of the
temple and of the end times {eschatology}. Much of it centers around the “abomination
of desolation” spoken by Daniel the prophet (Mark 13:14 and Daniel 11:31,12:11) By the
way, this teaching on eschatology, covering the same teaching event as Matthew 25, includes a parable about the fig tree, so that even as we had an Old Testament quote from Psalm to seal a parable about the wicked winedressers, so here we have a parable about the fig tree to seal a quote from Daniel and the explanations of the end times. THESE PARABLES CERTAINLY HAVE MANY APPLICATIONS AND FORMS, showing once again the very parabolic nature of all spiritual things.

The betrayal and arrest of Jesus as Jesus foretold in Mark 10:32-34: takes place in Mark 14, at least the record by Mark of that betrayal by Judas, the chapter starting with the plot by the chief priest and scribes to put Jesus to death. Should we wonder what was Mark’s source for such inside information, we need only look to Joseph of Arimathea in whose tomb Jesus was buried, and who himself was a member of the Sanhedrin council. What is our quote, Zechariah 13:7, “I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep are scattered.” Jesus is arrested in Gethsemane, a certain young man, of course John Mark himself, flees naked when they grab the linen cloth that is around his body.

“...the chief priests and the scribes...will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles”: in Mark 14:53-65 is the mock trail under the leadership of the high priest; in Mark 14:66-72 is the denial of Christ by Peter and the crow of the rooster; and in Mark 15:1-15 is the trial before the Roman judge Pilate to seek death and the choice of Pilate before the multitude between Jesus and Barabbas. The only quote here is from Jesus Himself as earlier he had predicted at the last Lord’s Supper that in Mark 14:30, “Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.” Thus the habit that Jesus started in the Old Testament as the Spirit of Christ in making predictions through the Holy Prophets as He moved them, now is a prediction not only of Peter’s denial three times before the rooster crows twice, but also of the betrayal, arrest, death, and resurrection. You see, this was all in His plan and the plan of God given to Jesus for the salvation of the world.

“...and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him”: in Mark 15:16-20, the Roman soldiers mock Jesus; in Mark 15:21-32, the Roman soldiers crucify Jesus with a robber to the left and right and in fulfillment of Isaiah 53:12; and in Mark 15:33-41 they kill Him, at the ninth hour He cries out according to the saying of Psalm 22:1; and in Mark 15:42-47 Jesus is buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

“And the third day He will rise again” (Jesus in Mark 10:34): and so He did as recorded in Mark 16 with the Great Commission given to the remaining eleven apostles and then the Ascension. No quote from this one unless it is from Dr. Luke, his companion with Mary and the Apostle John at Ephesus, and from the book of Acts.
Chapter 6:  Mark 4 and Exegesis in Context

“And with many such parables {the many parables recorded in the events of Mark 4} He spoke the word to them as they were able to hear it. But without a parable He did not speak to them. And when they were alone, He explained all things to His disciples.” (Mark 4:33-34)

There is only one way to properly do Bible exegesis. That is by keeping a verse in the total context of the chapter, a chapter in the total context of the book, and the book in the total context of all 66 books of the Bible. Part of God’s assurance that each generation would get to the truth as He made it known was in motivating so many holy men of God, prophets and apostles, to write down the truth. This is an aspect of the ASI that we have not discussed thoroughly enough, but which I anticipate will be focused in this chapter as we look at the detailed exegesis of Mark 4. You must remember that no Bible author, like Mark or Paul, came to the task of writing an individual book of the Bible without certain common experiences, training, and assumptions. The Jews like John Mark and Paul, especially Paul as a lawyer of the religious laws of his country, were perhaps the most literate generation on the Bible in history. You can bet that Mark had read Daniel, and Paul also; and indeed you see the quotes of Daniel and the Prophets in their writings. You can be assured that Christ had the dominant influence in their lives, and that within itself gives the most important influence on consistency in the Bible.

Parables

We find four major parables in Mark 4, that we are able to readily recognize as parables. According to the exegesis of the chapter text above, from Mark 4:33,34, we see that in parables was about the only way that Jesus ever taught: (1) with parables Jesus “spoke the word to them” so that parables were the methodology or means Jesus used to communicate the Word; (2) The number and nature of the parables were proportional to what the Public was able to understand—if they knew a little they were given a little number and magnitude of parables and if they knew a lot there were given more; (3) there just was hardly any teaching from Jesus without a parable; and (4) alone with His disciples, Jesus gave the Semi-Public interpretation which only disciples are allowed to understand. You see understanding also comes with being with Jesus. Paul stated it this way. First, you have not so learned Christ if you are still living like the other Gentiles around you; and second “if you indeed heard Him and were taught by Him”. {We should discuss this in more detail later along with the real 9 month new birth of John 3, and the how to hear and be taught by Jesus now as given in John 14-16.}

Have you ever stopped to think what is there in a parable that prevents the understanding of non-disciples, and which simultaneously promotes the understanding of disciples? Well, it is not that simple. The key is in the explanations that Jesus gave His disciples later, which by the way, we must find something comparable today in our experiences with God, Christ, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit in order to have the understanding of a disciple. However, there are certain characteristics of parables that we can consider.

1. They are so simple and life based that the world, apart from Christ, refuses to believe them as true. A Ph.D. or the scientific and educated when never talk in such simple terms, so that I think it is the wisdom of this world and the dominant concept in the American Democratic Faith of what is “wise” that keeps many from understanding the eternal truth in the parables. You recall that it was the Apostle Paul who said to Christians, “you see
your calling, brethren, how many wise and noble and wealthy are not called.” And we read also that “the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God”. Further when the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching {by the way, first preaching like by Jesus was also preaching by parables} to save those who believe.

2. Second, having no confidence in God and in the wisdom of God, and confidence that God can reveal his truth to us efficiently and effectively in the Bible and with the help of the Holy Spirit, we are likewise not able to believe that eternal truth can come through such simple means. Like Naaman, we want to wash in some great and clean river of the world rather than the dirty Jordan. You remember the book by J.B. Phillips, YOUR GOD IS TOO SMALL”, where he asks questions like “do you think God understands radar”, and the answers generally come back, “No”. Today, we would ask, “do you think God understands computers and physics?” What would you answer be; and if you can not understand that how can you understand that God can deliver truth in such simple things as parables. In fact parables is the way that God and Christ chose to deliver truth. {Always remember that the book God wrote and the world God made will not contradict each other. The problem is in our understanding of both the world God made and the book God wrote. As the nobel prize winning physicist, R.A. Millikan wrote in the book form of his famous lectures on science and religion, scientist can be more prejudiced than people of religion since they are still human and have pride and a certain prejudice against eternal truth.}

What are the parables in Mark 4, how does Jesus introduce the parables, and what approach does Paul make in the written presentation of these parables? What the parables are is the easiest of the questions to answer. (1). The parable of the seed and the sower which really helps us to understand the mechanism in the local churches toward whereby so many have not experienced the new birth, the tares have outgrown the wheat in numbers, there is a large gap between Christ and church membership, and the challenge of the Falling Away has overwhelmed the work of Christ as well as the love which has waxed cold {by the way, also explains the difference between the instantaneous new birth of the fundamentalists which seldom takes place anyway and the more like 9 month new birth which Jesus explained by comparing it to the 9 month physical birth}; (2) the explanation of the parable of the seed and the sower, without which we would never come to understand why our churches are like they are today in this time of the Falling Away; (3) the parable of the light under a bushel, where Jesus goes back to the only theme of hearing and understanding, the subject of parables itself if you would; (4) the parable of the growing seed where Jesus explains some more things about the way the kingdom of God is; (5) the parable of the mustard seed, more understanding on the kingdom; (5) an observation with which we started this chapter from Mark himself, no doubt originally from the Ascended Christ through Paul, about parables (Mark 4:33-34); and (6) the parable of the wind and the sea obeying Jesus, and how that is a parable will expand our concept of the parable.

The Gospel of the Boat

As far as the introduction to Mark 1, the first two verses do that, as long as we remember the larger context of how Jesus is in Galilee and the sea is the Sea of Galilee.

“And again He began to teach by the sea. And a great multitude was gathered to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat it on the sea; and the whole multitude was on the land facing the sea. Then He taught {sometime we must consider the individualistic style of John Mark in his use of such words as “so” and “then”, which is okay as we primarily look for the style of the Holy Spirit and Jesus in the writing also} many things by parables {taught many things and the method is parables, “by parables}, and said to them in His teaching {the Teaching of Jesus}.” (Mark 4:1,2)
You have noticed that Jesus was teaching by the Sea of Galilee; and how the press of the multitude caused Him again to take position just off shore in a boat He had instructed the disciples to make ready for such occasions. There is a certain nautical jargon about the boat as Jesus “sat in on the sea” which implies a proper launching and anchoring just off the shore, and leads one to think that John Mark might have fished some with Simon Peter. We know that Peter called him his “son in the faith” {I Peter 5:13; we know that Peter went to the home of Mark’s mother, Mary, when miraculously delivered from prison by the angel {Acts 12:11-17}; and speculation has it that the last Lord’s Supper was in an upper room in the house of Mary, also that perhaps Mary owned the Garden called Gethsemane, and the reason as Mark was awakened from sleep by Jesus and the disciples on the way to the Garden followed them with only a cloth about his naked body, knowing something important was about to happen. {Only the Gospel of Mark records the young man who fled naked at the captivity of Jesus, Mark willing to tell on himself in order to authenticate his personal knowledge of what happened to Jesus.} It is also possible that Mark learned much from the fishermen disciples with which he kept company, and you do find the word “boat” mentioned most often in the Gospel of Mark as compared to the other three Gospels. Actually the word in the King James Version is “ship”, to distinguish as a boat that you sail as well as row; and this is better than the New King James Version of “boat”. Well, if you look at the number of times the Greek word for “ship”, the word “ploion” for sailing vessel, it is found 13 times in Matthew, 8 times in Luke, 6 times in John; but a dominant 16 times in Mark. {It might even be possible to outline the first 8 chapters of Mark around “ship” as in the King James Version or “boat” as in the New King James Version, since it has a good spread in the first 8 chapters: Mark 1:19; 1:20; 4:1 (notice that jump of 3 chapters that we are use to from Old Testament quotes with sometimes clusters of sub-quotes for support, and we do find a cluster in Mark 4); 4:36 and 37; 5:2; 5:18; 5:21; 6:32; 6:45; 6:47; 6:51; 6:54; 8:10; 8:13; and 8:14.} Of course with further study on boats or ships in the Bible and on John Mark, we may decide that it was just the fascination of a city boy from Jerusalem with the fishing and fishermen of Galilee.

Since most of our study of Mark is a condensed version of Mark based on the New King James Version, we will first look briefly at the times “boat” in prominent in Mark, remembering as I was instructed in the Navy that a boat is something you row. {A few years ago as I was out on the Harry S. Truman aircraft carrier, a ship which supports a crew of 5,000 as well as aircraft, the aviators would call it a “boat”; but I think that was in order to irritate those there of the sea-going Navy.} I will start with the place Mark records Jesus instruction to the disciples to make a boat ready by the Sea for such teaching use during the press of the multitude. {It reminds me how that the Son of God who with God Himself made preparation for His life and death from before the beginning of time, also planned ahead while on earth in preparations of things like making a boat ready and also of telling the disciples where the get the young colt for His triumphant entry.}

“But Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea {this is a prior occasion by the sea and recorded in chapter 3 which makes Mark in chapter 4, as we read above, refer to the “And again He began to teach by the sea.”} And a great multitude from Galilee {you see this was a prior time in His home province of Galilee} followed Him, and from Jude and Jerusalem and Idumea and beyond the Jordan {the Jordan River feeds out of the Sea of Galilee southward}; and
those from Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they heard how many things He was doing {how many things Jesus was doing and how many of those Mark records and which one is also something that we wish to discuss in this condensed version of Mark}, came to Him.”

“So He told His disciples {Jesus instructs the disciples, the professional fisherman by trade and living before they met Jesus; and they knew to listen because of how He told them where to catch the most fish, and of how He could walk on water—remember when Mark was written all the life and Ascension of Jesus had taken place, and the faith of John Mark had become very large: and by the way, you will find often certain hind-sight conclusions which were made after the event in the life of Jesus, but it is far more important to operate with the assumption that the earth is round instead of flat if I might use somewhat of a parallel parable.}  that small boat {really a small ship if you wish to be nautically correct} should be kept ready for Him because of the multitude, lest they should crush Him.” (Mark 3:7-9)

The reason was very practical to keep this multitude that came from all Palestine and the surrounding Gentile areas from crushing Him. And when it says Jesus told them to “keep ready for Him” I would imagine that it was manned by a competent fisherman every time Jesus and the disciples got close to the Sea, knowing that many fishermen of Galilee would be honored for that closeness to Jesus, and perhaps even a city boy like John Mark would volunteer after instructions from Simon Peter. But in progressing on this condensed version of the Gospel of the Mark as a possible Gospel of the Boat, let us look at some instances of the word usage in Mark.

First in chapter sequence, as Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee when first beginning His Galilean Ministry, and as recorded in Mark 1:16-20, where He chose 4 of His apostles from the fishing boats, the word “boat” been mentioned twice. Once, when He saw James and John, the sons of Zebedee in the boat with their father mending nets. You see that the boat was quite larger than a rowing boat as the record says that when James and John immediately heeded the call of Jesus to be fishers of men, they left behind in the “boat” the father Zebedee with a certain number of hired servants. Of course, before James and Son was the similar call to Simon and Andrew who were casting their nets into the Sea of Galilee.

Second, we looked at previously in chapter 3, and from another incident along the Sea with His disciples and the vast multitude, where Jesus passed the instruction to keep a ship in the standby mode (Mark 3:7-9).

Third, we also looked at previously in the introduction to Mark 4, where the prepared boat had to be used because of the press of the multitude (Mark 4:1,2). And what a pleasure it must have been for those people to have the view of the Sea of Galilee, as they faced it, and of the ship and of Jesus as He taught them in parables. {You would almost think that there would be more parables on the sea, but there is when you are willing to consider the quieting of the wind and sea in Mark 4 by Jesus as a parable, and we must come to that in proper order.}

And the fourth is that very occasion, recorded in Mark 4:35-41, where the same day as the teaching of the other parables, Jesus recommended to the disciples that they would cross over to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, and “they took Him along in the boat as He was.” (Mark 4:36) {I really don’t know what this means except perhaps Jesus had on His Sunday best instead of clothes for fishing.} And the record said that other “little boats” went along with them, once again re-inforcing what we thought about the boat prepared for Jesus being more a sailing ship.
A great windstorm came along, and the waves beat into the boat to the extent that the ship was filling up with water; but Jesus, overcome by His human frailties of tiredness (“in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin”) was asleep in the “stern”. The stern is the rear of the boat for you landlubbers, and even enough preparation had been made that He had a pillow, or perhaps that was the normal gear aboard for this kind of fishing vessel of the Sea of Galilee.

They woke Jesus up, saying to Him, “Teacher {isn’t that significant that after a day of teaching by the Sea, the disciples called Him “Teacher” although Jesus came to Galilee first “preaching” the Gospel of the Kingdom (Mark 1:14)...Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing.” These fisherman knew that with that wind and the waves and the filling up of the ship, they were about to go down; and the probability of survival in the waves of such a storm was minimal. How many stories through the generations in Galilee must have been told of many storms although not necessarily the “perfect storm”. It may not have been a perfect storm, but it was the perfect time for Jesus to present a real life parable on faith. Jesus stood up in the ship. He “rebuked” the wind like He might rebuke a Pharisee. He said to the sea with authority, “Peace be still”: the wind ceased and there was a great calm. What do you think was the response of the disciple fisherman to this parable of life?

“And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, “Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!” (Mark 4:41) {How do you think Mark knew about this? Probably because he had tagged along with the twelve, was in one of the little boats, or got it firsthand from Simon Peter.}

What was the moral of the story, to use our current jargon? Or in the context of Mark 4 and parables, what was the gist of this life parable? {and don’t forget that all parables are very life based} Well, here it is from Jesus Himself. Just like later He would seal the meaning of a parable with an Old Testament quote, and sometimes seal an Old Testament quote with explanation with a parable, even know He seals the parable of faith testing with a teaching from the Master Teaching, a challenge if you would to faith in Him and in His authority. “But He said to them, ‘Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?” (Mark 4:40)

Jesus knew what they had not yet come to know, or understand. That He was the original co-creator of the universe with God the Father and the Holy Spirit; and even when He accepted certain limitations of human existence by being born of a certain virgin Mary, He had not given up His godhead of power over the works of nature. You will find this very evidence of power over nature in 7 signs that is the prime theme of the Gospel of John in order “that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.” Could that be what Jesus was after, having laid the foundation of the new kingdom teachings that day? Certainly, He was after faith in Himself and in His authority as the Son of God. {Shortly after this and in Casarea Phillipi as recorded in Mark 8:27-30, Jesus will call for a confession of faith on the part of the twelve apostles. Would it not be interesting to hear what Judas Iscariot said as Peter replied, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Mark 8:29 with a little addition from the other Gospels). We know don’t we: like the tares in the churches today and the victims of the Falling Away, he would make that confession of faith in the words of his lips while his heart was far away from Jesus.}

Many of the other incidents, the going about to do work and good, of Jesus center around this very “boat”. (1). At the end of this incident above on the Sea, and with the assistance of the calm sea to get them there, they came to the other side of the Sea in Mark
where Jesus, even immediately as He came out of the boat, was met by a crazy, wild, and strong man that was Demon possessed. {Wow, was it every demon possession as the record says that about 2,000 evil spirits went out of him. No wonder that it made him so strong, so wild, and so noisy in the mountains.} You recall the famous story of how Jesus gave the evil spirits permission to go into a herd of swine; and how when the swine could not stand the evil spirits, the swine ran off a cliff into the sea and drowned.

The boat immediately after this, in Mark 5:18, is mentioned again as Jesus “got into the boat” and as the former demon possessee begged to go with Jesus. Jesus told him to go home to his own friends, tell them “what great things the Lord has done for you”, and how the Lord had compassion on you. If this is another life parable; and it is, what is the moral. Well obviously, the moral is that Jesus has power over the devils, the devil, and the illnesses of men. Likewise, the moral is that Jesus generated another witness to Himself and His authority, for the record said that as the man began to proclaim what Jesus had done for him, all the people of Decapolis marvelled—the region on the other side of the Sea of Galilee.

After the rejection at Nazareth in Galilee of Mark 6:1-6, and the sending out of the twelve to practice what they had learned from Him {of course, as the record says only He had given them the power to do so, and this power to do so coming from Jesus is so important as we would consider the validity of the many faith healers today}. And after the report from the disciples, Jesus advised a “boat” trip to a desert place across the sea where they could rest. (Mark 6:32) We might briefly mention in passing how this first faith healers did it.

“So they went out and preached that people should repent. {do you hear that from today’s faith healers, hardly a popular thing for a crowd to be hearing that has their mind only on their own sickness} And they cast out many demons {first was the preaching of repentance, then the healing was secondary, “And they cast out...”}, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them.” (Mark 6:12,13) {And by the way, do you think the disciples sold the oil to the persons being healed as faith resources. Remember what Peter said as he was healing people, “Freely we have received, freely we give.”}
was also accomplished with the daughter of Jairus who died while Jesus was enroute, but when Jesus took the child by the hand, saying “child arise” (Mark 5:41), the 12 year old girl immediately arose and walked. So it was after Jesus walked on the Sea in Mark 6:45-52, after teaching and feeding the five thousand, this time Jesus making His disciple get into the boat to go to the other side at Bethsaida, there on a mountain to pray (by the way the incident here with Jesus alone on the land and the disciples in the middle of the Sea, is the occasion that we must look at in more detail later where the disciples saw Jesus walking past them on the Sea); but when they anchored off shore from the land of Gennesaret, and when they came out of the boat (Mark 6:54), in every city and village the sick were laid near where Jesus walked, “and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment, and as many as touched Him were made well.” (Mark 6:56) Although in the region of Tyre and Sidon (Mark 7), Jesus heals the daughter of a Syro-Phonecian woman, casting out the demon from a distance, it was in response to a treasured saying of faith, later however when departing that region through Decapolis back to the Sea, Jesus once again healed with a touch. This time it was the touch of Jesus in his ears and on his tongue (Mark 7:31-37). The man’s ears were opened and he spoke plainly.

The Parable of the Leaven of the Bread in the Boat

After the feeding of the four thousand in Decapolis, immediately they “got into a boat” (8:10), sailing to the region of Dalmanutha, where it seems that Jesus could do no mighty works because of the disputing Pharisees, so they escaped via the boat to the other side where Jesus taught in the boat about the parable of the feeding of first five thousand and then four thousand. Actually the whole parable of the boat, on the way between Dalmanutha and the Pharisees they had left behind and on the way to Bethsaida, where He would heal the blind man with a touch of His hands...that is, the parable in the boat started with Jesus’ warning to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. Recall what the Pharisees had disputed about as they were seeking a sign from heaven, testing Jesus (8:11,12). What does this remind you of? Yes, the temptations from Satan Himself in the wilderness who also wanted Jesus to subvert from prayer and fasting by performing certain miracle-signs as turning stones into bread, and as flying down from the top of the Temple.

“But He (Jesus) sighed deeply in His spirit, and said, ‘Why does this generation seek a sign? Assuredly, I say to you, no sign shall be given to this generation.’” (Mark 8:11,12)

In reality, Jesus had been performing many miracle-signs of healing, and feeding, and teaching; and the Pharisees knew that, it was because of these signs and the multitudes that went after Jesus that they had come out into this far away region to dispute with Him. They wanted the kind of signs like Satan wanted, signs of a kingdom of power and like David and Solomon. Jesus sighed so deeply because He knew all this, but also because he knew that these religious leaders, perhaps even Saul was among them as a Pharisee of the Pharisees and even a spokesman for them, were representative of the majority of the people; further that when He rejected their concept of the “kingdom”, there would inevitably come the Crucifixion.

You begin to see the relationship to the parable of the leaven in the boat when you see how the teachings of Jesus turn in the boat toward words that are very similar to the very description of parables of Mark 4.

“Why do you reason because you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive nor understand? (Remember understanding for the authorized is to come through parables.) Is
your heart still hardened? {The Pharisees had hardened hearts that kept them from understanding parables, or that would appreciate the meaning of miracle-signs except for personal use and for power.}

“Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? {A hardened heart grows blindness and deafness like the Pharisees, which can be summarized as a lack of faith.} And do you not remember?” {While faith grows a remembrance and understanding of the teachings of Jesus, a lack of faith grows selective memory.}

“When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments did you take up?” They said, Twelve. ‘Also when I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of fragments did you take up?’ And they said, Seven. So He said to the , ‘How is it you do not understand”’ (Mark 8:17-21)

What Jesus was after from the parable of leaven in the boat was a recognition and confession of Himself as the Son of God. This the Pharisees refused to do in spite of all the miracle-signs of power that only the Son of God can do, He had spread all around Palestine, and the Pharisees knew about them. I am sure the disciples pondered this parable of the boat, so that when later in the towns of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus pointedly asked the disciples who they thought He is, Peter replied for them, “You are the Christ.” (Mark 8:27-30) This was what Jesus had been teaching to hear, performing miracles to hear, feeding thousands with a few loaves to hear, walking on water and disputing with the Pharisees for, in order to get recognition from His own disciples that He was and is the Son of God, the Promised Prophet Messiah of the Old Testament. {Christ is the Greek word for the Hebrew word of the Old Testament Messiah.} You know, Jesus had patiently led them step by step, but enough was enough. It was time for a little faith that He by His actions and teachings and miracles was the Christ of the Old Testament. It was time to go beyond the hardened heart of the religious teachers of the day to a faith in Jesus.

The Second Half of the Gospel of the Kingdom

That brings us to the second half of the Gospel of the Kingdom, which by the way is also the end of the boat references. You might call Mark 1-8:30, with in Mark 1 the “beginning of the gospel of the kingdom” and in 8:30 the confession of faith from the twelve apostles that Jesus is the Christ {other Gospels record the complete confession as “thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”}; and the rest of Mark from Mark 8:31-33 through Mark 16 as the “Gospel of the Kingdom through the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ”.

“And He began to teach them that the Son of Man {recall the Son of Man is the favorite expression of Isaiah for the suffering servant, the Messiah which Jesus identifies with since He knows that it refers to Him since it was through His Spirit that He put it in Isaiah in the first place}... the Son of Man must suffer many things {yes, sounds like Isaiah}... and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes {all the religious leaders of God’s chosen nation of Israel, like the Pharisees of Dalmanutha}...and be killed, and after three days rise again.” (Mark 8:31)

Jesus needed a lot more teaching and showing in life parables for the disciples to understand this; for Peter, as representative and as the spokesman for the group, rebuked Jesus for speaking this loudly and openly as he knew that it would inevitable lead to Jerusalem and Crucifixion by the Roman government. Jesus recognized Satan in the voice and attitude of Peter, saying “get behind Me Satan”. And that needed teaching on the requirement of crucifixion is the rest of the story. A story we need also for salvation, and in order to share the influence of Jesus with the rest of the world. Without the crucifixion and resurrection, the story of Jesus would be no more than that of a Prophet. But by being crucified, and in the manner His character was shown in
crucifixion—also the silence with which He took if which spoke to others volumes that perhaps He could do something about it and chose not too—Jesus thereby showed “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.”
Chapter 7: WITH COMMENTS

What more is there for Jesus to teach His disciples, including us, since we are determined to be influenced by Christ and to Learn Christ as the first disciples learned Christ, not as church members are learning Christ today in the period of the Falling Away? What more can Jesus do for miracles? And should He not stay away from Jerusalem since He knows that the religious leaders will try to kill Him. Yes, unless death is His plan, and the plan of God from before the beginning of time; and we know the latter to be true. And in the very nature of the Gospel of Mark as a Gospel of Action and Boats, of the Kingdom and Parables, the teachings and miracles with the final and ultimate miracles of death, resurrection, and Ascension come rapidly in Mark 8:34-16:19,20.

A Condensed Version

Mark 8:34-38: Jesus teaches that His death is also a parable, without using that word, in that any disciple who truly follows Him into the kingdom must also take up a cross, must lose his life for Jesus and the gospel of the kingdom, and must give priority to the soul over what the world can offer. If any human is ashamed of Jesus and His words in his own sinful generation, then Jesus will be ashamed of him when He comes in power and glory with the angels at the Second Coming.

With Comments

{Yes, already Jesus is teaching about the Second Coming, even before the First Coming has been terminated.}

A Condensed Version

Mark 9:1-13: Before the sealing of the Supreme Position of Jesus in the Universe at the Mount of Transfiguration, and with testimonies from Elijah and Moses, Jesus teachings about the power of the kingdom of God. Considering the leaven of the Pharisees and other religious leaders, their influence if you would, Jesus needed a little knudge toward faith on the part of the disciples. On the high mountain, with Peter, James, and John, Jesus was first transfigured before them with His clothes become shiny, snowy white; with the appearance of Elijah and Moses, holding conversation with Jesus; and then the supreme testimony of God to Jesus in order to elicit faith from the disciples. The Pharisees had played their final card, recall that the Pharisees also believed in a body resurrection, and now Jesus and God were playing a card to elicit faith from the future leaders of the church—Peter, James, and John. Like at the baptism by John, the voice from heaven came, saying “This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him.” (Mark 9:7) These events on the Mount were the answers to the deep sigh from Jesus as the Pharisees sought to spread their venomous leaven by disputing.

On the way down the mountain, Jesus told Peter, James, and John to tell no one until He had risen from the dead. So how did Mark hear about it? Peter told him, I am sure. What they really pondered about then was not what the appearance of Elijah and Moses meant, it obviously meant that Jesus was to be respected right up there with the most revered of the forefathers and prophets; nor did they ponder as much about the voice of God the Father from heaven with approval of Jesus, setting Him apart from other Prophets in that He is and was the only Son of God, and hence to heed the disciples to listen to Him more than the Pharisees or even Moses and Elijah. What they were more concerned about now was some of the other religious leaders of the nation said, which was also common knowledge among the people in the nation, and that was that Elijah must come first before the Messiah—Son of God? Jesus reminds them of John the Baptist, who did come before Jesus, much in the same mannerism of the Prophet Elijah, and
how he was killed. You can read in the Old Testament and in the other Gospels about these
details of Elijah.

“And He said to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you that there
are some standing here who will not taste death till they
see the kingdom of God present with power.’” (Mark 9:1)

With Comments

And from reading the rest of the story in Acts, with the Coming of the Holy Spirit in great
power on the first day of Pentecost after the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus, we know
this to be the kingdom of God coming in great power, an event beheld by all 12 of the
apostles except Judas Iscariot who fell by transgression. You might say that Judas working
with Satan and the established religious leaders of the nation was representative of the
nation itself, represented in the fig tree which Jesus cursed without fruit, representative of
the desolation of the abomination as in a few years the Temple and Jerusalem would be
destroyed by the Roman General Titus, and representative of the whole nation who after
one week, according to Daniel, one week after the nation of Israel cut off the Messiah
would be desolate of any more salvation. The one week, of course, representative only one
short year for salvation in Israel.

A Condensed Version

Mark 9:14-29: Evidently the other 9 disciples needed the more faith messages of the
mountain, they had let the scribes draw them by way of the leaven of unbelief into a
dispute centered around their inability to heal the mute son of one of the crowd. That we
are dealing with faith and lack of faith in the leaven is made clear in Jesus’ response to all
present.

“How long shall I bear with you? {the end was
getting much closer for the death and resurrection and ascension}
O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? {only one more year Jesus and
God would bear with the unbelief, rebellion, and abominations of
the nation of Israel: you can see that in the wording of “O faithless
generation...”} Jesus always looking for signs of faith, found it in the
father of the boy after his description of the long-standing illness of
the boy, how the spirit within him would convulse him into the fire or
water in order to destroy him. Jesus did get the famous response of
faith from the father, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief.” (Mark 9:24)

With Comments

Did this time, Jesus use the touch of faith for healing as in most of the faith-healings. Yes,
after He rebuked the deaf and dumb spirit to come out of the boy, and after with removal
of the unclean spirit, when the boy became like dead and the crowd thought he was dead,
the record says that “Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.” What do
you think that this life-parable taught even beyond that of the necessity of faith? Yes, the
power of Jesus over what seems like death; and later of death itself. “It was not possible
that the very Son of God, nor of God the Father’s power, that He should be beholden or
obligated to death.” Jesus as the Son of God, and God Himself, are eternal life incarnate
or personnification. They can not more be the victims of death than they can be victims of
the forces of nature which they in the beginning Created.

A Condensed Version With Comments

Mark 9:30-32: Another Forecast by Jesus of His death and resurrection on the third day.
Jesus definitely wanted the disciples to know that His death and resurrection, much like the

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preparation of the boat from the press of the crowd, was His plan and the great eternal plan of God. He, nor God, would be a victim of a crucifixion plotted by the religious leaders, approved by the crowd, and executed by the Roman government at the request of the leaders and crowd. The rejection of the very Son of God would by His own chosen people and nation would be complete even as the abomination of desolation, one year from the crucifixion, would also be complete until the Fulness of the Gentiles was finished.

“Then they departed from there {there was the region of Caesarea Phillipi} and passed through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know it. For He taught His disciples {Jesus must concentrate on faith for the disciples that can overcome all, primarily the leaven of the religious leaders and the lack of power to heal a little boy}...and said to them, ‘The Son of Man is being betrayed {Judas and Satan were at work already in the evil hearts of the leaders}...into the hands of men {we know who those hands are}, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day. ‘ But they did not understand this saying, and were afraid to ask Him.” (Mark 9:30-32)

The crucifixion, Jesus knew, would discourage their faith; and the resurrection, obviously a demonstration of the power of Jesus and God, would revive their faith. But the problem, you see, is that the leaven and the lack of understanding was still too strong, overcoming their faith; and like in the boat where they were chastised and several incidents later for unbelief, they “were afraid to ask Him.”

A Condensed Version with Comments

Mark 9:33-10:31: Jesus continues to teach the disciple intensely. At Capernaum in Galilee, He taught of how the top positions in the kingdom of God comes only by being a servant of all, by becoming like a little child; also when John told Jesus of seeing a person not of their little group casting out demons in the name of Jesus and how the disciples had forbid him, Jesus tells some important things which will help us as we develop understanding and toleration for the tares and the wheat: (1) Do not forbid anyone of any group for working a miracle in the name of Jesus; (2) Such a person of another group can not first work a miracle in Jesus’ name then “soon afterward speak evil of” Jesus (Mark 9:39); (3) Those not against Jesus and His disciples, those who can do a miracle in the name of Jesus and who find it difficult afterwards to speak evil of Jesus are on the side of Jesus and disciples; (4) Even a cup of water given to a disciple of Jesus in the name of Jesus and because the disciples belong to Christ, will give the members of these other groups a reward from Jesus. How the fundamentalists in this day of their warfare in the SBC against what they call the moderates, need this message of toleration and moderation for those not of their Darby and Scofield moral majority group.

The opposite of a cup of water in the name of Jesus and for those who belong to Jesus is a use of influence or other offenses which causes any “little one of faith” to stumble. Each and every person who comes to Jesus, even after much intellectual seeking and obstacle removal, must come ultimately like a little child with simple faith in Jesus and God; so that when Jesus talks about “whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble”, it includes but goes beyond little children to all disciples that are children of God, and the very influence toward stumbling, being the opposite of a cup of water in the name of Jesus and because they belong to Jesus, the punishment also the opposite of the reward, is so great as the viable alternative would be to hand a millstone about their neck and be thrown into the Sea. Did you hear that Stanley and other fuedamentalists who destroyed the careers, work, and perhaps even overthrew the faith of some, as they created warfare in the SBC years ago, and have sustained it quietly all these years? Or likewise what about the influence these moderate men of God could
have had on little children of faith as pastors, teachers, and denominational workers. You have destroyed that also.

We have three groups in succession that we are dealing with here, from the teachings of Jesus, and before we wrestle with toleration of the tares and the wheat: (1) those not of the most prominent group of Jesus’ disciples {call them the OTHER DISCIPLES}, who perform a miracle in the name of Jesus, and therefore can not quickly speak evil of Jesus; (2) those who give a drink of water or materially {call them the OCASSIONAL SUPPORTERS} to those disciples who belong to Christ, who will get a reward in this life and perhaps in the next for that cup of water; and (3) those who cause little children of faith to stumble with offenses {call them the INFLUENCES FOR STUMBLING}, the opposite of a cup of water. So to be thorough on the teachings of Jesus, we must deal with five groups.

The Tares and the Wheat;
The Other Disciples;
The Ocassional Supporters; and
The Influencers for Stumbling.

Whatever, we know that even as Jesus is down to the nitty-gritty of what members of the kingdom of God must know about His death and resurrection, also it what disciples need to know about other characteristics of kingdom membership. It is a unique eternal kingdom, yet one established with power with the coming of the Holy Spirit in power; and therefore the characteristics required for citizenship will be unique and eternal. While it is obvious as to the difference between the local church and the kingdom of Christ which will have members of every nation, language, and region, the difference between the one church of the body of Christ and the kingdom of Christ. One difference we must consider is that while the one church never becomes more than the total Temple of Christ in the fulfilled kingdom of the new earth and new universe, the kingdom of Christ must also have some amount of materialism and government because of the vast size of every nation, kindred, and tongue.

The horrows of hell taught by Jesus Himself in Mark 9:42-50, and lead into by the criticism of stumbling, no doubt surprised the disciples even as it surprises many today, not stopping to think that Jesus quotes three times from the Old Testament letting us know that teachings about hell are not new or novel, the quote being three times, “Their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.” (Isaiah 66:24 and Mark 9:44,46, and 48). Jesus calls this “hell”, and it is to be avoided at all cost to the extent of cutting off all pleasures of the world to the extent of losing a right arm. Don’t let your hand offend; don’t let your foot offend; and don’t let your eye offend you; and that these are possible offenses that can prevent entrance into the “kingdom of God” is made clear by Jesus in Mark 9:47 of how entrance into the kingdom of God with one eye would be better than entrance into hell. Yes, now Jesus has turned around the fear of the disciples to ask about what they did not understand, to a real fear of offences that could cause an entrance into the very fearful hell!

And Jesus goes beyond this into more eschatalogy, and so quickly that we almost miss it, as He says, “For everyone will be seasoned with fire....” (Mark 9:49), which is the same refined and made white of the end times of the book of Daniel. How the final fires of the end time as the elements melt with a fervent heat will be on all until the Second Coming where one in the field is taken up and another in the home, and so on. Also we almost miss the next phrase of that sentence, “...and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt.” Those
sacrifices of a cup of water and miracles in the name of Jesus, those sacrifices of the five groups previously identified, all have the caveat that conclusions about them must be seasoned with a dash of salt. What is the required caveat?

“Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor (if a kingdom member or disciple lose their distinction as salt or a kingdom member)... how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another.” (Mark 9:50)

[COMMENT: Have salt in your own lives as a kingdom member, and let that salt be seen by others by having peace between you and fellow kingdom members, not seeking the first positions, not forbidding others, and not exerting influences for stumbling. Yet the clincher on those that eliminate themselves from the kingdom with their stumblings and falling aways comes next in: (1) the unsound doctrines of people like the Pharisees who substitute the laws and teachings of men on marriage and divorce, and outright rebellion against God on the subject as Jesus taught in Mark 10:1-12; (2) those who forbid Jesus to touch the little children received the rebuke of Jesus of how the very kingdom of God is like little children in Mark 10:13-16; (3) how a grown up rich young ruler who kept the Ten Commandments outwardly and according to the moral majority, must like a little child also give up priority for the other toys of great possesions in his life in favor of the cross and treasure in heaven, in Mark 10:13-22; and (4) when the disciples could not take the dominant concept of God's blessings of prosperity the equivalent of salvation, like many evangelists can not do today, Jesus explains what is impossible with men is possible with God, Mark 10:23-31. Is he talking about the same thing, all the way from the discussion with the disciples about who will be the greatest in the kingdom, through the other disciples, and cup of water, and stumbling and little children, and hell, right up to disputations with the Pharisees over the very popular marriage and divorce, to the rich young ruler with the subsequent explanation of who can be saved by the power of God. Yes, you see that as Jesus adds the final comments at the end of this greatness in the kingdom of God passage, in Mark 9:33-10:31.]

“But many who are first will be last, and the last first.” (Mark 10:31)

They are still in the kingdom of God; and will be part of the kingdom of God that spreads out from Jerusalem to the whole world: but some will be last and some first. You know the saying, “Be careful what you say to a fellow employee as you may be working for him someday.” Even so be careful of your treatment of the first and last tares, the first and last wheat, and the others as they may wind up being first in the government of the kingdom of God as finalized at the end of time.

Condensed Version with Comments

Mark 10:32-34: A third Forecast by Jesus of His death and resurrection. There is absolutely no entrance into the kingdom of God now or when it comes to fruition as the new heaven and new earth, and Jesus continues, a third time, to teach his disciples on the imminent necessity of His death and resurrection. Does He add anything to this third teaching as compared to the other two. Yes, as we previously discussed, He gives them more details designed to engender faith, just like the predicted details of the Old Testament about the crucifixion and resurrection can engender faith in Jesus as the Promised Messiah-Christ. You recall. How He will be betrayed to the chief priest himself, with the scribes, who are already trying to kill Him; how they will sit in judgment on Jesus to condemn Him in a mock trial and then deliver Him to the Romans to be crucified, since the Jews under the government of the Roman Empire can not themselves legally
bring the penalty of death.

**Mark 10:35-45:** Greatness or Firstness or Pre-eminence in the Kingdom of God comes by serving fellow-members of the kingdom. Look at the ones today who have taken first place in the kingdom by first places in their churches and denominations, then you will see the ones that are going to be last. The ones that are going to be first, no doubt, you will not see on TV or at the head of a group, but they work quietly and hidden as they work as a servant of the other children of God and of faith.

**Chapter 8: How Did It Get So Personal So Quickly.**

Immediately after Jesus’ first prediction of His death and resurrection in Mark 8:31-33, which of course is also immediately behind the confession of faith from Peter, is the mention of the necessity of a personal cross. This is somewhat surprising, for hardly had the disciples puzzled over His own death on a cross, then He speaks about for them also a cross. Surely, the thought must have entered their mind that all of them were going to Jerusalem in order to be crucified on a cross. No, it turns out that their cross was to be taken up immediately, even before Jerusalem; but we must develop that in this book, and also how the disciples might have even suspected that the death Jesus foretold was to be by crucifixion. First of all, all Palestinians knew that only Rome could legally put a person to death, and that all executions were by the cross. Of course, Jesus had told them in the words of Mark 8:31-33 that the rejection would start with the chief priests and ruling body of the Jewish people, who would hardly have been expected to do anything illegal without a mock trial.

It got intense for the disciples now. Immediately behind their puzzlings of the leaven of the Pharisees, and Peter’s confession of faith in Jesus as the Son of God, and then followed swiftly by Jesus’ first prediction of His death and resurrection, comes this first mention of the personal cross that they must bear.

*“When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, ‘Whosoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.’” (Mark 8:34)*

Those had to be scary words coming right behind the prediction of His own pending death which must come by way of a cross. It would sound to them at first as if He were calling them, and notice Jesus before teaching this called all of the people around Himself as well as the chosen twelve disciples, to go with Him to Jerusalem in order to be crucified with Him. No, He was inviting them to be crucified with Him, but even before Jerusalem. Paul would later make that clear in the writing of Galatians 2:20; of course, of which John Mark was well aware at the time of his writing of Mark, from their time together in the missionary journeys. {At some point, we might need to discuss how much John Mark knew about the teachings and meanings of the teachings of Jesus, at the time He wrote compared to what the twelve understood at that point, and how much understanding from the rest of the Bible should be allowed to crept into a study of Mark. The preliminary answer is all of it, although we want to have some appreciate for the step-by-step teachings of Jesus to His disciples to elicit faith and discipliship. However, since we have all of the recorded truth of the letters of Paul, of the four Gospels, and of the Old Testament, we cheat ourselves in an effort to learn the total truths from God if we neglect any of it. I know that Mark in the writing of the life of Jesus, likewise a story of the cultivation of faith in the disciples, struggled often with an urge to preach the
whole message of the New Testament; at least what he knew of it. And what we will find is that Jesus exposed His first disciples to far more than they could immediately understand, even with the later help of the Holy Spirit to guide them, and that Jesus had to call, after His Ascension, a scholar like the Apostle Paul to explain in great detail, with the writing of 14 books of the New Testament, what Jesus had only time to mention.

Harmony on the Personal Cross

What we might do is to look at the other four Gospel writers from a harmony of the Gospels to see what they heard Jesus teach at this point in His life? It is number 83 in Robertson’s HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS, in the section he harmonizes under “The Special Training of the Twelve Around Galilee.” (Matthew 16:21-26 and Luke 9:22-25 with Mark 8:31-37, and for several reasons to be discussed later Robertsons harmonizes the other three Gospels, John of course not on this passage, around Mark.) Looking at only the comparable verse or verses of this section of the life and teachings of Jesus, we find the following.

“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?” (Matthew 16:21-26)

Matthew did hear the same thing as Mark, it is only that Matthew talks about disciples while Mark talks about the people and His disciples, no doubt, Matthew including those people as disciples as many disciples existed at that time beyond the twelve. It would seem that Mark, even like Paul, would like to emphasize more the extensive nature of discipliship of all who would take up a cross and deny self, both Jews and Gentiles. {Remember that some thing of Mark as the Gospel to the Romans.} Mainly, we begin to understand the nature of the personal cross as: (1) a self denial of pleasures of this world and self direction of life; (2) following in the same paths as Jesus, although that path may not be exactly the same as crucifixion in Jerusalem by the Roman government; (3) a lose of life as the world thinks of life, and for the sake of Jesus which by the way is the only real way to find “life” itself—the subtle implications here that was more food for thought for disciples was that finding this life was both an eternal life and and special blessings in this life; (4) Jesus makes the contrast that goes with the cross of what is the profit in gaining all that the world offers as compared to eternal life.

Along with a cross, this is another word, the word “world” that Jesus offers to puzzle the disciples along with cross. It is a word that Paul will explain, but primarily the Apostle John with years to ponder after the Ascension of Jesus and with the help of the Holy Spirit will explain in I John 2:15-17.

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.” (I John 2:15-17)

What is the world as defined by Jesus and clarified by His Apostle John? It is three things, and that summarizes all that we know of this world in which we live, America or otherwise: lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Lust is “wants” or “desires” of this life that tend to control our life and motivations; and we should contrast pride of life, forbidden here, with the love of the good life which the Apostle Peter recommends in I Peter 3:10-12 {by the way a quote from Psalm 34:12-16} which is essentially living a long time and in peace, also so restraining talking evil, doing good, seeking the peace of righteousness that it pushes out the negatives of lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life. {Peter also mentions righteousness and prayer,
which we must also do later in justice to total truth of and from God.)

We have yet to look at Luke 9:22-25 from the Harmony with Mark on the personal cross.

“And he said unto all {well, with “all” you can see that both Mark and Luke, and I would think that by way of encouragment from Paul would emphasize the wides-spread nature of discipiship beyond that of the twelve}, If any man {you can see that the “any man”, Jew or Gentile, would certainly go with the all} would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, {Luke adds the “daily” which I am sure that Jesus also said; but even if Luke added the total of what Jesus meant as later explained to Paul and Paul to Mark and Luke, then would that not be okay with us in the nature of getting at total truth.} and follow me.” (Luke 9:25)

And I like the translation of Luke as “losing his own self”, giving us also the full meaning from Jesus of how the real self is gained with the losing of the world. The real self is what God and God through Jesus wants for our life. Now, you can not get any more personal than that; and clearly we see that all of the disciples heard Jesus talk about the nature of the cross that not only had to be taken up for discipiship, starting then and before Jerusalem, but also was to be a daily thing starting immediately. {I am sure it took a while for the disicples, the twelve as well as the crowd of disciples, to learn this. We know that one of the select twelve, Judas, never learned it; and that he considered 12 pieces of silver of this world more important than Jesus. He just could not get rid of the materialistic nature of a kingdom of God like the kingdom of David, and right now instead of at the end of time.}

You know this is a fate of a Tare for which we should have some pity and tolerance. Once a Tare, always a Tare, and there is nothing that they can do about it. At least, when someone is stumbling or has been offended, there can be hope still that they are among the wheat. A Tare, like with Lazarus and the rich man, of whom Jesus said the rich man received his reward in the comforts of this life, must also receive all his rewards in this life as there will be zero for him, even torture, in the life to come, and eternally.

Back to a Condensed Version with Comments

However, the comments are getting ahead of the condensed version of Mark itself, so that we will take up again with Mark 10, yet keep in mind that we must come back time and time again to previous chapters and verses for more comments. {I think we see the wisdom of the teaching method of Jesus, which the Spirit of Jesus started in the Old Testament, where you go from the start to the end, and then repeat with more detail, until you have exhausted every mountain peak and valley. Daniel did it; Jesus did it in Matthew 24 and Mark 13; and the Ascended Christ did it through the Apostle John in the book of Revelation.}

Mark 10:35-45: While Jesus just before this makes the third prediction of His death and resurrection, and we must keep in mind that is the prime thrust now of His teaching as we head toward the end of Mark in Mark 16, still He continues to clarify characteristics of kingdom membership. Still He must deal with the dissensions and divisions among His own disciples, recalling that there is still one there that is a Tare, Judas. The Apostles James and John asked for special favor when the kingdom finds fulfillent. They wanted to seat at the right and left hand of Jesus. What do we learn about the coming fulfillment of the kingdom from what Jesus then teaches? (1) Positions in the finalized kingdom have already been determined by God the Father; (2) Positions in the finalized kingdom
are for whom they have been prepared; (3) positions in the kingdom are based on the amount of suffering for Jesus on this earth; (4) positions in the kingdom are based on the amount of servitude to fellow citizens in this kingdom on earth; (5) positions in the kingdom will be a surprise to all as many of the first in this world will be last and the last will be first, get ready for it; and (5) Jesus greatly advances the argument with other puzzling words, that of “drinking the cup” and being baptized, both not references to the Lord’s Supper or water baptism, but reference to a baptism and drinking the cup of suffering for Jesus; and (6) primarily we should see here that the custom among the Gentiles, every prevalent in America today and of American churches, for control and supervision should cause all to heed the challenge of servitude over supervision.  {By the way in order to further understand the government of the fulfilled kingdom since we already know it to be over a multitude so much larger than one country, we should add that Jesus told the twelve in Matthew 19:28 that when He reigned on His throne during the “regeneration” that the twelve will also sit on 12 thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.  Yes, Judas will not be there; but I think Paul will be on one of those 12 thrones over the regenerated nation of Israel; and this regenerated nation is also something that we must consider again, later.}

Furthermore we get some more insight into this cross that Jesus is about to take upon Himself in Jerusalem as “to give His life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45) Is this the first mention of ransom in Mark, or do we find it previously mentioned? Wham...bang, the disciples were hit again. First the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus in three days, then the personal cross, then the difference between the world and the Father, and the Lord’s Supper and baptism as suffering, and now Jesus is giving up His life as a ransom for me. What happened a few verses before, and in Mark 10:32-34, as they saw Jesus headed toward Jerusalem, and “they were amazed” and “they were afraid”, became more puzzling. I can easily think that they walk that road to Jerusalem dizzily, or in a daze. But we do not find a previous usage of “ransom” in Mark. In fact the only other place we find it in the four Gospels is in Matthew 20:28. You might think, at first, that this is the place in Matthew 20 which harmonizes with Mark 10; and so it is. The wording in Matthew 20:28 is very similar to that of Mark 10:45, “...and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

Loss of Servitude over Supervision with Loss of Kingdom Emphasis
How often do you hear of the kingdom of God as contrasted to how often do you hear of the local church, the body of Christ of the church, or of denominations and other man-made groups? Seldom is the kingdom of God mentioned, and that silence surely correlates with the lack of servitude over supervision. The whole world wants to supervise, lording it over a local church or denomination like a Rick Warren or a first in the kingdom. And why do you think there is so little discussion of the kingdom. That is what is going to take over the world at the end of time when the old heaven and old earth pass away and that governs over the new heaven and the new earth. While the headquarters will be at Jerusalem, with the demand that all come there to worship, and with the New Jerusalem which is lowered down from heaven, the multitude of kingdom members will be so large with accumulated believers from the beginning of time until the end, that many nations will be governed out of Jerusalem and Israel, and many more thrones will be sat upon in other nations like the 12 apostles will sit on the thrones of Israel. I think we are even materialistic in our concepts of the spiritual. We want to see new and large brick buildings as representative of the local church; and we want to hear of largeness and financial resources and vast organizations with a lot of high-price administration in our denominations, even of the summer camps as a symbol of wealth. We do not want to hear of any invisible, whether it is the total church which is the body of Christ or of the kingdom. And I think this is one reason that the
fundamentalists so easily bought the inadequate and superficial teachings of Scoffield and Darby on a thousand year kingdom. They still want that materialism of a thousand years in their own homes and on their own lands and with their own positions that they have now.

If Jesus were preaching today, do you not think that you would hear the same message that He preached to the masses, and individually to the twelve. Certainly, it would be the same “gospel of the kingdom”; and indeed it is to the extent that we are faithful to the total content of the Gospels and the Bible. Pick and chose, hunt and peck methodology in Bible study, preaching, and teaching will not get it. There has to be a thorough chapter by chapter and book by book exegesis of the Bible much like B. H. Carroll went through the whole Bible in his lectures with the start of Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, now in the commentaries AN INTERPRETATION OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE. The hunt and peck method of Bible teaching and preaching not only grows generations of a lack of soundness in doctrine, but also promotes the intolerance toward sound doctrine which comes with the Falling Away. Kingdom is mentioned approximately 54 times in Matthew, 19 times in Mark, and 44 times in Luke. Most of these, of course, came from Jesus Himself. How often do you hear of the kingdom from your pulpit as compared to local church, church activities, and even the total body of Christ, the one church? Why do you think that is? Because service in the kingdom of Christ is non-exclusive; there is no profit or credit for the local church in kingdom service; and kingdom service is not considered a function of the pastor in order to earn his salary. We have lost something, and that something is a proper perspective on the kingdom of Christ. If Christ were here today in person, He would have the same message of the 117 times the word kingdom is used. In fact if you were to contrast the messages of Jesus in the New Testament, with their kingdom content, you will find little mention of kingdom in all the other New Testament books. Why, I think it is because of all other major Bible doctrines, Jesus so developed the concept and characteristics of the kingdom, that He did not need to give Paul further revelations on the matter. {Of course, you will remember that Paul through his manuscripts and books left with Mark and Luke that guided in their kingdom emphasis, and when we come to that chapter in this book we will want to see where Mark and Luke used the word “kingdom” independent of a quote from Jesus; and you will also recall that Paul left specific Old Testament quotes with both writers, some quotes from the Old Testament on the kingdom, and that also we want to check out as we get into the “kingdom” emphasis in the book of Mark as well as the rest of the Bible.}
Chapter 9: Kingdoms in Mark & the Bible.

The outline of Mark developed in SOME MORE SOUNDS... centering around “kingdom” as well as Old Testament quotes and the 35 miracles of Jesus in Mark, will be used here as a summary of what Jesus and Mark had to say about the “kingdom”. Also we must add some others, especially on the characteristics of kingdom membership as given by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount and as recorded in Matthew 24. Likewise we must look at some perspective on the everlasting kingdom as contrasted to all kingdoms of this world as Gabriel lead Daniel to understand, and of course, a little from the book of Revelation where the “kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.” And ultimately we must ask ourselves, what difference would it make in our attitude and work for Christ if we add an attitude more like Christ about the kingdom, local church, one church, and denominations; and beyond that what difference would it make in our attitudes toward the wheat and the tares.

Kingdom in Daniel

In order to appreciate the “concept” of the kingdom of God in Mark and the rest of the Bible we need the background which was also in the minds of Jesus’ disciples on Daniel. It is in Daniel that we get the real contrast between the kingdoms of this world like Persia, Greece, and Rome and the kingdom of God. Does it surprise you that the word “kingdom” is used 44 times in the book of Daniel? While Daniel is explaining the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 2:36, it is with the words of how the king is a “king of kings”, and how the God of heaven has given him a kingdom. In 2:39 God through Daniel predicts history after Nebuchadnezzar of how another but inferior kingdom will arise, and then a third kingdom of bronze but which will rule over the whole earth. {Can not help but add here that when we come later to the kingdom of Christ, yes it is also part of Daniel, that while at first it does not rule over the whole earth, and even loses some ground and numbers during the Falling Away as the refinement process kicks in and with the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit; then end goal and fulfillment of the kingdom of Christ will be to rule over the whole new earth under the new heavens.

You know one of the most un-appreciated passages of the New Testament, and yet one of the most significant is found in I Corinthians 15 tells about the Second Coming of Christ and of how Christ will deliver the kingdom up to God the Father.

“Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. {This is a different Christ from the Christ who came first, or it would almost seem; but rather while His goal was only to establish the kingdom at His first Coming, giving many thousands the opportunity to join, the purpose of His Second Coming is to establish the kingdom as the absolute rule over the earth, then deliver that very kingdom to God the Father. He will in the process destroy all other rules, authorities, and power. While we think often of the destruction of the heavens and the earth that must take place before the Second Coming, we tend to think little of the governments and kingdom rules that Christ must destroy in order to rule supreme.} For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. {you know how death and Satan and the man of sin with his army will be among the last rules and authorities to be destroyed}...The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. For ‘He has put all things under His feet’ {here Paul quotes from Psalm 8:6}. But when He say ‘all things are put under Him,’ it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. Now when all things are
made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.”

I want to say this respectfully; however to say it, that Christ had to do all the dirty work at the First Coming and the Second. At the first coming, He gave His life a ransom for many as He died on the cross for the sins of the world. At the second coming God the Father is standing by as Christ subjects all remaining on the earth to Himself. Of course, we know from Revelation and other Scriptures that the thousands of thousands and ten thousands times ten thousands of the angels of God will assist Christ in that dirty work of the Second Coming. Jesus said that He could have also called them to assist during the First Coming, in the Garden when Peter drew the sword; but the crucifixion was the plan and purpose of God for the salvation of the world, at least of that part of the world that had eyes to see and ears to hear. And even this we must attach a grain of salt, because the Scriptures tell us that “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.” And I think we get something of the pain that God the Father suffered as He had to turn His back on Christ temporarily at death on the cross as the pain was to great to look. We see this in the parable, which Jesus got from God the Father and delivered to the world, of the wicked winedressers as They teach of how the tenant farmers killed the owners only Son, the one remaining messenger He could send to get the fruit of the land. How is Jesus going to do this dirty work of government and rule destruction at the end of time? We will come to it in more detail later as we look at the cycles of Matthew 24 and the book of Revelation, but suffice it to say for now that the elements melting with a fervent heat, after the great and real battle of Armagaddeon in the middle east, being set up right now as the forces of Mohammed align against that of the West and Democracy...that is, the elements melting with a fervent heat will take care of government buildings and armies of other kingdoms, and then the Great Judgment with consignment of many rulers into hell with Satan and his angels, will take care of much of the governments. {I heard one preacher of unsound doctrine on the radio a Sunday morning, tell of how the fires of hell are not real heat or burning, but they just feel like it. Well...what can you say! If it smells like a duck and walks like a duck and looks like a duck then maybe it is a duck. And I’m afraid that such preachers are in the category of those so-called Bible scholars of many Universities who parade their Ph.Ds, and ignorance by the way under the disguise of the Jesus Seminar, having the nerve to vote whether Jesus really claimed to be the Son of God, and denying among many other things that approximately two-thirds of the Gospel of John is actually the words of Jesus. These are they of which Paul wrote in II Timothy, who “overthrow the faith of some”; and those of whom Jesus said it would be better for them to have a millstone about their neck and be cast into a lake, than to offend the smallest member of the kingdom.}

**Continuation of “kingdom” in Daniel**

We need the “kingdom” background of Daniel, just like Mark and the first disciples had, when we come to understand what Jesus taught on the kingdom in the 117 times of the Gospels. {Actually when you add the 4 times of the Gospel of John, it is over 200 times.}

In Daniel 2:40 the fourth “kingdom” is a kingdom of iron which like iron will shatter and break in pieces all the other kingdoms; and with the hind-sight of history we now know that to be the Roman Empire. It shattered into many divisions, but still ruled over the world for years. So that in 2:41 that kingdom of Rome is divided since the feet are iron and clay; and then in 2:44 we have the background that we need to proceed into a New Testament study of kingdom, the background of the eternal kingdom to be set up, the kingdom that Jesus Himself set up during the reign of the Roman Empire over Palestine.
“And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.” (Daniel 2:44)

Here we have the germ for what Jesus taught, and what Paul helped to explain in I Corinthians. (1) the God of heaven sets up an eternal kingdom, and the time of establishment is the time of those kings of the Roman Empire; (2) WE must ponder some of how “the kingdom shall not be left to other people” to mean that God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit intervene continuous in the health and welfare of this particular kingdom, much like the law of the Old Testament would not make fit citizens so Ezekiel predicts a new heart to do the will and ways of God; (3) Just like the Roman Empire breaks into many pieces, the kingdom of God will extend across the earth slowly consuming all other kingdoms—and the exact process we have trouble appreciating here. We know how the Roman Empire of iron shattered and consumed the Greek and Persian kingdoms, but while the gospel has been spread to every nation as the fulness of the Gentiles has been ushered in, we do not see the world getting better and better like the kingdom of Christ is taking over and as the post-millineumists predict. How will the kingdom of God consume the others. Surely it must wait past the Falling Away, the shattering of the holy people of God completely of Daniel, past the influence and battle against the man of sin and Satan, past the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from earth, until Christ intervene in Person to protect the camp of the saints outside of Jerusalem, and Himself fight the great battle of Armageddon. {If we find anything different in our study of Daniel and of Mark and the rest of the Bible on “kingdom”, we will of course modify this concept.} (4). And this kingdom of God shall stand forever!

In Daniel 4:3 King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar introduces his second dream, having bought what Daniel told him about the first dream and the everlasting kingdom, with a tribute to the “wonders of the Most High God” and of how “His kingdom is an everlating kingdom” whose “dominion is from generation to generation”. In Daniel 4:17,25, and 32 near the end of the King’s telling of the second dream, where he attributes the dream to an effort of the Most High to let the living know that He rules in the kingdom of men. {This is a good testimony to God as the Great Maker of History who right now exerts a rule in the diverse kingdoms, here called one kingdom of the kingdom of men. It tells us two additional things about the kingdom of men,that (1) God gives the rule of the kingdom of men to whomever He wants, definitely a control over history; and (2) even sets over the kingdom of men the lowest of men. {Certainly when we look at some of our Presidents over the United States, we would have to say that God has indeed set up over our kingdom some of the “lowest of men”.} In Daniel 4:18 the reference is to the King’s own “kingdom”, a kingdom of which the wise men can not interpret his dream, so that he turns to Daniel for interpretation, knowing that he is able since “the “Spirit of the Holy God is in you.” {Peter tells us that this Spirit is also the Spirit of Christ who moved Holy men of God like Daniel.} In Daniel 4:26, part of Daniel’s interpretation of the second dream, and after the bad news of how the King will be crazy for a while, is of how his “kingdom” is assured of existence by God after the King learns that “Heaven rules”. {I am inclined to thinkthat heaven is ruling far more than we know in the history of nation, in the acts of nature, and in governments and armies; and perhaps we can modify our concept of kingdom shattering the other kingdoms to find that God will consume many of these earthly kingdoms before the very end times of the Falling Away. We could perhaps picture a time of no world powers and little government, perhaps a more nomadic time of little kingdoms and powers. We see that, if this is the case, we have a long ways to go with the elimination by God of such super-powers as the United States, China, and Russia, and even the European Community. {I will not at present go into the thoughts of the pastor of the largest church in the world, in Seoul, Korea who believes
that the end anti-Christ, the man of sin and perdition, will be a Syrian Jew that is the leader of the European Union. Yes, he reads all of this out of the first cycles of Daniel; or is it that he reads this meaning into it in the desire for fame and notoriety."

Daniel 4:29 refers again to the King’s palace of his kingdom where after 12 months past the dream interpretation, the fulfillment started, when as the King gloated over his kingdom of Babylon built by the power and glory of the King, a voice falling from heaven said, “the kingdom has departed from you” in 4:31. And after the King ceased to live like an animal, in 4:34 as he praises the Most High God with a “kingdom from generation to generation”, we learn more about this even-then rule of God: (1) His dominion is an everlasting dominion that started with Creation, simply becoming more evident as Jesus announced the characteristics of kingdom membership, and as Jesus showed how the kingdom of heaven had invaded, so to speak, the kingdoms of this world; (2) It is a kingdom, according to the King, where all the inhabitants of the earth are considered as nothing {you might consider the contrast here of the perspective of God as compared to our respect for numbers in nations, in churches, in universities and governments and government and church and university buildings; and how all this is just plain “nothing” to God}; (3) God rules an army in heaven which carries out His will and rule; (4) And God also does according to His own will here on earth, a testimony to God working through history from a king, almost heathen, and many years ago; (5) There is none on earth with enough power to restrain the hand of God; and (6) There is none with enough wisdom, power, and status to say to God, “What have you done?” In Daniel 4:36 the King’s reason returned to him at the same time as his “kingdom”; in Daniel 5:7, we have King Belshazzar on the throne of Babylon, ruler over the inferior kingdom to come behind Nebuchadnezzar, and after seeing at a feast with the vessels of the temple in Jerusalem a finger writing on the wall, offers to all the wise men of his kingdom a third of the kingdom if they can interpret the writing of the finger. As Daniel is brought in to interpret the finger on the wall, in 5:18, starts the explanation with how his King-father was given “a kingdom and majesty” from the Most High God; in 5:21 a re-cap of Daniel to the present king of how Nebuchanezzar, being lifted up with pride and gloating over his kingdom, was driven to become like an animal until he learned that “the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints whomever He chooses” {And if that is not the Great Maker of History making history, what in the world is it, as God Himself chooses the top leaders in the nations, some for good and some for evil.}

And from here on we will choice very discritionarily the ones on the kingdom, that will in particular help in our understand of the kingdom of God established by Christ and secured at His Second Coming. One such is the interpretation in Daniel 5:25-31 of the writing on the wall. Daniel said the inscription was: “MENE, MENE< TEKEL, UPHARSIN”; and the interpretation is “MENE” for God has numbered your kingdom and finished it {evidently the number of the days was completed by God because of the king’s failure to acknowledge God}; “TEKEL” for God has weighed you in the balance of what it takes to be a king over the kingdom of men and found you wanting; and “PERES” for God has divided your kingdom and also given it to the Medes and Persians.

According to Daniel 5:30,31 that very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain; and Darius the Mede received the “kingdom” being 62 years old. Another such insight into the kingdom of God is when King Darius the Mede gives honor to the most high God in Daniel 6:24-27: (1) This God’s kingdom is “the one which shall not be destroyed”; (2) His dominion endures to the very end of time; (3) This God as part of His
kingdom rule “delivers and rescues”, works “wonders and signs” in heaven and earth, which of course would remind one of the rule of Jesus on earth during the first coming as He exercised authority over nature and healing: (4) it is the same God who rules now by delivering Daniel from the Lion’s Den.

In Daniel 7:14, after Daniel himself had a dream and a vision of four beasts, and while Daniel was writing down the dream in the book of Daniel, after the four beasts had their dominions taken away, He saw the second coming, not the First Coming {recall how Daniel and God through Daniel likes to go all the way to the end in a cycle, before later filling in the details. Well, here the first coming is bypassed temporarily in this first sweep in order to go all the way to the end cycle, to an everlasting dominion.} of the “Son of Man” {remember, how often in Mark and the other Gospels and Isaiah does Jesus refer to Himself as “the Son of Man”}.

Here is the description of this Jesus being given a kingdom like other king-beasts have been given a kingdom with the description of: (1) Coming with the clouds in heaven, which reminds us of the way Jesus ascended back to heaven, after His first coming; (2) Jesus, the Son of Man, presents Himself before the “Ancient of Days”, the One seated on the throne with the vast court before Him; (3) Jesus is given “dominion, glory, and power” {no wonder Paul after reading this wrote of Jesus as the name above every name}; (4) All nations, peoples, and languages will serve Him—that just about covers the whole world of the kingdom of men; (5) Jesus’ dominion is an everlasting dominion; (6) Jesus’ kingdom will have no end since it will not pass way; and (7) His kingdom is the only kingdom, which like all the other kingdoms of this world, will not be destroyed.

Fine Tunings of the “Kingdom” in Daniel and Mark

It is in the second cycle or sweep of Daniel, in Daniel 7:15-28, that we get some juicy details about the very end time as a judgment by the Most High still in court session is made in favor of the “saints to possess the kingdom” (7:22). The little horn was making war against the saints, which we know to be the man of sin or perdition with the help of Satan; the man of sin was “prevailing against the saints” {surely the same as the time when the power of the holy people is shattered}; when a Judgment was rendered from the eternal throne in favor of the saints {I’m sure this is also referenced in Revelation as the camp of the saints close to Jerusalem, which could be a close in heart as for example in the United States instead of a physical closeness to Jerusalem}; and then “the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom”. Isn’t that a marvelous time and timing: “THE TIME CAME FOR THE SAINTS TO POSSESS THE KINGDOM.” God had a kingdom from before the beginning, and God certainly, as Daniel alone tells us, quite often overruled the other kingdoms and kings in favor of the progress on His kingdom on earth as well as in heaven; then Christ made the kingdom of God visible on earth with an historical invasion; and the rest of history from the time of Christ until the end of time can be considered as a warfare between the kingdom of Christ on earth and the other kingdoms of this world; until finally under God’s umbrella and direction THE TIME COMES for the saints to possess the kingdom. What do the saints possess! They possess the kingdom of men as well as the kingdom of God and Christ with Christ reigning over the kingdom.

Let us pause to ask a question here: as in this chapter we pass from the awesome nature of futuristic predictions in Daniel centered around the kingdom to the kingdom in Mark will Mark seem like a letdown. It should not when we consider that Christ is introducing the full extent of His kingdom in the teachings of Mark; that is the very King of this kingdom Himself who is introducing us to His own kingdom; and that is we come to appreciate the fulness of the parables, as God and the Spirit give us eyes to see and ears to hear of the nature of the kingdom of God and Christ, it certainly should not be a let down. It should be a lift up! We need to recapture some of the excitement of the teachings of Christ as Jesus comes to earth from before
the very throne of God, and from the Ancient of Days, to tell us what God has told Him to entrust to us about the eternal kingdom. And when at the Mount of Transfiguration, like at the baptism of Jesus by John, God the Father says to LISTEN TO HIM, we are cautioned that the very Ancient of Days has entrusted to His own Son a message and messages on the kingdom that He wants us to understand! And just because Mark is a little book, and a book from a non-apostle with a semi-checkered past, the teachings of Jesus in Mark are still the same teachings of the other Gospels and the rest of the Bible; and the fact that John Mark carried his treasure in earthen vessels even as we do, should also help us appreciate his come back in service to the Lord Jesus Christ. {He quite the first missionary journey with Paul and Barnabas for some reason which we must explore before the conclusion of this book; although he went with Barnabas on a second as Paul and Barnabas split; and of course near the end of Paul’s life he told Timothy to bring John Mark as he was “profitable to me for the ministry”. I would call that a significant comeback in the eyes of the greatest of all Apostles, Paul, if not also in the eyes of the Lord Jesus Christ. And just look at what the little Gospel of Mark has done for all of us, being an abbreviated and action version of the life of Jesus.}

The Kingdom of the American Democratic Faith.
While much has been said in other chapters about the American Democratic Faith, and even more in previous books such as SOME MORE SOUNDS and THE SOUNDS OF SOUND FAITH, only now with a consideration of some of the meanings of “kingdom” can you appreciate the phrase of “the kingdom of the American Democratic Faith.” It is a kingdom of government, a kingdom of “ideas” and the intellectual and of the history of American thought, that like all other kingdoms of men will be shattered ultimately by the kingdom of God and Christ. {Rather than repeat all the time the kingdom of God and Christ, we can easily just write the kingdom of God, especially since we know according to II Corinthians that when Christ ultimately reigns supreme over all men, then Christ will deliver this kingdom to God the Father.} I think hardly anyone would deny the influence of the United States in the world today and as a super-power, especially after the demise of Russia as a legitimate super-power, and the influence that the United States has in the world in the direction of the American Democratic Faith. Indeed, some speculate, legitimately so that since there were no real weapons of mass destruction as a cause for attack in Iraqi, that the United States had the goal of a certain liberalization of the Middle East in the favor of democracy and of the nation of Israel. And certainly as all rules of men must be shattered by the kingdom of God before the end, so also the kingdom of the American Democratic Faith must be overthrown in favor of the faith of the Bible and of Christ. Could it be that when in Daniel, the power of the Holy people is shattered—indicating that even the power of the saints must be shattered by the kingdom of God, that it closely relates to a demise in the super-power status of the American Democratic Faith, synonymous no doubt with the completion of the Fulness of the Gentiles and the gospel being spread to every nation?

Well, again back to the Condensed Version with Comments with some of The 35 Miracles of Mark

Mark 10:46-52: A touch of faith without the touch of Jesus as the blind man Bartimaeus is healed of his blindness. Jesus did not have to touch a person in order for them to be healed as we saw previously about the Greek woman of Mark 7:24-30 who came home to find that Jesus had healed her daughter from a distance, in reponse to her saying of faith about the dogs eating crumbs of the table. Does this incident of faith healing on the part of Jesus
help us in any way in dealing with the charlatans today, or is it that we must exercise a toleration for them as of another group more than even of the toleration of the Tares. WE do know that at the judgment many will refer to the marvelous works that they have done in the name of Jesus in order to hear Jesus respond with, “I never knew you. You that work iniquity.” And we know that of all the marvelous works that we can think of today which would help so-called Christian workers to deceive themselves into their “marvelous works” at the head of the list, along with building large church buildings and donating vast amounts of moneys and occupying large places of church government, would be the marvelous meetings of faith healing. {A little reality from Jesus does make you stop and think on the realities of the Toleration of the Tares.}

That lesson for us is: (1) immediately the man received His sight when Jesus said he was made whole; and (2) Jesus said His “faith has made you whole”. It was the man’s own faith which made Him whole, which of course, makes us think that if a person has faith to be made whole in a distant meeting with a famous faith-healer, that they also have faith to be healed on the road, or anywhere else God is. You will recall, by the way, that Jesus saw God healing from heaven for thousands of years; and He said that is where He learned it.
God Himself told three of the first disciples—James, John, and Peter—to listen to Jesus; and you need to listen carefully when Jesus teaches something, in a parable or otherwise; for there is far more to what He is teaching than the obvious. Take for example when He told the story of Lazarus and the rich man, and how the rich man had received his rewards while here on earth, the natural conclusion being that a person can so live in this world as to receive all the good rewards that He is going to get. It would seem that so to live also eliminates the possibility of rewards in eternal life, making possible only the bad compensations of hell. Would you think that also, those of other groups from the twelve, might receive a reward in this life from giving a cup of water to a disciple in the name of Jesus, that does not imply eternal reward; and the Tares, what are we to think of the Mormon Tares and the Roman Catholic Tares as it is so obvious that they continue the works of false teachers and anti-Christ. Then we must come to the Falling Away that must also encompass all the churches and denominations of the United States; and having already the examples first of the Roman Catholics and of the Mormons, how much further can they also go in a falling away from God, Christ, and the Bible. Church attendance may go up during the Falling Away, although as Daniel writes “the power of the holy people will be destroyed completely.” The Holy Spirit will be withdrawn at the end of the Falling Away, and the influence of the wheat-ly people of God will diminish to nothing in the world. You still will not be able to tell the difference between the tares and the wheat until the work of Christ at the Second Coming, although there will be some separation of the two in the refinement and making white of Daniel during the Falling Away; but the key to the Falling Away is to make the wrong seem right, unsound doctrine and behavior seem like sound doctrine, to make the angels of darkness look like the angels of light, the man of sin look like god and take a place of leadership in the temple, and the false prophets and teachers take over the spiritual leadership. Can it be done? Of course, it will be done; and it is already being done among those two groups mentioned above. It was also done in 6 out of 7 of the first churches of Asia Minor. Can it be done? It is inevitable! Like the members of the seven churches, we must learn to listen individually to the Jesus who continues to speak to us in the remaining spirits of our heart; and although we will find it impossible to close the increasing gap between Christ and the churches, we can find individual assurance in what Jesus and God, at home in our hearts, have to say to us individually. Remembering if not the individual messages to individual members of the seven churches, then remembering Daniel on the Falling Away as those that are wise will shine as the firmament and those who turn many to righteousness as the stars. {We will want to make sure that we will therefore in this chapter consider something of “rightness” or “righteousness”, and something of listening to Jesus on wisdom.}

We must remember that even the Prophet Moses told of the Messiah to come, which Moses effectively referred to as the Prophet Messiah; and of how Moses warned to the nation of Israel that they must listen to this Prophet like himself, this Prophet Messiah, lest they would be cut off from the land and from the designation as the people of God. Listen to Moses briefly before we listen more to Jesus Himself.

“The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear.... I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command
him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.” (Deuteronomy 18:15,18,19)

Mark 4

And we must go back to Mark 4 where we discussed as Jesus presented the reason for teaching in parables to begin a more thorough look at what Jesus really taught in parables. The big parable with explanation from Jesus Himself to the twelve, just after laying out the purpose of parables; and of how “all things are spoken in parables” (4:11) to those who are outside the kingdom, is the Parable of the Sower. I think I can safely say that this is the biggest, most significant parable that Jesus taught: no only did it explain what was about to be the response of Israel to His teachings as only approximately 25% believed, the equivalent of the seed sown on good ground with multi-fruit, compared with the 75% respectively of sown by the wayside, seed sown on stony ground, and seed sown among thorns. Jesus explains the three unfruitful efforts at sowing the seed of faith as (1) sown by the wayside is where Satan immediately snatches away the seed; (2) sown on stony ground is more complicated, as it is immediately received with gladness simulating the conversion experience and leading evangelists, pastors, and churche to think that the new birth has instantly taking place and filling churches with Tares; (3) seed sown among thorns are when some churchmembers hear the word, but three things choke out the Word which we can easily recognize as influences in our churches today, especially where the preaching of the Gospel of Prosperity is often heard—the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things keep the word from being fruitful. By the way another thing that happens when the seed of faith is sown on stony ground is that there can be no root to the life, and when tribulations and persecution which of necessity must come and for the sake of the Word, immediately such a church member stumbles. Does the stumbling not remind us of one who causes offences against the smallest of a kingdom member, which by way of analogy, we would say is one of the church members, pastor or evangelists, or others, who leads that stony heart where the seed was sown to go in the direction of tribulations and persecutions. You know what I mean, many are the churches including one of the largest in Houston where faith must be tested by encouraging members to step in every mud puddle visible and to surround themselves with problems. {It is considered an appropriate challenge to faith.} We will try to express the gist of this parable and the other parables in one concise sentence. First, however, a parable of 3:20-27 which we previously discussed, but have yet to express in a concise sentence.

Gist of Parable #1 (A House Divided Cannot Stand, Mark 3:20-27): Since Jesus heard the scribes from Jerusalem saying that Jesus cast out Satan by the power of Satan, He told the foolishness of Satan casting out Satan, of a kingdom divided against itself, and of a strong man that must first be overcome in order to rob his house. {We will have to ponder if we can apply this to the tares and the wheat. Certainly the scribes would be among the equivalent of the tares, and if Jesus was casting out demons therefore on the side of the kingdom of God, then the tares have to be on the other side of the divided kingdom.}

Gist of Parable #2 (The Seed and the Sower, Mark 4:1-9 and 4:13-20): Four human responses come when people hear the Word of faith, only one of which is fruitful that sown on good soil, and the other three would compare to by the wayside—Satan snatches it immediately—seed sown on stony ground and received with gladness like an instantaneous new birth but there is no root and with tribulation and persecution, they are caused to stumble, and seed sown among thorns where the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things choke it out.

Gist of Parable #3 (Light under a bushel, Mark 4:21-25): The lamp bought not to be put under a basket or bed is the beginning of a short parable with several implications: (1) the hidden and secret comes to light with the lamp in the proper place; (2) In the nature of the understanding of parables, in order to have ears to hear, what is heard and utilized will determine
what more understanding comes; and (3) the opposite is true, whoever listens a little only will have even that taken away.

**Gist of Parable #4 (The Mustard Seed, Mark 3:30-32):** This is also a short parable, sometimes the most difficult; but certain tells us something of the kingdom of God, as Jesus says what the kingdom of God is like; and replies that it is like a grain of mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds when it is sown, but which grows up larger than all herbs. {I think that Jesus is telling us with respect to the kingdom of the Roman Empire and of Greece and even of the Persians, the kingdom which Jesus is about to make evident on earth, the kingdom of God, that it starts small and with years grows big. One reason that it grows big, because unlike other kingdoms, it has no end; but continues as long as time continues, to grow.} As we hopefully and quickly pass, at least once, all the way to the end of Mark in chapter 16, we would want to include not only the life and teachings of Jesus, but also how the people of His generation reacted or responded to them. We will separate the more general type of responses from those which were positive indications or teachings on the Falling Away.

**Falling Away #1 (In the Purpose of Parables, Mark 10-12):** The quote from Isaiah 6:9,10 should certainly be considered a lot of seed being sown by the wayside, where the birds or Satan come to snatch it away immediately, alias the people see and do not perceive, they hear and not understand; and this prevents them from turning around in order that their sins might be forgiven.

**Falling Away #2 (At the End of the Parable of the light and the basket, Mark 4:25):** where the “whosoever does not have” caused by not hearing and understanding, has even that taken away which is a very good description over time of the Falling Away.

**Falling Away #3 (In the quote by Jesus of Isaiah 29:17):** of worship with lips without the heart, vain worship, and teachings of the commandments of men, like the Pharisees and Sadducees, not hardly tares as they never claimed to enter the kingdom of Jesus, but certainly of the seed sown by the wayside, that with the work of Satan on such a sad heart, never stood a chance.

**Response #1 in Mark 8:31-33 and Falling Away #4:** This response of Peter to Jesus’ teachings on His impending death and resurrection was a rebuke by Peter, which is turn received a rebuke from Jesus of “Get behind Me, Satan.” And the Falling Away #4 is in the 33 verse with the rest of the response from Jesus to Peter of “For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.” And of course, while this attitude of “things” and “mammon” over God could lead, and often does lead to the Falling Away, we know that while Peter stumbled in unbelief and even denial for a while, he did not fall away from God, Christ, and the truth of the Word.

**Falling Away #5** comes in Mark 8:34-38 in the self denial and personal cross teachings of Jesus: as at the Second Coming he who has fallen so far away as to be ashamed of Jesus and His teachings will likewise be ashamed at the result during the Second Coming.

**Condensed Version with Comments**

**Mark 11:1-24:** The Triumphant Entry as related to the kingdom of God, the withered fig tree, the judgment on the temple, and the explanation of the parable of the withered fig tree.

**Mark 11:25,26:** Prayer with forgiveness as necessary for entrance into the kingdom of God. And at this point we should briefly consider the Sermon on the Mount as given in more detail in Matthew 24 as to exactly what attitudes we must assume in order to be legitimate citizens of the kingdoms. They are given in the “blessings”, the so-called “beautitudes of Jesus and God.

**Response #2** is the way the three disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration reacted to what happened and what God said about listening to Jesus: as they came down the mountain
Jesus commanded them to tell no one what they had seen until after His own resurrection, and their reaction was that they pondered it over in their heart, puzzled at what the resurrection from the dead meant.

**Response #3**, also from the twelve, was also after a prediction of His death and resurrection in Mark 9:30-32: The response was simple, they did not understand and they were afraid to ask.

**Falling Away #6** is implied in Mark 9:49,50 about worthless salt: when all members of the kingdom are tested with fire and when every sacrifice for the kingdom is seasoned with a grain of salt, if the salt has lost its distinctness and flavor, then it cannot season the sacrifice of service. However, the disciples, except for Judas, prevented this loss of flavor in service by heeding what Jesus said about, “Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another.” (Mark 9:50)

**Falling Away #7** is definite in Mark 10:22 as the rich young ruler: goes away sad at Jesus recommendation to sell all he has and give to the poor, then to take up the cross, just like he told other disciples, and follow Him; and the rich young ruler went away sad because he had great possessions. Remember in the parable of the seed and the sower how cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches are like thorns which choke out the seed of the Word of faith.

Mark 11:27-33 through Mark 12:12. The Atypical attitude of Israel that brought on the curse of the withered fig tree, the abomination of desolation, and the lack of salvation one year after the Messiah was cut off. And so important was this for the people of Israel to see, especially the approximately 100,000 that would be converted in the next year, and the apostles, that Jesus reinforces the teachings of 1:27-33 with the parable of the wicked vinedressers in Mark 12:1-12, also including in the parable a quote from the Old Testament that predicts and describes the rise and fall of the nation of Israel. They were builders for many years, and how beautiful were the stones of the Temple and the city they built; however, according to David in Psalm 118:22,23, they rejected the chief cornerstone that was selected by God Himself even as He though Ezekiel selected the exact pattern of the building of the second temple.

“**This was the LORD’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.**” (Psalm 118:22,23 and Mark 12:11).

**GOD DID IT!**

Mark 12:13-17: The relationship between the kingdom of the Roman Empire and the kingdom of the Death and Resurrection of Christ given in the parable of Caesar and the coin of the Roman Empire.

Mark 12:18-27: How does the kingdom of the death and resurrection of Christ relate to the subsequent resurrection from the dead of His disciples.

Mark 12:35-44: How does the kingdom of the death and resurrection of Christ relate to the Kingdom of David, to the religious leaders of Israel, and to a poor widow that gives her all.

Mark 13:1-37: How does the kingdom of the death and resurrection of Christ relate to the existing Temple, the abomination of desolation of Daniel, and to the end times and the Second Coming.
You have heard about or read B. F. Skinner’s BEYOND FREEDOM AND DIGNITY which advocates that the American and world-wide problems are not to great to be settled if we continue to allow for human freedom and human dignity. In other words, you can not solve them if you let people have freedom of choice, speech, and the other freedoms, and if you do not allow State control to have dominance over even the human dignity of control over their own children. This challenges our thinking; but there is another challenge to our thinking, say let us call it convenient church and community thinking, that goes beyond the obvious of government and dominant world movements. Beyond government and dominant world movements is an underground movement, moving always slow and unwavering, which is seeking to bring about the will of God on earth to the same extent that the will of God is done in heaven.

Have you ever stopped to think of all the choices that God had in heaven of living souls from the beginning of time until the impending time of the death of Jesus, why God chose to send Moses and Elijah to encourage Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. Stop to think about it, Moses at a critical time in the history of God’s people, and for the future of the nation, made such a serious mistake in the striking of the rock at Horeb, that it prevented his entrance into the Promised Land. {Moses, of course, was not among the vast majority in the wilderness, all of those 21 and over except Caleb and Joshua, who were not allowed to enter eternal rest; and that is verified as you see him now with Jesus on the Mount. It was a critical time for Jesus and for the salvation of the world. He was thinking now even as He would pray later in the Garden, “If it is possible, let this cup pass away from me; but nevertheless not my will but Your will be done.” Like Moses and in anger, He did not want to strike the rock; and cease to be without sin, negating His own life as a sinless, perfect sacrifice on the cross for sins. Well, it was similar with Elijah. In the heat of the battle against Baal, the prophets of Baal, and King Ahab and Jezebel as well as the rebellion of the whole nation against God and toward idol worship, Elijah lost his temper when the tree did not provide shade for him, thinking as he stated that He alone was left as a loyal follower of God. {God had to assure him that He had in Israel 5,000 faithfuls who had not bowed their knee to Baal.} Elijah and Moses both could encourage Jesus in His monumental task of dying for the sins of the world not to sin under the pressure.

Well, what does all this about Moses and Elijah had to do with the kingdom of God and the tares in the kingdom? The main point is that we must get behind history, past and primarily present, to understand the very nature of the spiritual warfare that goes on here on earth and in America in 2006, and how it includes “high places” as well as the low places where we live and worship. Answers about the priority of the kingdom over local churches and the total body of Christ, and answers about what should be our attitudes toward the tares in the kingdom and local church will not come easy; and it requires far more than a superficial answer. We need to look deep into the mentality of a Pharisee and scribe, into a Moses and Elijah, of even a typical religious person during the generation of Christ in order to understand what made them tick. Why did the religious leaders of Jesus’ own generation reject Him, having seen enough miracle-signs to know that the power of God was with Him? Why did almost all of the children of Isarel—in fact all above 20 years of age except Moses, Joshua, and Caleb—not qualify for the eternal rest of God? And most importantly as there is nothing new under the sun, and people behave and react to God today as they have of old, what can we apply of the behavior of the majority in Isarel and
of their religious leaders to the kingdom of God today and of the current religious leaders. Is it not possible that many denominational leaders of religion are just like the Pharisees and scribes of the nation of Israel? What is it that makes our American religious movements so much better than the Jews? Or, is it possible that they are not any better: not any different.

There are several Bible facts that can guide us into this serious look at ourselves and our churches today. First, the majority far from being reliable is never right, in any generation or of any nation, even the greatest nation that has ever been on the face of the earth. It is true today and of our time like Jesus told in the parable of the majority and the minority. Most people go the broad way which leads to destruction as it is a broad and easy way, and few people go the narrow way which leads to life eternal since it is a narrow and difficult way. This is called taking the path of least resistance; and how subtle are the ways, as the tares travel down the broad way in which they justify themselves and rationalize behavior to look like the wheat while they enjoy the life of the tare.

Second, there are going to be a lot of surprises on the Judgment Day which contradict our easy way of community and church thinking. While many will say, “look at the marvelous works that we have done for you”, Christ will say, “get away from Me, you that work iniquity, I never knew you.” That is a shocker, right. And then there is the “last” and “first” concept from the teachings of Jesus. When He demanded service and service with salt from His disciples, He also told them that when all of on earth is settled up many of the religious first will be last and many of the religious last will be first. In short, we will be surprised as to who is sitting on the throne and ruling our little bit of the kingdom of God in the new earth. {I think what you are going to have to admit as we move along in this book and chapter is that God’s thinking is not conventional and like ours. You will also have to admit that Satan and the prince and power of this world is more in control of conventional community thinking than God is, although don’t neglect that continuous, unstoppable underground movement of the kingdom of God.}

Third, it is hard to shallow in our nation and time where the “toleration” of the American Democratic thought is dominant in community thinking that Jesus told the Pharisees and other religious leaders that “you are of your father the devil”. We just can not fathom, and do not want to fathom, the fact that religious leaders can be under the control of Satan.

Fourth, we have not faced up to the realities of the Falling Away, still thinking of it as something in the distant future and on foreign soil. The Falling Away is for the most religious as they must have some knowledge, experience, and works of God in their lives in order to fall away from it. {Of course, we still believe in the security of the believer, and as made clear in SOME MORE SOUNDS, and I hope echoed here, the reason for all the tares at the end of time is shown in the parable of the Seed and the Sower, with the Snatching of Satan, the Stumbling where there is no root and the human tendecy toward comfort and security; and above all the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of the Gospel of Prosperity. In short, many instantaneous new birth happenings were not conversions at all.} And it is not a falling away from church as church attendance may actually go up, especially among the Roman Catholics and the Mormons, as the world of unbelievers and the unrighteous are attracted to them, even as to other large and unsound doctrine and practices churches. It is a falling away from God, Christ, and the Bible as the children of Israel did for 40 years in the wilderness in spite of seeing many works and wonders of God. It is “an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.”

Fifth, we must learn to exercise “righteous jugment”. How Satan has deceived us along with a dominant attitude of tolerance for almost anything, in perverting what the Bible says on judgment, to keep us from making good decisions on what is happening in our churches, denominations, and country today. We do want to be judged by the same judgment, that is the
truths of the Bible, that we use to judge; and all those truths of the Bible, and in depth, must be applied to our thinking, a real challenge to thought, as we face what to do and how to do it with the Falling Away in our local churches, denominations, and nation. So back into some more Bible.

**Moses’ Sin at the Rock of Horeb**

Often was the time when God wanted Moses to step aside so that He could destroy the children of Israel in their unbelief in the wilderness; and often Moses with patience pleaded for His own people, a people that God had chosen to be His own in a special way all the way back to Abraham. *Right now, we should straighten out another mis-conception of Abraham, the people of God, and the extent to which they were the chosen of God. When God said that He would bless the seed of Abraham, it was singular, and applied to Jesus Christ; and the reason God did not destroy the nation of Israel sooner was in order that Israel could be the nation of the birth of Christ. Of course, according to His promise to Abraham, he did make a great nation out of a rag-tag bunch of desert nomads, as they came to prominence under King Saul, David, and Solomon; but always consistent with a personal covenant between God and an individual, there were few really saved in the nation, just like the only three in the wilderness that were over 20 years of age. Of course, in order to be thorough and as Paul tells us in the book of Romans, in his answer to the question “what profit is it to be a Jew”, the Jews or Hebrews as they were called in most of their history, were chosen to be custodians of the oracles of God.*

It is true that God has always had a special place in His heart for Palestine and for Jerusalem in particular. And it is true that for many years He protected His chosen nation and their temple, until what they were doing in secret as recorded in Ezekiel was such a stench in His nostril that He rejected that nation. It did not happen in fact until after they were instrumental in the cutting off of the Messiah, the final rejection of the son of the vineyard owner, and it happened exactly as predicted in the book of Daniel, one year after they cut off the Messiah the Jews became an abomination and an abomination of desolation to God. While many thousands of Jews were saved during that one years, including thousands who came to Jerusalem for the first feast of the passover after the Ascension of Jews, you see how the dirth of the desolation continues even unto this day among the Jewish people. *Of course, we must allow that after the fulness of the Gentiles is complete, there could be a revival for Jesus among the Jews; but often in the Scripture the “consummation” seems to be more for the New Jerusalem and the new Israel after the old has passed away. In other words, those many Hebrews throughout Old Testament and the beginning of New Testament times were saved, with a sprinkling of men like Hyman Appleman that we hear about occasion that were marvelously converted, will make possible the consummation along with a multitude of Gentiles that no man can number.*

How can you admit the consistent message of the Prophets of how God controls nations, looking the same time on the blessings of God on the nation of the United States, and not believe that America was chosen as a nation of God’s people just like Israel was a chosen nation of God’s people. *Remember separate a chosen nation from salvation.* Surely the United States has had a special place in the Fulness of the Gentiles, being undoubtedly the world leader in godliness and evangelism in the world for many years; and surely in God’s plan to have the gospel preached to every nation, and “then shall the end come”, the United States with many missionaries and godly influences in

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the world has been the leader. However there are now many indications that the Fulness of the Gentiles are represented by America is over, as evangelization has reached every nation of the world, as American increasing is doing more counter to the will and way of God; and that God, and the angel that God has set over to watch the United States, have withdrawn the umbrella of their support. We see that in 911, in the many hurricanes striking this nation as the major of New Orleans noted in once of his recent speeches, and in other works of nature which the Prophets teach as instruments of God’s immediate judgments.

Sampey in his marvelous little book THE HEART OF THE OLD TESTAMENT describes the incident at Horeb providing a proper background in the 40 years of wilderness wanderings. “In the first month of the fortieth year, after nearly thirty-eight years of wandering and waiting, Israel is back at Kadesh-barnea again. Here Miriam dies. The generation that came out of Egypt has perished in the wilderness {this was part of their punishment from God because of their “evil heart of unbelief”, the most serious punishment however being of elimination from the eternal rest of God, we might say which is the same as from the eternal kingdom of God}..., and a new generation has grown up in its stead. Will their sons endure affliction any better than their fathers? Jehovah tests them by letting the supply of water fail. Like their fathers, they murmur and complain. {Do you hear any murmuring and complaining in your church today, a sure sign of tares and falling away?} The patience of Moses and Aaron at length fails them, and they make a proud address to the rebellious people. {It is not enough to serve God, but as Jesus taught to serve with salt. To not lose the distinctness of Christ-likeness while serving.} Moses in anger smites the rock twice; whereas God had commanded him merely to speak to it. Because they thus dishonor the holy God in the presence of the people, Moses and Aaron are told that they will not be permitted to lead Israel into the promised land (Num. 20:1-13).

When God puts men before the world as His representatives, He holds them to a strict account. Unbelief in a great leader of God’s people brings reproach upon God Himself. If even Moses, after a long career of singular faithfulness, finally failed through human weakness, who may presume upon his past achievements? “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” {You see why Moses was such a good choice for the Father to send to the Mount to counsel with Jesus on the eve of His crucifixion, lest He also sin by striking a rock, even slaying a Roman or a chief priest.}

That is good, but we need the real impact of the actual historical record in Numbers 20:1-13. Some exegesis of the passage follows: (1) they are called by the Word of God as a “congregation”, as the whole congregation came into the Wilderness of Zin; (2) as there was no water for the congregation, “they gathered together against Moses and Aaron”; (3) the people contended with Moses {and this is not the “contend for the faith like in Jude, but more than the contention and contentious attitude of the fundamentalists as they have inspired southern baptist to overthrow God’s ordained leadership in religious organizations} does this not remind you of the questioning of God’s leadership in most churches today as part of the Falling Away, church members reject with rejection of Jesus’ leadership and lordship the leadership of Jesus through the pastor, and in the name of the majority and of democracy}; (4) they question the bringing of the “assembly” {yes,they are called an assembly, the same Greek word as “ecclesia” most often translated as church, for local church} into a wilderness like Zin where they and their animals might die; (5) they call it an “evil place” which reminds one of how easily certain national leaders throw around the word “evil”, and in order to suit their own purposes; (6) Moses and Aaron went to worship in the tabernacle, seeking help from God; (7) God gave them the solution, take the rod in your hand but speak to the rock, and water will come out; (8) Moses
took the rod which was in the tabernacle and before God as a symbol of the leadership of God, then gathered the “assembly” together before the rock; (9) here is the point of the sin of Moses as in anger he says, “Here now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out ofthis rock?” {with all due respect for Sampey, I think the sin of Moses here was the same “I” problem that many leaders have today. Instead of simply saying to the people that God had said with a word from us as we speak to the rock water will come out, they wanted to take some credit and to establish a certain moral superiority over the people by calling them “rebels”. You see the people had already come to the point where God wanted them in the wilderness of Zin, where they recognized that there was not other way out of the dilemma apart from faith in God; and now it was simply a time for the messengers of God like Moses and Aaron to relay to the people exactly what God told them.} (10) It did work as Moses struck the rock violently and twice, water gushed out as if by a act of Moses, giving Moses the glory over God, but the congregation and the animals drank the water; (11) I think the LORD took them aside to explain that because “you did not believe Me” (there was a little evil heart of belief in Moses and Aaron briefly); because you did not hallow God in the eyes of the “children of Israel” and as per “My” instructions, you will not have the privilege of bringing this people into the land of Israel.

Do you understand a little better now Jesus’ parable about service with salt. Incidentally, it came right behind the incident on the Mount of Transfiguration, and of the counseling from Moses and Elijah. It can be called “tasteless salt is worthless”. This kind of service of leadership, God did not need in the refining work of the wilderness.

“For everyone will be seasoned with fire, {Certainly all of the children of Israel, especially this second generation, had gone through fire, and thirst, and hunger, and tests of belief in preparation to settlement in the promised land.} ...and every sacrifice {certainly Moses and the people had made many sacrifices}...shall be seasoned with salt. {We should ask the question as to who in this case is doing the seasoning, and the answer would come back that God is doing the seasoning. He seasons with salt whatever service that He sees on the part of man, leaders or otherwise; and He says that it is not simply a matter of what you do, but it is also a matter of how you do it in order to give Him the glory. {How much glory do you think God truly receives from Benny Hinn and his work as compared to the glory that Benny Hinn receives for himself.} Salt is good {well, we can buy this simple statement that leads Jesus to the next part of the parable)...but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? {You can not season that salt with similar salt which has also lost its flavor, for like one bad apple in the barrel of religious leaders and disciples, it affects all the apples, so one unflavored spoon full of salt implies the rest is unseasoned. And remember that all the disciples had been disputing among themselves as to who would be the greatest in the kingdom.}

“Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another.”
(Mark 9:49,50)
Have the fundamentalists in their takeover of control of the southern baptist convention,
largest Protestant and one-time most conservation and evangelistic denomination in the world, not signalled the demise of the United States as the leader in the Fulness of the Gentiles, losing with their fighting spirit and their subsequent destruction of the careers of other disciples in their quest for the first places in the kingdom, not also lost the flavor of their personal salt while they have replaced with warfare what should be “peace with one another”? {You must recall that the whole subject under discussion from the time that Jesus heard the disciples disputing among themselves of who should be first in the kingdom, is the matter of how fellow disciples will behave among themselves. Is that not the province of the local church, the larger church of all believers, and of the kingdom today; and are we not to think of such fundamentalists and warfaring leaders like Falwell, Stanley, Rogers, and Criswell as disciple-leaders in the kingdom? You know when you come right down to it and face up to the intellectual honesties of the matter, and of the related teachings of Jesus, these fundamentalists have been and are being just like the first disciples in seeking first places in the kingdom for themselves; and they fail to realize, also like Moses and the twelve failed to realize, that what you can make happen here on earth may not really be part of kingdom service. They will really go down in history and in the history books of heaven as striking the rock of Horeb like Moses. Listen to Falwell, the self-appointed leader of men like Stanley and LeHaye, the self-appointed leader of the moral majority, and you will find much of the tone of Moses as he accuses with moral superiority the nation of sinners, and as he talks about himself and the marvelous works that he is doing. You can see him like Moses, striking the rock of Horeb, as he says, “You rebels; look what you have forced me to do and say.”

Moses and the Assembly or Congregation at Mount Sinai

It, of course, was an honor for Moses, with Elijah, to be summoned by God to the Mount of Transfiguration to meet with God’s only Son. I am sure they visited and talked often in the aeons of eternity between the time Moses went to heaven and the time of the life of Christ on earth. They had another similar experience as in the presence of God, Christ as He walked up the mountain for a special blessing with God and Moses as he went up Mount Sinai to receive the commandments of God, they became transfigured. As from Jesus on the Mount, He was “transfigured before them” (Mark 9:2b), the “them” being Peter, James, and John; and as for Moses at Mount Sinai, “So when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him”. (Exodus 34:30)

And we learn that the assembly or congregation was afraid of more than that from the New Testament interpretation of these incidents on Mount Sinai, in Hebrews 12 and from the Apostle Paul, of course this is the ASI of Mount Sinai.

“For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words {seeing how Paul and the Word of God here is appealing to all our senses, the forbidden touch of the mountain where God had, like the mount of transfiguration made His presence known in a very special way; the vision of the burning fire on the mountain which came with the presence of God even as in Daniel we read of the Ancient of Days where fire proceeded from His throne; the vision and feel of blackness, darkness, and of the wind of the tempest; and the sound of the trumpet and of the awesome words from God Himself}..., so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken them anymore. {Well, what do you think we have right here at Mount Sinai as God Himself tries to talk to His own chosen nation, and they in turn react by begging that the speaking of God to
them not happen anymore. It is the very beginning of the end of the Falling Away in the wilderness, and so it is for churches and denominations today, where church members beg that the Word of God at its points of difficult sayings, not be spoken to them.

“For they could not endure what was commanded: {What does that sound like except II Timothy 4 where “the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.”} ...’And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow. (Exodus 19:1,13) And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I am exceedingly afraid and tremble. “ (Hebrews 12:18-21)

Now this is background for what we read earlier from Deuteronomy as introduction to Moses foretelling about the Prophet Messiah. You must detect an ultimatum as God Himself speaks after Moses introduces the Prophet Messiah, and in the words: “and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speak in My name, I will require it of him.” (Deuteronomy 18:18,19) And a few words before that of how the people begged not to hear personally the voice of God, in these words, “according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly {God and God through Moses were about to give them their very request of no direct words from God—can you imagine how many long for the honoring of direct speakings from God and when these haughty people and this haughty nation have the privilege, a privilege that is part of the normal environment in heaven of listening to God, they turn it down—then we start to appreciate a little this peculiar and rebellious people called the Jews or Hebrews, and in particular begin to understand something of the mentality and behavior of a scribe or Pharisee}, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.’” (Deuteronomy 18:16)

Well, Moses or God could have told them right then that because of such an evil heart of unbelief, and refusal to listen to the voice of the Maker, they were going to die in the wilderness, as not allowed to enter the Promised Land because of their lack of faith in God, the wilderness wanderings were extended for 40 more years. Not only do that generation {all above 20 years of age} die in the wilderness except for Moses, Aaron, Caleb, and Joshua, but the book of Hebrews, indeed the book on the Falling Away of the Bible, tells us that they could not enter God’s eternal rest. What can of attitude is this on the part of people who fear their God and Maker so much when He speaks to them, in spite of all the feeding, guidance, and care of over 40 years, that they think it will kill them. And I think we also see a little sensitivity with a little trying to manipulate God with the excuse related to God’s command that no one or no animal touch the mountain. With a little care, they could prevent themselves and their animals from straying into the mountains. This is much like the Pharisees, and people today, who strain for any excuse to place the guilt on God for why they do not want to listen and heed.

And you recall how that Jesus had nothing good to say about the religious leaders of His day. They were leading the people of Israel astray with their leaven of unbelief; they made pretentious prayers on the street corner in order to be seen of men; they would worship God in vain; they lips would speak formal praises to God while their hearts were far from Him; they had the gall after not being willing like their forefathers to listen to God Himself, or even His Prophets, to substitute their own teachings and commandments for God’s; they accused Jesus of being a devil while Jesus had to remind them that they “were
of their father the devil”; in their buildings of religious institutions and the kingdom of God they had ignored the chief cornerstone selected by God Himself {they followed more faithfully the construction details for the rebuilt temple from God through Ezekiel more carefully than they did the instructions for the spiritual temple and kingdom}; and not only did they miss the correct way, but lead others in the false way.

The Prayer of Daniel for His People

The prayer of Daniel for His people is a good history of the constant rebellion of the leaders and the people of Israel, and as we take a good look at it we are reminded of the words “like the priest, like the people”, and vice versa, of how leaders and people became one in their rebellions so that God often in the Old Testament--Hosea, Isaiah, and Jeremiah and Daniel for example—warned of a time of desolation of spiritual renewal in Israel, an abomination much greater than any drought in the land. How do we miss all this in our Bible reading and study? Because we want to, and because we in this nation have also come to the time when we “will not endure sound doctrine”. If it is not comfortably to us, like God’s voice with fire coming out of the Mountain, then we do not want any part of it. However, I do have to admit that it was scary what Daniel put up with in the revelations given directly to Him from Gabriel and the Spirit of Christ, it was so awesome that Daniel at first fell to his knees and afterwards became unconscious, and was sick for days. When in chapter 12 Daniel got the full impact of the revelations of the future for His people in the “abomination of desolation”, how that it would all be over for his people one year after the Messiah was cut off, we are not even told of Daniel’s help and welfare. It does sound ominous when he is told to rest and that things would be well for his soul, which sounds like death after Daniel had time to record the revelations. For now, however, back to the history of rebellion of the people of Israel as given in Daniel’s prayer, Daniel 9.

You will recall the beginning of this prayer in the first year of King Darius, and how the prayer starting with the reading of Jeremiah where the Prophet predicted the 70 years of the “desolations of Jerusalem” {70 years without a temple of God, 70 years without the chosen people of God in the city of God; and 70 years of embarassesment and captivity of Daniel’s people in a foreign country—you would think that after recovery from the 70 years with a rebuilt temple and city and restoration of the nation, they could start listening to the voice of God through Jesus, rather continue in rebellion to the extent of bringing the abomination of all desolations on themselves one year after the Crucifixion}; (2) Daniel set his face toward God in prayer to make supplication for his people, and Daniel confessed to God how the nation had “sinned and committed iniquity” {we need the specifics here of their history as recognized by one of their own: (a) “we have done wickedly”; (b) “we have rebelled”; (c) we have departed from Your precepts and Your Judgments; (d) we have not heeded your servants the many Prophets that you sent to us through the years—was their any year that they truly heeded the Prophets except somewhat during Isaiah, then spasmodically; (e) Daniel acknowledges how faithful God was with the Prophets, speaking to kings, princes, forefathers, and all the people in the land—Prophets who spoke in the name of God; (3) Daniel contrasts how righteousness belongs to God, but shame belongs to the nation of Israel {wow, what Daniel is about to learn of additional and long lasting shame for his people}; (4) Daniel elaborates on the shame in which the people of Judah, Jerusalem, and all of Israel experience—those near to Persian and those far off in all the countries are mentioned; (5) It is admitted by Daniel that it was God who drove the children of Israel into all these countries, primarily because of the “unfaithfulness which they have committed against You” {recall how Hosea accused Israel of being a harlot, and was instructed by God to take a prostitute for a wife as a message to Israel, and more—by the way if you read Hosea carefully, you will be inclined to think that at that point in their history, it is all over for Israel}; (6) “O Lord, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers,
because we have sinned against You” (Daniel 9:8); (7) In spite of their admitted rebellion against God, Daniel appeals to the God of mercy and forgiveness; and (8) then comes another list of specifics of their unfaithfulness and rebellion from one of their brightest and best, Daniel: (a) Israel did not obey the voice of their own God; (b) Israel did not obey the voice of God {if they will not listen, how can they obey}; (c) Israel did not walk in the laws of God as were faithfully set before them by His servants the Prophets—yes, yes, yes, many times and in many ways; (d) All the nation of Israel has transgressed God’s law; (e) all of Israel has departed so as not to obey the voice of God {their is a good reason for not listening, or not wanting to listen to the voice of God, because what you don’t know can not hurt you, they thought, as they did not want to obey the voice of God}; AND THE NEXT IS VERY IMPORTANT—

“...therefore the curse and the oath {we should look at the curse and the oath in the books of Moses} written in the Law of Moses the servant of God {Daniel had been reading the Law of Moses, the first five books of the Bible as well as the Prophets} have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him. And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us {looks like Joshua and Judges also where we see the checkered up and down history of the nation of Israel before they were unified under a king}, by bringing upon us a great disaster {it seems that Daniel here refers to first the northern kingdom of Israel going into Assyrian Captivity, and then later with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, the southern kingdom of Judah with Daniel and his friends going into Babylonian Captivity}; for under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem” (Daniel 9:11-12)

Then Daniel quotes {actually it looks more like a precis or paraphrase} from the Law of Moses, “all this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth.” (Daniel 9:13)

The rebellious people still had not as a nation turned from their iniquities.

They as a nation still did not understand God’s truth.

More about the “disaster” from Daniel, as the above has not happened, God has kept the disaster in His mind, continuing to bring the disaster upon Daniel’s people. Daniel does not forget Who He is praying to, the Ancient of Days, and the court that surrounds Him, quickly mentioning How God is righteous in all He does in spite of how Israel has not obeyed. “And now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand {You see how Daniel calls his people the people of God, and indeed they are as a chosen nation for Christ and for the oracles of God, and a remnant of the remnant for salvation, but not all for salvation} ...and made Yourself a name... {God did become famous in the world of the middle east with His overpowering of the Pharaoh of Egypt, but you will recall how Paul, also of their own nation, tells in Romans how because of the actions of men like Daniel’s generation, and men like the Pharisees and scribes, the name of God was desecrated all over the world}. Daniel admits that Israel as a nation has sinned and done wickedly, and would it not be a comfort to see such a confession to God in this day and time. Rather than continuing as Daniel”” generation of Jerusalem and Jesus”” generation of Jerusalem and today” generation of Jerusalem to rebel against God, to hear them say in
the past and now we have done wickedly against God and sinned. Too much pride to do that. Yes I think so unless after the time of the Fulness of Gentiles, there is implied in Romans that some kind of spiritual revival could happen; that is, if God lifts the curse of the abomination of desolations, or if the consummation of that desolation is on earth instead of in heaven. Daniel makes a fervent prayer that “Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain.” Daniel again mentions part of the desolation as “Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us.” And we hear again of desolation in the prayerful words of “Your sanctuary, which is desolate.” See our “desolations” Daniel prays, and for the sake of Your people and your city that are called by Your own name, forgive the people.

Therefore should we be surprised that a latter generation at the time of the life of Jesus, well after the announcement by God through Daniel that extreme disaster and desolation will come after the birth and crucifixion of Jesus, that Jesus uses such harsh words to describe the behavior and attitude of the religious leaders of His day; and while certainly, the United States does not have the long rebellious history against God of a nation like Israel, is it not possible that religious leaders in this day and in the America of the Falling Away could see something similar; and where would you look but to the religiously popular and established for such behavior and attitudes.
Chapter 12: Service and Separation with Salt.

“For everyone will be seasoned with fire, and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. Salt is good {separation and service is good}, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another.” (Mark 9:49,50)

An immediate disclaimer is made here of Hebrew or Jew bashing, as they might want to claim instead of an admission that a year after they cut off the Messiah, they have ever since become spiritually desolate toward God. Paul, a Hebrew of the Hebrews before his encounter with the Ascended Christ and conversion, expressed it about his own nation in these words of Romans 10:1-3.

“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness {he could because as a lawyer of the religious law in Israel and a leader, he had also been overcome with that religious zeal of the Jews} that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.” (Romans 10:1-4)

If anything there should be an accusation against this book for local church and denomination bashing; for the attempt is being made to show after an assumption that all churches are now a victim of the Falling Away, some more and some less, that is, to show with on that basis some possible ways in which it has happened. Of course, the tares among the wheat caused by a fundamentally inadequate concept of instantaneous new birth is one, along with the substitution of a Gospel of Prosperity for the Gospel of the Kingdom of God where the deceitfulness of riches becomes and remains part of the message, where seeking first the other things shows God is not with them as they have not learned to seek first the kingdom of God and righteousness so that these things will be automatically added as needed, enough things for daily bread but not for wealth as the advocates of the Gospel of Prosperity preach; but the failure to realistic face up to the human frailties of the tares in the local church as bad behavior and act accordingly with the takeover of the saltless servers of the fundamentalists have been factors also, and if there is any hope for the SBC at all, it will be by real pre-fundamentalists domination southern baptists regaining control of their own local churches and denomination. I would say that this is the equivalent of taking back the kingdom of God from which other invaders, and outsiders, have taken the kingdom by violence. In short, what I am really attempting to do is to take the most famous religious leaders of all time, with the insights from Jesus on these Pharisees and scribes and from the rest of the Bible, then see what of this insight can help us on the religious leaders of today who have helped to lead us into the Falling Away. If you want to accuse me of bashing, then accuse me of fundamentalists bashing. What has changed is not my respect for real southern baptists or of our concept when growing up in southern baptist work of the fundamentalists as feudamentalists, what has changed is that fundamentalists with support of the moral majority and other factors have become more popular than the so-called “moderates”, really another brand of conservatives, whom they have accused
and still accuse. These leaders like Stanley, Criswell, Rogers, and Falwell have lost their salt in serving and separation, if they ever really had it; and you can readily see how they like the first disciples before the learned the salty lessons from Jesus not to seek the first places in the kingdom, have gone to the extreme to topple from leadership other real conservatives in order to have their places in the present kingdom of the United States and in the kingdom of the American Democratic Faith.

Let us make something clear as Carroll does in his INTERPRETATION, and in the volume on the inter-Biblical period. It was during the period of the restoration as recorded in Ezra and Nehemiah, that the Hebrews were first called “Jews”, being a short form of Jerusalem. It was also during this restoration that the Jews had re-inforced the saltless nature of their separation from the rest of the world as only Hebrews that could prove their lineage back to Abraham were allowed to return from the countries of Captivity. However, this only served to enhance their “blood and birth” pride back to Abraham, that they had counted on for distinctness and peculiarity all along. We must allow the Gospel of John to help us here, and I think one reason that the tares of the Jesus Seminar fight John so hard, saying that only about 1/3 of the recorded teachings of Jesus actually came from Jesus, is because of the frankness with which John levels the real teachings of Jesus on the behavior of the religious leaders of his time, the Jesus Seminar {pardon us Jesus, for using your name with such a group of the evil hear of unbelief as these PhDs and teachers at diverse Christian schools, and if you don’t recognize who they are a list of the members with their schools are in the back of their book, and they are the bunch who foolishly get together to vote on whether Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, or not} also recognize similarities between themselves and the scribes of the time. John records the famous Abraham versus Satan dispute between Jesus and the Jews at the Feast of the Tabernacles in Jerusalem. {These teachings of Jesus under fire during the Feast of Tabernacles is recorded in John 7-8, just before the healing of a blind man at Bethsaida. The Harmony of Robertson places it as “The Later Judean Ministry”, after Mark 9 where Jesus was transfigured on the Mount and before Mark 10 where Jesus encounters the rich young ruler. You will notice that while Luke and John only record this bout with the Jews, Mark in 10:1 also speaks of the trip back into the region of Judea; and this is immediately after the verses of our chapter focus, indeed what may become the most focused verse of this book on the toleration of the tares, as we continue to explore Mark 9:49,50.}

Jesus had a special word in John 8:31-36 for those Jews who believed Him on how to be disciples indeed. {Perhaps we should coin the word “indeed-disciples” in order to distinguish between the tares and the wheat of the kingdom.}

"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:31,32)

Somehow we must come to understand and appreciate the response of these would-be disciples: “We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, ‘You will be made free.’ (John 8:33)

This is hard for us to appreciate. They had been in Egyptian bondage; they had been under the Captivity at the direction of God to the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians; and more recently in bondage to the Greeks and Romans. So what in the world did they mean by being free by being a descendant of Abraham. It had to be more an intellectual or mental thing rather than a physical reality. Of course, it would be in the same realm, at least in their minds, of the kind of freedom that would come by knowing the truth in Jesus. Indeed through time and captivities that had developed a certain self-bondage or captivity to custom and tradition among
themselves, sort of a group cohesiveness, that was based solely on their common ancestry back to Abraham. They thought of themselves as motivated primarily by the customs and traditions of Abraham. You will recall how Carroll tells of how the returning remnant must be able to prove ancestry back to Abraham which through the year had formulated a large pride of birth among residents of Palestine. It is the equivalent of saying, “We are born the most privileged and blessed people of all the world and all history, because we are the descendants of Abraham; and everybody knows, have you heard that community saying before, everybody knows that the descendants of Abraham are the people of God. They were soon to be in for a violent shock as the very Son of God, recently from God Himself and with the total truth from God, was the tell them who their real father was.

“You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.” (John 8:44)

Now we get some more insight as to what is happening to church members today in the Falling Away. They like these people who would be “indeed-disciples” while deceiving themselves into thinking that they were people of faith like Abraham, based not on faith but on blood lineage and national identity, were really under bondage and control of their real father, Satan. Wow, can Satan exert that much control over the very nation that God had chosen for His own. Yes, He did; but it was based on their lack of ability and understanding as we have discussed often in the parables. Jesus made that clear in what John records in John 8:43.

“Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.” (John 8:43)

We must ask ourselves the serious question, “Can Satan gain such control of the present nation chosen by God as he did over Israel, and is not the present gap between Christ and church membership with the Falling Away leave the undeniable possibility that Satan has control over most of the churches?” Impossible, one might say. Look at all the marvelous works that we do for Christ. Well, you know what Christ had to say about that. Rather than fall back to the large numbers and big buildings that our churches have, with pastors that are PhDs, we should rather look for the salt of Jesus in serving and separation. Without salt there can be many not “indeed-disciples” and many victims of the Falling Away, etc.

Continuation with the Parables, Falling Aways, and Events of Mark to chapter 16

That we need a lot more insight from Jesus and the apostles whom He trained is obvious, so that we will continue through to the completion, I hope in this chapter, of the parables, the evidences of Falling Away {these are little falling aways, not to be confused with the great Falling Away of the whole nation of Israel in the wilderness warnings, as made clear in Hebrews, and of the likewise great Falling Away, according to II Thessalonians that must happen before the Second Coming of Christ, which is as great or a greater Falling Away among the Gentiles of the Fulness of the Gentiles}, and the incidents—remember also sometimes with the messages of parables—of the rest of Mark. First a short review of where we have been in Mark.

Gist of Parable #1 (A House Divided Cannot Stand, Mark 3:20-27): Since Jesus heard the scribes from Jerusalem saying that Jesus cast out Satan by the power of Satan, He told the foolishness of Satan casting out Satan, of a kingdom divided against itself, and of a
strong man that must first be overcome in order to rob his house. {We will have to ponder if we can apply this to the tares and the wheat. Certainly the scribes would be among the equivalent of the tares, and if Jesus was casting out demons therefore on the side of the kingdom of God, then the tares have to be on the other side of the divided kingdom.}

**Gist of Parable #2 (The Seed and the Sower, Mark 4:1-9 and 4:13-20):** Four human responses come when people hear the Word of faith, only one of which is fruitful that sown on good soil, and the other three would compare to by the wayside—Satan snatches it immediately—seed sown on stony ground and received with gladness like an instantaneous new birth but there is no root and with tribulation and persecution, they are caused to stumble, and seed sown among thorns where the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things choke it out.

**Gist of Parable #3 (Light under a bushel, Mark 4:21-25):** The lamp bought not to be put under a basket or bed is the beginning of a short parable with several implications: (1) the hidden and secret comes to light with the lamp in the proper place; (2) In the nature of the understanding of parables, in order to have ears to hear, what is heard and utilized will determine what more understanding comes; and (3) the opposite is true, whoever listens a little only will have even that taken away.

**Gist of Parable #4 (The Mustard Seed, Mark 3:30-32):** This is also a short parable, sometimes the most difficult; but certain tells us something of the kingdom of God, as Jesus says what the kingdom of God is like; and replies that it is like a grain of mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds when it is sown, but which grows up larger than all herbs. {I think that Jesus is telling us with respect to the kingdom of the Roman Empire and of Greece and even of the Persians, the kingdom which Jesus is about to make evident on earth, the kingdom of God, that it starts small and with years grows big. One reason that it grows big, because unlike other kingdoms, it has no end; but continues as long as time continues, to grow.} As we hopefully and quickly pass, at least once, all the way to the end of Mark in chapter 16, we would want to include not only the life and teachings of Jesus, but also how the people of His generation reacted or responded to them. We will separate the more general type of reponses from those which were positive indications or teachings on the Falling Away.

**Falling Away #1 (In the Purpose of Parables, Mark 10-12):** The quote from Isaiah 6:9,10 should certainly be considered a lot of seed being sown by the wayside, where the birds or Satan come to snatch it away immediately, alias the people see and do not perceive, they hear and not understand; and this prevents them from turning around in order that their sins might be forgiven.

**Falling Away #2 (At the End of the Parable of the light and the basket, Mark 4:25):** where the “whosoever does not have” caused by not hearing and understanding, has even that taken away which is a very good description over time of the Falling Away.

**Falling Away #3 (In the quote by Jesus of Isaiah 29:17):** o worship with lips without the heart, vain worship, and teachings of the commandments of men, like the Pharisees and Saducees, not hardly tares as they never claimed to enter the kingdom of Jesus, but certainly of the seed sown by the wayside, that with the work of Satan on such a sad heart, never stood a chance.

**Response #1 in Mark 8:31-33 and Falling Away #4:** This response of Peter to Jesus’ teachings on His impending death and resurrection was a rebuke by Peter, which is turn received a rebuke from Jesus of “Get behind Me, Satan.” And the Falling Away #4 is in the 33 verse with the rest of the response from Jesus to Peter of “For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.” And of course, while this attitude of “things” and “mammon” over God could lead, and often does lead to the Falling Away, we know that while Peter stumbled in unbelief and even denial for a while, he did not fall away from God, Christ, and the truth of the Word.

**Falling Away # 5** comes in Mark 8:34-38 in the self denial and personal cross teachings of Jesus: as at the Second Coming he who has fallen so far away as to be ashamed of Jesus.
and His teachings will likewise be ashamed at the result during the Second Coming.

Condensed Version with Comments

Mark 11:1-24: The Triumphant Entry as related to the kingdom of God, the withered fig tree, the judgment on the temple, and the explanation of the parable of the withered fig tree.

Mark 11:25,26: Prayer with forgiveness as necessary for entrance into the kingdom of God. And at this point we should briefly consider the Sermon on the Mount as given in more detail in Matthew 24 as to exactly what attitudes we must assume in order to be legitimate citizens of the kingdoms. They are given in the “blessings”, the so-called “beautitudes” of Jesus and God.

Response #2 is the way the three disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration reacted to what happened and what God said about listening to Jesus: as they came down the mountain Jesus commanded them to tell no one what they had seen until after His own resurrection, and their reaction was that they pondered it over in their heart, puzzled at what the resurrection from the dead meant.

Response #3, also from the twelve, was also after a prediction of His death and resurrection in Mark 9:30-32: The response was simple, they did not understand and they were afraid to ask.

Falling Away #6 is implied in Mark 9:49,50 about worthless salt: when all members of the kingdom are tested with fire and when every sacrifice for the kingdom is seasoned with a grain of salt, if the salt has lost its distinctness and flavor, then it can not season the sacrifice of service. However the disciples, except for Judas, prevented this loss of flavor in service by heeding what Jesus said about, “Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another.” (Mark 9:50)

Falling Away #7 is definite in Mark 10:22 as the rich young ruler: goes away sad at Jesus recommendation to sell all he has and give to the poor, then to take up the cross, just like he told other disciples, and follow Him; and the rich young ruler went away sad because he had great possessions. Remember in the parable of the seed and the sower how cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches are like thorns which choke out the seed of the Word of faith.

Response #4 in Mark 10:32-34 is an exact prediction of Jesus of what the response to Himself and His teachings will be from chief priests and scribes: While sadder than the response above of the rich young ruler who chose the great possessions over following Jesus, the outcome of the rejection of Jesus is the same. Well, not exactly for this rejection by the cutting off of the Messiah, God had decided as early as the book of Daniel, to be the temporal end, if not permanent end, of any salvation in Israel.

Response #5 in Mark 10:35-45 as it began to dawn on the twelve about the kingdom of God through Christ, and of Jesus’ obvious power to bring it about in spite of continued opposition from the majority in the nation of Israel, they started thinking of their own places in the realized kingdom of eternity: in their expressed desires for the first places at Jesus’ right and left hand, Jesus responded to them with a challenge to drink the same cup He drank and to be baptized with the same baptism. {Can you see the faith-healers today that we see on television, and who are promoted by the millionaire Lamb with his gospel of prosperity, drinking the same cup and having the same baptism of unpopularity and a cross that Jesus had. What we indeed see in these evangelists and false prophets of television is a drinking of the cup of prosperity and a baptism in comforts, security, and
money with all the things that money can buy. And again we must express the vast difference between the society in which we live, like the Gentiles in Jesus’ day where the leaders lorded over the citizens, where firstness is considered to be supervision and control while lastness is considered to be like an inept servant. Jesus challenges “indeed-disciples” to be slaves of all people, and that is not easy in the United States.

**Mark 12:10-11** with the quote from Psalm 118:22,23, the focus of our thought, has become a settled fact in the mind of God even before the actual rejection of the crucifixion: You will see that the quote from David is in the past tense, and even as Jesus quotes it in the past tense as the nation of Israel has already rejected Jesus as the chief cornerstone of the Temple and the kingdom. However, you must see that David sets in awe of the marvel of God’s salvation plan, related to the temple and the kingdom, as “This was the LORD’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?” It took a God, a great God like the LORD is, to think of such a marvelous plan in the face of all the manipulations, that is what builders means like the movers and shakers of today, done by the nation of Israel and of their religious leaders. You see you just can not buy into the kingdom of God, anymore with impunity, without the right and individual response of repentance from sins and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, including what He did on the cross for the salvation of the world. We echo with David, and with God in His Word, that it is marvelous in our sight!

**Mark 11:27-33 through Mark 12:12.** The Atypical attitude of Israel that brought on the curse of the withered fig tree, the abomination of desolation, and the lack of salvation one year after the Messiah was cut off. And so important was this for the people of Israel to see, especially the approximately 100,000 that would be converted in the next year, and the apostles, that Jesus reinforces the teachings of 1:27-33 with the parable of the wicked vinedressers in Mark 12:1-12, also including in the parable a quote from the Old Testament that predicts and describes the rise and fall of the nation of Israel. They were builders for many years, and how beautiful were the stones of the Temple and the city they built; however, according to David in Psalm 118:22,23, they rejected the chief cornerstone that was selected by God Himself even as He though Ezekiel selected the exact pattern of the building of the second temple.

“This was the LORD’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.” (Psalm 118:22,23 and Mark 12:11).

GOD DID IT!

Therefore we take up with Mark 12:10 and the quote from Jesus from Psalm 118:22,23, That Will Predict His Crucifixion Under the Phrase of “The Stone Which the Builders Rejected”.

However, we must add to our analysis of the events, miracles, and teachings in the life of Jesus also the debates and questions of the religious leaders. This will give us much insight into the mentality and “wants” of the Jesus Seminar today, as well as other false prophets and teachers that must, by prediction, proliferate in this time of the Falling Away. We will label them “debates and disputing questions”; and we will briefly go back to Mark 11:27-33 where truly publically began to question the authority of Jesus to do what He said and did.

**Debate and Disputing Question # 1 in Mark 11:27-33,** a question of authority to teach and heal: By what authority do you do these things? And who gave you that authority? This is indeed a strong argument from religious leaders today. You need the authority of a piece of paper which says PhD from a recognized organization, or you need degrees from the most famous of Universities or you need the authority of the top position or of special recognition among men. Let us see if we can get some help from Jesus on this issue? Jesus stumped them with a question in reply, is the baptism of John from heaven or from men. In other words, what authority did John the Baptist have to baptize? Was that authority from heaven and God, or from men. But
at this point, the religious leaders so feared the popularity of John as a Prophet among the people, that they would not answer; but they had their answer already, and they knew it, the authority and source of Jesus’ ministry of teaching, healing, and other miracles, and well as the character which He exhibited, was from heaven and from God Himself. Two chapters before this and a short while before this, the select disciples of John, Peter, and James had a direct witness to that authority as God Himself on the Mount of Transfiguration said, “THIS IS MY SON, LISTEN TO HIM.”

Debate and Disputing Question #2 in Mark 12:13-17, a question from some of the Pharisees and Herodians, which by the way were sent according to the record from the very top, also related to authority and whether it was right to pay taxes, hence also tribute to the Roman Caesar: The very words were a test much like religious leaders would try to test us today to get agreement from the people, and to embarrass as we would try to teach, with questions that tend to set you up: (1) Calling you “Teacher” in a sacrastic manner; (2) calling you likewise “true” in a sacrastic manner; (3) Built you up with a status of being indifferent to the customs, opinions, and traditions of others; (4) Setting you up as a non-respector of Persons {how grand this would have been if sincere to so recognize Jesus}; (5) how you teach the way of God based on very truth itself {wow, what a set up; for if they had recognized that they would never have been there in the first place to trap Jesus}; (6) is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not; (7) Jesus, of course, who knew the heart of all men, and who did not even need that here as the “set-up” was so obvious, told them “Why do you test Me?” (7) And Jesus was so poor, a lesson for the Gospel of Prosperity advocates, that He had to borrow a Roman “denarius’ in order to teach a point. You remember the point, “Don’t get your kingdoms mixed up: render to the Roman kingdom what belongs legitimately to the Roman kingdom, like the coins of the State, and render to God’s kingdom what legitimately belongs to God; and we know from the teachings in the Sermon on the Mount and of Matthew 24, that all which is not “mammon”, or the creations of man, belongs to God.

Debate and Question #3: Ah yes, they come rapidly now here in Jerusalem as there is a concerted effort of the religious leaders to destroy His influence with the people, short of killing Him which they must do as swiftly and as secretly as possible. If they could only use the influence of their own authority, both religious and some delegated authority from the Roman government, to overcome His own sense of authority and support, then they could easily win. And being unbelievers in God, and having Satan as their father, they actually deceived themselves into thinking they might overcome the very Son of God in wisdoms of teachings. After all, they knew themselves to be right as THE SOLE SURVIVING DESCENDANTS OF ABRAHAM. I guess subversion was always a possibility. After the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness was real, and that Satan really thought He could tempt Jesus away from His mission on three counts: (1) Perverting His power from God to make bread out of stones, putting seeking these things ahead for this important moment of the kingdom of God and His righteousness, which indeed was the focus of the moment for Jesus; (2) Taking the easy way of a kingdom by the worship of the world as offered by Satan who really had and does have that power over the long-range attainment of the kingdom after the Second Coming, and of a kingdom based on His own death and resurrection, which above all Satan wanted to thwart, being as Satan was very familiar with the Old Testament as with all Scriptures about Christ; and (3) To tempt God by casting Himself down from the high point.

Well, let us see if Satan works now through his children, the Sadducees this time
to solve one of the most puzzling riddles of this time, and as related to the Resurrection. {They were definitely hypocrites and their questionings were hypocritical in that they did not believe in the Resurrection like the Pharisees did, but some of the people would side with them on this issue.} In the after life and after the Resurrection of the physical bodies, a woman who was wife to seven brothers, each of whom died and the woman married them only after the death of the other husband, whose wife would see be in heaven. We are indebted to these disputing Sadducees for some of the most informative teachings on the after life. First of all, those who have died in faith like Moses, go to immediately at death be with God; and you recall that Jesus just talked with Moses on the Mount of Transfiguration. Secondly God is Himself a living God and not God of the dead. They, as Jesus told them, had the same lack of understanding of this as of parables; however here the doctrines from God through Jesus were more specific, they did not understand (1) the Old Testament Scriptures, and (2) the power of God, that is, they did not understand God Himself. And what you must look for in authority is real understanding of God Himself, His thoughts and His character, and real understanding of Scripture that only comes through the ASI.

Debate and Question #4: Well, here come the scribes right behind the other religious leaders, in Mark 12:28-34, with their efforts to stump or try Jesus verbally and to embarass Him. Their question is, “What is the greatest of all commandments?” They figured that there were Ten to chose from, so that they might catch Jesus on a matter of priority for one commandment more than the other ten. Tricky huh, in straining at a knat in order to shallow a camel; and yet often today we also here that, more from average people than from scribes, but nonetheless similar as people say “well I don't kill or steal”, effectively in their own mind and life giving a priority for those two commandments over the others. Jesus evaded their efforts by going to the real heart of the matter which is “love” itself—love of God and love of fellow man—and with a summarizing quote from Moses of the Ten Commandments in Deuteronomy 6:4,5.

Response #6 and in Mark 12:32,33, comes from the questing scribe: You would have to put the scribe with his answer to Jesus about the Ten Commandments in the category of almost disciples, yet not quite “indeed-disciple” and in the previous teachings of Jesus, and as Jesus does now in replay to the response of the scribe.

“Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, ‘You are not far from the kingdom of God.” (Mark 12:34) So what we have is another category from Jesus Himself which is the “category of not far from the kingdom of God”. Surely not far from the kigdom of God is just before being an “indeed-disciple.” And we think of Jesus and the rich young ruler where Jesus told the disciples, after the rich young man walked away from the challenge of following Jesus because he had great possessions, Jesus explained how hard it is for a man of riches to enter the kingdom of God. Although, I doubt if the scribe was a man of riches: rather a man of wisdom, scholarship, and even of Bible knowledge.

Unfortunately in a way, Jesus here puts an end to the questioning and debates, as Mark relays how “But after that no one dared question Him.” (Mark 12:34) The questions are over and the efforts will commence to get Him alone for capture, mock trail, and deliverance to the Roman government for death. Questioning was too dangerous from the additional popularity gained among the people, and from the fact that Jesus almost made a convert out of one of their own religious leaders.

Mark 12:13-17: “The Stone Which the Builders Rejected” was not a stone from the kingdom of the Roman Empire. The relationship between the kingdom of the Roman Empire and the kingdom of the Death and Resurrection of Christ given in the parable of Caesar and the coin of
the Roman Empire.

**Mark 12:18-27:** “The Stone Which the Builders Rejected” implied the crucifixion of the nation of Israel of the very Son of God. How does the kingdom of the death and resurrection of Christ relate to the subsequent resurrection from the dead of His disciples. According to Psalm 118:22,23 the very stone rejected by crucifixion by the Jews was selected to be the chief cornerstone of the beginning Temple of God. Bad choice on their part: to overlook and ignore even reject the cornerstone chosen by God Himself for their own salvation.

And David himself in Psalm 118:22,23 speaks of this rejection of the chief cornerstone whom God has chosen as a basis to build His own kingdom. How does the kingdom of the death and resurrection of Christ relate to the Kingdom of David, to the religious leaders of Israel, and to a poor widow that gives her all. By the sacrifice for God of giving her all, surely the equivalent of a cross and self-denial, like the cross in the teachings from Jesus relate to His own crucifixion, so does her self-sacrifice, showing even the faith of a little child, also relate to the death and resurrection of Christ. At some point we must make clear from Paul and Romans, how a baptism in the death and resurrection of Christ, the process of real salvation, also relates to the cross of Christ. After all, Christ belatedly chose the Apostle Paul to make things like this clear as Paul did in the majority of the New Testament books which he wrote, and even in the choice of his quotes and manuscripts for the three other books from John Mark and Dr. Luke.

Jesus takes on the unsound doctrines and practices of the scribes in Mark 12:35-40: First in their mistaken claim that the Christ-Messiah is the Son of David, something for which the scribes were responsible in the beliefs of the multitude as Jesus did a triumphant entry {we might question that phrase as not really Biblical} into Jerusalem, saying, “Blessed is the kingdom of our father David.” We see that the Jews could find more than one father to justify themselves, David and Abraham. Then as we previously discussed Jesus quotes from Psalm 110:1 how David called Jesus the Christ, “Lord”; and this is an interesting study of contrast you might want to make some time between God the Father as LORD in all capital letters and Jesus as Lord in mostly little letters; and please if you do, add to that study the passage in I Corinthians 15:12-19 where the Lord Jesus Christ ultimately delivers the completely subdued kingdoms of this world under His own lordship to God the Father, in order that God may be all in all. Secondly Jesus takes on the unsound practices of the scribes. {One thing that we must do, by way of Paul and the pastoral epistles of I, II Timothy, and Titus is make clear the relationship of bad church behavior to bad and unsound doctrine.} Jesus enumerates to the people what to beware of in the practices of the scribes: (1) they dress in long, loud and attractive robes {does that remind us of certain religious leaders today with their pompous dress in public}; (2) they love greetings in the marketplace—that is, they solicit popularity and adulation from the people in the common places like the market, and it is the status and position among the public that they most love above God and the kingdom of God {at some point, we must also speak with the “human frailties of church members” on what has been referred to as “the unspoken influences of the Pastor”, one of those often not spoken about is the status of the community that pastors come to love, no doubt in many cases more than the love of the kingdom of God which is invisible now}; (3) they love the best seats in the synagogues, indeed they take and demand the best seats in the synagogue sort of like asking for firstness in the kingdom, the synagogues of course being the equivalent of our churches and we know who demands certain seats or the best seats in our churches; (4)
likewise out there in the world and at the feasts, some religious and some not so religious but where food is, they demand the best seats; (5) wow, Jesus says that “they devour widows houses, and for a pretence make long prayers” {we can not let this opportunity pass for insight into II Timothy 3:1-9 where we have the characteristics of bad church behavior, and where some of the church members, like the scribes, were taking captive simple women in their homes with their false teachings and practices} of course the long prayers are for money, and Jesus shows us that it is more a professional ministry without real concern for the widow or the needs of the widow, but long prayers for money, once again much like the characteristics of bad church behavior of II Timothy 3:1-9 where there is “a form of godliness {the public establishment of their own righteousness like Paul describe the average Jew} but without the power thereof {as the power of God does not come inwardly without the pre-requisite saving faith}; (6) Jesus teaches that there is a greater and a smaller “condemnation” for the tares like the scribes, some will receive greater punishment in the Judgment than others; and now we have still another category beyond tares, wheat, “indeed-disciples” as contrasted to those “not far away from the kingdom of God”. We have the tares of lesser condemnation and the tares of greater condemnation, the greater being those like the scribe who with their knowledge of Scripture was not far from the kingdom of God. Almost but not quite, and it reminds us of the categories of the book of Jude which we must also explore in our chapter on the “Human Frailities of Church Members”.

You know, we should also think about this as we approach the actual Crucifixion of Jesus which seemingly had already been settled in the mind of God and recorded in Psalm long before it happened; and therefore we must ask the question, “Did God and Jesus setup the chief priests, Pharisees, Herodians, and scribes to carry out the crucifixion that He had already planned?” Yes, I think so; but only to the extent to show what He had already decided on and planned on, how Israel had already earned the abomination of desolation, and how they would behave as wicked vinedressers when confronted with the Owner’s own Son. In other words, God gave Israel a final chance to put up or shut up; and we must add to that how God through Christ made a tremendous personal sacrifice, the humiliation and death of His only Son, in order to carry out that plan. Either way, the cross of Jesus was necessary for the salvation of the world; and although Jesus tried to keep most of the healed silent about His works which showed the power of God in His life for years, finally as He knew the time of the end approached as He and God had planned, He spoke and performed miracles more in the open and more in Jerusalem. So much of His work had previously been done in Galilee, except for Nazareth where He was without honor, and in the regions beyond Galilee, the regions of the Gentiles; but now the focus and efforts of Jesus centered in Jerusalem and toward the cross. What we have from the point above in Mark 12-16 is: (1) Jesus Prediction about the destruction of the Temple and Last Things in Mark 13:1-37; (2) The Plot to Kill Jesus with the Betrayal of Jesus by Judas and the prediction of Jesus at the Last Supper in Mark 14, with also a momentary denial by Simon Peter, although not fatal like the betrayal of Judas {and perhaps another sub-category we should consider of fatal-betrayal versus redeemed-betrayal}; (3) Arrest and Betrayal in the Garden, which some speculate belonged to the mother of John Mark, in Mark 14:32-51, with the young man fleeing naked, not doubt John Mark telling on himself as sort of an act of self-identification of authorship and authenticity, along with just before these events, the Lord’s Supper, which most agree was at the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark {we, of course will desire to speak of Jesus’ preparation and predictions about this to the disciples even as we did of the preparation of the young colt for triumphant entry and the ship in waiting near the shore of the Sea of Galilee, but the biggest preparation of all, especially of the disciples, in His death and Resurrection on the third day—who but Jesus, the Son of God, could predict the exact day of His Resurrection, three days after His death}; (4) The whole false arrest and mock trail business
of Mark 14:53-15:20 of before the Sanhedrin {the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees and Herodians finally have their day in court as they had plotted}; Peter’s denial—a redemptive betrayal—before the cock of the early morning crowed twice, Jesus taken before the Roman ruler Pilate and replaced by Barabbas for freedom, and the Roman soldiers mocking Jesus, all so surprised at His silence acceptance of the process; (5) The King of the Jews, Jesus, as Pilate had written on the cross and His death and burial in Mark 15:21-47; and (6) Lastly the Resurrection in Mark 16 with several appearances, the giving of the Great Commission to the “eleven”, and the Ascension back into heaven.

**Mark 13:1-37:** Ah, the difference between the Temple at Jerusalem and the Temple of God which is the same difference between “The Stone which the Builders Rejected in the building and maintenance of the Temple at Jerusalem and the Eternal Temple which is very similar to the kingdom of God which God built through the chief cornerstone of Jesus, a Temple of Gentiles and Jews, and of the real children of faith of Abraham. How does the kingdom of the death and resurrection of Christ relate to the existing Temple, the abomination of desolation of Daniel, and to the end times and the Second Coming. {We must continue in this book at some point on some similarities and differences between the kingdom of God and the Temple, of the kingdom of God and the local church and one church.}
Chapter 13: Some Marvels of Daniel

I. Thrones are Put in Place in the First Sweep, Daniel 7:9-14.
   God in place for Judgment and the Books opened.

II. The pompous words of the Man of Sin judged with his sponsor the beast, and the
    execution of justice in the flaming fire.

III. The other beasts given a short dominion.

IV. The Second Coming of Christ and His everlasting kingdom that has been given dominion
    over all kingdoms.

V. The Four Great Beasts versus the Saints of God and their kingdom, Daniel 7:15-27.
   8. The four great beasts are the four Kings. {Remember that this is the interpretation
      of the previous vision, so here even like Jesus identifies the actors in the parable of
      the seed and the sower, so one of those standing near during the vision explains to
      Daniel that the four great beasts are four Kings.}
   9. What Daniel asked to understand the most about: the fourth awesome beast and the
      10 horns, and especially the little horn that came up whose appearance was greater
      than the others and who spoke pompous words. {You see consistently, we have in
      the five cycles information about the man of sin and perdition of II Thessalonians.}
   10. This little pompous horn was making war against the saints of the kingdom, and he
       was “prevailing against them”. {You know this is the final great Falling Away of II
       Thessalonians during which Satan is released as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn from
       the earth.}
   11. The Ancient of Days comes, judges in favor of the saints, a theme repeated from the
       first cycle, and the time comes that the saints wholly possess the kingdom, as the
       kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of Jesus and God.
   12. Okay, an explanation about the fourth beast, the 10 horns, and the little horn.
      (1). The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom—different, devouring, and trampling all
          other kingdoms on the earth {Daniel 7:23}.
      (2). The ten horns are ten kings (actually Caesars as we see from later history in the
          Bible and in secular history). {Daniel 7:24b-25}
      (3). “Another shall rise after them”, different from the first ones who will speak
          pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints, who will try to
          “change times and law”; and the saints will be given into his hand for “a time, times,
          and half a time”.

   13. The court of God is seated and takes away his dominion, destroying it forever.
   14. The greatness of all the kingdoms on the earth shall be given over to the kingdom of
       the saints, the kingdom of the Most High who has an everlasting kingdom. He will
       have dominion over the saints and they will serve and obey Him {this is a partial
       answer to Daniel’s repeated prayer and question, what is going to happen to my
       people?}

   {Note that while you get some detail on the major peaks from the first cycle, in this second
   sweep you primarily get details on the four beasts, the 10 horns, and even more on the little
   horn. This little horn is undeniably the final man of sin of the Falling Away who under
   the supervision of Satan will try to change all history and all law, although it can like any
   parable also include more men before the final man of sin.}

VI. The Second Vision of the Third Sweep, “the Time of the End” {Daniel 8:17} the Ram
    with two horns interpreted by Gabriel as kings of Media and Persia, and “the male goat
    is the kingdom of Greece.” {Daniel 8:21}
   (1) The ram with two high horns, the second one higher than the first that came up, pushed north, south and west conquering until a male goat with a very large horn from the West attached the ram, breaking the horns of the ram.
   (2) The male goat grew large and strong, the large horn broke off and four notable horns came in its place from the four winds.
   (3) Out of one of the four notable horns came a little horn which great exceeding great and spread toward the south, east, and toward the Glorious Land. {Little have doubt that this is the Promised land of Palestine, whatever name it was called throughout history.}
   (4) “And it grew up to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground, and trampled them.” (Daniel 8:10) {Obviously we have a reference to the war in heaven against Satan as Satan and his angels, the fallen stars, are cast out of heaven, and already we begin to see what we will see more and more of in Daniel where the spiritual warfare above becomes one with the spiritual warfare here on earth.}
   (5) “He even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host; {the reference here is of the man of sin exalting himself to the Prince of the power of the air and this earth, since the host would refer back in the last verse to the host that is cast down out of heaven}...and by him the daily sacrifices were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down.”
   (6) An army is given, obviously by Satan, to this horn; and with this army, he opposes the daily sacrifices, cast truth down to the ground, and while he did all this, he prospered. {God let it happen!}
   (7) How Long between the taking away of the daily sacrifices and the “abomination of desolation”, destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem? The answer comes, “for two thousand three hundred days”.

5. The Interpretation by Gabriel in Daniel 8:15-26.
   (1) The vision refers to the “time of the end”, what shall happen in the later time of “the indignation”. It shall be at a definite time that God has appointed with echoes again of “known unto God are all His works from the beginning” of James and the book of Acts, help from the ASI if you would.
   (2) The ram with two horns are the kings of Media and Persia, the male goat is the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn between his eyes is the first king of Greece.
   (3) Four kingdoms shall arise out of Greece, but not with that power.
   (4) In the latter time of the Grecian kingdom, another king shall arise of fierce features, sinister schemes, welding the power of Satan, destroying, prospering, and thriving, destroying the mighty and the people of God {8:23-24—here you almost have a parable within a parable as this latter Grecian king is a prototype of the last man of sin. His characteristics of Satan sponsorship, the abounding of sin and transgression, and of himself as a man of sin carry all the way through a Grecian, a Roman, and then a final days son of perdition.}
   (5) A long verse is given over to a detailed description of what this preliminary, parable like man of sin will do: (a) with cunning cause deceit to prosper as he rules; (b) exalt himself like a god in his own heart; (c) destroy many that prosper; (d) rise against the Prince of princes, obviously Christ, and we have
another anti-Christ; and (e) he and his kingdom are broken by God without human help like war and politics.

(6). Seal up the vision because it has references to “many days in the future” {Daniel 8:26b}

6. The fainting and sickness for days of Daniel, 8:27.

{Once again you see a lot of focus on the atypical man of sin, or anti-Christ, which will be a final fulfillment with the last man of sin. Again it is like a parable, without names, that is a general-type story that applies to at least three kings—one of Greece, another of Rome, and then the last at the final days.}

VII. The fourth cycle or sweep as Daniel starts his quest for understanding and prayer again for “what will happen to my people” with Jeremiah’s 70 years of Jerusalem desolation, and Gabriel comes with an answer to his prayers.

7. The history of Daniel’s people, a history of disobedience and rebellion, from the wilderness to the destruction of Jerusalem, Daniel 9:1-19.

8. The intercessory prayer of Daniel, Daniel 9:1-20: “Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God....” (Daniel 9:20)

9. Gabriel started his trip from heaven to earth when at the start of Daniel’s prayer, God commanded him to move swiftly. Gabriel came to give Daniel “skill to understand”, something that we must have in the ASI and in parable, often called in the Bible and by Jesus as “eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand”. Gabriel told Daniel that he was greatly beloved.

10. God has determined that the period of time will be 70 weeks for Daniel’s people and the holy city of Jerusalem as that amount of time is required by God in order to: (a) to let the transgression runs its course; (b) to make an end to the sins; (c) to make reconciliation to God for their iniquity; (d) to bring in an everlasting righteousness, which we know clearly know from Daniel and all the Prophets and the New Testament to be the plan of salvation brought to earth in fullness by Jesus Christ in His life and death; (e) to seal up vision and prophesy, in the life and teachings of Jesus and the Apostles the seal is put on all Old Testament visions and prophesy as we come to understand what was forecast; and (f) to anoint the MOST HOLY.

11. From the Restoration {the return from exile and rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple} until the time the Messiah comes will be 7 weeks and 62 weeks, for a total of 69 weeks which leaves us one short of the 70 weeks.

(1). The end of the 69 weeks is identified clearly as the Messiah being killed, not for his own sins, but for the people.

(2). Then the city and the sanctuary will again be destroyed by the people of the prince to come, which we now know to be Titus and the Roman Empire.

(3). A short description of the desolations and the war that ends Jerusalem and the Temple.

12. The one week after the 69 to complete the 70 weeks, Daniel 9:27.

(1). For this one week, the last of the 40 years, and a one week or really one year after the crucifixion of Christ, God allows the covenant of the New Testament to be confirmed with “many for one week”, and we know that approximately 100,000 Jews were saved during this one year after the crucifixion of Christ, many on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension.

(2). In the middle of that year after the Crucifixion of Christ, God brings an end to
“sacrifice and offering”. {In other words an end to Temple worship.}
(3). On the wing of these abominations of desolation caused by no more temple sacrifice and offering shall be “one who makes desolate”. Satan and men of sin will thrive on the wings of the desolation.
(4). The end of the abomination that makes desolate is the “consummation”, and God has determined a precise time; and the consummation is poured out on the desolate, obviously a judgment on the desolate.
Where did the word “kingdom” go in Gospel? When you hear in our large and small churches today, of all denominations, the Gospel preached and taught, do you hear the word “kingdom”? For example, when like Charles Stanley there is an effort to explain the plan of salvation in simple words, is the word “kingdom” ever used? And does this mean that not only have we lost the word “kingdom”, but also the Bible concept, importance, and meaning of the kingdom. {Forget for this chapter the Jehovah Witnesses with their unsound doctrines and kingdom halls.}

Remember at the beginning study of Mark, how Mark introduces the ministry and preaching of Jesus as “Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God...” (Mark 1:14) In fact Mark quotes from that preaching of the gospel of the kingdom of God from Mark by writing, Jesus said, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” We do hear repentance; we do hear believe; we do hear gospel; but we do not hear the “kingdom of God”. I think we are on to something: that we have ceased to preach and teach the Gospel message as Jesus preached and taught it. Now, granted what Jesus said about the Gospel of the Kingdom of God was a three point message like all good messages should be {remember homiletics 101 of three point and a poem, etc}. The three points you see in an exegesis, or break down of the phrases of Mark 1:15.

- The time is fulfilled;
- The kingdom of God is at hand; and
- Repent and Believe in the Gospel.

Well, once might say that the “times” are different now in that the kingdom of God, through the life, ministry, and death of Christ, with the subsequent work of the Holy Spirit and the Apostles has been fulfilled, so there is no need for that third of the Gospel preaching; and that would be sufficient, if in our contemporary pulpits and Bible teaching which is being heaped up like a fortress for unsound doctrine, we could also hear that the time is fulfilled for the Falling Away which must come before the Second Coming. We do hear about the Second Coming, but how adequate can our Bible be on that matter when we neglect the very two signs that must happen before the Second Coming, as Paul gives in II Thessalonians, the Falling Away and the appearance of the man of sin, the son of perdition?

The bottom line of the contrast between the preaching of Jesus and the preaching and teaching of today is that we have dropped two-thirds of the Gospel message. We have replaced a three part message with a one part message, dropping for all practical purposes—and you know this to be true by what you are hearing and by what you are not hearing—the “time is fulfilled” and “the kingdom of God is at hand”. What happens to Christians when they do not hear and teach two-thirds of the Gospel; what happens to local churches and denominations when they not longer understand and hold up the gospel of the kingdom of God; and what happens in that part of the kingdom of God that is apportioned to local churches and the church of the total body of Christ when the kingdom of God is no longer important. We would seem to me that this is like training a soldier without the mention of “gun”; or of training a golfer without the usage of the word “club”; or of the training of a football player without the concepts of “blocking” and “tackling”. Now, granted that the large churches of many denominations strung across our country side, especially in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, and the room still left for so many small churches, have vastly departed from the New Testament pattern. Church schools helped saved the local churches in the communities and now wag the dog instead of the tail; the concept of “elder” as the same as a pastor or shepherd, with the realities of actual church employment have replaced the place of leadership of seniority in churches in favor of a popularity
among youth {the loss of sound doctrine has been much greater than the gain of youthful enthusiasm, and both existed in New Testament churches as you see about John Mark and the Apostle Paul who worked out their differences to the benefit of the kingdom of God}; numbering of the people of God, once prohibited in Numbers, has replaced that prohibition with the church roll; automatic acceptance in going from a church in Jerusalem to a church in Antioch, for example in New Testament times, has been replaced by a certain American Democratic Faith process whereby existing church members find exclusiveness and status in voting on new members; and we could go on and on about the way local churches have departed from the pattern and practices of New Testament churches, of course the creation and maintenance of a deacon board like a board of trustees in other American financial institutions is one, with a subsequent departure from the serving of the material welfare of church members as in the first churches.

Yet even if we could rationalize this as a natural evolution under the leadership of the Holy Spirit as He guided our professionals and denominational leaders, which we can not rationalize, then we are left with the puzzling question as to where the words “kingdom of God” went from our Gospel message; and what did we lose of important Bible and spirituality when we dropped this part of the truth from our messages, teachings, and our sound doctrines. Did the kingdom of God disappear some where along the line of history from Jesus to the present day? It can hardly disappear as Jesus told us the parable of the mustard seed of how large with time and history it would grow to be larger than all the other seeds. Perhaps, one might respond that it has become so large, well-established, that like our large church buildings which seem to be impregnable and immutability, we drive by them to almost ignore them.

I recall hearing the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Dallas, once under George W. Truett a powerhouse of conservatism and evangelism, lament to his congregation and over radio that “nothing significant has happened in this church for years.” The pastor of Preston Wood Baptist church should also admit that, it the custom of large and small churches was not to cover up; also of the First Baptist Church of Fort Worth, and similar churches in Weatherford, Mineral Wells, and Garland. As one of our SBC leaders said years ago, “We Baptists are many, but we are not much.” The sad story is that all that happens among the church members at those large and small churches stays right there in those church walls. You can pass by them for months, even live near them, and except for the seeing of cars come and go, never see the Christ ministry of that building, although you know a lot of busy work for the denomination is going on. But we will not labor the point, I think most are willing to admit, that there is a vast and rapidly increasing gap between Christ and church membership. It is only hoped to honestly explore the possibility that our loss of the meaning and message of the “gospel of the kingdom of God” has made a significant contribution to that gap, alias Falling Away from God, Christ, and the Bible: a Falling Away that is directly proportion to an increase in numbers, and a Falling Away where accusations against the youth are uncalled for since this Second Great Falling Away in all probability will be much like the First Great Falling Away of the children of Israel in the 40 year wilderness wanderings where all under 21 years of age were safe.

I would think that this wise, Bible-based pastor, had in mind that the First Baptist Church of Dallas would make some contribution to the kingdom of God; and how different would churches and denominations today be if the leaders would challenge church members to growth of the kingdom of God. A challenge of the actual implementation of the flippant prayers for the kingdom of God, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in
heaven.” Of course, this would necessitate many changes in the life of that individual church member to truly implement in their own life the will of God. There is a small part in the kingdom of God where we are actually in charge, and that is in the realm of that part of the kingdom of God which is our own life; and there is where the will and desires of God must reign supreme even as they reign supreme among the multitudes of heaven.

**New Birth and the Kingdom of God**

I know you have heard about the new birth. Fundamentalists which now dominant the largest Protestant denomination in the world are famous for their “born again” concepts. While the fundamentals of this important Bible doctrine of the new birth are distorted by them as they use the same hunt and peck, pick and choice methods of Bible exegesis as on so many other doctrines, we must recognize that you do hear about it from them. Unfortunately it has replaced the forgiveness of sins by God with a public approval of changed character and behavior for politicians like one of the favorite lines of the movie Chicago, “the whole world loves a converted sinner”. And as previously discussed in this book, centered around understanding of the parable from Jesus of the seed and the sower, is that when the seed down on stony or thorny ground instantly received with joy, that instant joy is interpreted as instant new birth, when in reality spiritual birth like physical birth takes at least 9 months. Again, God can convert instantly, and don’t use Paul as an example since Jesus said that Paul had been kicking against the pricks for a long time; but it is just that more normally according to the plan and program of God on the new birth, and according to the comparison of Jesus Himself with the physical birth of John 3, it normally takes at least 9 months. It requires 9 months to see if there is any root; it takes 9 months to see if persecutions and tribulations because of that Word are going to cause stumbling; and it takes at least 9 months to know if the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches are going to choke it out, no matter how marvelous the seeming conversion was in that meeting or personal encounter. You see just like our admiration of the visibility and appearance of our large church buildings, and the large visible size of our church rolls, even so is our preference for the visibility of salvation and immediately over the invisible aspects of the kingdom of God.” Look again at the teaching of Jesus to Nicodemus on the new birth.

*“Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’” (John 3:3)*

How important is it for all of us who expect eternal life, and for all of those who still hope to come around to the necessary conditions of the Bible for eternal life, to “see the kingdom of God”. We know from Matthew 5-7, the Sermon on the Mount, that to see the kingdom of God is the equivalent of seeing God; and likewise seeing the kingdom of God is the equivalent of being with the eternal God, and His Son, in eternity. You might want to say that “seeing the kingdom of God” is the equivalent of salvation. Okay, well why don’t we include that in our message when we are trying to explain the salvation of God. Well, it confuses people, one might respond to try to explain the kingdom of God while we are trying to explain the new birth, repentance, and belief. Well, well, well...therein is part of the problem that we have insufficiently preached and taught the whole truth of God and Christ in the very fundamentals of initial salvation, so that we have grown up at least one generation that is almost completely ignorant of the kingdom of God. Shame...shame...shame! And it is even worse if your church or denomination has come to the point beyond ignorance, of an intolerance toward sound doctrine that Paul predicted in II Timothy 4:3, as “the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine...”

And when the Pharisee Nicodemus protested with the ridiculous image of an old man entering the second time into the womb, for another 9 months, Jesus once again re-inforced the necessity of the “kingdom of God” part of the Gospel message in the following words.
“Jesus answered, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.’” (John 3:5)

Even as most know that actual birth is referred to as the breaking of the water, and that in physical birth the babe resides in water-like fluids, even so beyond the physical birth by water is the spiritual birth by the power of God through the Holy Spirit; and it is important to hear and teach and preach the whole story of Jesus on salvation and the new birth, as the means of entrance into “the kingdom of God”. You see we are so eager to add one more number for entrance into our church roll and building, that we neglect what has truly happened—if indeed it has truly happened after we wait 9 months for the Biblical and Jesus-based new birth. Oh, that we might lament over the lack of fundamentals from the fundamentalists caused not only by their lack of a good spirit, being dominated by a fighting spirit, but also by their inadequate hunt and peck methods of Bible exegesis which place pragmatism and the functionality of the moment over the ultimate welfare of the kingdom of God.

Perhaps this is another reason I can see congregations cring when I read of the kingdom of God and Christ in I Corinthians 15: not only a step back for the real exegesis of how Christ Second Coming is, then the end—they want to look for a thousand years between the Second Coming and the end; but also a step back when we talk of how God puts all things under the feet of Christ, excluded in those all things is God the Father, and of how Christ will then deliver “the kingdom of God the Father” to the Father in order that God the Father may be all in all. Look at it again.

“Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom of God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.” (Mark 15:24)

Who does Jesus deliver “kingdom of God the Father” to? Naturally, to God the Father. It was the Father’s kingdom before Christ came on earth, and in all the aeons of time of the Old Testament; it was the “kingdom of God” when Jesus preached on this earth of the Gospel; it was salvation for the kingdom of God when the Apostles in Acts and in letters of Paul took over the Gospel message; and at the end of time, when Christ comes again, dominates all kingdoms of this earth and reigns supreme, it will again be the kingdom of God the Father that Jesus delivers to God the Father.

**Kingdom of God in the Gospel Preaching of the Other Gospels**

Before we check out some references to how the Apostles, in Acts and in the letters of Paul, preached the Gospel of the kingdom of God, that is as to whether they actually included “the kingdom of God” in that message, we will check what some of the other Gospel writers have to say on the subject. We know what the results will be, as in all other cases where we find a consistency from the mind and heart of God between Mark and the other Gospel writers, we will find a consistency here; but since we have on the contemporary scene false teachers with PhD’s, ThD’s, and influence, we should re-inforce our Bible studies with a little reality.

Since the “kingdom” is found 54 times in Matthew, and primarily from Jesus Himself, let us look at a few pertinent and typical examples. In Matthew 3:2 the message of John the Baptist was at least a two part message, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”, even though it is “the kingdom of heaven” instead of the “kingdom of God”; we do know with our background on The Sermon on the Mount how interchangeable in meaning is the kingdom of heaven and of God. And in Matthew 4:17 is the equivalent of
Mark 1:14,15 with the beginning of the Galilean Ministry, where Matthew quotes from Jesus as saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Interesting how Mark heard “kingdom of God” and Matthew heard “kingdom of heaven”, and I would like in the actual event, much longer than what is recorded, that Jesus either spoke both, or the words are almost the equivalent in the dictionary. At least they must be synonyms. If we check a standard dictionary on “kingdom”, we find the following.

“1 archaic : KINGSHIP
2 : a politically organized community or major territorial unit having a monarchical form of government headed by a king or queen
3 often capitalized a : the eternal kingship of God b : the realm in which God’s will is fulfilled
4 a : a realm or region in which something is dominant b : an area or sphere in which one holds a preeminent position.”

Of course of the four definitions here, the definition that would apply would be, except for Daniel and other Prophets in the Old Testament where kingdom is more a political kingdom like in number 2, it would be number 3, a. of “the eternal kingship of God” and b. Of “the realm in which God’s will is fulfilled.” Of course when it comes to the end time after the Second Coming of Christ as He subdues all over kingdoms and reigns and delivers the dominant kingdom to God the Father, then number 4 would also apply, “a realm or region in which something is dominant” or “an area of sphere in which one holds a preeminent position.”

That is sort of interesting here. We might call it a little message from the Webster Collegiate dictionary as to one reason that we don’t use the word kingdom in our churches very often. Can it not be that based on 4b. Christ does not dominant and Christ does not hold a preeminent position. The pastor, or deacon, or some loud group of the church hold dominance and preeminence; and at least we have the intellectual honesty not to claim a kingdom of God and Christ ruling over our church when we indeed that many other things rule over our churches.

We might also look up “kingdom of God” in a Bible dictionary, say in EERDMANS DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE. First of all the heading itself under the definition is given is “KINGDOM OF GOD, KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.”

“The sovereignty or realm ruled by God. The image of the kingdom of God/heaven is n important on for understanding the message and ministry of Jesus, particularly as he is portrayed in the Synoptic Gospels {Matthew, Mark, and Luke}. This image builds on the images of kingly rule found in the OT, and it gives rise to NT discussions of the end times (or eschaton).”

Kingdom of God in the Gospel Preaching of the Apostles
This is good; but we may become impatient to find where “the kingdom of God” was dropped from the preaching and teaching of the Gospel, hoping still that is was by the Apostles and under the leadership of the Spirit, rather than by us! First of all the word “kingdom” is found 8 times in Acts, admittedly quite a drop over the preachings of Christ, while we recall that the book of Acts is often called the book of the works of the Apostles and the Holy Spirit. We should be reminded as in Acts 1:3 of how Jesus made Resurrection appearances for 40 days, and by many “infallible proofs” as Dr. Luke relates, being seen of many people; and of how during that period of time Jesus “spoke of things pertaining to the kingdom of God”. It is important that Jesus continued to teach His disciples, even after the doctrines of the cross and resurrection, of the kingdom of
God—how they needed it as well as it was the way to continue to promote the kingdom of God—and that likewise our ministries to new disciples, and after initial salvation, should include things about the kingdom of God! We can go too far on the kingdom, and we can go off on tangents about the kingdom, if our goal is to discern or prove when and what is going to happen to Israel and their kingdom restoration, as the apostles asked him in Acts 1:6. You can see how much the disciples still needed to learn with the answer of Jesus: “it is not for you to know times or season which the Father has put in His own authority.” (Acts 1:7) The time and the season now, as Jesus continued to tell the Apostles, was to cordially welcome and receive special power of the Holy Spirit on the first day of Pentecost after His ascension, and to be witnesses into the whole world. Yes, Dr. Luke starts the book of Acts, just like he and John Mark ended Mark and Luke. {And while we must continue to look at the Gospel messages of the Apostles of Acts, I think that what Jesus is not telling us here is that later He will chose and train the Apostle Paul to straighten out the issues about the kingdom of Israel and any possible explantion; and also the Apostle John as he will as one of the last books of the New Testament write the book of Revelation.}

**In Acts.**

Acts 8:12 we must include the evangelist Philip in the list of those after Christ who preached the Gospel, and while hold a revival meeting in Samaria, and as the people there believed him, the record said, that they also believed the things that he spoke about: (1) “as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God”; and (2) “as he preached the things pertained to the name of Jesus Christ”. Acts 14:22, about the first missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas and at Derbe where Paul “preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples”, and beyond the initial disciple making process of Derbe came the “strengthening” disciples process of Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch where they were exhorted to continue in the faith; and Dr. Luke quotes part of that strengthening of disciples message, I am sure for our benefit, as “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22)

And one might say, “Ah here is the difference between our Gospel message and the training of disciples today, we don’t need the kingdom emphasis because we do not need the “tribulation” emphasis; and while much could be said about, but not right now, we should be reminded of how it takes tribulations and persecutions for the sake of the Word, as in the stony ground of the Seed and the Sower, to prove that our instant new birth has been more than a lack of root and a stumbling.

In Acts 19:8, a record of the Apostle Paul talking in the synagogue at Ephesus and on his second missionary journey, reasonings “concerning the things of the kingdom of God” were so important that Paul persuaded them on the subject for 3 months. In Acts 20:25 where Paul bids farwell to the Elders of Ephesus, and at Miletus, he consider matters of the “kingdom of God” to be so important in that while he attempts to summarize for these elders what he taught and preached in Asia Minor, he mentions “among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God”. (Acts 20:25) In Acts 28:23, under guard and Roman captivity in Rome, Paul when he called the leaders of the Jews together in Rome, has his message summarized by Dr. Luke, who of course there with him as his personal physician, as follows: (1) Paul explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God; and (2) Paul persuaded them about Jesus from both the Lawand the Prophets, from morning till evening. That was a long message; but even as audiences were more accustomed to longer messages in those days compared to the 20 or 30 inattentive minutes of today, so also did they then hear more of the “kingdom of God” than we do today!
The Kingdom of God in the letters of Paul.

Since we find the “kingdom”, primary with the phrase “the kingdom of God” in Romans, I Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, I and II Thessalonians, II Timothy and Titus, and in Hebrews; and for a total of 16 times, I think we can safely conclude that “the kingdom of God” was part of the preaching of the Apostle Paul even as we saw it was from Dr. Luke in Acts. We will try to find a few typical references. In I Corinthians 6:9 it is that “the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God” {could our lack of preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom of God in our churches signal a lack of righteousness in our churches, or a lack of willingness to preach the Gospel as Jesus and the Apostles did, in a fear of offended some unrighteous behavior on the part of church members who do come and who do give, perhaps an over tolerance of the tares—recalling, I hope the specifics of unrighteousness of “fornication, idolatry, adulterer, homosexuality, sodom, stealing, covetousness, drunkenness, reveling, and extortion—oh no, do you have members of Enron in your church, and you recognize that these are people who make a habit out of these sins, not a one time or a few times happening and where forgiveness from God has not been asked and received}.  

Or perhaps we want some of the flesh and blood of our congregations, especially if status and money has come with their blue bood, to continue in our toleration of tares to consider themselves as indeed part of the kingdom of God, counter to what Paul preached in I Corinthians 15:50, “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor doe corruption inherit incorruption.” And with an emphasis on the thought above from I Corinthians where this unrighteousness is a habit of unrighteousness, Paul echoes in Galatians 5:21 about the works of the flesh, I might add the continuous works of the flesh, where “those who practice such things” {you see in the practice the habit} shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:12). Do you have the courage to preach and teach in your church that the practitioners of unrighteouness can not be part of the kingdom of God, even if part of your local church, your denomination, and even leaders like for example priests who commit sodomy against children? Has our tolerance as part of the American Democratic Faith and as a toleration of the tares so grown out of balance, along with a correspondence intolerance toward sound doctrine and sound righteousness, that we cring to talk of, or much less preach against such unrighteousness.  

{The Human Frailities to be mentioned in a later chapter, and the bad church behavior of II Timothy, has been allowed to run amuke under the disguise of “they are just human”, and under the disguise, they need a church and ministry too.}  

Lastly we must at least include II Timothy 4:1, from the letter of Paul on the kingdom of God, in order to set an adequate background for the good and bad church behavior of a later chapter, and to comprehend all important was the kingdom of God and Christ to the Apostle Paul.  

“I charge you, therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word!” (II Timothy 4:1)  

It is the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ, so we assume it is also His kingdom; and that it is temporarily Jesus’ kingdom, based on I Corinthians 15, until the reign and dominance of Jesus is completed, and the kingdom is delivered to God the Father.

Kingdom of God in the book of Revelation

Revelation 11:15  

“Then the seventh angel sounded {seventh is always a number of a completion, so that here the sounding of the seventh trumpet is a completion of the kingdom of God}; and there were loud voice in heaven {you can imagine how many loud voices there were around
the Ancient of Days and His court), saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms {notice that both the kingdoms of this world and the kingdoms of God and Christ are plural, as if of a one to one turn-over like the kingdom of the United States is a kingdom of Christ, the kingdom of Europe, and of Israel, and so on, which must puzzle us as we know that the old earth and heaven are destroyed with fire, so what remains of the old kingdoms} of our Lord {here in the New Testament of the book of Revelation God the Father is not LORD as in the Old Testament, and as in Old Testament quotes, but it is clear as to the fact that it is the Father since the “His Christ” follows} and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever.” (Revelation 11:15)

The answer, of course, is the settled fact in heaven before it takes place on earth, which when God says it or ordains it, is as good as done; and from verse 19 of the same chapter we realize that the location is above it all, in heaven, and in the temple of God.

Revelation 12:10

“Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ‘Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God {here we see a lot of similarity between salvation and the kingdom of God}, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night has been cast down.” (Revelation 12:10)
Chapter 15: Sweeps of Daniel and the Finalized Kingdom.

“Last Things” or end time events have become known in the Biblical world as “eschatology”. And some of the weirdest and most unsound Bible teachings in the world have come out of eschatology, not to be confused with the real eschatology of the Bible itself. Since part of the problem of these interpreters of last things who ignore the ASI method of Bible study and teaching is that they most general start and end with the book of Revelation, taking it completely out of the context of the other teachings of Christ and of the Bible as if the book of Revelation was not part of the authorized Semi-Public Word of God, in reality and in interpretation. Many have take advantage of the neglect by most believers of last things and the book of Revelation, to spin their horrifying tales with scary and awesome symbols and charts. You can genrally tell the real ASI interpreters from the charlatans when they drag out charts to show you elaborate timelines and kingdom phases, like as originated with Darby and Scoffield, and like Tim LeHaye has done with his other books not considered to be fiction. In short, in order to keep such errors of interpretation caused by such private interpretations, independent of Jesus and the Prophets, we will considered last things from Daniel, Jesus in Mark 13 and Matthew 24, and from the book of Revelation, showing the similarity in the method of sweeps and in the parable like nature of the teachings. If we succeed, and you buy it, we will have come one giant step forward in throwing off of the yoke of the fundamentalists which they have intimidated and forced on the Southern Baptist Convention. If the foundation for Bible conservatism and salvation is their pre-millineum beliefs where they have intimidated, and we throw off that yoke, at the same time we can start a revival that can likewise destroy their hold on control and on a spirit of warfare that has crept over the Convention like a dark cloud. {I must say that surely this is the most destructive of all bad influences on the kingdom today that has helped to bring on the Falling Away; and surely if Osama Bin Laden or the Pope were not such logical candidates for the man of sin, we might have to chose a fundamentalist to fit that role.}

The Five Sweeps of Daniel

While I target for “last things”, sometimes called “end times” or eschatology, is Mark 13 with additional understanding from Matthew 24 and Luke, the legitimate place to start with this awesome subject of last things is in the book of Daniel, after we have gained some perspective from the Apostle Peter’s great sermon on the day of Pentecost, as he explained exactly what was happening with Coming of the Holy Spirit to earth in a special way. Peter and the Prophet Joel explain each other, typing the events of that day together with the “last days” as Peter quotes from Joel 2:28-32 on the famous subject of the Day of the LORD from the Old Testament. Far better than running off with charts and weird drawings, and interpretations as weird is it to start with something as basic and easy to understand as Peter’s message with his New Testament interpretation of “last days” and the Day of the LORD mentioned so often in the Old Testament, and always with references to the cessation of light from the sun, the moon, and the stars. {That always in New Testament times and today gains attention since the world is quite accustomed to the routine of sunrise, sunset, the stars at night and the moon.} There were two sayings common among the Hebrews, “tomorrow in Jerusalem” to encourage themselves with better days; and “the Day of the LORD” to denote ultimate justice. And this is also a good principle of the ASI and Bible understanding. Since the Bible is semi-publically interpreted, in other words of “no private interpretation”, and since what the Apostles say about the Old Testament quotes interprets the Old Testament Prophets, and vice versa, we should start with what is most easily understood in the New Testament and from the Apostles of Jesus Himself in order to understand “last things”. Goodness knows, the struggle for Peter to understand was hard; but he had the
help of Jesus, the Master Teacher, and don’t forget that Jesus after His resurrection was with them 40 days explaining the things of the kingdom before He Ascended on to heaven. Likewise we must remember that Peter now had the help of the Holy Spirit to understand and explain. We might add that as we get all this information on “last things” from Acts 2, as Peter quotes from Joel 2:28-32, we are also getting info from Dr. Luke who wrote Acts, and I maintain also from the Apostle Paul who left for him manuscripts for research.

You may want to read Acts 2:14-21 right now. You will see that the major part of it is Joel 2:28-32; and you will note how the Apostle Peter in an effort to explain that the other disciples were not drunk as it seemed and since it was so early in the day, explained that what was happening there in Jerusalem at that very moment was that which was predicted by the Prophet Joel. “But this is what was spoken by the Prophet Joel...’ (Acts 2:16) Okay, we need to nail down quickly certain obvious Biblical facts in order to proceed from the Bible with the wide sweep of eschatology.

First, on this first day of Pentecost after the Ascension was the beginning of the “last days”. In the Bible, you have “latter times”, end times, and last days; but you can clearly see from the context of Acts, Peter, and Joel that the last days started with the Coming of the Holy Spirit in great power to take the place of Jesus on earth.

Second, and by the way the end of the last days with the Day of the LORD is also given in Joel and from Peter as “the great and awesome {or notable} day of the LORD”.

The sweep of what happens in-between the beginning and the end of the last days in the order of Joel is: (1) the power and help of the Holy Spirit becomes more democratic and common during the last days, not like the specialized empowerment of the Old Testament, as say during the period of the Judges; (2) the last days will be a continuous period of signs in the heaven above and the earth beneath, those signs summarized as “blood, fire, and vapor of smoke”—and certainly every year we see those; but (3) just before the Day of the LORD the sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood—obviously the shaking of the heavens and the earth that Paul wrote often of, and the earth melting with fervent heat of which Peter writes; and that leaves for the Day of the LORD itself the Second Coming of Christ and the Judgment Court of which we previously read so much in Daniel; and of course another characteristic of the continuity of the last days is the growth of the kingdom of God as “whosoever shall call upon the name of the LORD shall be saved”. This would correlate with the Gospel being preached in every nation from Jesus in Mark 13 and Matthew 24. Also the Fulness of the Gentiles of Paul in Romans. {We would naturally think that while the final days of this old earth are marred by the Falling Away, that with more and more of the signs in the earth beneath and the heavens above, the extent to which humans, hopefully also Jews, call upon the name of the LORD will increase; and we are inclined to think that this unique combination of Falling Away from the tares and the stumbling will be mixed with new and surprising callings on the LORD which Daniel is told is the time of refinement and making white, alias a final tribulation as contrasted to the Great Tribulation which took place obviously during the first few centuries as the most awesome persecution which if not shortened by God would have even deceived the elect.}

With this simple Bible perspective, we will jump into the first four cycles of Daniel, then add to that the fifth cycle which we did not complete in chapter 1. The first sweep is given in the first vision that Daniel himself had and of the four beasts, and the peak and valley events are: (1) God, the Ancient of Days, sitting in Judgment with His court and the power to execute; (2) The Man of Sin, or the Son of Perdition, respectively of the
Greek and Roman Empire, like a parable, completely fulfilled in the end time Man of Sin of Paul in II Thessalonians; (3) Other kingdoms under the control and judgment of God and kings given a period of dominion according to the determination of the Ancient of Days; (4) Establishment (not fulfillment) of the Everlasting kingdom of Christ to rule over all other kings and kingdoms, determined by the Ancient of Days but not truly established on earth until the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and (5) The Second Coming of Christ to finalize the reign of Christ over all other kingdoms of this earth, and then deliverance to the Great Judge that God may be all in all.

Thus in the simplicities of Peter, Acts, and Joel we have with a first broad sweep of Daniel some of the main events of all time and eschatology. We can start our table of peaks and valleys. {The complete Table of the sweeps of Daniel is listed in the Appendix, each sweep is identified by a color code and at the top of the column.} With the second sweep of Daniel, of course, our radar sweep of the future must continue to peak up some of the previous peaks and valleys; but since we come closer, we will pick up more peaks and valleys, or at least see some of those previous peaks and valleys clearer. The second sweep is the interpretation of the first vision of Daniel about the four beasts, and we find it we looked at in chapter 1 of this book in Daniel 7:15-27. (1) Daniel has explained to him that these four beasts, like explanations from Jesus in parables, are four kings, giving some more details—therefore we really do not need to add a peak or valley event here; (2) the focus of Daniel’s interest is on the details about the little horn, the man of sin or perdition so important throughout history and throughout Daniel’s sweeps, mainly on how he speaks very pompous words against the Ancient of Days {we will show this addition of detail in the third column of the Table, which is the second sweep of Daniel, and with the color magenta}; (3) the pompous little horn, the man of sin, in his fight against the saints is prevailing {the Falling Away, of course}; (4) the Ancient of Days judges in favor of the saints and the Lord Jesus Christ executes Judgment at His Second Coming; (5) the son of perdition will be a revolutionary that tries to change “times and laws”, and the saints will be given into his hands for a “time, times, and half a time”; (6) The Court of God takes away the dominion of the man of sin and Satan, destroying it forever; and (7) the greatness of the kingdoms of the earth will be over to the Kingdom of the Most High God where the saints will obey and serve Him. {And you should take a quick look at this Table of Last Things in the Appendix before we must move it to the Appendix of this book in order to add all of the five cycles of Daniel, Mark 13 and Matthew 24, and the corresponding sweeps of the book of Revelation.}

The third cycle of Daniel is based on the second personal vision of Daniel, Daniel 8:1-28, the vision of the Ram and the Goat and with the interpretation from Gabriel himself, sent from heaven by the command of God as the beginning of Daniel’s prayer. While much of it is about the kings of Persian, Greece, and Rome—which you might if interested in history want to compare with secular history, all well-know facts, we do get additional insight into the little horn, the man of sin again, as the little horn spreads from the north to the south, east, and west; and as the forces on earth join with the fallen forces from heaven to wage war. {You are reminded of the war between Satan and the beast of Revelation which is against the Woman and Her seed, Mary being the woman and the seed being those who would be called saints.} And before we pass on to the fourth cycle, you should know that Gabriel was sent to make Daniel understand about “the time of the end”, to use the words of Gabriel himself.

The fourth sweep of Daniel 9:1-27, with the coming of Gabriel to give an answer to Daniel about what is to be the fate of his people, prayer on which started after Daniel read the Law, the historical books especially Judges, and the Prophets, and in particular as he focused on the 70 weeks of Jeremiah. (1) 70 weeks {or in reality 70 years} is the amount of time from
Captivity to great desolation for Israel, God allows in order to let all the transgressions of Israel run their course, to make an end to their rebellion and unfaithfulness, to make reconciliation to God for their sins, to bring in the everlasting righteousness of Christ and the kingdom of God on earth, and to seal up all the Old Testament through the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles {the New Testament record, or the second half of the oracles of God}; (2) From the Restoration until the Messiah comes and will be cut off {crucified by Israel} will be 69 years; (3) behind that will be the physical realities of temple and Jerusalem destruction, in the abomination of desolation, of the spiritual reality of separation from God and Christ that happened the year after approximately 100,000 Jews were converted; (4) this anti-Christ, a prototype or parable of the ultimate man of sin of the very end times, will be the Roman general Titus, later Caesar, who destroys the temple and Jerusalem in 75 A.D; (5) Satan and the man of sin, during the Falling Away and after the release of Satan by the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit, will prosper under the wings of desolation; and (6) the end of the desolation is in the consummation where the Jews again receive some spiritual blessings, perhaps more in eternity than here on this earth, although we must allow from Paul and Romans something to happen among the Jews after the Fulness of the Gentiles.

[Refer to the Table of Last Things in the Appendix for a complete Outline.]

Fifth cycle of Daniel, in Daniel 10-12 with Daniel’s personal vision of the Glorious Man. Up to this point, Daniel has received primarily bad news in answer to his prayerful requests as to what will happen to his people. Now, we are hopeful like Daniel for more good news, although as in the nature of all sweeps in Daniel or elsewhere like in Revelation and Mark 13 and Matthew 24, there is much repetition. Here are the prime peaks and valleys, sometimes with just details of the previous peaks and valleys, of this last sweep. (1) while all know chapter 10 to be on Persia, and eleven to start on the famous kings of the north and the south, where the king of the north ultimately turns into the man of sin of the end times, we still must remember how Daniel was informed in an introduction to the interpretation that “the vision refers to many days yet to come” (Daniel 10:14); (2) it is the king of the north, first a Grecian king then a Roman king then the man of sin, that will take away the daily sacrifices and defile the temple in Daniel 11:31, the famous “abomination of desolation” of Daniel and referenced by Jesus in Matthew 24; (3) the people who know God shall be strong and carry out great exploits—obviously Acts and the Apostles including Paul contrasted with only a year from the Jews as “the people who do wickedly against the covenant” and who are flattered by Satan and the next-to-the-last man of sin, the Roman Emperors; (4) While the process continues throughout history and the world of those who understand instructing many (11:33), the great tribulation happens where “they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering”; and then (5) we go all the way to the Falling Away of the final tribulation where “some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end” (11:35) {perhaps you have never thought of the Falling Away period as a time when the kingdom of God, if not the churches, will be (a) refined, (b) purified, and (c) made white from this beginning to the end with the Second Coming, so that we might think of the simultaneous Falling Away and refinement, purification, and whitening as the Final Tribulation; (6) the king of the north, now almost completely turned the final anti-Christ, or man of sin, shows his colors with (a) do according to whatever he wants, (b) exalting himself above every god, (c) blasphemy against the God of gods (11:36), and (d) prospering right up to the time the cup of wrath is
full, (e) ignoring the God of his fathers, (f) ignoring women, (g) put a god of war to whom he is devoted above all else, (h) war against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which has to be no less than Satan himself—and the man will come out in the open to acknowledge this worship and service of Satan, (i) and this king, the final man of sin will advance the “glory” of Satan, (j) he will make wickedness to reign over many and divide up the land for his own gain; (7) NOW WE ARE NEARER TO THE END for the words are “at the time of the end” (11:40), there is a battle between the king of the north and the king of the south who attacks him, but the king of the north will enter the countries and overwhelm them all the way to the Glorious Land of Palestine with a taking of the riches of the lands and countries; (8) News from the east and the north, and the Great battle happens as “he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many” (11:44); (9) as he also plants the “tents of his palace” between the seas the glorious holy mountain, sound like on the Gaza strip doesn’t it; (10) “yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him” (11:45); (11) there shall be a time of trouble such as never seen from the beginning to then; (12) this is the time of deliverance of the people of Daniel, everyone who is found written in the book of life; (13) the body resurrection of the all the dead with a separation into a group of (a) shame and a (b) group of “some to everlasting life” during the period of which some will shine like the firmament and like the stars forever.

Since we have obviously come to eternity with the Judgement separation of the shamed and the recepients of everlasting life, we will need a sixth cycle or sweep in order to finish Daniel 12:4-13, which is especially addressed to Daniel, but also applicable to us. (1) Shut up the book from now to the time of the end; and (2) from now to the time of the end, “many shall run to and fro” {an obvious increase in world travel}, and knowledge shall increase “ {obviously the information explosion}; (3) how long until the fulfillment of all these wonders Daniel asks, and receive the answer of a “time, times, and half a time” so here specifically the time, times, and half a time is applied to history from the time of Daniel to the very end—time would be from Daniel until the Jews are cut off from salvation, times would be the time of the last days, the preaching of the Gospel to every nation, and the Fullness of the Gentiles, and the half-time would be that short period of the Falling Away, the realization of the Man of Sin, and the Release of Satan with the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from earth, corresponding also to the Final Tribulation, and somewhere in there before the Second Coming of Christ comes with the final great battle lead against the man of sin and Satan; (4) all of the things mentioned will be completely fulfilled as in the Falling Away and withdrawal of the Holy Spirit, “the power of the holy people has been completely shattered”; (5) Again is the re-interation in this sixth cycle like in the fifth cycle of how “many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and one of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.” (12:10).
Chapter 16: Mark 13-16 and the Second Coming.

How can we summarize Mark 13 through Mark 16 which includes with the eschatology of Jesus in Mark 13, both good news and bad news, both encouragements and discouragements, as well in the remaining chapters events like the capture, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus—both bad and sad but necessary for the completion of the plan of God for the salvation of the world, and the good news of the Resurrection, only made possible because of the death of the Crucifixion; and then before the Ascension of the last words of chapter 16, the amoral news of the great commission, since it is a command, perhaps both good and bad in implications.

You know, in spite of the fact that God and Christ set up the chief priests as well as the Roman Emperor for His crucifixion, I suppose that at any point the value of the crucifixion was in jeopardy since Jesus could have failed at any point by a single act of anger or sin. This was no doubt the reason He was so silent during the trial before the Jewish Sanhedrin and before the Roman ruler, Pilate, and even before the mockings of the Roman soldiers. At any point with legions of angels, and awesome power, the Son of God who performed numerous miracles on nature and humanity, could have exhibited a like power of wrath and judgment. However, He had to be as it turned out He was through all these trials and temptations, “in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” The Lamb of God foretold by John the Baptist, the same Lamb of God of the Old Testament as a sufficient sacrifice because “without blame and blemish” must go all the way through the shadow of the cross and the cross itself into very death without a moment of anger or other sin. I also think this is another reason that God sent Moses and Elijah to the Mount of Transfiguration to counsel with the One they knew from heaven, to leave no stone unturned in preparation for the cross so that unlike Moses who was angered at the rock of Horeb and Elijah who was angered at being alone in Israel, Jesus might retain complete control of the situation, maintaining the flawless character that was necessary as a sufficient sacrifice to God for the sins of the world.

“What will Be the Sign of Your Coming, and of the end of the Age?”

So quickly do the events in the life and teachings of Jesus pass from the Temple in Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives, from the disciples attempting to solicit an admirable response by the type of stones and the magnitude of the Temple buildings to their question above on the Mount, that we might miss the transition of two verses at the Temple (Mark 13:1,2 and Matthew 24:1,2), where Jesus wisely starts the disciples thinking on last things with His forecast of the one stone not left on the other as the Romans will in 75 A.D. destroy Jerusalem and the temple, and to the Mount where their thoughts will bring forth the questions of Mark 13:3,4 and Matthew 24:3. Of course in the first case, actually at the temple, and the second case, on the Mount, there is a good view of the Temple. And never forget the place in the heart of God, and therefore of Jesus, for His holy mountain and His holy temple; a place that He is about to give up for thousands of years as He controls the Roman destruction of the temple with the daily sacrifice, and the destruction of Jerusalem with another scattering of the rebellious children of Israel. The temple and Jerusalem will only be restored after the end of this age, as with the new heavens and the new earth, a new temple and city is lowered from heaven to sit on that holy mount.

“Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately. ‘Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the
“Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?’” (Matthew 24:3)

While Mark tells us the most details about the “seating” on Mount Olives, in that he relates how the view is opposite that of the temple and how it is not all twelve of the disciples who ask Jesus about “last things”, it is Peter, James, John, and Andrew. (Interesting that Andrew has joined the special inner group of the disciples of the Mount of transfiguration), Matthew 24 and 25 gives us more details with two chapters and a combined 97 verses on eschatology than the one chapter and 37 verses of Mark 13. Of course we already know that Mark is a more action filled and abbreviated form of the events in the life and teachings of Jesus. However the questions that Jesus will now answer in Mark 13 and in Matthew 24 and 25 are the same: (1) when will these events like you were talking about at the temple earlier happen; and (2) what sign do we look for to herald “Your coming” {the Second Coming of course}, and of the end of the age? It would lead us to think that, at least at this point, disciples—four of them if not all of them—knew that the end of time, or the end of the age to use the exact words of the Bible—was the same. In other words, the Second Coming of Christ marked the end of time and of the age, and the beginning of a new age called eternity. {Much of the Bible calls it a period of a new heaven and a new earth with a new Jerusalem and a new temple, and even a new people made “white”, to use some of the words of Daniel.}

Even as Daniel in the last sweep has introduced the processes of “refinement, purification, and whitening” along with the Falling Away, in such a manner and from such a distance as in a sweep to see them as one, we must allow Jesus here to refine, or separate the two in such a way, that we can see the distinction; and what we will find with a careful study of Mark 13 and Matthew 24,25 is that while some measure of refinement between the tares and the wheat, between the goats and the sheep, takes place during the Falling Away, at the end of the Falling Away when Christ comes the second time, the full refinement happens, also the purification of the wheat or sheep made like Christ as they met Him in the air—at the same time as the sheep are placed by the angels on the right hand of Christ, then the goats on the left hand and bundled up for eternal fire, or the equivalent in the parable of tares and wheat of the tares bundled up for eternal fire while the wheat is purified. But that is jumping ahead of the story somewhat. Or by the way, the whitening comes in the eternal kingdom of God, and in the presence of God and Christ, when like Moses on Mount Sinai and Jesus on the Mount of transfiguration, the presence of God rubs off on us! And one additional remark: Jesus is the same source in both cases, in the last sweeps of Daniel, if most of the conservative commentators are correct, having near the end visions taken the place of Gabriel, who needed his assistance in the warfare with Persia {this is the modern day “Iran” and I wonder if we are being told something about the last great battle of this earth age}.

“Your Coming” and “the End of the Age”

We have two key phrases here which are truly two key teachings of all the Bible, and of course, of Jesus. That should be called “doctrines of eschatology” or “doctrines of last things”; although the word doctrine is often in contemporary ill repute, partly because of a misunderstanding of how doctrine means the same as teachings, and partly because the word doctrine as something living, like salvation, is not understood. Often in previous books I have tried to explain about the “doctrine of Christ” mentioned in the Bible as living doctrine as Christ is the living Christ, that was dead but arose on the third day, and lives for evermore to make intercession for our sins at the right hand of God until He comes again to take us unto Himself and the Father in the house.
Likewise when we request in prayer the forgiveness of sins, as we should often, and we base our plea to God for the promise of forgiveness, while it is based on the specific words of the Bible, behind the words is the character of God on which it is really based. And during the Falling Away from the kingdom of God, the tares or goats, are really putting distance between themselves and the characters of God and Christ.

I think it is marvelous that even four disciples had come to understand about The Second Coming of Christ, the “Your Coming”, even before the completion of the first coming in the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ; and that the disciples had come to make the “End of the Age” synonymous with the Second Coming. Perhaps, Mathew is letting us know about only the four disciples as he tells more details of the event in order to let us know that all twelve, especially Judas Iscariot, had not come to understand the sameness. These four did have Daniel to read; they had been schooled on it as from youth; and as they read it again near the end of Jesus’ life, no doubt even discussed it among themselves and with Jesus, they were looking more for signs of when to expect the simultaneous events than for confirmations of the realities that the Second Coming and the End of this world age would happen.

The “end of this age” and the Second Coming loom large in the parables and other teachings of Mark 13 and Matthew 24, 25, also of the parable of the tares and the wheat of Matthew 13:24-30 and Matthew 13:36-43, immediately after the parable of the seed and the sower and the explanation that we primarily looked at in Mark previously. The parable of the tares and the wheat is in Matthew 13:24-30 and the explanation in Matthew 13:36-43. Since we are fortunate enough as disciples who read the Bible to have the explanation from Jesus Himself as recorded in Matthew 13:36-43 we will look their for “Your Coming”, “the end of the age”, and even mentions of the kingdom of God and Christ. {Even as the Day of the LORD of the Old Testament blends into the Day of the LORD God the Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ of the New Testament, so does the kingdom of God blend into the kingdom of Christ in the New Testament. And you know the story from I Corinthians 15 how Christ after through His angels He completes the submission of the earth will deliver that kingdom to God the Father in order that God may be all in all!}

Key words of “Christ’s Coming”, “end of the age”, and kingdom in the Parable of the tares and wheat: “the field is the world” (13:38), “the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom” (13:38), “but the tares are the sons of the wicked ones” (13:38) {and right away we see the interesting fact that it is hard, if not impossible to distinguish the tares in the kingdom from the tares in the whole world since the field in which the separating angels will find the tares is the extent of the whole world”; “the enemy who sowed them {the tares} is the devil” (11:39), “the harvest is the end of the age” (11:39) {ah, we have here our first mention of the “end of the age” and we will find that it becomes synonymous with the sending out of the Returned Christ His angels—you might think here of the almost limitless power of angels to carry out the will and commissions of God, and to think of the power of a legion, or legions which Christ always had at His command, even in the Garden of Gethsemanne before crucifixion, and the millions of millions of angels He will being with Himself at the Second Coming—this also allows us to see how easily, almost with a breath, Jesus will wipe away all opposition to Himself, including the army of the north of the Great Battle where no one will help the man of sin, how could they help against millions of angels, one angel can take care of one army like one Texas Ranger can take care of one riot}; “Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age” (11:40) {notice that it is “this age” as contrasted to the end of the
age and as contrasted to the age to come which is eternal in duration}; “The Son of Man {you know, I’m sure that this is Christ} will send out His angels {it appears that immediately after His appearance which later we will learn is an appearance to all the world at one time, “every eye shall see Him”, the reigning complete work of Christ starts with a sending out of the angels to the four corners of the earth}, and they will gather out of His kingdom {there it is, “gather out of His kingdom, and do you see how the kingdom is more a subset of the field which is the world, as the angels under the instructions of Christ, like always in the things of Christ He has made preparation as to which angel goes where, like the detailed preparations of a large battle plan} all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness...(13:41) {out of the kingdom could two types of tares: (1) those who offend, and we think naturally, as we should, of the offenses to little children where the little children cover all of the kingdom, from the smallest child to the largest child-like faith; and (2) those who practice sin, once again a continuous practice or habit of sin.

Perhaps we can glean some toleration for the tares, both those inside the kingdom and those outside the kingdom in the larger world, are we realize the fate of both.

“and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 13:42)

And lest we not realize that this is the same end of the age event of which Daniel writes, you need only to look at the similarity of the wording about the shining, like whitening no doubt, of the righteous. Also you should see that with the tares removed from the kingdom, the wheat will stand out better, like whitening.

“For then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father {notice that the kingdom of Christ has become the kingdom of God the Father}. (Matthew 13:43)

“At that time your people shall be delivered {this is the answer to Daniel’s question as to what will happen to His people and as to the later question as to the “end of these things”, and while Daniel may not have understood that His people would be Jews and Gentiles as Paul so aptly explains in Romans, there is the possibility that he knew even the children of Abraham were the children of faith more than children by birth; and the magnificent fact we have here is a matter of DELIVERANCE, the second coming of Christ immediately after the Falling Away and the Last Tribulation is called in the Bible, THE DELIVERANCE}, every one who is found written in the book {the angels have done their homework in heaven, ready the gigantic book of names written there, which I maintain is more like a wall not unlike the Vietnam war memorial; and having determine where is the remains of the present life of that name have been assigned to go out to fetch that person to be delivered}. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake {you see the angels have to have previously correlated the name in the book with the location of the dead, this is the famous RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD of Thessalonians, but the dead are separated here also in Daniel into the two groups of tares and wheat, although only Jesus uses those terms} some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt {while the fire of Jesus’ parable is not here, the shame and everlasting contempt is sufficient get the picture and the harrow, just the eternal banishment and contempt from God is enough for eternal punishment, even if that were all}. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament {the wise and shining, of course, correlates with the wheat of the parable, and the shining forth as the sun in the kingdom of God the Father, and then there is a group that shines even more in the eternal kingdom} And those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.” (Daniel 12:1-3)

Even as there is a challenge to abstain to the tares of two groups in the kingdom {likewise in the local church} to abstain from offences against other lesser kingdom members and to stop
the habitual practices of sin while naming the name of Christ, so also is there the challenge to the wheat to either shine like the brightness of the stars (a lesser whitening) or to shine like the sun (the greater brightness).

**Toleration of the Tares**

Parenthetically, this is not to say that we can so tolerate the tares because of sympathy for their ultimate fate, that we can allow them unabated to offend little children and other lesser members of the kingdom by the use of their bad influences and habits of sinning. Even during the time of the Falling Away, when the power or influence of the holy people and the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit, allows these tares to shine in the kingdom like wheat, we must (1) seek to counter their offenses and influences; and (2) seek to expose and remove their practices of unrighteousness. All the time we know that during the Falling Away, the tares and the leaders of the tares will look more like wheat than tares; and the wheat will be made by the tares to appear like the real tares. There will be the challenge to judge righteous judgment, to look not on the appearance but on the realities; and of course, as always the teachings of the Bible on the Falling Away and the bad church behavior that leads into the Falling Away will help us through this crisis time (although we are told by the Son of God Himself in Daniel 12 to seal it up until the end time events make clear the end of the age in the 1335 days as contrasted to the 1290 which is the beginning of the Falling Away, we are allowed to see even as in the difference between the 70 weeks and 69 weeks of Daniel, the period of time of the Falling Away of 45 years. At least it might seem that way, although we must also wait for that, for those of us that indeed live through the 45 years of the Falling Away, and which has not yet been made definite to us in a visual of the man of sin, unless Osama Bin Laden—a lieutenant, son, or follower—is indeed that man of sin or son of perdition.)

As in The Falling Away sin abounds and the love of many waxes cold, even while the tares in the kingdom (those outside the kingdom will hardly care) will know that they will not endure sound doctrine, will even recognize that they are seeking teachers with itching ears to comfort them and will recognize that they build up a fortress around themselves and around other tares, often the controlling influences in a church, to protect against the sound doctrines of the wheat, they will begin to recognize their “offenses” as characteristics of the elect and their unrighteousness habits as just shortcomings of humanity; and they will not even know—without eyes to see, ears to hear, and doctrines of the Bible as contrasted to the doctrines of mean, and their vain worship in place of a worship from the heart—the point at which they turn away from the truth of Christ completely and turn into the subtle fables of Satan. Those very characteristics that make them tares in the sight of the Returning Christ, and of the angel that comes to fetch them, will in the end not allow them to recognize themselves as tares until either that find themselves in the crowd, as controlled by the angels, on the left side of Christ or until they receive the blundling of the fires of eternity. You know, however, I would think that any person who has one foot in the world and one foot in the kingdom, which is the case of tares or goats, must suspect that there is something wrong with such compromise; and there will be no great surprise as Christ gets past their marvelous works, which impressed the tares but not Christ, to hear Christ say, “Depart from me you that work iniquity, for I never knew you.” And I think that is a key for the rationalizations and justifications of the tares or goats. They become so enamored with their “own marvelous works in the name of Christ”, that they are almost oblivious to their own offenses and habitual practices of unrighteousness. And if the opposition, by preaching as well as influence, against these tares in the kingdom and church were to
prevent their offenses toward just one little child and for eternity, would it not be worth the effort for the real Southern Baptists to attempt a re-takeover of the SBC.  \{This is sedition and heresy in the SBC: I know it, but right now I have not real popularity to lose in the SBC.\}

The key words of “end of the age”, “Coming” of Christ, and the kingdom in Mark 13:24-27 where Jesus speaks plainly on His Second Coming and in answer to the questions of the four \{and by the way after completion of the cycles or sweep of last things which we will cover after a clear establishment of the Second Coming and the End of this Age, even as it is more important to first establish the event before it is important to look for the signs of the event. You need to know the event as the four disciples knew the event before you start looking at the signs of the event, else what do you know to look for?\}: in those days and after the tribulation, in parable form and like in Daniel, Jesus runs from the Great Tribulation to the Final Tribulation, but with the tale-tale signs of the Day of the LORD \{and I hope you see in this and these signs the end of the Age, as contrasted to the signs before the “great and notable day of the Lord of Acts, Peter, and Joel, which come just before that great day in the “blood, fire, and vapor of smoke” of the signs in the heavens above and the earth beneath, the periodic nature of bad things happening on the earth as forecasts and reminders that the worse things of all, in the end, for the tares and the best of all things for those who will shine\} of darkened sun and moon, with the stars falling from heaven \{this is almost a new one\} and the powers in the heavens shaken \{this is entropy, the lack of system coming to fruition in the universe and the shakings without gravitational attraction between heavenly bodies, and no telling what else Christ less loose of at the time, as the One through whom all things consist—it looks like Jesus lets go of some of those works of holding together the universe in favor of His Coming and subsequent Judgment and reigning work, of course on purpose and on plan\}; “Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory” (Mark 13:26)...{Contrast this Second Coming in great power and glory with the First Coming, riding on a young colt and meekly submitting to death, accepting death among thieves and with the rich making His tomb. It is the Second Coming that makes complete sense of the kingdom of Christ established as the continuing kingdom of God, and finalized at this second coming, which makes sense out of the first coming of Christ.}.

“And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of the earth to the farthest part of heaven.” (Mark 13:27)

The wheat and sheep are here plainly called, and by Jesus Himself “His elect”. The angels, you can see and according to the plan worked out in heaven before the Second Coming based on the names written on the wall of heaven, deploy to the four corners of the earth to pick up the living and dead of the elect. That is the job of the angels. By the way, do you notice that the angels also go up into heaven to get many of the elect that have previously died as the elect. No mention of the tares or the goats here, but the four disciples are hearing the kind of assurances about themselves and the rest of the elect that they wanted to hear, and about the people of Daniel who would also receive the DELIVERANCE.

The parable of the fig tree of Mark 13:28-31 \{remember the withered fig tree of Mark 11:12-14 and the lesson of the withered fig tree of Mark 11:20-24: “Now learn this parable from the fig tree.. \{this is an interesting parable that Jesus is about to tell right in the middle of His detailed teachings on last things, the events and the signs, and I would have to say that the four are truly ready to learn it, I hope you also\}...When its branch ahs already become tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near... \{Jesus wants disciples to know when the summer of their DELIVERANCE is at hand\}...So you also, when you see these things happening \{granted that we need a more complete list of these things happening that Jesus enumerates in Mark 13, before this parable, and some appreciation of the sweeps of Mark
13 and Matthew 24, then we like real disciples, if we live that long, will appreciate the nearness to the end of the Age; however, we are in for a surprise if we do not appreciate the cycles, as Jesus will tell the four that they will be alive for some of those signs...know that it is near...{what is “it” but the end of the Age and the Second Coming, no, not in the case of the signs for that generation of disciples to see, it is only for the cycle that goes up to the abomination of desolation of Daniel, the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem around 75 A.D. by General Titus, the second anti-Christ of the man of sin; and you will notice a difference in Mark 13, if not in Matthew 24, that while the sweeps identify themselves by going all the way to the end of the age, that is not the case here}—at the doors! {in this case at the doors of Israel, at the doors of the temple and at the gates of Jerusalem}...Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will be no means pass away till all these things {all these things related to the temple destruction question} take place. Heaven and earth will pass away {and so they will as the new heavens and new earth replace the old heavens and old earth at the turnover of the end of the age} but My words will by no means pass away {all of these things, the signs of the temple destruction and the abomination of desolating of Daniel, and the other signs of blood, fire, and vapor of smoke before the Great and notable Day of the Lord’s Second Coming and the End of the Age will all happen}. Do you think that even as Jesus left the impression on the minds and the hearts of these four disciples, and the rest of the disciples, that His return might be immediate, that He also intentionally confused them about the signs more immediate and the ones at the end even as Gabriel and Jesus confused Daniel and us between the signs of near and far, and as the Old Testament does often? Yes, of course we must remember as we will come to in Mark 13:32-37, that Jesus warned at that time He did not know the exact time of His Second Coming and the end of the Age, that no one knew, and only God the Father knew. Jesus had been shared by the Father with the events of the time of sorrows to come on that generation; Jesus had been part as the Son of Man of Daniel and of the other Prophets with knowledge of the destruction of the Temple and the cutting off the nation of Israel until the consummation; but the very last events and signs were known only to God the Father. We must think of how Daniel with learning of future events fainted and was sick for days, and of a certain sympathy from Jesus on these disciples; and a patience with all disciples as to just how much we need to know and when, although we are given many signs about both immediate and far future events. The exact time of the end of the 1335 days of Daniel, and the same as the Second Coming and the End of the Age of the teachings of Jesus, are not given; and will not be understood as Christ said to seal them up until they become clear to the disciples of the Falling Away, and that is the time to know.

The “beginning of sorrows” from Jesus and of Mark 13:5-8 that begin immediately after His Ascension, among those signs to be seen by that generation, but also to be seen by future generations up to the end of the Age as the same signs continue: Many will come in the name of Christ, claiming to be Christ, and deceiving many in the world (13:6); don’t look for the end even though you continual will hear of “wars and rumors of wars”, nation against nation and kingdom against kingdom {wow, do you think Christ’s implications were board enough here to include a worldly kingdom against a spiritual kingdom, but that could be reading too much into it like fuedamentalists like to do}; earthquakes in various places, famines, and troubles {by the way in the teachings when Jesus stops warning about the end is not yet, is and are signs and events of the end!}; Jesus identifies these as “the beginning of sorrows” only (13:8); also in the continuing sorrows that this generation will see are arrests before councils, beatings, paraded before kings and rulers for the testimony
of Christ, “and the gospel must first be preached to every nation” (Mark 10:13).

We have a tremendous transition here at this saying from Jesus in Mark 10:13 and about the necessity of the preaching of the gospel to every nation, that Mark does not tell us about. We do find it in Matthew 24: “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come.” (Matthew 24:14) {By the way, notice it is the “gospel of the kingdom”, also in Matthew like the introduction to the gospel and kingdom in Mark; and that here we see the transition to the end even as the preaching of the gospel to every nation becomes within itself a sign of the end of the Age.} Our point here though in the event on Mount Olives, looking at the temple, is that this point in the eschatological teachings mark an event for the End rather than a sign related to the destruction of the Temple. So that when we come to these words we are clearly in a second sweep from Jesus, of Mark 13 and Matthew 24, that will include as a continuation many of the beginnings of the first sweep like the earthquakes, famines, and wars; but which do not include the end since those are signs to be seen by that generation. Perhaps we could come with a division or sweeps like this of: (1) Signs to be seen and events of the present generation of disciples, some of which as the beginning of sorrows or travails continue to the end of the age; (2) Signs based on the beginning of sorrows which continue but go to the end, not seen by that generation of the disciples, charge also with the taking of the gospel to every nation, but who will not be in the generation that sees the taking of the gospel to the whole world which will mark the end of the Age.

I think it is obvious, with Mark among them, that Mark is more concerned with the teachings of Jesus for that immediate generation, which would be understandable. And it is also only Matthew who tells us of things that will happen in both sweeps, to the present generation, to some more distant generations in the persecutions that build up against Christians in the first three centuries and which are so aptly chronicles in Acts, Revelation, and the FOX BOOK OF MARTYRS, and then beyond that to the final generation of the Falling Away. It is almost as if, by Jesus and when we consider all of His teachings at this event on the Mount of Olives, Jesus is making the cycle of time He gave to Daniel as “time, times, and half a time”. The time would correspond to what was left of the judgments of the abomination of desolation and of the 70 weeks with 69 weeks of Daniel, a precise one year before Israel’s salvation is cut off; the times of generations up to 2006 as we know from the history of Christianity and of the kingdom with all signs continuing, and then the final signs of the one half time of 45 years of the Falling Away, the time of Daniel when the power of the holy people will be completely shattered and the time with the man of sin of Daniel and II Thessalonians, with the subsequent Second Coming of Christ, DELIVERANCE and ETERNITY. You will see the differences in concern between what Mark and what Matthew record when you consider also that it is Matthew 24:10-14—about the stumbling of many, of hate and betrayal between many, of false prophets to lead many astray—is mentioned in Mathew before the “abomination of desolation” of Daniel, while in Mark it is the stumblings, hate, and false prophets leading many astray that comes after the abomination of desolation; and further only Matthew mentions “that because sin will abound, the love of many will wax cold {an obvious allusion to the Falling Away, and within itself a measure of the refinement of Daniel}, and further it is only Matthew who mentions these signs as related to the end, “But he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.” (Matthew 24:13).

We will have to give Mark credit for getting around to it after the abomination of desolation and in Mark 13:22.

“For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.” (Mark 13:22)

Several observations should be made here before we quickly pass on: (1) we think more of
the false prophets and false Bible teachers, so many of which we see being heaped up in our day that we easily think of them, while we have more trouble with sightings of false christs since we do not stop to think that a person or prophet, even an academic leader, can effective be a false christs by offering a message of salvation that is anti- to or counter to the message, teachings, and salvation of Christ. Even an Osma Bin Laden is more a false christ than a false message in that he offers a message counter to that of Christ; (2) the false prophets and teachers have their own signs of “marvelous works” to counter Christ and to make disciples look for them, or see them, instead of the signs ordained and taught by Christ; and (3) this is certainly the Fallling Away as even the elect almost deceived, although we must allow for this being a sign also seen by the first and second and third generation of disciples as the persecutions of the first few centuries, and the deceptions were also strong.  

Always remember that the book of Revelation, written near the end of the first century and a time of persecution, had to have a message for the people to whom it was written as well as to future generations that would read and listen to the Book.
Chapter 17: Signs for the Time, Times, and the Half-a-Time.

If we are right in our interpretations of Daniel, and in the previous teachings of Jesus in Mark 13 as well as Matthew, then the time would relate to the generation of the four disciples who on Mount Olives asked the questions about things to come, the times would refer to the generations after them of the history of the kingdom of Christ until 2006, and the half a time would refer to the 45 last years of the earth, the time of the Falling Away. What we really desire to look at is the remaining parables and teachings of Mark 13 and of Matthew 24, 25, recalling that more of this event of last teachings form Jesus on the Mount of Olives is recorded in Matthew 24 and 25 than in Mark 13. It is the same time and event, but Mark in the name of action and brevity has shortened the teaching time and content; and I think as stated before, that Mark is more concerned about his generation and himself than he is concerned about end times. That is understandable. Of course, we are much closer now, even perhaps in the 45 last years of earth during the Falling Away; and we naturally are more concerned about Matthew and all the teachings, yet we will stick with Mark in order to make our efforts more a condensed version and with comments.

{Anytime you wish you can read Mark, Matthew, even Luke and John; and a good harmony of the Gospels, like Robertson’s Harmony is recommended as an assist in the paralleling of events in the life of Christ.}

“...that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished.” (Daniel 12:7b)

Time

We have learned from Daniel that the “time”, the first major division of time in the three divisions, would be from Daniel’s own generation until the Jews, like the Messiah are cutoff from the kingdom. 69 years after Restoration until the Messiah is cut off, and 70 years until the people of Israel are cut off. Remember Daniel’s incessant questioning about “what will happen to my people?” and “when will it happen?” It is the equivalent of the “How Long?” of the book of Revelation. Before praying for his people Daniel was reading from the Prophet Jeremiah, and of how the city of Jerusalem would be “desolate” for 70 years (Daniel 9:2). {What Daniel specifically read was 70 years of “desolations” in Jerusalem. This is more than deserted, a city and nation and land left homeless as the Jews are in Exile, but it speaks of desolations of worship in the Temple once selected by God, of spiritual desolation of the people from God with their rebellion, disloyalty, and unrighteousness.} Whatever period we see in Jeremiah, and it indeed appears to be the time of Captivity, it is neither the 69 weeks or 70 weeks of Daniel. God changes the focus from the nation of Israel and Jerusalem to the Messiah where He has ordained it all along. We have a new 70, this time a 70 weeks of 490 years in parable form as 70 weeks in Daniel 9:24-27 in the 70 weeks with the addition of a 62 weeks of 434 years as the “time” before the crucifixion of Jesus as the “Messiah shall be cut off” (9:26) for the world. This much is very clear, except for the little mathematical manipulation of numbers where 1 week is equal to 7 years, as Gabriel comes to give Daniel skill in understanding.

“Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city... Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times...And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince
who is to come shall destroy the city and sanctuary. (Daniel 9:24-25)

490 years is all the time the nation of Israel has left with God and the kingdom of God. It starts with the Restoration {recorded in Ezra, Nehemiah, and some of the Prophets} and continues until the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ {the words of Daniel are “Messiah”, Hebrew equivalent of the Greek word Christ, and “Prince”, for the Son of God}. This is a parable method of saying to Israel that you have one week of 7 years after you cut off the Messiah to get your spiritual affairs in order, and from then on through the times and half-a-time, there will be few conversions among the children of Israel. God needed them back in Palestine in order that Christ might be born as predicted in Bethlehem, raised in Nazareth, and the light seen throughout all Israel. God needed Israel to also see the extent of their rebellion in that they cut off His very own Son. However after they cut Him off, they had only one week of seven years {approximately 33 A.D. to approximately 40 A.D.} of conversions {approximately 100,000 with 3,000 alone on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension}.

That these little manipulations of time and numbers, like the one week of 7 years of Laban and Jacob {in Genesis 30:27} are justified is the historical evidence for (1) the decree for Restoration in 457 B.C.; and (2) the coming of the Messiah as announced by John the Baptist 483 years later {7 X 69} in approximately 26 A.D. {I am sure you are aware of the minor problems from Bishop Ussher’s dating method, whereby Jesus was actually born approximately 4 B.C.} During the 3 ½ years of Christ’s ministry, mid-way of the 7 years, Jesus Himself confirmed the covenant with many Jews. The finishing of the transgressions of Daniel, the same as the filling up of the measure of their—the point at which God said enough is enough, the original 490 years of the 70 weeks of Daniel above. Once again, if you take Restoration {several dates are possible when you look at the various decrees from Persian rulers that controlled the Jews}, as 457 B.C. then the end of any spiritual enlightenment of the Jews was approximately 33 A.D.

The “abomination of desolation”, alias the ultimate abomination of these desolations, the desecration of the holy of Holys in God’s own temple at Jerusalem---the ultimate as a symbol of how the people of God had let their God down—is mentioned twice in Daniel {9:27, 11:31 and 12:11} and once in Mark 13:14. {Matthew 24:15 is the equivalent of Mark 13:14.} More specifically the complete phrase is used in 11:31 and 12:11 while the wording is somewhat different in 9:27.

“But he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate. Even until the consummation which is determined is poured out on the desolate.” (Daniel 9:27)

On the wings of those abominations and desolations comes the Roman General Titus {called in Daniel a prince since later Titus will become a Caesar of the Roman Empire, having destroyed the city and the temple of Jerusalem, allowed by coming on the wings of Israel’s desolations, desecrated the temple; and the daily sacrifices were terminated. {Approximately 75 A.D.}} So centered around that great destruction of Jerusalem, Titus was mad after Jerusalem held out so long against his siege and the city and area was strewn with Roman crosses of the crucified, is the passage of Mark 13:14-23: (1) the abomination of desolation; (2) fleeing the housetops of Jerusalem and the cities of the area; (3) a period of great tribulation the record of which starts in Acts and goes on into Revelation, alias the rest of the first century, (4) and which continues for a couple of more centuries of
“tribulation such as has not been seen since the beginning of time until this time, nor ever shall be, and unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days” (Mark 13:19020)

**Times**

Actually the Great Tribulation, as contrasted to the Final Tribulation of the half-time, belongs more to the “times” than to the time. Even as the preaching of the Gospel to every nation before the end of the age belongs to both the “time” and “times” so it likewise marks the end of the Age with the Second Coming and the Gathering. With the desolations of the Jew complete as the chosen people of God, evangelism turns to the Gentiles, and under the control of God goes toward the Fulness of the Gentiles. The gospel is preached to every nation, and the United States replaces the nation of Israel as the chosen people of God. The Great Tribulation runs into the Final Tribulation in Mark more than in Matthew, but the “times” would include both, the Final being more a tribulation of the disintegration of nature, and as much on the elect as on the non-elect; but with the addition of the Falling Away as it passes from the “times” to the half-time. The false prophets and teacher of Mark 13:21-22 starts even in the time, gets worse in the “times”, and becomes extremely bad to the extent of the vast heaping up of an army of itching ear teachers in the half time of the Falling Away.

**Half-Time**

Things move fast in the predicted 45 years of the half-time: the period which Paul calls the Falling Away. The period where the Holy Spirit is withdrawn from earth, the final man of sin and son of perdition {beyond the king of the north of the Greek and Roman Empires} makes His appearance; and as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn, Satan is released from his symbolic imprisonment of 1000 years which started on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension of Jesus. The man of sin, as king of the north, leads an army against the king of the south and defeats him. He makes his palace between the holy mountain of the Glorious Land and the seas; and after frightening news comes to him from the north and east, he is cut off with no one to help him. Although we have no real justification to look for the nation of Israel to again prosper physically and spiritually, apart from the consummation in heaven and of the new Jerusalem with the new earth lowered from heaven, we do have justification to look for a last giant battle fought in the Glorious Land of the Middle East; and I think we can see how rapidly the sides between the Muslims on one side and the West of U.S. and Israel has built up in only 5 years, realizing how significantly it can change in the gigantic last battle in 40 more years. {Study it carefully and you will find that the references in the Old Testament where people look for a long period of unprecedented peace in Israel and in the world really refers to after the beginning of the new heaven and the new earth, at the consummation or end of this Age.} And having cleared the board of fictitious interpretations, and having laid a foundation in the ASI of the Bible, we are clear to speculate on the possibilities of only 40 more years for this earth since undoubtedly we are already in the Falling Away of “they will not endure sound doctrine...” {We are allowing for only 5 years of the 45 years already in the Falling Away, when in reality it would seem more like we have been in the Falling Away for 10 years, even 20 years when you consider the fundamentalists takeover of the SBC as a significant step into the Falling Away. And although you may consider some of this as pure speculation, surely you will at least treat it with the same respect that you treat the fictional studies of Tim LeHaye on the Second Coming and the End of the Age.}

**The Key Is Whether You Can See in the churches and Kingdom Evidences of the Falling Away**

I will not repeat all the arguments here of three of my previous books that include studies of the Falling Away: (1) SOME SOUNDS OF SOUND FAITH, (2) SOME MORE SOUNDS, and (4)
volume 4 of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries, “Christ, Paul, and the Falling Away”, this last of which treats the book of Hebrews as the book of the Falling Away, of the First and of the Last in the Half-Time. It can be summarized in the words of Paul as “Beware brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God...” Never forget that all of the so-called children of God, the nation of Israel, that came out of Egyptian bondage, and over 20 years of age fell in the wilderness except for four; and furthermore that the Scriptures tell us that were forbidden from eternity in the eternal rest of God. Pure and simple that is the First Falling Away; and Paul speaks in II Thessalonians of the necessity of the Second Falling Away before the Second Coming of Christ. Like I say, I will not try to repeat the evidences in society and churches and the kingdom today that the Falling Away is well under way, but rather I will make a more general approach from the local church behaviors of II Timothy, in particular to explain the difference between the bad characteristic of church behavior in the “perilous times”, chapter 3, and the absolute intolerance toward sound doctrine of the Falling Away, chapter 4.

However for some perspective, a perspective that we obviously have not gained in today’s kingdom of Christ and God by the respect or toleration we have for the tares and goats, by a reminder about both parables. While we are looked at both, recall as Jesus interprets those parables, that Satan is actually planting traitors and deceivers inside the kingdom of God. Why do you think Satan would want to do that, and why would the tares, humans with freedom of choice, desire to get into the kingdom under the leadership of Satan? Well, I think we have the human motivations in the bad behavior of church members as recorded in II Timothy 3:1-9 where there a form of religion or “godliness” without the power of conversion; and where the motivations are factors like “love for self”, “love for money”, to be in a democratic and gracious crowd that will listen to their boasting and even accept their traitous doctrines from Satan, even like Satan despising the truly good people and good deeds that come their way, loving their pleasure more than the god they claim to serve when in reality they show that they are serving more the god of this world, Satan; headstrong and haughty as a diversion from their commitment to sound doctrine; blasphemers and unholy in their denials of the power of godliness, they nonetheless with unthankful, unholy, and unforgiving attitudes cover up their blasphemies with the sheep’s clothing to look like any other kingdom or church member.

While we are told to give such a tolerance of no physical separation from the kingdom until God takes care of it at the end of the half-time, we likewise are told not to associate with them if they be called brothers, telling us in several ways and on several occasions in the Bible that we are more free to associate with the tares in the kingdom and the tares in the church than we are with the tares in the rest of the world, the tares that have made no public commitment to the kingdom and church.

“And from such people turn away!” (II Timothy 3:5b)

“I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother {yes, church members}, who is sexually immoral {and don’t forget the earlier difference between habitual practices and brief stumblings}, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to etwith such a person.” (I Corinthians 5:9-11)
It may seem incongruous, at first, to think that we should have more toleration for the tares out there in the world than we do for the tares that are called brethren in the church, but that is the gist of the kind of TOLERATION OF THE TARES that the Word of God teaches. These tares are far more dangerous since they look like sheep and since they are hiding in among the wheat field of the kingdom. Our toleration, gone amuck to the extreme of the toleration of the American Democratic Faith, which is world and has a worldly goal, allows them to continue their dirty work of the Falling Away, and under the leadership of the great progenitor of the lie and of the Falling Away, Satan himself. Let us look again as a reminder of the parable of the goats and the sheep as explained by Jesus in Matthew 25:31-46, and part of an explanation of what happens after His Second Coming of Matthew 24,25 and Mark 13.

“When the Son of Man comes in His glory {this has to be the Second Coming, which is the subject under discussion by Jesus anyway, and since here Jesus comes in glory as contrasted to the humble way He came the first time}...and all the holy angels with Him {this shows it also to be the Second Coming since this time He does what He refused to do the first time, although the angels were available to Him, to bring them for assistance in the Separations of the sheep from the goats at the four corners of the earth, admittedly a very large job, and of the dead as well as the living to be identified by their names in heaven and their DNA’s, no doubt; although I think that with the names, the angel of that believer also has a specific location where they know to go for the body, and since the soul is already in heaven, where the angels will also gather sheep, that person can help in the location—right, it will be no small job, but much simpler than the Creation of the old heavens and earth}...then He will sit on the throne of His glory {well, we know that the Returning Lord is seated on the throne of judgment and rule}...All the nations will be gathered before Him {yes, the angels have been active in gathering all the nations before the Lord Jesus Christ}...and He will separate them one from another {the Great Separation},...as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’...{even as according to Ephesians we are chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world, so our kingdom inheritance has also been prepared}...’for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in: I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’” {do we really believe that such simple acts of kindness can take a person out of the goat category and put them in the sheep category; yes, when it is a habit of life and belief that shows itself in many gracious acts}...”Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and gave You drink’”? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothed You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’” {Well, Jesus answers as he told about the little child of faith or the little big child of faith, the least of the members in the kingdom of God, how any time you have done these acts of graciousness to the least in the kingdom, you have for all practical purposes also done it because of faith in Christ, and you have passed from goat status in your life to sheep status!}...And the King will answer and say to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren {I think they will see Jesus nod toward the sheep on the right hand}...you did it to Me.”

The judgments of Jesus turn toward those on the left hand, after the angels have gathered them from the four corners of the earth also, the living and the dead, toward the goats on the left hand; and it is not good, but it is all over.

“When He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels…”
{the company kept in life determines the company kept in eternity, if one is a servant of Satan—by definition any of the world not a servant of God—then that person will also share with the fate of Satan and his angels)...for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Mein, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.' {what we do for other sheep in the kingdom of God and of Christ shows our faith and the reality of our faith, you know like James said “faith without works is dead”; it is non-profitable, and does not save, and it shows a certain respect of persons among the sheep, that is also a bad sign)...Then they {the goats of course have a spokesman, and the last chance to boast or complain in the kingdom)... also will answer Him {the tares or goats always have an answer until this final chance to answer, then they lose all control; as a matter of fact with the End of the Age and the Gathering of the Angels into the two groups, they have already lost control, and begin to think that as they see who their associates are now}...}, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ And these will also go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” (Matthew 25:31-46)
chapter 18: Matthew 24 and Revelation on the Sweeps of Eschatology.

Even as on the Sweeps of Last Things, we have gone from Daniel and Mark 13 in the previous chapters to include Matthew 24 and 25, now we go from those to include Matthew 24 and Revelation. {Most of this material is borrowed from my LEARN CHRIST COMMENTARIES, volume 3 on the five books of the Apostle John which, of course, includes the book of Revelation, and entitled ‘Christ for Individuals”. In it I try to illustrate how to let the clearer teachings of Jesus in Matthew 24 guide you into the more difficult material of the book of Revelation, and how with the consideration of all five of the books written by John, keep Revelation as with the other books, in the total context of the Bible itself. Remember the ASI based on “no Scripture is of any private interpretation”; and remember the very parable nature of all things spiritual in the Bible. Since the book of Revelation is a lot more than eschatology, and since we want to keep the “last things” of Revelation realted to the rest of the Bible, we will as briefly as possible look at eschatology in the book of Revelation and in the Old Testament Prophets. In the Tables of this chapter, you will find a phase of cycle of last things called “period of offences” which should remind you of the danger of too much toleration of the tares as their offence toward the least in the kingdom will build up, even those offences will be much of the basis to separate the tares from the wheat, or the goats from the sheep.

Since we have already made inroads and progress on last things and since that is what most people think of in Revelation, we will continue from the last chapter of volume 1 (“Eschatalogy in the Old Testament”) with the eschatalogical aspects of Revelation. Later we will have the more pleasant surprises of the timely messages of Revelation that deal with our churches and our lives today! Let us first survey such passages in the book of Revelation, then we will go back to review, highlight, and reinforce what was found on last things from the Prophets in volume 1 of the LEARN CHRIST COMMENTARIES. About the most serious mistake people make on eschatology and the book of Revelation is to study it isolated. In other words, come to the book of Revelation and treat it as isolated from the rest of the truth of the Bible. We will not do that. Remember, we are looking for truth from the Apostles and Prophets, and the consistent truth for ALL the Apostles and Prophets. We will find the consistency between the eschatology of Revelation and the eschatology of the Prophets, between the Apostles and Prophets and Jesus.

18-1: Last Things (eschatology) passages in the book of Revelation. (**As you will see in this commentary, the book of Revelation is far from being a book only abut last things or eschatology.)

1. The opening of the Seven Seals, Revelation 6,7. There is little doubt in anyone’s mind that the events of Revelation 6 and 7 deal with the very end times.

   “But one of the elders said to me, ‘Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals..’” (Revelation 5:5)

The Events of Revelation 6 and 7

(1). Rumors of wars, Revelation 6:2, bow and white horse.
(2). War, Revelation 6:4, sword and red horse.
(3). Famine, Revelation 6:5,6, black horse and scales.
(4). Accidental death, Rev 6:8, pale horse and Death.
(5). Tribulation, Rev 6:9-11, martyrdom.
(6) The Day of the Lord, Rev 6:12-17. (**Here in the book of Revelation the Day of the LORD has been further developed from the consistent theme throughout the Old Testament, almost always in terms of the dark sun and moon and the falling stars as the old universe crumbles.)
“I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig the drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand.” (Revelation 6:12-17)

{It should be apparent to you that this is an elaboration on the Day of the LORD of the Old Testament and the Day of the Lord Jesus Christ of the New Testament, the same Day or period of time. Like with the Hebrew word for Day, it can be a period of time.}

Last Things Outline in Revelation, continued

3. Opening of the Seventh Seal with the forthcoming of the Seven Trumpets, more elaboration on the Day of the Lord of the Sixth Seal, Revelation 8-11, of the teachings of Jesus in Matthew 24 of the elements melting with a fervent heat of the Apostle Peter, and of the consistent DAY theme of the Old Testament.
   (1). Hail, fire, and blood-letting.
   (2). Burning mass into sea becoming bloody.
   (3). Polluted wars and death.
   (4). Darkening of moon, stars, and sun.
   (5). Locusts with the power of scorpions to harm non-Christians.
   (6). Four angels released to kill a third of mankind with an army of horsemen.
   (7). The Mystery of God finished with the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

“...but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.” (Revelation 10:7)

{NOTE the phrase of verse 7 about the prophets, “…AS HE DECLARED TO HIS SERVANTS THE PROPHETS…: It is impossible to overestimate the importance of the Prophets as background for Revelation. And also NOTE that this mystery is in the same sense of the mystery of godliness or the mystery of Christ; that is, something hidden that God is about to make clear! However this is the mystery of the Day of the LORD that God revealed often to His Prophets, but is now making much more clear to the whole world. This tells of the actual event from the mind of Jesus. This is the Day of the LORD actually completed on the earth. You get a lot of fiction from LeHay and other PREs where some truth is mixed with fiction and half truth, much like with the Mormons and their extra four Bibles. However in the case of the PREs, it is most generally based on the Scofield Reference Bible notes rather than the Bible itself. (I have...}
known people to memorize these notes and treat them as if Scripture itself. The book of Revelation also has something to say about this near the end.) This is just one of the unsound doctrines of the fundamentalists: the others being a fighting spirit and a substitution of the American Democratic Faith for the Faith of the Bible and Christ. However this will be further discussed in the chapter on “Some Sounds of a Sound Faith”.

4. The Romans tread Jerusalem underfoot for 42 months, Revelation 11:1,2. (**Right now it is important that you get away from the sequence flow of most books where what you read at the beginning is historically before what you read next. There is somewhat a historical flow in the book of Revelation in that in the first chapters it deals with problems in the churches of the first century and then finally in the last chapter all is wrapped up with the new heaven and the earth; however often like in this case there are flashbacks in history. This is first century history as in approximately 48 A.D. the Romans destroyed the temple and Jerusalem and took most of the residents captive. Jesus in Matthew 24 also skipped in time. He would end things at the very end of time like when He taught the gospel would be delivered to every nation and then the end would come, then later in Matthew 24 go back to fill in some of the details. This is a consistent pattern in eschatology: like radar to make an initial sweep from a distance that picks up the broad outline, then later a closer look that fills in the details. Why does the Bible do this on eschatology? To confuse people? Perhaps partly to confuse a lack of spiritual discernment, but primarily because time is like that to God the Father and therefore to the Son: the past, present, and future are to them like one day or a thousand years, and what the future holds as God has determined it is as much a settled fact as the past.**)

5. Two witnesses, Revelation 11:1-14. (**Although the more classical interpretations of the two witnesses will also be presented, I must see this as a tribute to the Apostles Peter and Paul.**)

6. The Sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, Rev 11:15-14:20
   (1). The Woman and the Child, Rev 12. (**You must see this also as the past. A “God-perspective” of Mary and the birth of Jesus, putting it in the total context of world history as warfare between Satan and the forces of evil with Jesus and the people of God.**)

   (2). The Beast and the False Prophet, Rev 13. (**Even as there has always since Christ been two witnesses, there has always been a Beast (that is Satan) and some false prophet. That false prophet can also be an anti-Christ, and the Apostle John said in I John that already in the first century there were many anti-Christ. Do not confuse this with the man of sin, the son of perdition, that Paul writes about in II Thessalonians 2. There Paul clearly identifies that several things have to happen before the Second Coming: the falling away of church members after the increase in lawlessness and the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from the world scene which is the unloosing of Satan for a little while, and then also the revelation of the man of sin, the son of perdition, which I would speculate is Osama Bin Ladin or an associate or relative.**)

   (3). Babylon and the people of God, Rev 14. (**In God’s perspective of history even as there has always been two witnesses and a Beast and a false prophet, there has also always been a wicked city. Babylon was the best known, but it was not the first; and surely not the last. The Babylon of the first century was Rome. The Babylon of today could be Paris or New York or Washington. The contrast is once again between most of the people in the world, who are of course in the big cities, and on the other side the people of God (albeit small in number and appropriately represented by seven thousand).**)

7. Seven angels with the seven last plagues, Rev 15-16. (**More details on the Day of the LORD and Lord.**)

“Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous:
seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete.” (Revelation 15:1)

(1). First angel with a bowl, foul and loathsome sores on non-believers, Revelation 16:2.
(2). Second, blood in the sea and total death, Rev 16:3.
(3). Third, rivers and springs turned to blood, Rev 16:4-7.
(4). Fourth, sun and intense heat, Rev 16:8,9.
(5). Fifth, darkness, Rev 16:10,11.
(6). Sixth, the waters of Euphrates dried up, Rev 16:12-16, with the preparation for the great battle of Armageddon. {**You know where the Euphrates is? In Iraq. People are right to be thinking that with our troops in Iraqi and the increasing Muslim opposition from the whole region, that the stage is set for the final great battle of Armageddon. In fact what we can expect in the not-too-distant future is an invasion against the American army in Iraqi from Muslims all over the world as they flood in from Iran, Palestine, and Saudi Arabia led by Osama or a follower with the subsequent retreat of the US army to the camp of the saints outside of Jerusalem and then the destruction by God of the gigantic Muslim army (perhaps supported by other countries like China, Russia, and some European countries--all needing the oil supplies.**}

[Look in Appendix B at the back of the book for Table B-1.]

“This then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I am coming as a thief, blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame. And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.” (Revelation 16:12-16)

{**NOTE: Obviously, like the Prophets told us this “great day of God Almighty” is the “day of the LORD” of the Prophets and the “day of the Lord” of Peter. How foolhardly for PREs to weave their fiction of Christians not being there for this final tribulation in light of Jesus saying to “watch”. If there were no Christians on earth at the Day of the LORD and the Second Coming, how could they watch for the Second Coming which happens immediately after the Day of the LORD and Lord.**}

(7). Seventh angel and bowl, “It is done”, Rev 16:17-21, with the great earthquake. This earthquake, one like never before seen on earth puts it in the category of a once for all time or end time event.

“And there were noises and thundering and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth.” (Revelation 16:18)

8. The Woman and the Beast with seven heads and seven horns, Rev 17:1-18:24. {**This is obviously the specific Babylon called Rome since it represents in the “sevens” the famous seven hills of Rome and the infamous seven Caesars that persecuted first
centuries’ Christians. The “Woman” is of course Rome, and the Beast as always is Satan.**

8. The Word on the white horse with his army against the kings of the earth, Rev 19:1-21, with the beast captured and his followers into the lake of fire and brimstone.  

**Christ’s Second Coming to personally intervene with the destruction of the Muslim plus army, and the subsequent casting of Satan and his followers into the lake of fire and brimstone. Some think it is terrible that God created a hell. Well, beyond hell is the lake of fire and brimstone. The dead unbelievers wait in hell now for the lake of fire and brimstone. Once again you will not find this in the history books or even in LeHay’s fiction: it is God’s perspective and predestination of history.**

[Look in Appendix B at the back of this book for Table B-2.]

10. Satan chained to the bottomless pit for one thousand years so that he cannot deceive the nations, and then released for a little while, Rev 20:1-3. **It is important to see the thousand years as just a long time from man’s perspective. Even as “a little while” is an indefinite period of time, so is a thousand years. All we know for certain is that a little while is much less than the long period of a thousand years, and that is all that we are meant to know except for the two signs that much happen before the Second Coming preceded by the Day of the LORD and culminated by the battle of Armageddon: remember the two signs of II Thessalonians 2: revelation of the man of sin, the son of perdition; and the Falling Away of church members from God, Christ, and the Bible. If God had wanted us to know exactly the number of the years, He would have told us. It is even more important to see that what chained Satan was the coming of the Holy Spirit on earth, and that what releases Satan for a little while is the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit during the “Falling Away” that Paul writes of in II Thessalonian 2.**

11. The Souls that witnessed for God and Word reigned with Christ one thousand years, Rev 20:4-6. **Believers throughout history from the chaining of Satan by the Holy Spirit to the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit, the time represented by the thousand years, go immediately in spirit or soul to be with Christ and God after death. What happens at the Second Coming of Christ when the elect are gathered by the angels from all corners of the universe is the resurrection of the physical body. Of course unbelievers are waiting in hades or hell for the lake of fire and brimstone with their leader, the prince of this world, Satan.**

12. Satan released for a little while at the end of the thousand years, to deceive the nations and gather against the camp of the saints, and fire comes down from heaven to destroy Satan and his army, Revelation 20:7-9. **I think it is quite obvious that this is a real battle, and that the army of the saints is loosing against the Muslims and their unbelieving allies until God and Christ intervene. I know it strained us to think of the US army as an army of the saints, but it is perhaps the closest to saints that this earth can have remaining at that time.**

13. Satan cast into the same lake of fire and brimstone as the beast and the false prophets, Revelation 20:10.

“And the devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” (Revelation 20:10)

14. Old heaven and earth pass away, judgment with believers judged according to the book of life and all others according to other books of their deeds, and then comes the second death which is the lake of fire and brimstone, Revelation 20:11-15. **You see how a second death which is the lake of fire and brimstone demands a first death where souls come to an intermediate place called “hades” or “hell”. Incidentally that is where Peter says that Jesus went for three days after His crucifixion to preach, and it is mistakenly confused with “paradise” (paradise is more appropriately called hades) where the day of the crucifixion Jesus met with
the thief on the cross to further explain to him and all residents of hades the way of salvation.**}

15. New heaven, new earth, and a new Jerusalem, Revelation 21:1-22:1-5 {**It is true that we will again live on this earth, and for eternity; but it will be a new earth and a new heaven--in other words a new universe. The new Jerusalem is lowered down from heaven as a place where believers can live and worship. You see the old universe has already been melted with fervent heat: you see all unbelievers and Satan have been defeated by Christ and cast into a separate place called the lake of fire and brimstone. Unbelievers have been judged by their works as every deed has been recorded; and believers are judged on a separate basis as to whether their names have been written in the book of life. By the way, when you become a member of the Assembly of the Firstborn (Jesus Christ was the Firstborn from the dead), then your name is written in two books: you are recorded in heaven as a member of the only Church or Assembly that really counts, and you are simultaneously written in the book of life. Wow, that is something worth shouting about!**}

Perhaps we should speculate as to why the large group of PREs that now dominant the Southern Baptist Convention, historically they are essentially the same as the fundamentalists that left the SBC about 1920 and decided 20 years ago to take control with a fighting spirit, are so determined to have a thousand year reign on this earth: (1) it is primarily due to inadequate Bible exegesis and hermeneutics (rules for Bible interpretation that are established by the Bible itself) whereby the reader or teacher takes Scripture like in the book of Revelation out of the context of the total Bible; that is, away from the teachings of Jesus in Matthew 24, that of Paul in II Thessalonians 2, that of Peter, and that of the consistent Day of the LORD and of the Lord of both the Old Testament and New Testament; (2) a desire to not be here for the final tribulation which is just good old human nature and the desire of teachers and preachers to tell churchmembers what they want to believe (this is coupled with another out of Bible context failure to see the great tribulation as during the first centuries and the simultaneous failure to see tribulation as part of each century); and (3) if the majority is wrong and the minority right as Jesus taught about the many and the few, the broad way and the narrow way, and if the majority of churchmembers fall away from God, Christ, and the Bible during the Falling Away, and if we are in the Falling Away right now, and if the Falling Away includes the heaping away of sound teachers of sound doctrine who will teach and preach the truth, and if the Falling Away that we are in now includes, as the Bible teaches, the teachers of itching ears teaching congregations of itching ears what they want to hear, the comfort of a materialistic kingdom for themselves, then it should be no surprise that a majority of churchmembers in the populous SBC support a thousand year reign on earth. Materialism among churchmembers is far more pervasive and determinative than any American cares to admit. You see it in the America of today and yesteryear in what Henry Steele Commager and other American Studies scholars call “the gospel of wealth” and the corollary of “success”.

18-2: Phases of Historical Events.
It is obvious with this previous summary of last events that there is some repetition. A help would be key to find the overlap and chart it as shown in Table 2 on page 10. Consider the heading numbers of 1-4 as hisorical sequence, and the numbers in the body of the Table, 1-11, as more an outline of the teachings of Jesus, supplemented by the Apostles. The “false Christs deceiving many” of number 1 in the outline of Jesus, as you can see, overlaps the four phases of history. Also the wars and rumors of wars start in the beginning
of sorrows and continue to the falling away where they culminate in the last great war, the battle of Armageddon. Likewise in the outline of the teachings of Jesus in Matthew 24 as supplemented by the Apostle John and the Ascended Christ in the book of Revelation, number 3 with earthquakes in diverse places continues until the last great earthquake of the DAY of the LORD, number 4, tribulation is a characteristic of every historical phase with the greatest in the first centuries and the final during the Falling Away period. {**The final tribulation is only great in the sense of the tribulation from God as He shakes the whole universe.**} Also continuous is the false prophets that deceive many of the four phases that also culminates with the Great Deception of the Falling Away of church members of the fourth phase of history according to Jesus. Of course, the gospel of the kingdom is preached in each phase until the end at that DAY and the Second Coming.

Before we deal thoroughly and decisively with the “chaining of Satan” for a thousand years, which is no doubt one of the most divisive of all issues in eschatology; we must consider some fundamental principles of hermeneutics. (I think it was mentioned previously but hermeneutics is the study of the principles of Biblical interpretation, which by and large come from the Bible itself, but which received widespread recognition in the books of Bernard Ramm.) The prime principles of hermeneutics is to keep the book or section of the Bible under studying the context of the total body, in this case the book under study is the book of Revelation. This is based on the very fundamental doctrine that the total Bible came from the single source of God; and therefore like God Himself, it is consistent. (One of the primary reasons in Christian evidences that we are convinced of the inspiration of the Bible--that is, that it is divine in origin--is because that what we read in Paul agrees with what we read in John, and what we read from a Prophet like Moses, the first writing Prophet of the Old Testament, agrees with what we read in Malachi, the last writing Prophet of the Old Testament. Although separated by thousands of years Moses and Malachi agreed, because the initial source was not Moses and Malachi, but God Himself through the Spirit of Christ.

There is another principle of Bible interpretation we should consider and that is to first go with the most straightforward and simple to understand, like the teachings of Jesus and Peter, or sometimes even Paul, then to look at the more difficult passages like in the book of Revelation in the light of the simpler. One reason that the book of Revelation is somewhat difficult is that it is a book of visions with symbolic meanings more than straightforward statements like from Paul or Peter. (Of course, even here it is in the category of certain Old Testament books like Zechariah; and if we read and understood the book of Zechariah more then we would also understand the book of Revelation more. A case in point will be when we come to the two olive trees and the two lamstand standing before the God of the earth of Revelation 11:4, which if a person already knew Zechariah would be a way to identify the two witnesses of Revelation 11:3.)

Now, on the chaining of Satan it is the Apostle Paul in II Thessalonians 2:1-12 that gives us the clearest understanding. (It is a long passage and you should read it straight from the Bible and in which ever version you prefer. The meaning will be the same.) Instead of quoting it here, I will paraphrase the passage.

1. This passage is dealing with the subject of the Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Gathering of the Saints at His return (II Thess. 2:1). Well, that’s obviously eschatology of all eschatology, the Second Coming of Christ and the Rapture of the Saints.

2. Paul calls this the Day of Christ (II Thess. 2:2). Recall that previously we talked of how is is the Day of the LORD in the Old Testament, and the Day of the LORD and the Lord in the New Testament.

3. Paul wants the Christians at Thessalonica not to get all shook up (II Thess 2:2). There
is probably more getting all shook up over the book of Revelation and eschatology based on it than over any other book in the Bible. Certainly Satan has worked overtime to confuse the understanding of this book. Satan’s work here must be considered the best he can do to simulate God’s confusion of tongues and languages at the tower of Babel. Of course, some of it is still the veil that the Apostle Paul speaks of in Hebrews in the reading of the Bible that is done way with when a person knows Christ. And I think there is still a third factor, human pride. Have you ever noticed that if there is a little confusion in a group, there is always a hero to come to the rescue to take leadership with strong convictions, sometimes based on false assumptions. Of course, the people in the First Century at this church, and no doubt at many of the other churches, had decided that the Second Coming of Christ had already passed and therefore since they were not caught up in the air to meet Christ, they were not among the elect. (I don’t know why they did look around themselves and among themselves for the most saintly, like say an Apostle, to see if he was still among them.) But this was a serious problem! We know according to II Timothy 2:17,18 that two preachers of such false doctrine were Hymenaeus and Philetus, who were saying that the resurrection was already passed, and how that they with this unsound doctrine were overthrowing the faith of some. Well, brother or sister, today we have some (no many) teachers with itching ears (perhaps even the majority as a characteristic of the end time), who are overthrowing the faith of many or at least shaking them up with unsound doctrine.

3. Okay, now in verse 3, we start to get into the nitty-gritty, and in particular to the understanding of last things and the chaining of Satan that we need in order to proceed to the historical cycles of Revelation (II Thess 2:3). “THAT DAY” (the Day of the LORD and the Lord) will not come until first there is a Falling Away and the Man of Sin is revealed. {**NOTE about the Tables and the Teachings of Jesus in Matthew 24: let us never forget as we get into the “harder-to-understand” eschatology of the book of Revelation, that The Day of the LORD and Lord comes immediately after tribulation--that Day as in all other places of the Old and New Testaments being marked by the sun and moon darkened and the falling stars. Then Christ comes again, and then the elect are gathered up to meet Him in the air.)

(1). There is the general falling away of churchmembers first; and

(2). It becomes obvious as to who the “man of sin”, the son of perdition is, as he is revealed. Of course, he must first make his appearance, and then he must become infamous to be known. **}

By the way, let me suggest right now before later study of the subject that Osama Bin Laden can fit the bill of the description in Daniel 11 of the man of sin. Osama is a man of war and a person who has a low esteem toward women. Also he seems to be fitting the description of the person of another country who first fights in a foreign country (like Afghanistan) then goes back to his home country (in Saudi Arabia on the border of Yemen), and then leads an uprising from there that extends to Israel and the Middle East. You see even if he has made his appearance, it is still not clear that he is the man of sin. If killed, then he is not; and perhaps one of his likeminded sons or followers is the man of perdition.


“And now you know what is restraining (what restrains or chains Satan for a thousand years) that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He (and noticed this
is capitalized for Holy Spirit, a member of the godhead) who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.” (II Thessalonians 2:6,7)

Of course, the thousand years of Revelation 20 where Satan is bound for that period of time and then released for a little while to deceive the whole world is an indefinite period of time. We learn that from the Apostle Peter who talks of how indefinite a period of time is to God. It can be a day or a thousand years. Peter also in that passage of II Peter 3 on the subject of the day of the Lord tells people not to get shook over the scoffers that come during the last days period to talk about “where is Christ’s appearing”. Therefore it is amazing that the single subject that has been most divisive among Christians becomes the simplest to understand in the light of Peter and Paul’s teachings (which by the way they received from Christ), and hence the chaining of Satan for a thousand years becomes the firm foundation for the historical cycles of the book of Revelation. The table and the cycles also have their start in the teachings of Jesus, especially in Matthew 24, and in the teachings from Paul and Peter. Really, it is Jesus Himself who starts the cycles going in a major outline of Matthew 24, and leaves it for the disciples like John to fill in the gaps between the majors. (Recall how in John 14-16 Jesus told the disciples that the Holy Spirit would teach them more as they were able to understand it.)

**Keys to an understanding of Table B-1.**

1. The last cycle, of course, is the fourth, when the end comes; and the previous cycles do not stop but continue all the way from cycle 1 to cycle 4. In other words all through these cycles, the false prophets and wars and rumors of wars, famines, etc will continue.

2. You notice that there are a lot of gaps. Exactly, Jesus left it for His apostles, in particular, John and Peter and Paul, to fill in those gaps.

3. While this division may at first seem a little artificial, remember it is from a literal interpretation of Jesus in Matthew 24 based on the “THENs” and “AND THENs”.

4. In no way can we place a period of time on each phase or claim that they are equal. For example, the beginning of sorrows started shortly after the resurrection of Christ, and the continuation of sorrows, the famous persecutions of Christians during the First Century, were well under way after the destruction of the temple of 70 A.D.

5. Don’t get lost in the phases. The Table is for assistance in understanding, not to make a dogma of history. It is much like the efforts in volume 1 to sequence the books of the Old Testament. Use it as far as it helps, after all it is only an approximation, and please don’t make a religion out of it like some have done for the notes in the Scofield Reference Bible.

6. It should be explained that Satan is bound only to the extent as indicated in the passage that he can no longer for a thousand years deceive the nations as he did during the Roman Empire. The method of deception in the Roman Empire is now obvious: Satan used the Emperor, the Caesar if you will, to demand worship of the citizens of the Emperor. So that John and the Spirit through the Apostle John is telling us that for a complete and long period of time, a thousand years, Satan will not be allowed to deceive all the nations of the world through worship of a giant dictator. Satan can still and does deceive in many ways, and as a lion goes about seeking whom he may devour; but this is not deception on the world-of-nations level. Of course, for a little while after the thousand years Satan is loosed to establish control over and use a giant dictator again. The Holy Spirit is busy during that one thousand years to convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. But woe be to the world when the Holy Spirit is withdrawn, causing Satan to be released. Lawlessness abounds and the love of many waxes cold. Believers and churches become intolerant of sound doctrine. States and nations ignore the teachings of God.

7. As you would expect from the next to the last row in the table, with the great earthquake, it is also the phase for the old heavens and the old earth pass away. Remember there have been

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earthquakes all along but this is the great earthquake; there have been anti-Christ all along but this is the time of the man of sin; there have been the ups and downs of the “perilous times” but as the folly is no longer obvious of church members with a only a form of godliness”, then comes the full pledge falling away. There has also been tribulations all along; but in this phase comes the great tribulation that is more physical than persecution. It is physical tribulation as the earth’s passing away involves the earth and the mountains being ripped apart, pieces of the universe falling from the sky, the molten material in the earth erupting out and all over the earth, the shaking of heavens and earth, and the fervent heat that Peter speaks of as the elements themselves melt.

18-3: Eschatology in the Prophets.

What Jesus had taught the Apostles on the Prophets was background for the eschatology of Revelation; what the Apostle John spent his life reading from the Prophets was background for the eschatology of Revelation; and of course, what Jesus the Risen Christ appearing to John on the isle of Patmos taught him was background for the eschatology of Revelation. In short, we need that background of the Prophets to properly understand the eschatology of the book of Revelation. We will use the outline of Carroll in a sequencing of the Prophets. It is amazing the amount of literature written on the Prophets, but it is also amazing that with the advent of historical criticism and then the reaction of the superficialities of the fundamentalists centered around the Scofield Reference notes that little new contributions have been made to the Prophets.


I. Obadiah.

If this sequencing is correct that places Obadiah at the beginning of the Prophets, and I think it is since both Sampey and Carroll use it, then Obadiah has the burden of starting the eschatology of the Prophets. This it does well with the introduction to the “day of the LORD”, a time of final judgment that makes for the righting of many wrongs.

“For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.” (Obadiah 15)

Even as the Hebrews thought of the heathen as Gentiles, and Paul so quoted the Old Testament putting Gentile in place of heathen, so also after Paul’s development in Romans of God’s people as Jews and Gentiles who are believers, so also must we expand our concept to the heathen as being non-believing Jews and Gentiles. Leslie C. Allen in THE NEW INTERNATIONAL COMMENTARIES writes about this passage from Obadiah.

“The final portion of the poem (Obadiah) sets the downfall of guilty Edom within a wider perspective. A substantial part of the prophetic literature of the O.T. is concerned with eschatological expectations, in which the themes of the Day of Yahweh and his people’s dominations of other nations come to the fore. It is to this larger hope that our prophet now not unnaturally turns in climatic conclusion. Relating his own theme to the
great traditional framework of the future, he is still much concerned with Edom but shows how his special message fits into the eschatological pattern of God’s final triumph. The conquest of Edom already predicted is now presented as a signal inaugurating that traditional widespread demonstration of divine justice and grace which is associated with the Day of Jahweh. Behind the fate of the nations, as behind that of Edom alone in the preceding part of the book, stands the fall of Jerusalem in 587 as the crime that sets the wheels of divine retribution in motion.”

We must recall from the previous look at eschatology in Revelation that on the Judgment Day of Revelation 20:11-15 several books are opened as the “dead” stand before God. The “standing before God”, of course is the Judgment of the Day of the LORD. Books were opened and a Book of Life was opened: the dead are judged according to their works, good or bad, from the books; but believers according to their names being written in the Book of Life. So what the Prophet Obadiah is really telling us, or the Spirit of Christ speaking through Obadiah, is that Edom because of the treatment of God’s people (the Jews at that time being essentially all of the people of God, and even then only a remnant of the Jews), Edom will be judged out of the books according to their deeds. NOTE: Believers are judged by grace as to whether they believe with their names written in the Book of Life. Others are judged according to works.

“The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Revelation 20:13-15)

Allen continues on Obadiah.

“This first piece is a divine pronouncement of coming punishment for all the nations, i.e., excluding the Jewish nation. (This really has to be the nation of Romans 11 of all Jews, God’s children of Jews and Gentiles, will be saved.)...The O.T. looked forward to a time when Jahweh would finally intervene in human affairs and set right the wicked world, a time when man’s day of self-sufficiency and oppression would be brought to a close. This future period, when moral debts would be settled and Jahweh openly revealed to all as the upholder of right and justice and the victor over sin and violence, was called the Day of Jahweh. A basic and traditional part of this eschatalogical motif was the participation of the people of God in his victory.”

John in Revelation also tries to make it clear of how God’s people who reap the final rewards are primarily Gentiles, or rather Jesus the Risen Christ tries to make it clear through John. For while the first of Revelation 7 talks about the 144,000 that come from the tribes of Israel, the second part tells of the multitude of Gentiles that come from all nations.

“After these things I looked, and beheld, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with loud voice, saying, Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” (Revelation 7:9)

This theme of judgment on Edom is repeated throughout the Prophets all the way up to Malachi.

“I have loved you,’ says the LORD. Yet you say, ‘In what way have you loved us?’ Was not Esau Jacob’s brother?” says the LORD. Yet Jacob I have loved; but Esau I have hated, and laid waste his mountains and his heritage for the jackals of the wilderness. Even though Edom has said, ‘We have been impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places, thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘They may build, but I will throw down...” (Malachi 1:2-5)
Paul deals with this question of the love of Jacob over Esau and Edom in Romans 9, and as to whether there is a matter of unrighteous favoritism with God. It is part of the Apostle Paul’s great treatment of the doctrine of election. The older of Esau was chosen to serve the younger Jacob before the two were born, and before they had done any good or evil. God wants it by election rather than by works. God will have mercy and compassion on those whom He decides to have mercy and compassion!

2. Joel.
The subject matter of Joel is very similar to Obadiah; however, for some reason Joel is more frequently quoted in the New Testament.

(1). For example, there is that very popular passage already alluded in the chapter on Last Days where the Apostle Peter quoted from Joel 2:28-31 to refer to what was happening on the first Pentecost after the Resurrection. It is a passage that begins fulfillment on the first Pentecost and runs all the way to the end of time. Only the mountaintops are seen, but it does give an outline that can be filled in with the valleys and lesser peaks during a study of the book of Revelation. And I think it would be wise here to follow a procedure that we will use later on the book of Revelation, that of considering the very last things first then backing up to what happened on this last day of Pentecost.

a. The great and notable day of the LORD.

b. Wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth: blood, fire, smoke with the sun turned to darkness and the moon into blood.

c. The beginning of the last days with the democratic outpouring of the Spirit of God, and the salvation of all that will call upon the name of the LORD.

(2). Jesus quotes from Joel 3:13 as recorded in Mark 4:29 and Mark 13:24.

“Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; for the whimpers is full, the vats overflow—for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. The sun and moon will grow dark, and the stars will diminish their brightness. The LORD also will roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; the heavens and earth will shake; but the LORD will be shelter for His people, and the strength of the children of Israel.” (Joel 3:12-16)

Obviously we can get our perspective both from the end of time seen in the heavens and earth from Peter’s explanation, and some perspective from Mark 4 and 13: (1) Mark 4 is a parable Jesus told about the kingdom of God which He established during His life on this earth, how the seed would grow and then harvest time would come with the sickle, obviously another reference to judgment which we see is also the main subject as it says “I will sit to judge all...”; and (2) Mark 13 is the equivalent of Matthew 24 with the great eschatological teachings of Jesus.

“Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?” (Mark 13:4)

Once again we will look at the end events like we did with Matthew 24, but this time we will work from the time of the end of history with the passing of the heaven and the earth and work forwards to the Phase 1 of Jesus, the beginning of sorrows.
1. Heaven and earth shall pass away (13:31). We should pronounce what Jesus said about that day and that hour when the heavens and earth pass away. He said no one knows when that is, not the angels, not even the Son of God, but only the Father. Now, there could be some question as to whether the Father told Jesus when He got back to heaven after the Resurrection, and therefore told John in Revelation.

2. Jesus comes in the clouds with great power and glory (13:14), and then Jesus will gather His Elect from the four corners of the earth and of heaven.

3. After tribulation, the sun will be darkened, the moon will stop giving light, and the stars will fall, and the powers in the heavens shaken (13:24-13).

4. Tribulation like no other time in history, shortened only for the sake of the elect of God, with false christs, false prophets.

Allen writes in his commentary on Joel about the plague of locusts, the dominant event of Joel: “Enemy invasion was to blame, but from no human adversary. Advancing in their myriads, the locusts had done as much damage as any army could. Joel is to develop the military metaphor in 2:4-11...Observers have often commented on this terrifying phenomenon, of ‘the myriads of insects that blot out the sun above and cover the earth beneath and fill the air whichever way one looked.’”

And further Allen relates this locust plague to the Day of Yahweh as sort of a percussive, or image lesson: “First, the prophetic DAY of Jahweh, which Judah underwent in a king of trial run in the form of the locust plague, is to be unleashed in its full force upon the nations, according to Joel. The curtailed prototype of Judah’s experience is now built into its fully developed counterpart. Secondly, Judah is to experience a reversal of the devastation caused by the locusts and drought. The curse will be no more: it is to give way to a wealth of blessing.”

We should briefly also look at what Carroll has to say on the plague of locusts: “The locust is used else where in the Bible symbolically, to represent a curse (Rev 9:3-11).”

You recall what we briefly considered on the locusts in Revelation 9:3-11. As the fifth angel sounded his trumpet, a star fell from heaven to the bottomless pit where poured out smoke with a darkening of the sun. From the smoke of the bottomless pit came locusts with power like the scorpions of earth have power. These locusts were very unique as they had instructions to ignore the green grass and trees, but to only sting the men on earth who did not have the seal of God in their foreheads. Likewise the scorpions were not given power to kill, only power to torture; and that torture would be like the torment of a scorpion. Then Revelation 9 further describes the locusts as having a shape like battle horses, with something like gold on their heads, and with faces like the faces of men. You notice how much of the description is in terms of “like”: the locusts are like scorpions, the shape is like battle horses, like gold, and like the faces of men. Like women was their hair, like lions’ teeth were their teeth, like breastplates of iron were their breastplates, like the sound of chariots with many horses running in battle were their sons, like scorpions were their tails with stings. The angle of the bottomless pit was their king. You know what it sounds like: a great final battle of choppers and other aircraft. So that even as the locusts of Joel sound like an invading army so do the locusts of Revelation 9 sound like an invading army over which Satan rules, but Satan can only hurt the non-elect of God.

Now, with eschatology out of the way, we can come to the main messages of the Bible. Like for first century Christians under the great tribulation, we under the last tribulation need practical messages for the daily life, even beyond the comfort that comes from the assurance that the ultimate justice of God will prevail. You can consider 22:11-21 as the last instructions.

Keep living like you live already, the unjust being unjust, the filthy being unfilthy, the righteous as righteous, and the holy as holy (22:11) Hey, just keep doing what you are doing
already! You know the consequences of what is done. That will not waiver nor change. God is the same yesterday, today, and eternally. The results are inevitable for the unjust and filthy; and as for the righteous and holy, Jesus is Coming quickly to give to every man rewards according to his works. Jesus is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. The blessed are those who by doing his commandments prove that they have a right to the tree of life. These will enter into the gates of the holy city. Outside the city are dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, those that lie and love a lie (22:15). This message is from Jesus and He has given the message to angels to give to the churches. Jesus is the root and offspring of David, the bright and morning star (22:16).

The Holy Spirit and the Christ say “Come” to drink of the water of life freely (22:17). If any man who hears or reads the book of Revelation and adds words to it, then God will add to him the plagues of this book (22:18). This is a compulsion to good exegesis. You will hear a lot in this commentary about the Mormons as a good example of the bad practice of “falling” away from sound doctrine to turn away from the truth and ultimately turn into fables. It is not that they are so different from other denominations where churchmembers are also falling away from sound doctrine, it is only that they lead the fleet, so to speak. They need prayer. Two curses are on their head and we need to remind them of these two curses from the Bible: (1) the curse above which comes from adding words to the Bible as the Mormons have actually added the additional words of three more Bibles; and (2) the curse of advocating a reformed gospel that is different from what Jesus gave to the Apostles Paul to deliver in word and print.

Recall that isogesis is adding meaning to the Bible. The bottom line of this warning and the next is to not read too much into or out of the original meaning or intention! This is also a clue as to what is the worse that can happen to a person besides their name not being written in the book of life. What are the plagues? Since this is, no doubt, a summary of the wrath of God and the worse that can happen, we will cover it in the next section. If any man takes away from the words of this book, God will take away his name from the book of life and from the holy city, and from all the good things that are written in this book (22:19). Jesus says, “I come quickly” (22:20)

It is a shame that we do not let the easiest to understand parts of the Bible be guides for what is more difficult to understand; for exmple let the simple, straightforward words in II Thessalonias from Paul about the Holy Spirit being withdrawn be a commentary on Satan being released in the book of Revelation. It should be obvious that Satan was bound as the Holy Spirit came in great power on the first day of Pentecost after the resurrection, that the Holy Spirit restrains for an indefinitely long period of time which is represented by the thousand years; and then Satan is released for a short period of time as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn.

It is at this period that the United States will have so declined, even as the Roman Empire declined, that it will no longer have the power as it did in World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and Kosovo to contain dictatorships. These dictatorships will expand, rule the world, with the elimination of the separation of church and state, and Satan will again deceive the nations as he did during the time of the Roman Empire.

18-5: Composite Witness of the Five of the New Pentateuch.
The composite witness of the five books from John is that God is not willing that any person should perish because of last things, but rather that through the last events and knowledge of the last events might turn to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. J. B. Phillips in
his translation of the book of Revelation so aptly lists 5 great themes that emerge from the book of Revelation.

1. That God is absolutely sovereign and that His eternal purpose is to destroy all forms of evil.

2. There will be inevitable judgement and judgements from God on all forms of evil such as the worship of false gods (this includes riches, power, and success as in the Judgment on the large, collective group call Babylon).

3. It is expected of the believing reader of Revelation that they maintain patient endurance (steadfast and immovable as recorded in Paul) made secure in the knowledge that God is in control of history. The first volume of THE LEARN CHRIST COMMENTARIES is “The Great Maker of History”, where the theme is developed from the Apostle James and the book of Acts that “known unto God are all His works from the beginning.”

4. Such spiritual realities as the New Heaven and New Earth, New Jerusalem, the tree of life, and etc provide complete assurance of complete, ultimate victory in spite of temporal difficulties and tribulations.

5. Worship and Adoration of God and the Lamb of God are the resultants of seeing something of the power, majesty, and glory of God and His Son. One such witness of the Five is from John 3:17, after the famous John 3:16 of “God so loved the world” and after the less famous John 3:18 of how the none believer automatically is under condemnation by not believing.
Chapter 19: Mark as an Appendix to the Bible.

Even as previously we have tried to show the standalone nature of Mark as a Gospel of the Boat and of Action, and even as we have tried to illustrate constantly Mark’s place in the Synoptic Gospels and of the Gospel of John, now we enlarge our boundaries to the whole counsel of God in the Bible to show Mark’s place in the Bible itself, of the Old and New Testaments, of the Prophets and Apostles.  {Most of the material of this chapter is borrowed from my LEARN CHRIST COMMENTARIES, volume 1a on “The Old Testament according to the New Testament.}

The method of God the Father to make His own Mind clear to the world would be complete if it could get to the democratic level of New Testament prophets, the level of associates of Apostles like Dr. Luke and John Mark.  It is easy to see how Jesus Himself as the Son of God and the very incarnate expression of the Mind and Character of God would in life, teachings, death, and resurrection express that Will of God.  It is also possible to see how the Apostles of Jesus would continue that expression of the Life and Teachings of Jesus, alias the Gospel, both in the preaching and teaching which they did and in the writing of New Testament books which were Word of God that became in the formulation of the Bible Canon what we call the Bible of 66 books.  Yet the expression of God’s Character would not be complete until it got down to the very democratic level where the average citizen lives.  A giant step was made in this direction when two associates of Paul, Dr. Luke and John Mark, wrote books of the New Testament!

Beyond that just one more step in New Testament democracy was needed, really a simultaneously great step, as the Character or Word of God became with the preaching and teachings of Jesus as well as the Apostles, “living epistles, known and read of all men”.  This way the Word of God which is more than pages, print, and ideas was translated into fleshly and living epistles of human spirits and consciences.

“Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men; Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God;notintablesofstone,butfinfleshytablesoftheheart.” (II Cor.3:2,3)  
The Word of God moves forward not so much with the defence of the Bible as the Word of God, and as inerrantly given in the sense that the fundamentalists claim, as it does by the Word of God being incorporated as living epistles in the human heart of consciences!  The best defence of the Bible is another living epistle.

19-1: Mark, an Appendix to the Bible
Before the Bible of 66 books can be wrapped up a young man like John Mark has to write an abbreviated expression of the will of God as given by the life and teachings of Jesus.  A young man who exemplifies all the characteristics of the democratic New Testament prophets of Acts 2:17-21 and Joel 2:28-32, yet who is very human carrying the treasure in an earthen vessel--much like you and me!

“And it shall come to pass in the last days (the New Testament days and beyond), saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and thy shall prophesy... And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the
name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Acts 2:27-21 and Joel 2:28-32)

Now, we continue with Mark where we left off in the earlier chapter as we compared Luke and Mark, wrapping up on God’s Conscience, on how Jesus is greater than man’s esteem, and on the comparison on Old Testament quotations in Matthew, Luke, in Paul, and Mark; thus effectively providing an Appendix to the Bible in the Gospel of Mark. Where we started with the Gospel of Mark is as shown below where we compared it with Luke 16:18.

“And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him. And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter. And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.” (Mark 10:2-12 KJV)

And then we built a harmony around Luke 16 and Mark 10 that included all four of the Gospels--

I. Before the Perean Ministry.

II. The Perean Ministry.

III. After the Perean Ministry.
     (All four of the Gospels after John 11, Luke 19, Mark 10, and Matthew 20.)

     Then with a focus on the Perean Ministry of Jesus and “Master and Mammon” we got our foothold in Mark 10 and Luke 16.


     “But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:42-45  KJV)
“...When he ascended up on high...and gave gifts unto me...he gave some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...” (Ephesians 4:8-12 KJV)

Finally we looked at the Old Testament quotations in Luke, and made our comparisons with other New Testament books. It is time to do the same for the book of Mark, but more briefly taking advantage of the research that we have done up to this point. Let us Work Backwards! We have the Gospel of Mark in completed form as part of the Word of God and the Bible Canon, but let us briefly consider that we are there in the room of the house of Philemon with John Mark when it is time to sit down and write the book of Mark. Suppose that the Apostle John and Dr. Luke have passed away, only the young man John Mark, now himself an older man, is alive of all the Apostles and Associates. Before him on a table and in the book shelves are the references he can use to write an abbreviated form of the Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ--

1. Matthew;
2. The 14 letters of Paul;
3. Letters from the Apostles James, Peter, Jude, and John;
4. The Gospel of John;
6. The book of Acts by his former roommate in Galatia, Dr. Luke; and
7. Two parchments from the Apostle Paul left for him to use as a basis for the writing of a Gospel--
   (1). One which recorded the testimony to Jesus of the Apostle James;
   (2). And the other parchment which recorded all the Old Testament quotations for John Mark to use in the writing of the Life and Teachings of Jesus.

19-3: Old Testament Quotes in Mark
We could read through Mark twice, once to see the unique testimony of the Apostle James to Jesus; and a second time to record all the hard quotations from the Old Testament in Mark which would be effectively a reconstruction of the two parchments that the Apostle Paul left John Mark to use in writing a Life and Teachings Brief on Jesus--”Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is profitable to me for the ministry” (II Tim. 4:11) However, since Robertson in his HARMONY has already done such an effective job for us, we need not repeat this Bible research. Robertson’s list for Old Testament quotations is shown in Table 1-1 on the next page. Look at this thoroughness of quotations from the Old Testament in the shortest of the Look at this thoroughness of quotations from the Old Testament in the shortest of the four Gospels, in the book of Mark of only 16 chapters; and you can begin to appreciate why John expressed for all the New Testament writers at the home of Philemon--

“And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.” (John 21:25)

1. Isaiah 40:3, Malachi 3:1 and Mark 1:45
2. Acts 1:16 and Mark 1:11
3. Isaiah 6:9,10 and Mark 4:12
4. Isaiah 29:13 and Mark 7:6,7
5. Exodus 20:12;21:17 and Mark 7
6. Isaiah 66:24 and Mark 9:44,46,48
8. Deuteronomy 5:16-20 and Mark 10
9. Psalms 118:26 and Mark 11:9
10. Jeremiah 7:1 and Mark 11
11. Psalms 118:22,23 and Mark 12:10
12. Exodus 3:6,15 and Mark 12
13. Leviticus 19:18 and Mark 12
14. Psalms 110:1 and Mark 12
17. Isaiah 53:12 and Mark 15:28
18. Psalms 22:1 and Mark 15:34

A Few Observations from the List:
1. To make a short Life and Teachings of Jesus as Mark did in his Gospel of Mark takes more work, not less.
2. Mark was partly able to do this because of all the research and information available to him as he wrote.
3. The probability is that John Mark, Dr. Luke, and the Apostle John wrote simultaneously there at the home of Philemon; at least that the Apostle John was there to help them before he was exiled on the isle of Patmos (Philemon 2,24).

The Testimony of James to Jesus
After Paul’s experience on the road to Damascus and his time in Arabia, while back at Jerusalem, the Apostle James would have told to Paul his personal testimony to the Life and Teachings of Jesus which Paul would have recorded on one parchment for John Mark during the seven silent years at Tarsus. It is this first parchment for Mark that would have formed the outline for the writing of the Gospel of Mark. The second parchment would be like the Old Testament column for quotes except the probability is that the second parchment would contain the Old Testament words themselves in the sequence of from Genesis to Malachi. We will try to briefly reconstruct both parchments in the most probably pattern that John Mark received them. First, Paul’s Old Testament Quotes Parchment for John Mark which you saw in chapter 10, section 10-9, it is the same as the list of OT quotes in Mark.

19-4: An Outline for John Mark from the Apostle James by way of Paul.
First, Paul’s parchment for John Mark that outlined the testimony of James to Jesus-
- {If we look in a complete Concordance like YOUNG’S, we find indeed that while the word “James” is found only 10 times in Matthew, Luke, John, and Acts, it is found 9 times alone in the book of Mark; and those nine times will form the outline for the book of Mark.}

I. Mark 1:19, Jesus calls James and John from fishing to follow Him.
II. Mark 1:29, James was with John when they went into the house of Peter and Andrew where Jesus healed the mother-in-law of Simon Peter.
III. Mark 3:17, James is among the ordained twelve for special instructions from Jesus and to go forth to preach.
IV. Mark 5:37, only James, Peter, and John were allowed to go with Jesus to the house of Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, where Jesus raised Jairus’ daughter from the dead.
V. Mark 9:2, the same three only were taken by Jesus up into the mount of transfiguration where God Himself spoke His Conscience and testimony to Jesus, saying, “This is my beloved Son; hear him.” (9:7).
VI. Mark 10:35, James and John ask Jesus to sit on His right and left hand in God’s kingdom.

VII. Mark 10:41, the other ten Apostles were much displeased with James and John when they heard of this request.

VIII. Mark 13:3, James with John, Peter, and Andrew ask Jesus privately on the times of eschatological events.

“Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?” (Mark 13:4)

IX. Mark 14:33, In Gethsemane just before the arrest and crucifixion, Jesus takes only James with Peter and John apart to pray.

Of course this outline which Paul left John Mark on a parchments would not have the chapter and verse numbers, only the main points. The chapters and verses were not even in the original manuscript which John Mark wrote, but were inserted by the later translators. Now, for the second parchment from Paul that John Mark would have as he sat down there at the home of Philemon in Galatia to write the Gospel of Mark, the one on which Paul had carefully recorded Old Testament quotations for the writing of a Gospel other than the similar parchments Paul left for Dr. Luke. It would be similar to our list of OT quotes of section 10-9, but sequenced according to the order of writing of the Old Testament. One young Southern Baptist minister’s complaint was that during his education at Golden Gate Baptist Seminary that all the professors talked about was concerning a missing manuscript X which was the basis of Paul’s Bible research and development for the writing of his own 14 letters, and as a basis for John Mark and Dr. Luke to continue his work after he was gone. Well, that information is in the Bible, already; for we can reconstruct what was on one of those parchments that Paul left for John Mark!

as shown in the Appendix of “Prophets and Apostles”, volume 1 of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries.

Paul on the Old Testament

Paul certainly left for Mark on the Old Testament a thorough parchment since all but 17 of the 39 Old Testament books are included on that one parchment, and remember while we have used the chapter and verse references, Paul no doubt during those seven silent years at Tarsus copied the complete Old Testament verses on the parchment as shown in the Appendix of volume 1 of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries. You see once again Paul’s preference for Psalms and Isaiah as noted in an earlier chapter with quotes from Hebrews and Romans. At this point we might make a comparison between the quotations of Psalms and Isaiah in Hebrews and Romans as compared to Mark.

19-5: Where the Gospels Overlap

From Table 6 and 7 of the Appendix in “Prophets and Apostles” on Psalms in Mark and Paul, it is obvious where the earlier Gospel of Paul in Hebrews and Romans overlaps with the Gospel story of Jesus as written by John Mark, at Psalms 110:1 and Psalms 2:7!


“I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.” (Psalms 2:7)

“Foruntowhichoftheangelsaidheatanytime, ThouartmySon, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?” (Hebrews 1:5; Psalms 2:7 and II Samuel 7:14)
Here the Great Maker of History in His most history making decision is setting the eternal course of history by declaring that Jesus is Son.

“So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” (Hebrews 5:5; Psalms 2:7 and Psalms 110:4)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psalms</th>
<th>Mark</th>
<th>Paul (Rom./Heb.)</th>
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<tr>
<td>2:7</td>
<td>9:7</td>
<td>Hebrews 1:5; Hebrews 5:5</td>
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<td>8:4-6</td>
<td>8:7</td>
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<td>12:36</td>
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<td>18:49</td>
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<td>Romans 15:9</td>
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{NOTE: After both Mark and Paul begin the quotations from Psalms with Psalms 2:7 then the interweaving pattern starts: First Paul leads with Psalms 8 in Hebrews then Mark follows with Psalms 12 in Mark, then Paul with Psalms 14 in Romans and Mark comes back with Psalms 16 in Mark, followed then by Paul in Romans with Psalms 18. Don’t try to tell me that both Dr. Luke and John Mark were not working from the parchments of Paul in the writing of their books, nor that Paul was not under the call of Christ to be the Chief Editor of the New Testament! What Paul was not able to get into in his own epistles and from his parchments recorded at Tarsus, you can see that he left for John Mark to fill in the gaps! You can see above the interweaving pattern: first Mark and Paul quote Psalms 2:7, then Paul uses the next quote in Hebrews 2:6, followed by Mark using 12:36, then Paul in Romans 3:10, then Mark in Mark 1:24, and back to Paul in Romans 15:9. The alternation is obvious.}

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<tr>
<th>Psalms</th>
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<th>Paul (Rom/Heb)</th>
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<tr>
<td>22:1</td>
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<td>42:6</td>
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<td>45:6,7</td>
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<td>62:12</td>
<td>8:38</td>
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{NOTE: Then Mark quotes two, Paul comes back with three; and Mark responds with three, then both of them quote one.}
{NOTE:  John Mark let’s the teacher have the say, and how will he respond in Mark? And by the second time quoting from the same chapter and verse in Psalms as does Paul!}

Psalms  
102:25-32  Hebrews 1:10
104:4  Hebrews 1:7
104:8,9  Hebrews 1:8
110:1  12:36;14:62  Hebrews 1:13
110:4  Hebrews 5:6;7:21
117:1  Romans 15:11

{NOTE:  Then Mark concludes on Psalms, placing an Appendix on the work of the Chief Editor from Paul’s parchment.  That Appendix comes to a peak on Psalms 118:22-26.}

Psalms  
118:22  Romans 9:33
118:22f  12:10,11
118:26  11:9
Psalms 118:22-26--

“The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD’S doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day (notice the double meaning of the word day as this 24 hour day and as the time of the life of Jesus, pointing out all the double nature of Old Testament prophecies) which the LORD hath mae; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD.” (Psalms 118:22-26)

Paul’s version of Psalms 118:22 in Romans 9:33--

“As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence; and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” (Romans 9:33)

Mark’s version of Psalms 118:22-26, really Jesus’ version as Mark chose in writing to quote--

“And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner: This was the Lord’s doing (Lord here is really LORD for God the Father), and it is marvelous in our eyes?...And they that went before (the “they” is the multitude of people in Jerusalem during Jesus’ triumphant entry), and they that followed, cried (form Psalms and from the words of Psalms), saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord...” (Mark 12:10,11; then Mark 11:9)

Here you see the “movers and shakers” at work versus the Great Maker of History. The builders of history rejected the very stone that the Great Maker of History chose to be the
very head of the corner. How the tastes of the history builders differed from the taste of the Great Maker; and indeed to this day how different are the decisions of the “movers and shakers” as compared to the Great Maker of History. Pharaoh also was a mover and shaker, but the Great Maker had to remind him that he was placed in that position for the purpose of God, that purpose being to make God’s reputation and power known throughout the world.

Where the Gospels Overlap continued

“And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.” (Mark 9:7)


“The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” (Psalms 110:1)

Following is perhaps the best single statement of the Will of God on the esteem of Jesus!

“But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?” (Hebrews 1:13)

“And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David? For David himself said by the Holy (Spirit), The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.” (Mark 12:35,36)

Back to Basics and Basicist

All this is based on the internal evidence in the Bible itself! This illustrates the difference in the study ABOUT the Bible which so many of our professionals in religion do, and the study of the Bible itself; and the difference in the talking ABOUT the Bible which the fundamentalists do so much of as contrasted to “basicist” which talk the Bible itself! Also again the statement should be made that before we try to understand or teach and preach fundamentals, we need the BASICS of the Bible! Enough of the Bible itself will both adjust our content and methods!

19-6: Isaiah in Paul, Mark’s Appendix.

In the last secion we saw Mark’s Appendix on Psalms, in Mark 12:10,11 and Mark 11:9 from Psalms 118:22-26. After a re-emphasis of this we will also determine Mark’s Appendix for Isaiah. In doing so we are looking at two of the largest books of the Old Testament: that is, we are looking at the New Testament quotes from two of the largest books of the Old Testament.

“The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD. God is the LORD, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar. Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee.” (Psalms 118:22-28)

Another way to say “this is the LORD’s doing” would be “this is the great Maker of History at work”; and it is marvelous indeed when we consider the extent to which God is in control of history! This is a period of history--the period of history during the life of Christ on earth--that the Great Maker has particularly shown His intervention. A time, and a place, of His own chosing! Although prophesied above in Psalms 118:22-28.

“And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the
name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.” (Mark 11:9,10)

“And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which
the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:
This was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.”
(Mark 12:10,11 and Psalms 118:22-26 and Psalms 2:7)

In this chapter with Mark’s Appendix on Psalms, we will seek for a similar Appendix of Mark on Isaiah--back to BASICs as a foundation for fundamentals and fundamentalism; but first we should again distinguish between LORD for God the Father and Lord for the Lord Jesus Christ, for by doing so we begin to see most clearly the matter of God’s Conscience, the Conscience of God the Father, on the Lord Jesus Christ, and how much greater than man’s esteem is the Lord Jesus Christ! This is the way the LORD wants it, for Jesus Christ to be the Lord. This is the way God’s Will and plan for the universe has ordained that it will inevitably be so at the end of time as the stone which the builders (builders today and builders of the Hebrews and Jews) have rejected but the LORD God through the Lord Jesus Christ has made the very cornerstone of all His plan for salvation and restoration!

LORD and Lord

“Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” (I Corinthians 15:24-28)

1. Until we see the LORD God as did the Hebrews, the Creator of all in the universe and therefore the ruler of all, we are not in a position to appreciate how that what He decrees is absolute authority; and that therefore when He states, and He does clearly many times in the Bible, that Jesus has been appointed the Lord over heaven and earth, it is also absolute and inevitable!

(1). Paul makes clear in the passage above--perhaps the single most important passage of all the Bible--that “all things” being put under the Lordship of Jesus Christ excludes God the Father. When the Old Testament uses and capitalizes “LORD”, it for God the Father. You see the distinction between LORD God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in Mark 12:35,36 as God the Father as LORD talks to God the Son as Lord.

“And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David? For David himself said by the Holy (Spirit), The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.” (Mark 12:35,36)

While King James’ translators have like their confusion of “spirit” for human spirit and “Spirit” for Holy Spirit, and in the use of “Ghost” for Holy Spirit not always done a good job in translation, in this passage of Mark 12:35,36 since it is a direct quotation from Psalms 110:1 have been compelled to bring over the same LORD in capital letters for God the Father as was in the Old Testament.

(2). The translators did not do as well in Mark 10:11,12 as the passage, also a quote from Psalms and from Psalms 118:22-26, is translated “Lord” for LORD even
though the content of the passage is clearly speaking of the same God the Father. It is the LORD God the Father Who has ordained the chief corner stone as the Lord Jesus Christ, even thought it has been and continual is rejected by religious builders.

(3). In Mark 11:9,10 the “Lord”, which is really the “LORD” in whose name Jesus comes is really the LORD God the Father. In the name of all intellectual honesty toward the Bible and those who translated the versions of the Bible, it should however be stated that God as Father, or LORD as Father, was one of the progressions in New Testament revelations. After in Ephesians 4:4-6, Paul with the other seven fundamentals or basics of the faith has enumerated the “One Lord” for the Lord Jesus Christ, then in the climax of the Seven ONEs he comes to God the Father--

“One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” (Ephesians 4:6)

2. “Then cometh the end” (I Cor. 15:24). This is the end of time, the end of the universe as we know it with a new earth and new heavens replacing the old earth and old heavens, with new citizenship based on faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as ordained by the LORD God the Father.

3. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. It is not that death is our greatest enemy, it is only that death is the last enemy to be destroyed by the Lord Jesus Christ as His and our victory is culminated as “all things” are put under His Lordship and destroyed. Our greatest enemies are Satan and “the spirit within us which lusteth to envy”.

4. When after His Second Coming, the Lord Jesus Christ has destroyed this last enemy, then Jesus will turn ever thing over to the LORD God that God the Father might “be all in all.”

Isaiah

With this proper background and perspective, we are ready to look at Isaiah in Paul and Mark, seeing how Mark is an Appendix on the Bible and on Isaiah. Paul’s quotations of Isaiah in Hebrews and Romans with Mark’s is shown on the next page in Table 2-1. As noted from the Table and the NOTES with the Table, we will briefly look at first the sub-Appendix and then the Appendix from Mark as Mark makes the last quotation from Isaiah even as he did from Psalms. In reality the Apostle Paul has done this in the parchment that he left for John Mark, recording these quotes from Isaiah as will be illustrated through this volume, permitting Mark to write a Gospel which Paul himself originally planned to write.

The Sub-Appendix of Mark on Isaiah

Mark 7:6,7 and Isaiah 29:13.

“And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.” (Isaiah 29:12-14)

“He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment
of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.” (Mark 7:6-9)

1. This passage from Isaiah illustrates the kind of learning as Basic and as of the “Basicist” that must comes before even the fundamental: I as a fundamentalist can not understand the book because I am not learned, “I am not learned.” Why are they not learned?

2. They worship God with their lips, but their hearts (the hearts of their seduced and seared consciences are far from God) are far from the God of the Bible.

3. They have made the traditions of men and men in religious practices and politics more their fundamentals than the fundamentals of the Bible, taking such non-Biblical words as “inerrancy” and “millileum”; and teaching for doctrines of God those commandments of men.

### Isaiah in Paul and Mark

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Isaiah</th>
<th>Paul</th>
<th>Mark</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:9</td>
<td>Romans 9:29</td>
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<td>5:1f</td>
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<td>12:2</td>
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<td>11:17</td>
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<td>6:9,10</td>
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<td>4:12; 8:18</td>
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<td>8:14</td>
<td>Romans 9:33</td>
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{NOTE: Paul, the Chief Editor again takes the lead, and Mark works with what Paul has left for him in leadership on how to write a New Testament book; but this time Mark is even more thorough in capping off an Appendix on the Bible with three verses from Isaiah after the one introduction by Paul, and sandwiched in between Romans 9:29 and Romans 9:33.}

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<th>Isaiah</th>
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<tr>
<td>8:17</td>
<td>Hebrews 2:13</td>
<td>Romans 9:27</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:22,23</td>
<td>Romans 15:12</td>
<td>11:1,10</td>
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{NOTE: Rather John Mark with Paul’s parchments before him, and the books of Hebrews and Romans, knows how thorough Paul is going to be on the quotations from Isaiah. Of course, some of Mark’s quotations from Isaiah are dictated by the events and teachings of Jesus where He quoted from Isaiah. (Mark as the writer, and under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, makes the final decisions.)}

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<th>Isaiah</th>
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<tr>
<td>27:9</td>
<td>Romans 27:9</td>
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<td>28:16</td>
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<td>29:10</td>
<td>Romans 11:8</td>
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<td>29:13</td>
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<td>7:6,7</td>
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{NOTE: It is almost impossible for John Mark to be as thorough on all the implications of the Gospel from Isaiah as Paul is in Romans, letting the Editor have his say on Isaiah for four quotations, then placing a sub-Appendix with Mark 7:6,7 from Isaiah 29:13. More of an Appendix with Mark 1:2,3,11 and Mark 9:7 on Isaiah 40:1,3, and trying to stay up with the example and parchment of his teacher, Paul.}
NOTE: Mark leaves most of the 40’s and all of the 50’s of Isaiah to Paul in Romans. After all the Apostle Paul is the chief interpreter of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, also to the Jews although only one quote from Isaiah in found in Hebrews (there David and the Psalms prevail).

NOTE: Then Paul wraps up with Romans 10:20,21 and Isaiah 65:1 and John Mark provides the Appendix with Mark 9:48 and Isaiah 66:24.

19-7: Appendix of Isaiah, the Bible, and the Gospel.

Then Mark concludes on Isaiah with the quotation of Isaiah 66:24 in Mark 9:48.

“For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.” (Isaiah 66:22-24)

You can not go any further on eschatalogy, or last things, than that! After the old earth and old heavens, the new earth and the new heavens (which include a new moon), the seed of the woman and of Christ remains; this seed has a human flesh, and that flesh of the new citizens on the new earth under the new heavens every one of them worship the LORD God the Father; and all those who have rebelled against the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ and the LORD God will suffer.

“...it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” (Mark 9:45,46)

Focus

We can easily get lost in the details of Old and New Testament quotes, losing the perspective of a fresh look at Dr. Luke and John Mark. You must admit that it has been a fresh look; for I am sure that you have never thought of Paul as the Chief Editor of the New Testament, leaving for Dr. Luke and John Mark parchments for which to write the New Testament books of Luke, Acts, and Mark, nor have you considered in this detail the magnitude and implications of the quotations from the Old Testament in those same books as well as in Paul’s books of Hebrews and Romans.
Chapter 20: Mark, Pivotal in the Bible

We have a plan and a program in the Southern Baptist Convention for almost everything, let me ask you why it is that we do not have a plan and program for peace and unity in the Southern Baptist Convention? We have a plan for Bible study in the Sunday School; we have a plan for worship and giving in the Sunday morning and Sunday evening service; we have a plan for prayer in the Wednesday night prayer meeting and Bible study; we have plans for men’s work and women’s work; and for missionary activity and evangelism in revival meetings. Now, I ask you again, does it not seem strange that at associational meetings, and convention-wide meetings, and even church business meetings, why is it that we do not have a plan for peace and unity in the Southern Baptist Convention? Perhaps the more ignorant of what is happening in Baptist life, would respond that it is not needed! That would be gullible and would overlook the Baptist news in the New Mexican Baptist and what is secular news in terms of what has been happening to Texas Baptist and to the splits in the Southern Baptist Convention. I recall about 20 years ago when people said that the Southern Baptist Convention would never split; and then approximately 15 years ago when after two more Conventions had split off, people said, “Just be patient it will all work out.” Well, it has not worked out. It is getting worse, not better. Every week we hear of additional split and divisions and controversies among Texas Baptists and in the Southern Baptist Convention. Brother, this should not be true among Christians. We need a plan and a program to promote peace and unity in the Southern Baptist Convention; and what better place to start, a place with which all of us should be able to agree, than with the Bible--specifically the place in the Bible where the very subject of Peace and Unity is discussed, in Ephesians 4:3.  

20-1: A Text for Unity.

The fundamentalists, who have taken control of the SBC by political warfare and without thought to give brothers a cup of water they considered as least in the kingdom, like so much the “hunt and peck”, take a single text or single group of texts: let us focus for a while on Ephesians 4:3. You will find not only that “the bond of peace” was ignored--a decided fundamental of the Bible and Christian behavior, but also the endeavors were the opposite of “to keep the unity of the Spirit...” “...Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Ephesians 4:3 KJV)

How far these spiritual terrorists went 20 years ago, and continue to go, in the name of “fundamentalism” could be described as “spare no effort”, but the effort was in the opposite direction of this Bible fundamental as shown below with the same verse in the New English Version.

“Spare no efforts to make fast with bonds of peace the unity which the Spirit gives.” (Ephesians 4:3 NEV)

Now notice that there are two aspects to the textual verse, the matter of securing with “bonds of peace”, an effort to be exerted on our part; and the matter of the “unity which the Spirit gives” which should be the work of the Holy Spirit among us. And I submit to you if there is not peace and unity right now in the Southern Baptist Convention, and if there has not been peace and unity in the Southern Baptist Convention for at least the last 20 years--and surely I would beg that you see this is so--then there has been a failure on our part as Southern Baptists at either one or both of the aspects of this verse. Where have we failed? (1). Have we not made positive efforts to make fast or secure with bonds of peace; or (2). Do we not have the unity of the Spirit which Paul identifies in terms of the seven One’s that we will look at together briefly; or (3). Have we failed and/or we continuing to fail on both counts--is it possible that not only do we lack the unity of the Spirit given by the Seven One’s, and also that we are not making conscious and concerted efforts at peace in the Convention and in our churches?
(4). And I would offer one other possibility: that if we are extremely deficient on the unity of the Spirit given by the Seven Ones that are listed in the following verses of Ephesians--4:4-6--then it would be impossible to promote with bonds of peace a unity among our churchmembers that does not exist in the first place.

1. We stress keeping positive and keeping the text in the context of the whole book of Ephesians, and Colossians. We must keep positive about this, therefore our subject is: PAUL’S PLAN FOR PEACE AND UNITY IN THE SBC. And we must keep our study of Ephesians 4:3 in the context that it was written, that is of the whole book of Ephesians. Also we will expand to study to include the book of Colossians since they both were written almost simultaneously and essentially have the same subject matter. Paul mentions both in the conclusion of the letter to the Colossians. “And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans: and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.” (Colossians 4:16)

(1). So what we will do first is to start a sort of Harmony between Ephesians and Colossians. You know how A.T. Robertson has written “A Harmony of the Gospels”. It compares the parallel subject matter of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. So we will try to do that for Ephesians and Colossians by first looking through the book of Colossians for a single verse that compares to Ephesians 4:3. Ideally, if possible, we would want this verse to speak of both “peace” and “unity”. After reading again through Colossians, we find that the closest that we can come to a parallel or harmony is to be found in Colossians 3:14,15. Yes, it takes two verses to come close to the expression of Ephesians 4:3; and then again the wording goes beyond that of Ephesians 4:3. But that is the real benefit of comparing Scripture with Scripture. What we are going to read in Colossians 3:14,15 should help with our understanding of Ephesians 4:3.

“And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.” (Colossians 3:14,15)

(2). A look at Colossians 3:14,15 and the context. While we do have the word “peace” in Colossians 3:14,15, we do not have the word “unity”; however you will notice something very interesting as a possibility, that is, “the bond of perfectness”. I could easily see a harmony between the “bond of perfectness” and the unity of the Spirit.

(3). If we expand the context beyond the one verse of Ephesians 4:3 and beyond the two verses of Colossians 3:14,15, I think we will really start to appreciate a Harmony of Ephesians and Colossians and on the subject of PAUL’S PLAN FOR PEACE AND UNITY IN THE SBC.


“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness, and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Ephesians 4:1-3)


“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have
a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.” (Colossians 3:12-15)

Notice the similarity of subject matter: in Ephesians it is “walk worthy of the vocation where-with you are called” and in Colossians it is that you are “the elect of God”; in Ephesians it is “lowliness and meekness” while in Colossians it is “humbleness of mind and meekness”; in Ephesians and Colossians both, it is “longsuffering”; in Ephesians it is “forbearing one another in love” while it Colossians it is “forbearing one another” and later it is “charity” which is the equivalent of “love”. Charity is love with wheels on it, or love put into action!

20-2: The Unity Which the Spirit Gives as Summarized in the Seven One’s.

Remember we had agreed to take the text of Ephesians 4:3, as amplified and explained by Colossians; and from that Ephesians 4:3 text to look at it in the two parts—The Peace Which we are to Promote; and the Unity which the Spirit gives which are summarized in the Seven ONE’s. Let us take the second part first because this is the basis for the peace we can promote. If we do not have that unity of the Spirit as given in the Seven ONE’s, then we have not basis for peace among church members. Paul does not leave us dangling about what that “unity of the Spirit” is. Having mentioned it in Ephesians 4:3, he then amplifies on specifically what it is in the next three verses; and in such we have the great Seven doctrinal statements of the Bible on what is most basic and fundamental in all of the Bible. If you could have only one short statement of Baptist beliefs and doctrines, only one short church charter, then these three verses should be it. And may I say parenthetically that if we as Southern Baptists disagree on many things, and it is obvious that we do, we must agree on these fundamentals of the Seven ONE’s. Without agreement here there is no salvation, and without agreement here there is no basis for unity and peace!

“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” (Ephesians 4:4-6)

1. Before we proceed to briefly look at these Seven ONE’s and what they entail doctrinally, let us see once again if we have a parallel or harmony in the book of Colossians. Where you might naturally expect for it to be is immediately after Colossians 3:14,15 even as the Seven ONE’s of Ephesians are immediately after Ephesians 4:3. What we do have in Colossians 3:16, immediately after our parallel text of Colossians 3:14,15, is very illuminating.

“How grateful I am for this parallel; and how obvious it is as to why Paul wanted the church at Ephesus to read Colossians and the church at Colosse to read the letter to Ephesus. It was impossible for Paul to say all that needed saying on peace, unity, and the basic doctrines of the Bible in one letter, so he said it in two. In reality, Paul wrote it in 14 letters; and encouraged us to read with them all the rest of the Bible of 66 books. I don’t know about you but when I consider the real foundation of the unity that we have as Christians and that we have as members of the SBC, I tend to think of that unity as coming primarily from the Bible; so that I was almost disappointed when I noticed that among the Seven ONES was not the ONE BOOK which is the Word of God. Well, Paul not only takes care of that seeming deficiency in the parallel of Colossians 3:16, but as we will show by closely looking at the Seven ONES each one is related to the One Book which is the Bible. How will we show that? By first introducing each of the Seven ONE’s as to its essential meaning, and then showing exactly what the context of the book of Ephesians means by those ONE’s as well as the book of Colossians
20-3: One “Word”.
The favorite word of the Bible in talking about itself as the One Book is THE WORD. Therefore a very fundamental Bible statement and a fundamental Baptist belief would be: The Bible is the Word of God. By that we mean that the Bible is divine in origin—it originated in the mind and heart of God; that it is absolute in authority—when God speaks why listen to men on the same subject; and it is sufficient in message—the Bible tells us all we need to know for salvation and the living of the Christian life. Thus Paul writes in Colossians 3:16: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another...” We are to teach and admonish, or encourage one another, according to the Word of God and of Christ. The basis for our songs and melodies is the One Book which is the Word of God.

(1). Matthew 24:35.
Jesus knew that His words and teachings would become part of a New Testament and that New Testament in turn become a part of the One Book which is the Bible when He said that His words would never pass away. “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” (Matthew 24:35) It has been almost two thousand years since Jesus spoke these words on earth, and this earth is still moving on. It still orbits about the sun with the periods of day and night and the seasons of fall, winter, spring, and summer. But you will see this earth pass away before you will see the words of Jesus and the words of this book the Bible pass away.

(2). Mark 4:14.
One reason that the Bible cannot be stopped and that it will never pass away is because it becomes a living entity in the heart and life of Christians. “The sower soweth the word” (Mark 4:14) As we teach and preach and talk to people about Jesus, hopefully we do so by quoting or paraphrasing or reading to them the Bible, and in doing so we are sowing the seed of the Word. I want you to keep this in mind as we look at the SEVEN ONES of Ephesians 4:4-6: that at the foundation of each of those Seven is the word that is in the heart and life of Christians.

(3). II Corinthians 3:3.
The Christian is a living epistle, an outgrowth of the Word of God and Christ that is planted in their heart through faith. “Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.” (II Corinthians 3:3) You churchmembers and you southern baptists are an epistle of Christ. The word of Christ and of God has been written in your heart by the living God through the living Spirit. There is a significant source of unity of the Spirit and one that underlies all the seven ones of Ephesians 4.

(4). It is alive in your heart, the Bible as the Word of God is alive period, Hebrews 4:12. “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart...” (Hebrews 4:12)

On the seven actual ONE’s of Ephesians, we need a more thorough and systematic
manner of development, so that a chapter is borried from “Remember My Bonds”, the Life and
14 New Testament letters of Paul. When Paul, and the Holy Spirit through Paul, writes in Ephe-
sians 4:3, “Spare no effort to make fast with bonds of peace the unity which the Spirit gives”,
the unity of course is the inherent unity from a common spirit in each churchmembers heart, a
common spirit from the Holy Spirit, also called the spirit of Christ in the Bible; but the bonds
of peace that churchmembers are to work with...ah, the bonds of peace, that is another matter.
You as a churchmember, or hopefully a believer in Christ, can do little about this inherent unity.
You ever have the Spirit or you don’t; you either have this unity of the Spirit or not; your fel-
low churchmembers either have it or not, and quite naturally some do and some don’t since the
wheat will not be divided from the chaff until the end of time, the goats divided from the sheep.

20-4: Relationship of the Bonds of Peace to the Falling Away.
But ah...the bonds of peace...that is another matter. This is one of the prime subjects of this
commentary, if not the prime subject. Remember the title, “Remember My Bonds”, the Life
and 14 letters of the Apostle Paul. Paul chose his own epitaph by which to be remembered; and
this epitaph which he uses in Colossians 4:18 {the parallel epistle with Ephesians, essentially
duplicating the subject matter}, “Remember my bonds” (KJV). You have something similar
in Ephesians 4:1, “I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord....” This chosen epitaph from Paul has
double or triple meaning: (1) Remember the bonds of the Apostle Paul as a prisoner of the Roman
government, for Christ and for his ministry to the first century churches; (2) Remember the 14
epistles which Paul himself has written and the three he sponsored through John Mark and Dr.
Luke; and (3) Remember the bonds of peace which are the core of those epistles, the seven bonds
of peace which are listed in Ephesians 4:4-6, immediately after Paul writes in Ephesians 4:3 to
“spare no effort to make fast with bonds of peace the unity which the Spirit gives.” What has
really happened in southern baptist churches in the last 40 years, and I am sure all other churches
are the same, is that LITTLE EFFORT has been put into making fast with bonds of peace the
Seven ONE’s. Southern baptist churches have not been idle: if not into the bonds of peace, where
has this vast multi-local churches united effort of the largest Protestant denomination gone. The
answer is simple, but overwhelming: THE EFFORTS HAVE GONE INTO BUILDING THE
ORGANIZATION OF THE LOCAL CHURCH AND THE LARGEST DENOMINATION
RATHER THAN IN THE BUILDING OF THE LIVING BODY. The seven - to - ten ONE’s
that have been daily promoted from the pulpits, in Sunday School, in training union, in WMU
and brotherhood, in denomination emphasis, from the Boards and Pastor’s Conferences and
numerous associations and meetings has been like this: attend worship, go to Sunday School,
tithe, read your Bible, invite somebody to come, etc. {Seriously, I can document these as consider
by typical SBC churchmembers to be “major doctrines of the Bible” as indicated by tests of the
congregation on Sunday night.} While all of these are worthy, and do indeed support the man-
make organization of the church, they do not support and promote the bonds of peace according
to the Bible, and they in no way, by anyone’s definition, can be considered major doctrines of
the Bible. Many churchmembers are now sick over what is happening in their local churches as
the fighting that started 20 years ago at the denominational level between real southern baptists
and the fundamentalists like Criswell, and Adrian Rogers and Charles Stanley {men who came
into the Convention from other denominations, primarily the Bible Baptists fundamentalists},
has now come down to fighting at the State and the local church level. You can hardly find a
single southern baptist church now where there is not significant divisions or splits, and if you
do find one, it is generally because they are good a cover up. Of course, as noted in earlier
chapters, we are in the Falling Away, but the gradual falling away started over 40 years ago when
promoting the organization became a complete substitute for promoting the bonds of peace.
20-5: The Priesthood of Believers.
The can take the doctrine of “the priesthood of believers” as an example of what has happened to sound teaching, or I should say the lack of sound teaching and preaching, in the SBC during the last 40 years ago. In 1960 when I did a research paper at Ouachita Baptist College on “Baptist Distinctives”, researching many Baptist statements of faith and practice and many books written up to that point on Baptist Distinctives, “the priesthood of believers” was very prominent in any statement of faith. Today as I research the books being used in this desperate effort to save SB churches for the denominations, and especially the giving to support the Boards, and which have been used the last 40 years, YOU CAN NOT FIND THE DOCTRINE OF THE PRIESTHOOD OF BELIEVERS. Yes, I recently looked in BAPTIST DISTINCTIVES by W. R. White, in THESE THINGS WE BELIEVE by J. Clyde Turner, in THE BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE by Herschel H. Hobbs, and in A GUIDE TO BAPTIST BELIEF AND PRACTICE by Stanley J. Grenz. It just is not there anymore; and along with the disappearance from Baptist thought and practice of these significant and major Bible doctrine, definitely one of the historical Baptist distinctives, have gone also by the wayside such related doctrines as serious study of the Bible, the authority of Christ through the pastor to the local church, and the Bible as the real word of God far beyond the “pick-and-chose” method of the fundamentalists {granted they make a lot of noise on inspiration of the Scripture while failing to practice respect for every “word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. {Their real respect is for the Scofield Reference Bible notes, the teachings of the fundamentalists seminaries, and what they think gives them unique status among believers.} They carry their Bibles; the full truth lies there; and it dies there; and with this dying is now the death warrant of the SBC which like an early New Testament church had a reputation but was dead.

20-6: The Seven Bonds of Peace in the 10 books of Paul Before Ephesians.
As discussed earlier it is an approximation that Paul wrote ten books before he summarized all that was written in the twin epistles of Ephesians and Colossians. You can tell this several ways (remember there is always a difference in the time of writing of books and the publication or distribution): (1) Paul wrote Ephesians from Caesarea Philippi where he had the liberty to write and to think back over what he had written in the heat of the battles; and (2) Paul’s habit of quoting from the Old Testament as he does so much in Hebrews and Romans as well as the others of the first ten books essentially stops as a dominant style in Ephesians and Colossians, also in the books that follow them as Philippians and Philemon. We will look briefly at the development by Paul, and the spirit of Christ through Paul, of the Seven One’s of Ephesians 4:4-6 in the first ten books by Paul, and in the approximate order of writing if not of publication: (1) Hebrews; (2) Galatians; (3) I Thessalonians; (4) II Thessalonians; (5) Romans; (6) Titus; (7) I Corinthians; (8) I Timothy; (9) II Corinthians; and (10) II Timothy. It is only important that we get the Seven Major doctrines as developed in these books preliminary to their summary of Ephesians and Colossians, rather than get engaged in any squabbling about the exact sequence of the writing of the first 12 of the 14 letters from the Apostle Paul. Of course the old standby’s of YOUNG’S ANALYTICAL CONCORDANCE and STRONG’S ANALYTICAL CONCORDANCE will be used to find every instance of the seven key words {in the King James Version (KJV)}: body, Spirit, hope {“calling” must be included here as the wording of Ephesians 4:4-6 is “one hope of your calling”}; Lord {and we will try to distinguish between LORD for God the Father and Lord for the Lord Jesus Christ}, faith, baptism, God {and Father must be included as THE ONE is “God and Father of all”}.
You can see that I Corinthians is the book of the “one body” with I Corinthians chapter 9 leading; also that Galatians while a small book is prime on the “one Spirit” with Romans even more so as you would expect since Galatians is a miniature version of Romans, and with Romans 8, the famous chapter on what baptism really means leading, however the emphasis must be on I Corinthians about the “one Spirit”, and what is impressive is the way the subject is spread all the way from the second chapter to the sixteenth, and with the twelfth chapter leading in I Corinthians {also with I Corinthians leading on both “one body” and “one spirit” we must see the close connection between the two--what a marvelous study of the seven one’s Ephesians is leading us into}; and we are impressed with the respectable coverage of the “one hope” in 9 out of 10 {in that tenth one, II Timothy, as shown in the Table, the “calling” in included, and remember that it is the “one hope of Jesus calling”} of the first books by Paul, not an emphasis so much as just constant reminders; and surprised at the vast number of “one Lords” for the Lord Jesus Christ in all the ten--don’t be, we have often said that the whole Bible is a book about the Lord Jesus Christ {most impressive is I Thessalonians, a small book which references the Lord Jesus Christ often; however among the larger epistles, I Corinthians leads again with Romans--chapters 14 and 16 lead in Romans with usage of the Lord is what might be considered an unexpected way in the light of doctrine-- right behind it}. {Note: it is obvious that this volume of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries is the place in which to do a complete outline on I Corinthians; in fact, in the chapter on the “one Lord Jesus Christ”}. II Timothy on the “one Lord” for the Lord Jesus Christ should also be a surprise in that it is a small book with 17 mentions. And “Lord” for the Lord Jesus Christ is found significantly in all ten of the first epistles of Paul that lead up to the summary of the seven ONE’s in Ephesians. And lastly on the “one Lord” the significant number in II Thessalonians, 20, should be noted with II Thessalonians leading the books. Romans, Galatians, Hebrews, and I Timothy lead on the “one faith” references in the first 10 epistles from Paul. {For the actual tabulated results of the ten epistles, refer to “Remember My Bonds”, volume 2.}

20-7: Mark as Pivotal.

1. The goal of CUP OF WATER continues on Mark from SOME MORE SOUNDS, and to a certain extent to extend the influence of Christ and to prevent the Falling Away.

2. A second goal of both books is to promote the grand theme that ”God is the great Maker of History”, although this theme is more extensively developed in volume 1 of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries, “Prophets and Apostles”.

   (1). God makes history with the Bible. The Bible tells that God makes history. According to the Apostle James, ”Known unto God are all His works from the beginning {of time}....”

   (2). God makes history with the Bible by making the history of the Bible. The approximately 40 Prophets and Apostles God chose to write books of the Bible over a period of approximately one thousand years were carefully chosen in their historical context, running from the Prophets Job and Moses in the writing of the Old Testament to the Apostles Paul and John in the writing of the New Testament. Old Testament quotes in the New Testament provide internal proof in the Bible itself of God’s plan and control in the writing of the Bible. John Mark records 18 of those quotes, and SOME MORE SOUNDS...is organized around those 18 Old Testament quotes.

   (3). God makes sure that you will get the proper interpretation of the Bible by providing in the Bible not only the quotes from the Old and New Testament, but also by providing in the Bible itself the proper interpretation of the quotes. We have only begun to appreciate what the Apostle Peter meant when he wrote,
“no Scripture is of any private interpretation, but Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” God wrote it and God interpreted it properly, all in one book of two testaments.

a. These Holy men of God, prophets in the Old Testament and Apostles in the New Testament, were carefully chosen by God at specific intervals of history and moved by God the Holy Spirit to write consistently with the mind and heart of God.

b. God assured that what the Prophets wrote would be consistent with what the Apostles wrote, and both consistent with what Jesus brought to earth of the teachings of God. John Mark with his record of the teachings, character, and works of Jesus is a short 16 chapter example of that working of God in history. We might call this the “authorized interpretation”, the opposite of “private interpretation” which is forbidden by the Bible. In this day and time when the number one excuse for neglect of the Bible is “there are so many interpretations”, it should be comforting to comprehend that God not only gave the “Scripture” but also in the same Bible, the proper interpretation. This was more of God’s planning as the Great Maker of History to counter what He knew would be the Satan-given-excuse to the world for not living by “every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God”, as Jesus said, as well as living by bread, at which we are far more adept.

3. There is a third goal, closely related to the first two goals, and that is to see people truly chose God over comforts, God over “mammon”, God over pride of life, every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God over making a living, the kingdom of God over things, the of-the-Father over the of-the-world “lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life”—all carefully chosen ways that the Bible says the same thing. John Mark is a good personal example because he like Demas might have had Jesus say of their young lives like Paul wrote “Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world...” We must know that Jesus said, “The friend of this world is the enemy of God.”

Mark is Pivotal in the New Testament as Isaiah is in the Old Testament. Look again at the Old Testament quotes in Mark, and you will see the influence of the book of Isaiah. Of course while Isaiah is one of the largest book of the OT, you know Mark to be a short Gospel of only 16 chapters. It can say so much in only 16 chapters because knowing of the other Gospels it does not have to include every word that Jesus spoke, and also those quotes from Isaiah carry much of the total Bible truth with them.

1. Isaiah 40:3, Malachi 3:1 and Mark 1:45
2. Acts 1:16 and Mark 1:11
3. Isaiah 6:9,10 and Mark 4:12
4. Isaiah 29:13 and Mark 7:6,7
5. Exodus 20:12;21:17 and Mark 7
6. Isaiah 66:24 and Mark 9:44,46,48
8. Deuteronomy 5:16-20 and Mark 10
9. Psalms 118:26 and Mark 11:9
10. Jeremiah 7:1 and Mark 11
20-9: The PEACEMAKING of Jesus in Mark.
In this age of the Falling Away, just before the Second Coming of Christ and as a precursor to the Second Coming of Christ, the meaning of “Blessed are the peacemakers...” has been stolen like the real meaning even of Christian and of so many other words in the Bible. The world, Satan, and teachers of “itching ears” {II Timothy 4:4}, with skillful exercise of the techniques of “isogesis” {the reading of meaning into the Bible as contrasted to “exegesis” which is the faithful reading out of the original meaning}, use the word in an “of this world” sense to apply to any politician who seeks to promote peace in the nations of the world, independent of any faith in Christ. Peace and real peacemaking is only with Christ as the mediator according to the Word of God in Ephesians chapters 1 and 2. This applies to peace between man and man and to peace between God and men. Christ must be at the center of peacemaking efforts between man and man and between God and man.

“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.” (Ephesians 2:14-18)
If we are to truly extend the influence of Christ, the true Biblical employment of a peacemaker, then Christ must be personally involved, and the extensive “how” of this issue is the story of this book. John Mark, the author on the human side of the Gospel of Mark, extended the influence of Christ when under the inspiration of the Spirit of God when he wrote about the life and teachings of Christ. Of course, above all Mark extended the influence of Christ in faithful recordings about the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. It is the death of Christ, with faith in that death as a substitute atonement for our sins, that provides salvation for the world, and for us in particular; it is the resurrection of Christ which provides an example of life after death and provides the foundation for the hope {reasonable expectation} of eternal salvation; and it is the Ascension to the right hand of God the Father which provides both assurance of the forgiveness of sins {“He ever lives to make intercession for our sins”} and more assurance of eternal life as He promised that in the future we would be where He is. “Young John Mark did all that!” a reader might say. Well, yes, and so did Matthew, and Dr. Luke, and the Apostle John. So also did the Apostle Paul in the book of Romans, sometimes called “The Gospel according to Paul”. {I would remind you that “Gospel” always assumes the Gospel of Jesus Christ, although not always expressed in the Bible as such; and in such cases where the reference is to “the gospel of the kingdom”, it is decidedly the Gospel of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.} {Some things belong more to Jesus than to God like the kingdom, the only real Church, the Assembly of the Firstborn written in heaven, and the Judgeship to separate the living from the
dead, and general Lordship; but they have been ordained to Jesus Christ by God, and will be
turned over to God at the end. First, all things are placed at the feet of Jesus, subject to Him; and
then all things will be delivered to God the Father, in order that all glory will belong to God.

However, there are in the nature of inspiration and the whole history of the writing
of the 66 books of the Bible, unique characteristics of the personality of John Mark and
in the research and development of the Gospel of Mark. {See F.F. Bruce on THE BOOKS
AND THE PARCHMENTS.} For one thing John Mark, unlike most of the New Testament
writers, was not an Apostle. He was an eyewitness of much of the life and teachings of
Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God. Most conservative Bible commentators agree that it
was John Mark, with an unnamed reference to himself in the tradition of the Apostle John
doing the same in the Gospel of John as the writer, who as a young man about twelve years
of age fled naked from the Garden of Gethsemane when the arrestors of Jesus grabbed
the scant clothing that he hastily threw on the way to following Jesus and the Apostles
to the Garden. It is very possible that the Last Supper just before the evening excursion
in the Garden was held at the home of John Mark’s mother. John Mark’s mother was
the sister of Barnabas, the famous missionary with the Apostle Paul, and one sometimes
called an apostle in the book of Acts; although not the twelfth apostle selected by the other
Apostles after Judas fell by transgression. There is a lot of evidence of human personality
in Acts: Barnabas had pre-eminence in the first church as he sought out and promoted
the new convert Saul, then Barnabas and Saul brought John Mark back from Jerusalem to
Antioch with them {Acts 12:25} and then took him on the first missionary journey, but
Mark deserted the mission at Pamphylia, “not going to the work” as we read in Acts 15:28;
and then on the second missionary journey when Paul objected to taking Mark, there is
a personality conflict between Paul and Barnabas, Barnabas taking John Mark with him,
Paul taking Silas. The record does not tell us more than “the contention was sharp between
Paul and Silas.” We can only speculate as to why John Mark turned back at Pamphylia.
It was important to Paul, but Barnabas either wanted to give John Mark another chance or
Barnabas consider insignificant the desertion at Pamphylia. Do you look for the problem
at Perga in Pamphylia {Acts 13:13}? Did John Mark simply return to Jerusalem because
he was homesick, or did he wish to confer with Simon Peter, who in his epistle calls
him “my son”? Whatever, Paul took it seriously as an indication of John Mark’s lack of
dedication; but we also know that when later in prison in Rome, Paul asked for John Mark
saying that he was “profitable to me for the ministry”. Paul did give John Mark another
chance; and I think, from speculations based on the internal evidence of various scriptures,
that it was a chance equal to almost the one given by Paul to Dr. Luke. There is much
evidence that Paul was chosen to be the Chief Editor of the New Testament--that was
his prime ministry and the one he had in mind when he noted John Mark as profitable to
that end--so when Paul requested Timothy to come before winter, bringing the books and
parchments with him, two of those manuscripts were for Dr. Luke to write Luke and Acts,
and one of the manuscripts was for John Mark to use in the writing of the Gospel of Mark.

You can tell that John Mark made a marvelous recovery in the eyes of the Apostle
Paul, likewise in the esteem of the Church of First Century Christianity. Above all, and
what is most important, John Mark proved a person interest in extending the influence
of the life and teachings of Jesus; He showed extremely strong convictions on Jesus; He
illustrated his willingness to be used by the Spirit of God in the writing of the shortest of
the four Gospels. This personal recovery by John Mark, the opposite of the challenge
of our generation of the Falling Away, is a co-emphasis with the influence of Christ in
this presentation. Is it as dramatic as what happened in the life of Demas, personified when Paul wrote, “Demas hath forsaken me having loved this present world”? I don’t know, but it seems very similar. We hope that Demas also had a marvelous recovery in being rescued from his love of this present world, no doubt a similar experience to what happened to John Mark; but even more importantly in all these cases and others in the Bible, we can see hope for rescue of victims of the Falling Away. You know, loving “this present world” does not sound so serious, but it really is. Many might say, “well, they are young...wait until they grow up”; and indeed it no doubt worked in the case of John Mark, but perhaps not in the case of Demas, certainly not in the case of all of the children of Israel in the wilderness except for Caleb and Joshua. Love of this present world will not mix with the love of God. Mammon is the things of this world which man himself has created, and the Bible represents the bread God has given man, every word of which proceeds out of the mouth of God. Christ is the teachings that He received from God and delivered in the Sermon on the Mount, by the way recorded in Mark as well as the other Gospels, in there Christ demands, and God demands, that a definite choice for priority be made for God and God’s righteousness over the mammon of man.

It is not an either/or as to whether mammon and bread of life will both exist in human life: it is a matter of which will have the priority--mammon of God--to the extent of servitude. Christ is talking about motivation. What is your primary motivation? To seek the mammon of men like a house, and land, and degrees, and career, and position, and even wealth or pleasure? Or to diligently seek after the Bible and the words of the Bible as every word that proceeds out of mouth of God, and to seek first after the kingdom of God and after God’s righteousness?

20-10: Threads or Sounds of Doctrine and Authority in Mark

There are certain threads or sounds that repeat often in the Gospel of Mark. One such sound is that of DOCTRINE and AUTHORITY. {There are others that you will expect to see in a study of the 16 chapters of Mark: the teachings of Jesus on certain subject matters as the Falling Away, the teachings of Jesus on love of this world versus love of mammon, the teaching and preaching of Jesus on the Gospel, the miracles of Jesus, the death and resurrection of Jesus; and so on. It is hoped to limit to the study to eight of these and stay focused on them throughout Mark. This is not a attempted commentary on Mark. Many good commentaries on Mark already exist.} God plays with the wisdom of the world and of the university scholars as He chooses to save those through the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe (“When in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those that believe...”); (4) The wisdom of this world of the universities and books (except a select few) are foolishness with God, and not many mighty or noble or wise are called to a proper spiritual understanding; and (5) It is necessary to face up to the fact that true Bible faith in Christ is a minority endeavor as “many are called but few are chosen”, and “broad is the way that leads to destruction and many go that way” while “narrow is the way that leads to eternal life” and few there are that take that way of life. It is the simple difference between the majority and the minority that we are talking about.

This applies to the United States also. You can hardly make a legitimate case that this majority and minority thing of the Bible applies to the whole world apart from the United States. Even as it applied also to Israel, the originally chosen nation of God, in the days of Christ, it also applies to the currently chosen nation of God, the United States, during this age of the fullness of the Gentiles. What we have in the United States, to use the words of some of the American Studies scholars, is an AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC FAITH. It can be summarized as spoken by former Prime Minister of Israel Begin, “You Americans are born Christians just as Jews are born Jews.” Neither is true, but it takes a close study of that part of the Word of God called the book of Romans, by the Apostle Paul and the Spirit of God, to understand it. That will be
explained in the third chapter, “God’s Watershed of History: Choice of a Beloved and Foolish Nation”. Suffice it to say for now as Paul, “not every Jew is born of Israel”, nor is every child of God born of Israel, and there is a spiritual Israel. In other words, until the fullness of the Gentiles age is complete, there will be more children of God from among the Gentiles, the United States leading the way, than from among the physical nation of Israel. {Enjoy it while you can.} Second to the proper attitude, it is necessary to work hard to understand the Bible. Jesus uses the words “asking”, “seeking”, and “knocking”. Another way to say it is that those who search after the truth from the Bible are the ones most likely to find the truth. One of the so-called “beatitudes” describes the way God will bless those who seek the truth of the Bible, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” Many like to talk about this as happiness or the beatitudes. No, it is the blessings of God; and if God Himself blesses you beyond that of the sun and rain, beyond that of the majority on the earth, it is indeed a blessing. God can and will bless you by understanding of every word that proceeds out of His mouth if you will develop the right attitude and put out effort in knowing the truth. We live among many who desire the instant spiritual blessings of salvation and special insight; however there is never and has never been a quick and easy way. Many point to the salvation of Paul on the road to Damascus as an example of instantaneous salvation; but there would not have been a salvation experience of the road except for the extended time of that preceded it in which “he kicked against the pricks”. And still his salvation was not complete as indicated by the physical blindness {a sign of incomplete spiritual insight}, until Ananias assisted him with more truth from the Ascended Christ. Even so Paul was not yet ready to preach. He must spend time in the Arabian Desert with the Ascended Christ, and then go back to Tarsus to reread the Old Testament in the light of what Christ had taught him. Paul teaches about the yearn in Hebrews for the sound doctrine of the Word of God as the equivalent motivation of a new born baby desiring to have milk. All know of that yelling and screaming and crying of the baby for milk, and the person who yearns with that intensity after every word from the mouth of God as recorded in the Word of God will be rewarded in like manner as a mother cares for her child. Someone besides Jacob must wrestle with the angel for a spiritual blessing, and that someone is the person, having established a proper attitude, who seeks to know the truth of God and Christ, the truth of the Word of God which is divine in origin, absolute in authority, sufficient in message, and high fidelity in communication.


1. What is Sound Doctrine? Since doctrine is another word for teachings, and of course for Bible believers the teachings of Jesus and of God, which are the same, then sound doctrine is also sound teachings from God Himself and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus made it clear often during His three years ministry on earth that His teachings or doctrines were not His own but belonged to God His Father, and furthermore that whatever God taught Him to say is exactly what He taught on this earth. Parenthetically, it should be stated at this point that sound faith is a subset of sound doctrine. Even as sound doctrine includes all that comes from God and Jesus and all that can be known as truth about God and Jesus and their teachings, even so sound faith is a subset in that it is both beliefs and a process of confidence in that sound doctrine. {This will be discussed more thoroughly from the Bible in the chapter on FAITH.}

2. What is Sound Doctrine? Sound doctrine is synonymous with “the
faith once for all delivered to the saints” (verse 3) of the book of Jude. It was
delivered once for all by Jesus and the Apostles who recorded what He said in
Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; it was recorded once for all in the books written
by the Apostles and Prophets; it has been sealed once for all in the history of
the Christ faith in the book of 66 books, 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the
New Testament, by the assembly of the Firstborn and their leaders as they have
crystallized as the Holy Bible this book.

You see right here at this point at least half of the confusion is eliminated as on how to
distinguish between sound doctrine and all the beliefs that clamor for recognition. At least half
of all of the religions and denominations did not subscribe to the Bible as the Word of God,
and therefore do not subscribe to this as the only sufficient source of sound doctrine. Then
you can eliminate another one-fourth of so-called Christian denominations and religions who
do not believe as stated in Jude 3, that the sound faith and doctrine was once for all delivered
to the saints. They believe in the evolution of sound doctrine; they believe that they like the
Prophets and Apostles of old are the recipients of special revelations from God. At the extreme
of this spectrum are the Mormons who have replaced the single Bible of the faith once delivered
with four Bibles, and also subscribe to constant new revelation from the Heads of the LDS
churches. To express it in the words of the Doctrine and the Covenants any time the Head
Prophet of the Mormon church speaks, it is Word of God. {Later, I will discuss how this places
two curses from the Holy Bible itself on the head of the Latter Day Saints.} And at the other
end of the spectrum of the group who do not see sound doctrine and sound faith as “once for
all delivered” are those people and groups who see knowledge of truth from God as sort of an
evolution that comes as we learn more and as we acquire more scientific knowledge. As an
example, and this is very subtle, is the religious person who will take God’s name in vain as
excusable as if the words no longer apply, “the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh
his name in vain” as taught by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. Or the person that somehow
sees God and His Word as outdated because this new generation is so much smarter than the
last generation that lived. J.B. Phillips expressed it years ago when he wrote the book, YOUR
GOD IS TOO SMALL. People did not believe that God understood radar or the modified
Bohr Theory of the atom. Today people do not believe that God understands computers and
genetics and information technology. You see we confuse some older Christ believers and
what they understand with the God of this universe who understands and knows all things; and
further who created the minds who can probe and invent these things and the fundamentals
laws of the universe that make the understanding of these technical matters possible.

3. What is Sound Doctrine? It is doctrine that comes from God through
the work and will of the Holy Spirit of God. Here, I must quote from the Word
of God itself as found in II Timothy 3:16,17:
"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for
reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...” You see it came from
God is a gift from God for the profit of humanity in order that humanity may come
to know the way that God wants us to live {that is the instruction, another word for
teachings, and “instruction in righteousness” another way to correct our behavior
and beliefs.} As far as Scripture coming more specifically from the work on earth
of God the Holy Spirit, we turn to the teachings of Jesus as recorded in John 14-
16 where Jesus taught saying, “...when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will
guide you into all truth, for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever
He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.” (John 16:13)

4. What is Sound Doctrine? It also helps to shift out the wheat from
the chaff of sound doctrine to know not only the origin of sound doctrine as from God through the Spirit but that it must have come through an approved apostle or prophet. How do we know who has been approved? Once again it is from the Bible itself which tells of how Jesus chose both apostles and prophets. If you believe about the Apostle Peter, then you believe that the Apostle Paul wrote Scriptures as much the Word of God as those of the Old Testament Prophets because Peter states that in his books, and so on epistle after epistle in the Bible the approximately 20 writing prophets of the Old Testament are confirmed and the approximately 7 writing Apostles of the New Testament confirm each other.

5. What is Sound Doctrine? It is the doctrine or teachings or faith taught by the Holy Spirit of God Himself. Refer again to John 16:13 above, "the Spirit of truth...will guide you into all truth." Isn't just a little bit of conviction and certainty like this from the Bible, from the teachings of Jesus Himself, from the book written by the Apostle John, and that has come to be believed by the great cloud of witnesses of the Christ faith that have gone before {Hebrews 11 and 12} worth a lot more than the tendency to wallow in he mud puddle of uncertainly and doubt of looking at all the teachings and beliefs in the world. (Underlying all sound doctrine and the efforts to know and do sound doctrine is the fundamental belief based on the teachings of Jesus that the majority are wrong and the minority is right, and this applies in the United States as in all countries of the world.)

6. What is Sound Doctrine? It is life related–can not be learned apart from the way life is lived-in that it must proceed from a deep-seated yearning to know the truth, with the confidence that the truth is more likely to be learned when it is passionately sought; can not be learned apart from a desire to know the will of God; and can not be learned unless equal life priority is given to "every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" to the life priority of making a living.

20-12: What are Some Obstacles to Learning Sound Doctrine?

1. Pastor James, the pastor of the first church ever, in Jerusalem immediately after the life of Christ, and the half-brother of Jesus, had a lot to say in the little book of James about truth, doctrine, and what causes obstacles to sound doctrines in churches. It is very practical because Pastor James is dealing with the problems in a very real church, the First. First of all the Apostle James says that the wars and battles over sound doctrine in local churches (and denominations) come from individual desires for pleasure and status. Once again I must quote from the Word of God: "Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust (for control, for recognition, for power, etc) and do not have. You murder (that includes anger and fighting) and covet (desire to have and be what someone else in the church has and is) and cannot obtain. You fight (in your home church) and war (in the denomination). Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures." (James 4:1-3) Wow! It never can be said any better than that and never will be said any better than that. Don't look for some deep meaning that causes the splits in churches and
the warfare in the Southern Baptist Convention, it comes out of wars and battles for pleasure. Crude, but true!

2. Another obstacle to sound doctrine in individual lives, in beliefs, and in the practices of churches is the lack of wisdom. Contrary to the old wives tale “that if the majority of the church votes to do something, it is right” is the teaching of Pastor James in the Word of God that where there is no real prayer there is no real wisdom from God and from above, and further where in any church there is “self-seeking” and “confusion” that is the sure sign that the wisdom from above has never come.

3. Another obstacle to sound doctrine is the “doctrines of devils”. Do the devils, alias the fallen angels and Satan, really have doctrine? Oh yes, and that doctrine is subtle and often so close to the truth of Jesus that it is difficult to shift out from the truth. Recall the way Satan tempted Jesus Himself in order to divert Jesus from the real will of God. First of all, he quoted Scripture. Do not be deceived, every quoter of Scripture is not on the side of Jesus. In fact, it is very possible that Satan–especially in this time of intolerance toward sound doctrine–has as many people who quote Scripture as Jesus: the big difference being in the way they implement and interpret and apply the Scripture. For example, Satan tempted Jesus (Luke 4:1-13) on three fronts with unsound doctrine from Scripture: first, the temptation or obstacle from Satan was to live by bread instead of by the will of God; second, the obstacle from Satan was to worship Satan and to get the whole world rather than worship God; and third, the obstacle was to tempt God by leading Himself into futile tests of God Himself, a very common practice today in very popular churches.

4. The obstacle of seducing spirits. Along with the warnings of the Bible about doctrines of devils is also the warning of seducing spirits. Once again to quote from the Bible, the Word of God: "Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods, which God crated to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth." (I Timothy 4:1-3) This was expressly told to Paul by the Holy Spirit of God. It is an inevitable prediction, called a prophesy, of what will take place in history: in fact is a accepted burden of proof of this book on THE SOUND OF A SOUND FAITH that has already happened, the time of intolerance toward sound doctrine. It is generally referred to by Bible scholars as the Great Apostasy. The only reason I do not like that phrase as it seems like something to happen way out in the future instead of now! The short and simple of the meaning is: that is the doctrines of devils that come to you, and which must inevitable come as long as there is a Satan and other devils, if those doctrines of devils do not present obstacles to your sound faith and sound doctrine, then the seducing or deceiving spirts can get you. The bad thing about a bad spirit is that it can be clothed in clothing that is very deceptive, say for example black clothing or sheep’s clothing.

5. The last obstacle to be mentioned to sound doctrine is the most serious obstacle to most Protestant, non-Mormon believers: it is the wall of intolerant doctrine built up in churches and denominations by itching ears teachers, preachers, and people that protects them from the sound of sound doctrine. When the Bible says in II Timothy 4:3,4, about the time of intolerance toward sound doctrine and mentions how those of itching ears will “HEAP” to themselves teachers of itching
ears, the "heaping" has the implication of extensive effort to protect against sound doctrine. For example the effort that the divorced in churches go to, who have not confessed divorce as adultery when there is remarriage, the effort they go to protect themselves from hearing the true words of the Bible and the teachings of Jesus on the matter. The "heaping" is like building up a vast wall of protection against sound doctrine. It reminds of what some of the New Jersey ladies who lost husbands in 9/11 were quoted as saying about the Bush administration, "they have built up around the White House a wall of secrecy." Well, the wall of intolerance toward sound doctrine is a wall for comfort, a wall built by itching ears. The nature of the Falling Away, as most people will not endure sound doctrine, dictates that the popular preachers and teachers of large churches and television are "False Prophets" and "False Teachers". I wish there were a lesser category of "itching ears" teachers, not false ones, but the Bible clearly identifies the "turning away" from truth" and "turning into fables" as synonymous with unsound doctrine. Unfortunately it is the false prophets and teachers that are bearers of unsound doctrine.

20-13: “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” (Mark 1:1)

By now you know that Mark is an abbreviated gospel of only 16 chapters. It is the gospel of action. I like to think of it as the Appendix to the other gospels. While Matthew and Luke start with genealogies of Jesus of Nazareth and John starts with Christ the Logos at Creation, John Mark jumps right into the three and a half years ministry of Jesus which was full of activity from before sun up to after sun down. The implications of Mark 1:1 are: (1) This is the beginning in chapter one with the baptism of John the Baptist, and in this chapter and the chapters to follow we are going to learn exactly what “the gospel of Jesus Christ is”; and (2) Jesus Christ is the Son of God is basic to the gospel. This comes from Mark 1:1. It will be the outline of this message. In this message, we will only look at the first three chapters of Mark, but the first three chapters are typical of the routine run by Jesus in all the chapters. We will be looking for the influence of Jesus, believing that the two major parts of the outline of Mark 1:1 summarize that influence:

A description in action of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

I. What the Gospel Is? (1). The Gospel Influence of Jesus Christ, in Mark and today, is what Jesus did while on this earth; (2) The Gospel of Jesus Christ is what Jesus preached--Jesus healed the sick and performed many miracles, and Jesus taught--but primarily Mark will tell us that Jesus “preached” (of course as someone has said there is some teaching in all good preaching and some preaching in all good teaching); (3) The Gospel of Jesus Christ is how he healed; and (4) The Gospel of Jesus Christ is how He cast out demons. You see how all four of this activities extend the influence of Jesus: All that Jesus did in His busy life after at age 30 He came out the silence of Nazareth, from the carpenter’s shop, extended and extends the influence of Jesus. Largely the influence of Jesus was extended by His preaching, especially as He preached on His death and resurrection; and the Apostles took up those messages to continue with this gospel to the end of the earth. Also the healing miracles that Jesus performed extended and extend His influence. Many people today try to emulate this ministry of Jesus, but we will see from a close look at Mark that Jesus has to give disciples this authority. Some He does and some He does not. Fourthly, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is
how He cast out demons.

II. Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God. Basic to the Gospel of Jesus Christ is that He is the Son of God. John the Baptist identified Jesus as the Son of God in the words, “Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world.” God Himself identified Jesus as the Son of God, after His baptism by John in the Jordan River. This marked the beginning of the ministry of Jesus to the world, and God wanted people of this earth to know that this is His Son. “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased”, came the voice from heaven after Jesus’ baptism. There are five ways that the Gospel of Mark in this record of action records that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God: (1) the testimony of John in Mark; (2) the testimony of God Himself as recorded in Mark; (3) the testimony of the obvious authority of Jesus over demons and the elements as recorded in John remind us that Jesus is the Son of God; (4) the mighty works that Jesus performed, unequaled in the history of the world, testify to His Sonship; and (5) the recorded testimony in Mark as witnessed by His disciples and others of the death and resurrection of Jesus testify that this Son of Man was far more than mortal man, and as He claimed and God and others testified, the Son of God Himself.

20-14: Doctrine for the Falling Away.
The doctrinal series of SOME SOUNDS OF SOUND FAITH, SOME MORE SOUNDS…Snatching, Stumbling, and the Falling Away, and A CUP OF WATER have been respectively first an attempt at a straightforward presentation of the most basic subjects of the Bible, then since one of those is the Falling Away which must come before the Second Coming, the other two offer help in an understanding of the Falling Away. SOME MORE SOUNDS and A CUP OF WATER are based on Mark as a reference point, and as a common thread for development.

1. Some Sounds of a Sound Faith. SOME MORE SOUNDS is a reference back to the original book SOME SOUNDS OF SOUND FAITH which simply sets forth 10 of the most important subjects of the Bible. Facts from the Bible on...
   (1). God.
   (2). Christ.
   (3). The Holy Spirit.
   (4). The Bible Itself.
   (5). Salvation.
   (6). Faith.
   (7). Gospel.
   (8). Christ's Assembly.
   (9). The Great and Notable Day of the LORD.
   (10). The Falling Away

2. Some More Sounds. Sounds of the Influence of Christ, Spreading the influence of Christ is synonymous in Mark and the total Bible with peacemaking. Peace between God and man and between men and men is only possible through Christ as the mediator between man and God and between men and men: this is the consistent message of the Bible. When you look into the short book of Mark, you find certain key words that describe this peacemaking influence of Christ.
   (1). Gospel. The preaching of the Gospel or “good news” of Jesus is perhaps the number one way to spread the peacemaking influence of Christ. Instead what we find in many and the largest pulpits of the nation is a substitute Gospel of Prosperity. It is called the Gospel of Wealth and the “corollary of success” in the history of American Thought.
[1]. Mark 1:1-3: “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the Prophets: 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You. The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the LORD, make His paths straight.'”

[2]. Mark 1:14,15: “Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.'”

[3]. Mark 8:34-37: “When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, 'Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?'”

[4]. Mark 10:28-31: “Then Peter began to say to Him, 'See, we have left all and followed You.' So Jesus answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time-houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.'”

[5]. Mark 13:10: “And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations.”

[6]. Mark 14:9: “Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.”

[7]. Mark 16:15: “And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believed: In my name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will be no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.'”

(2). Kingdom.
As the gap between church, denominations, and Christ has widened, and as it increased diverges into a more widened gap, the influence of Christ's kingdom and believers more working for the kingdom than defunct churches, must become paramount. After all, part of Christ's model prayer is, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” It is no a prayer that the church or denomination with all the answers step forth as dominant.

(3). Judge. We think of Jesus as Saviour and Lord, and so He is. How often do we think of the peacemaking influence of Jesus as Judge. He will Judge the living and the dead. It is He alone that will determine whether real peace has been made between God and man, and between man and man. It will be hard on all to lose this control, harder on some than on other, especially on those who think they run and control every-
thing.

(4). Cross. The cross, of course, is another word for the Gospel. The Gospel of Jesus is the gospel of the kingdom and the gospel of the cross. While most pulpits would admit that “Christ died on the cross for the sins of the world, and that it is faith in what Christ did that saves”, it is more difficult for today’s Gospel of Prosperity and Comfort and Self-Improvement to admit like Paul did that “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ lives in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of God, who died for me.” Self-improvement hardly ever allows for a crucifixion or repentance before fulfillment of life.

(5). Resurrection. Surely that Christ is the only one to rise from the dead extends the influence of Christ, and the Gospel of Mark sets that forth clearly.

(6). Ascension. However the Risen Christ became the Ascended Christ as Jesus went back to the right hand of God the Father where He makes intercession for sins and prepares to return to this earth in great glory and power.

(7). Holy Spirit. When Christ Ascended back to heaven, God sent the Holy Spirit to do the work of Christ on earth: to teach and remind, to convict of sin, to show people true righteousness, and to remind of the inevitable Judgment to come. While churches and denominations going down the drain for a righteous influence on America is fearful in promotion of the Falling Away, it will be far more horrible as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn according to II Thessalonians.

(8). Miracles. That Jesus could walk on water and still the waves extends the influence of Christ by reminding us that this is the same Jesus with God at the beginning of time who was also the mediator of Creation. “All things were made through Him…”

(9). Teachings. While the influence of certain teachings of Jesus like “love your neighbor” are more obvious, the influence can be spread with attention to saying like “man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.”

(10). Healings. That Jesus healed the sick and still can heal the sick extends the influence of Jesus.
LEVEL 3: TOWARD THE FULL STATURE OF CHRIST.

1. “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...” (Ephesians 4:11-13)

2. “He (Jesus) said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’” (Matthew 13:28a)

3. “But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit; some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.” (Mark 4:20) {The process of growth in the kingdom of God: (1) hear the Word; (2) Accept the Word in the fullness of It’s meaning; and (3) Bear fruit according to the instructions of the Word.}

4. “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom {we don’t have it yet, nor does church membership guarantee proof of having it} which cannot be shaken {which by the way, can not be seen yet}, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.” {Oh yes!} (Hebrews 12:28,29)
GRAND FAINALE: WHAT THE CHURCHES DON’T WANT YOU TO HEAR!

This will only take a few pages to wrap up as I think based on what we have looked at in Mark and in the supporting passages of the Word, you know what to expect. Briefly we will look at the subject center around the following points:

1. What Have We Come To?
2. Buildings versus Kingdom
3. What Churches Keep from You
4. What Church Refuse to Hear!
5. The Influence of Christ

Appendix

What we have really come to is an unseen kingdom which can not be shaken as Paul wrote in concluding the book of the Bible on the Falling Away, Hebrews and in Hebrews 12:28,29. What is shaken and will be shaken is itemized from Daniel, the rest of the Old Testament where you have a great deal about The DAY of the LORD and Lord, and Matthew 24 from Jesus with the book of Revelation. With those last words of Hebrews 12:28,29 why would Paul want to tell of all people, church members about God as a consuming fire. Because in one day alone the carcasses fell in the wilderness of 23,000 children of Israel who thought they also were the elect of God; and they fell as the result of a consuming fire from God. That falling was much more than physical as the record in the Old Testament and in Hebrews informs us that they also were not allowed into the eternal rest of God.

1. What Have We Come To?

Well, we have come to something much more serious than that experienced in instruction by the 23,000 children of God. We have even come to something much more serious to heed than what the children of Israel experience at Mount Sinai, with the sight of smoke and burning from the special presence of God, with the awesome sight of blackness and darkness that only God the Father can muster, with the physical touch of a physical mountain which was untouchable in that any man or animal that did, died; with the sound of the trumpet of the angel announcing the special presence of God, and with the awesome holy and piercing voice of the many words of God which cause the children to beg, “please, let it be spoken no more”; nor have we come to the sight so terrible that the Prophet Moses himself said, “I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.” (Hebrews 12:21 and Deuteronomy 9:19).

We are come and are coming to just as much sound, and sight, and touch, and fellings; and more in that--

“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.” (Hebrews 12:22-24) Paul doesn’t want you to think that you have come to something as small as a local church where you have a new large brick or stone building, not to think that you have come to somethings lesser like Mount Sinai with the awesome special appearance of God with sounds, hearings, sights, and feelings. And although all of these entities are now invisible,
just like the faith that Paul has been talking about in Hebrews before, THEY ARE FAR MORE REAL AND ETERNAL AND PERMANENT; and therefore Paul would summons by way of all your physical senses of sound, sight, and hearing the challenge of things of faith, “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” And even as there is a lot of evidence in the Gospel of Mark, also reinforced by the Old Testament, Paul, Jesus, and the other Gospel writers of whom Simon Greenleaf, the former dean of the Harvard Law School and a legal authority on evidence, said that “the testimony of the four evangelists would stand up as a prima facie case in any court of law, so in Hebrews is offered a large roll call from the Old Testament of the heroes of faith which made the unseen entities clearer, although invisible, by the lives they live. What was in the abstract that it was faith in the unseen God, in the unseen Jesus Christ, in the unseen Holy Spirit, and in the unseen kingdom of God and the unseen assembly of the firstborn written in heaven, it was put in the concrete by these real men and women who lives real lives of real faith. And what we can come to at the End of this Age is very, very real. Our God is a consuming fire, and that is literal; in that God not only exercises judgment like a consuming fire, but the fate of all unbelievers is the eternal lake of fire and brimstone.

2. **Focus your eyes on Jesus, on the kingdom of God, and on whether you have membership in the assembly of the firstborn written in heaven, then your focus, pride, and efforts will be less on that large and comfortable building where you have chosen to focus all your attention.**

Have you ever noticed that when people want to talk to you about religion, it is centered around their own local church? As if, their local church was the center of the universe, or at least the center of the kingdom of God. No, the center of the kingdom of God is the place where the will of God is currently being done with squabbling and compromise, in heaven where the will of God is done as it will some day when Christ comes again be done on this earth. That is what you pray for in your local church, remember, “Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” If you pray for it, and you accept that word as well as hear it, then you might as well be putting your efforts into the kingdom rather than into a large brick and stone building.

We could talk about how Jesus during His life took the focus off that large Temple in Jerusalem of stone, the same stones that inspired the admiration of the disciples of Jesus to say, “look at these stones”, expecting a similar admiration from them; but were surprised when Jesus gave the warnings of stone destruction in the famous passage on eschatology of Matthew 24 and Mark 13. True, God gave the pattern for the building of the first tabernacle, for the building of the first Temple, and even the building of the second temple; but there came a time in the Old Testament Prophets when God said “no more” emphasis on buildings made with hands and stones, about the same time that He rejected Israel as the elect; and the emphasis became of an invisible kingdom, a tabernacle and temple not made with hands, a building not to be taken with pride and confidence of brick and tone; but on the invisible assembly or church of the firstborn, Jesus Christ, on the total body of Christ, on God Himself who is invisible although He is the Judge of all things and will ultimately be the Judge of all things, to the vast roll call of men and women of faith whom you can not see, but who still live and exist with the living God in the city of Jerusalem and around the temple in heaven.

You can pretty well see the demise in the kingdom of God and Christ of any church or denomination when they build a new and large brick and stone building. Although being like my good and former friend Dr. Charles Meister maintained, a symbol of the righteousness and godliness of American people, it has become a symbol of demise in the kingdom of God. The emphasis has thereby been taken off the spiritual unseen things and placed on that which can be seen, that of status in the community, in the denomination, and in the country. You see, when we build those large new church buildings, it is in order to become part of the “establishment”; and
since the establishment is worldly, then we likewise become part of the world which is forbidden in many ways and many times in the Bible. This is not to mention the influence in the local assembly that the “tares” and the leaders of the tares have on the kingdom of God.

3. What the Churches Do Not Want You to Hear?

It strikes like the lightning on the cover of this book with the statement that begs for approval. THE CHURCHES DO NOT WANT YOU TO HEAR THAT THEY ARE LEADERS IN THE FOLLOWING AWAY! They must be since they have more to fall away from. Like the children of Israel who saw the mighty works of God for 40 years in the wilderness before their Falling Away, these church members have seen for 40 years or more the works of God; yet allowing the tares in the kingdom of God to exercise a dominant voice of unsound doctrine, and by selecting pastors and teachers with itching ears to hear what they desired more than what they needed of the Word of God, teachers who continue to comfort them and tell them that they are the elect of God. Like in the time of Jeremiah, the life lived during the week has nothing to do with the God who is worshipped at the Temple of God; the church members are like a “den of thieves” who rob the people and mistreat the people in the land, who substitute the teachings of men for the commandments of God and worship and serve a god who is not the God of the Bible and the God of Jesus Christ. Like the people who refused to listen to Jeremiah, instead saying when faced with their contradictory lives and living, “we are safe” in the temple of God, contemporary church members are saying in increasing numbers as the gap between church membership and Christ grows into the Falling Away, we are safe here in our local church with this big, beautiful building and the status of the community, and in our large and stable nation. NOT SO!

What you don’t hear from the churches is, and you be the judge of this for yourself: (1) The reality of the Falling Away which must come before the Second Coming; (2) that these churches are the leaders in the Falling Away just as the children of Israel were leaders in the first Falling Away; (3) that this is not a criticism, as they would tell you, of the youth or the younger generation, since if the second Falling Away—that is, the Falling Away of our generation—is like the first falling away then those younger than 20 years of age will not be part of it, unless by choice; (4) you will not hear about the Falling Away from them because you will notice that every church or denomination has THE ANSWER, so how can they admit to you that they are also part of the Falling Away; and (5) by the way this would also include the vast number of weirdos on television and in so-called Bible conferences which by their prolification prove that we are in the time of intolerance toward sound doctrine, in that we are “heaping up”—boy, are we heaping up teachers with itching ears that sound weird and look weird but who succeed in the worldly sense of success because they are popular like the world and because they tell people what they want to hear.

4. What Churches Refuse to Hear!

You want hear about the sound doctrine of the Falling Away from them, because they refuse to hear it from their own pastors and teachers. Have you not wondered why over 50% of pastors marriages end in divorce, why over 50% of the church members practice and believe in the adultery of divorce, and why so many pastors are run off from their churches in a short period of time. Well, if the people have already rejected Christ, the Master, as their head of government and Lord, then they are also going to reject, thought in a subtle and skillful but worldly manner, the leaders which Christ has ordained and sent to their church. What they are motivated by now is: (1) a desire to hear about their own desires; (2) an intolerance toward sound doctrine; and (3) a tickling of the ears for comfort.

5. The Influence of Christ.
What we after when we give priority to the kingdom of God and of Christ is to extend the influence of Christ! The building can take care of itself, sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof of the world and the tares, and the leaders of the world and of the tares! You will find that this is the real “peacemaking” of the Bible. Christ is the only means of peace between God and man, and between men and men, so that as we extend the influence of Christ through the kingdom we are also promoting peace on earth, goodwill towards men.
Appendix A: TABLE OF “LAST THINGS”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peaks and Valleys from Acts, Peter, Joel, Sixth Sweeps of Daniel, Matthew 24 and Mark 13, and Revelation</th>
<th>Second Sweep Peaks and Valleys from the Second Sweep of Daniel, Interpretation of the First Vision and in Daniel 7:15-27/Third Sweep, called the “Time of the End”, is the first vision with Interpretation from Gabriel of Daniel 8:1-27/Sixth Sweep, Daniel 12:4-10</th>
<th>Peaks and Valleys from the First Sweep of Daniel, Daniel 7:9-14/Fouth Sweep of Daniel 9, Gabriel comes to give skill to understand in the answer of Daniel’s prayers for his people/Fifth Sweep, Daniel 10-12:12:3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Beginning of the Last Days with the special coming of the Spirit and the binding of Satan for a thousand years.</td>
<td>1.1. The Ancient of Days always sets in judgment and determines the fate of nations and individuals.</td>
<td>1.2. Kingdoms come and kingdoms go, and somewhere in between that process on earth the kingdom of Christ is fully set up with the death and resurrection of Christ. The 70 weeks of Jeremiah and Daniel, from Restoration to absolute spiritual blindness in Israel, and after approximately 100,000 Jews converted up to the one more year than the 69 years from Restoration until the cutting off of the Messiah. The “abomination of desolation” of temple destruction and Jerusalem by the Roman General Titus, a prototype of the man of sin. It is the king of the north, first a Grecian king then a Roman king then the man of sin, that will take away the daily sacrifices and defile the temple in Daniel 11:31, the famous “abomination of desolation” of Daniel and referenced by Jesus in Matthew 24</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Continuous wonders in the heavens above and earth beneath.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Continuous Gospel to every nation and the Fulness of Gentiles completion.</td>
<td>The people who know God shall be strong and carry out great exploits—obviously Acts and the Apostles including Paul contrasted with only a year from the Jews as “the people who do wickedly against the covenant” and who are flattered by Satan and the next-to-the-last man of sin, the Roman Emperors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3a. Great Tribulation</td>
<td>While the process continues throughout history and the world of those who understand instructing many (11:33), the great tribulation happens where “they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering.”</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 4a. What the world will be like near the end of time. | From now to the time of the end, “many shall run to and fro” {an obvious increase in world travel}, and knowledge shall increase “{obviously the information explosion}.

> how long until the fulfillment of all these wonders Daniel asks, and receive the answer of a “time, times, and half a time” so here specifically the time, times, and half a time is applied to history from the time of Daniel to the very end—time would be from Daniel until the Jews are cut off from salvation, times would be the time of the last days, the preaching of the Gospel to every nation, and the Fulness of the Gentiles, and the half-time would be that short period of the Falling Away, the realization of the Man of Sin, and the Release of Satan with the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from earth, corresponding also to the Final Tribulation, and somewhere in there before the Second Coming of Christ comes with the final great battle lead against the man of sin and Satan; |
<p>| 4b. “How long” until the end, from Daniel and from Jesus and from Revelation. |  |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4c. Final Tribulation as the sun, moon, and stars are shaken with the earth.</th>
<th>Pompous words against God from the Man of Sin as controlled and lead by Satan who has recently been released; and he is prevailing in his fight against the saints. He will be a revolutionary that tries to change “times and law”, and the saints will be given into his hands for “a time, times, and half a time.” The power of this little horn spreads from the north to the south, east, and west and joins with the power of the Fallen angels and Satan.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) the Falling Away from God, Christ, and the Bible; (2) a visual of the final man of sin; (3) the Holy Spirit is withdrawn from the earth with the resulting release of Satan from bondage. The man of sin and Satan prosper on the wings of the desolation, and the desolation on the Jews ends with the consummation. The Falling Away of the final tribulation where “some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end” (11:35) {perhaps you have never thought of the Falling Away period as a time when the kingdom of God, if not the churches, will be (a) refined, (b) purified, and (c) made white from this beginning to the end with the Second Coming, so that we might think of the simultaneous Falling Away and refinement, purification, and whitening as the Final Tribulation.</td>
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</table>
4d. Events from the man of sin and the rest of the world leading up to the last great battle of Armageddon.

The king of the north, now almost completely turned the final anti-Christ, or man of sin, shows his colors with (a) do according to whatever he wants, (b) exalting himself above every god, (c) blasphemy against the God of gods (11:36), and (d) prospering right up to the time the cup of wrath is full, (e) ignoring the God of his fathers, (f) ignoring women, (g) put a god of war to whom he is devoted above all else, (h) war against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which has to be no less than Satan himself—and the man will come out in the open to acknowledge this worship and service of Satan, (i) and this king, the final man of sin will advance the “glory” of Satan, (j) he will make wickedness to reign over many and divide up the land for his own gain.

5a. The Great Battle of Armageddon. Since this is also fought by the Christ on the while charger against Satan and the man of sin, this also happens simultaneously with the 5b and 5c below.

There is a battle between the king of the north and the king of the south who attacks Satan and the man of sin, this also happens simultaneously with the Glorious Land of Palestine with a taking of the riches of the lands and countries; (8) News from the east and the north, and the Great battle happens as “he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many” (11:44); (9) as he also plants the “tents of his palace” between the seas the glorious holy mountain, sound like on the Gaza strip doesn’t it; (10) “yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him” (11:45).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5b. Final Tribulation consummated with the Resurrection and Separation of those written in the book of life from all those of shame; and of everlasting life. You can see how that blends in with and is also simultaneous with the below Second Coming of Christ.</th>
<th>all of the things mentioned will be completely fulfilled as in the Falling Away and withdrawal of the Holy Spirit, “the power of the holy people has been completely shattered”; and again is the re-interation in this sixth cycle like in the fifth cycle of how “many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and one of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.” (12:10).</th>
<th>There shall be a time of trouble such as never seen from the beginning to then; (12) this is the time of deliverance of the people of Daniel, every one who is found written in the book of life; (13) the body resurrection of the all the dead with a separation into a group of (a) shame and a (b) group of “some to everlasting life” during the period of which some will shine like the firmament and like the stars forever.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5c. The great and notable Day of the LORD and Lord with the Second Coming</td>
<td>the Ancient of Days judges in favor of the saints and the Lord Jesus Christ executes that Judgment at His Second Coming; The Court of God takes away the dominion of the man of sin and Satan, destroying it forever. The greatness of the kingdoms of the earth will be given over to the Kingdom of the Most High God where the saints will obey and serve Him.</td>
<td>5. The Second Coming of Christ to finalize the reign of Christ over all other kingdoms of this earth, and then deliverance to the Great Judge that God may be all in all.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix B  Table 1: Phases of History in Revelation, starting with the teachings of Jesus in Matthew 24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Matthew Reference</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Beginning of Sorrows</td>
<td>Matthew 24:5-8</td>
<td>1. Many false prophets come</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Many deceived</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Persecution Triulation</td>
<td>Matthew 24:9</td>
<td>Many offended</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Falling Away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Period of Offences</td>
<td>Matthew 24:10</td>
<td>Betray one another</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Many deceived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Falling Away</td>
<td>Matthew 24:11-14</td>
<td>Hate one another</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lawlessness abounds</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Wars and rumors of war</td>
<td></td>
<td>man of sin revealed</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Nation against nation</td>
<td></td>
<td>lover of self and money</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Famine</td>
<td></td>
<td>Holy Spirit withdrawn</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Pestilence</td>
<td></td>
<td>despisers of good</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Earthquakes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Satan released</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Tribulation</td>
<td></td>
<td>form of godliness without inward power of God</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>battle of Armageddon</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Intolerance of sound doctrine</td>
<td></td>
<td>intolerance of sound doctrine</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>love of many waxes cold</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Blasphemy</td>
<td></td>
<td>blasphemers, proud, arrogant, and trouble makers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>shaking of heaven and earth</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Tribulation from the unbelieving</td>
<td></td>
<td>physical and natural tribulation as the universe disintegrates</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>elements melt with heat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Abomination of desolation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gospel to every nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Great tribulation shortened</td>
<td></td>
<td>Second Coming of Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. False rumors about Second Coming</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B  Table 2: Phases of History in Revelation, starting with the teachings of Jesus in Matthew 24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Matthew References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Beginning of Sorrows</strong>, (&quot;since the beginning they continue&quot;), Matthew 24:5-8</td>
<td>Matthew 24:9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Many false prophets come  
    False Prophets

2. wars and rumors of war but the end is not yet (also not end war)  
   last great war, look for the carcases, Armageddon

3. nation against nation and kingdom against kingdom and famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in different places  
   the great earthquake of all earthquakes

4. great tribulation: kill you and hated by all nations for the name of Christ, the same time as 1-3 above  
   the final tribulation that is for natural and leading to the day of the LORD

5. many believers offended, Christians betray and hate each other, proliferation of false prophets and the deception of many believers  
   the falling away of II Thessalonians 2:3 as lawlessness abounds and the love of many waxes cold

6. gospel of the kingdom preached to every nation as a witness to every nations and then comes the end  
   the END of the Age with the Day of the LORD and Lord

7. abomination of Desolation of Daniel with destruction of Jerusalem and the beginning of the persecutions of the Roman Empire  

8. many false Christs and many false prophets will arise by showing great signs and wonders and if possible even deceive the elect  

9. gathering of he carcasses and the eagles  

10. That DAY, after the tribulation of those days sun and moon darkened with the shaking of heaven and earth; and then the Second Coming with Gathering of the Elect
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Mark</strong></th>
<th><strong>Miracles of Jesus in Mark/Old Testament Quotes in Mark/PARABLES OF JESUS</strong></th>
<th><strong>Sign-Teachings of Jesus: Kingdom and Miracles/Jesus proper interpretation of Old Testament quotes in Mark</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:2,3</td>
<td>Isaiah 40:3: John the Baptist is the voice of the one in the wilderness preparing the way for Christ</td>
<td>The interpretation by Mark and the Spirit through Mark is that John the Baptist of Jesus' time was that preparatory voice, and it is obvious that the Jewish nation accepted John at first as a prophet.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Malachi 3:1</td>
<td>The interpretation of Mark and the Spirit is that the one John announced, this Jesus of Nazareth, was indeed Messiah and Son of God.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:14</td>
<td>Jesus preached “the gospel of the kingdom of God”</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:15</td>
<td>Part of the Gospel is that the kingdom of God is here!</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:16-20</td>
<td>Jesus out-fishes the fisherman-disciples who have been shunked all day in their fishing, and calls them to be fishers of men in His kingdom service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:21-28</td>
<td>Jesus Healing of the Demoniac in Capernaum: This amazed the religious leaders because of Jesus authority in doctrine which was a doctrine with the power to heal. I think what we see today is a claim for the power to heal which does not include any authority of doctrine, or adequate doctrinal support. Definitely what you do not see is the casting out of devils and demons, because Satan can not cast out Satan, and it would be too dangerous for these impostors as the demons would disclose them or jump on them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:29-34</td>
<td><strong>Jesus Heals the Mother-in-Law of Simon Peter.</strong> It was so routine and without fanfare for the Son of God, the former co-creator of the universe. He comes into the house routinely heals the mother in law of Peter, and gets up to graciously serve them a meal. That was much better than the putting on an expected show of jumping and shouting like we see today, a jumping and shouting that is a matter of learning by the examples of others. Well, that is what you are suppose to do when you are slain in the spirit, by the way not at all a Bible phrase or a practice of Jesus during healing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:40-45</td>
<td><strong>Jesus heals the Leper.</strong> This is a good place to note the approachability of Jesus, then and now as the leper came beseeching him, and yet Jesus showed compassion although the man was so irritating to publish abroad the healing which restricted the future activities of Jesus to the desert places.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:1-12</td>
<td><strong>Jesus heals the paralytic</strong> “the power of the Lord was with him to heal” (Luke 5:17-26)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:18-22</td>
<td><strong>PARABLES ABOUT THE NEW DISPENSATION</strong> The doctors of the law and other religious leaders were watching to see if He would heal on the sabbath. Jesus taught them and the others about doing good or harm on the sabbath day, and taking care of the sheep that is in the pit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:1-6</td>
<td><strong>Jesus heals the man with the withered hand</strong></td>
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<td>3:19-30</td>
<td><strong>PARABLES ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF SATAN</strong> When they accused him of being in league with Satan, he said that all sins will be forgiven men except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit: in other words it is not what is spoken in front of men, but it is the personal unbelief to the work of the Holy Spirit that condemns.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:24</td>
<td>Divided kingdoms are worse than divided churches and denominations</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:3-25</td>
<td><strong>THE SNATCHING, STUMBLING, AND THE FALLING AWAY: THE PARABLE OF THE SEED AND SOWER.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>4:11</td>
<td>(1) if you desire to define a real disciple of Jesus, it is one who understands the mysteries of the kingdom; and (2) the real outsiders not those in the church who do not understand the kingdom.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:12</td>
<td>Isaiah 6:9,10: The whole Bible is a parable so that only select persons can understand. The proper interpretation by Jesus to His disciples was that only kingdom members could understand the mysteries of the kingdom, and that all others were &quot;outsiders&quot;.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:26-29</td>
<td>PARABLE OF THE SEED GROWING OF ITSELF. The kingdom of God grows unseen by history and by much religious activity.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4:30-32</td>
<td>PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED. The kingdom of God and Christ will ultimately be larger than any other religious, political, social, or intellectual movement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:33-34</td>
<td>PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN. It caused faith, even fear, as the disciples pondered who is this that nature obeys. They had not as yet come to see Him as the Word active from the beginning in Creation, with the power to make the universe.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:35-41</td>
<td>Jesus performs the miracle over nature of causes the wind and waves to become calm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:1-20</td>
<td>Jesus heals the crazy man that is demon possessed and lived in the tombs. In the tombs all night the man was crying and cutting himself; and it was impossible to chain him as he was so strong as to break the chains. His name was Legion since many devils were inside him; however the man ran to worship Jesus and the devils cried out how He was Jesus, the Son of God, asking if Jesus had come to torment them before the time—look at how much doctrine the devils know, and tremble. Jesus commanded the devils to come out of him, and per the devils request not to be sent out of the country, he sent them into a herd of swine. Now here, Jesus tells the man to publish what happened to him.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:21-43</td>
<td>Jesus while on the way to heal the daughter at the request of Jairus, the woman with the issue of blood is healed automatically as she touched with faith the helm of the garment of Christ.</td>
<td>The woman had this malady for 12 years which drained all her money while the physicians had done her no good, and she knew as she touched his garment she would be made whole. Jesus to her, “Your faith has made you whole.” Can you imagine any of these current faith healers even allowing themselves to be touched by the crowd, and have you ever heard of one case where the touch of the person unknowingly of the healer, without the fanfare of the slaying of the spirit, has caused healing. Once again when Jesus healed the dead daughter, which He called sleeping, he charged the people there not to make it known; and charged them to give her something to eat. Did they do it? No!</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:23</td>
<td>Unfortunaely then and now, this is the kind of kingdom thinking—of a material kingdom—that dominantes our thoughts.</td>
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<td>6:30-44</td>
<td>Jesus performs a miracle of bread provision with fish. Jesus feeds the five thousand men with five loafs of bread and two fishes.</td>
<td>The disciples gathered up 12 baskets of barley loaves that were left over. When Jesus or God as far as that matter do a miracle they do it right, not one that is rescinded latter because of lack of faith.</td>
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<td>6:47-52</td>
<td>Jesus walks on the Sea that is so rough that the experienced disciple-fisherman have trouble rowing; and Peter also walks for a short time on the sea.</td>
<td>Jesus says it only takes faith. However in the boat they worshipped Jesus, and said that indeed He is the Son of God.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:1-23</td>
<td>THE PARABLE OF &quot;CORBAN&quot;</td>
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<td>7:6,7</td>
<td>Isaiah 29:13: the way that many worship who call themselves people of God is with their lips only while the hearts are far from God, much like the people in the temple and Jerusalem to whom God delivered the Temple message through Jeremiah.</td>
<td>Jesus called them “hypocrites” for such religious activity and worship.</td>
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<td>7:10</td>
<td>Exodus 20:12; 21:17, and Deuteronomy 5:16—Jesus establishes the continued validity of the Moses and the 10 commandments, and quotes about Honor for Father and Mother.</td>
<td>Perhaps the most religious men of all time had rejected the meaning of the Scriptures with their traditions and interpretations, Jesus tells us.</td>
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<td>7:24-30</td>
<td>Jesus heals the daughter of a Greek Gentile. The unclean spirit in the daughter was called a devil.</td>
<td>Jesus challenged faith from the woman as He said bread must first be given to the Jews, and she replied in faith that even the dogs eat of the crumbs under the table.</td>
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<td>7:31-8:9</td>
<td>Jesus heals the man deaf and with a speech impediment, and then feeds the four thousand with seven loaves and a few fishes.</td>
<td>The more Jesus charged people to secrecy about the healing, the more they published it; but the people decided that “He has done all things well.”</td>
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<td>8:13-26</td>
<td>Jesus heals a blind man at the pool of Bethsaida. This time the man was brought to Jesus, and Jesus besought just to touch him, knowing that it would bring healing.</td>
<td>It took two touches, the first after a test when the man saw others as tree walking, and a second from Jesus when he saw all things clearly; and this time the charged was heeded not to publish the matter as the man went directly home.</td>
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<td>9:1</td>
<td>Jesus defined the time of the establishment of the kingdom as later in the lifetime of many of His disciples, at that it would come with power which you know to be the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension of Christ.</td>
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<td>9:14-29</td>
<td>Jesus heals the demoniac boy which the disciples could not heal. Notice how many of the demon possessed were young.</td>
<td>Jesus criticizes the faithless generation for not being able to heal in such cases. All the observers were astonished at the majesty of God, for only that kind of power could come from God Himself.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>Miracles of Jesus in Mark</td>
<td>Sign-Teachings of Jesus: Kingdom and Miracles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Isaiah 66:24: three times Jesus quotes from Isaiah that “the worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.”</td>
<td>Jesus labels this hell and states that the fire of hell is never quenched.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark 9:47</td>
<td>Jesus Himself</td>
<td>Entrance into the kingdom of God is the only other alternative to hell, so horrible that the worm never dies and the fire is not quenched, and that there should be so much priority for every word from God as the loss of physical vision. {NOTE: this is not a recommendation for the loss of an eye, it is a sacrifice of pleasure, security, and comfort that lands a place in the eternal kingdom of Christ rather than in hell.}</td>
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<td>Genesis 1:27 and 2:24</td>
<td>One man and one woman with children for life.</td>
<td>THE PARABLE OF THE LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD.</td>
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<td>Mark 10:14</td>
<td>Jesus Himself</td>
<td>The kingdom of God is a kingdom of little children under God the Father. “Our Father” is essential.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark 10:15</td>
<td>Herod the Great</td>
<td>The kingdom of God must be received in faith and sincerity like a little child receives truth in humility.</td>
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10:19 Exodus 20:12-16 and Deutoronomy 5:16-20: the Ten Commandments

Although religious to the point of supposedly keeping the commandments, at least on the surface, it is hard for a prosperous man to enter the kingdom of God.

10:23 Jesus Himself

It is hard for a rich man, a wise man, or any man of status and achievement to enter the kingdom of God, a concept we still do not learn in our respect of persons concepts and ways, and even our world-like motivations.

Mark Jesus Himself

It is so hard for a man of many possessions to enter the kingdom of God that Jesus compares it to a camel passing through the eye of the needle. You might ask why: because cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things choke out the Word of Faith. Rich men are not eliminated from Faith, the fact is that like camels passing through the eye of the needle, there will be very, very few.

10:46-52 Jesus on the way out of Jericho, heard blind Bartimaeus addressing Jesus as the son of David, crying out for mercy; and when Jesus could not quite the man quiet, He sought the disciples to bring him: then Jesus told the two blind men that their faith had made them whole.

Is it possible that it is the faith of the attendees at miracles healing conferences that heals them more than any special powers that come from men like Bennie Hin? And is it not also possible that God like before Jesus came is till healing secretly from His secret place. You can see here how more selective Mark and Luke were to tell only of Bartimaeus while only Matthew tells that there were two blind men.

11:9 Psalms 118:26: Blessed is the kingdom of David that comes in the name of the Lord.

While appearing triumphant, this failure to accept the kind of kingdom Jesus taught, marks the beginning of the three and one half year period of salvation for the Jews until the Fulness of the Gentiles is complete.

Mark 11:10 The Crowd at the Triumphant Entry of Christ into Jerusalem

Seeing Jesus coming humbly on a donkey, the people still sought in Him a kingdom like that of David where they prospered greatly and ruled the known world. Carroll sees this as the beginning of the 3 ½ years of Daniel where Jews no longer entered the kingdom, approximately 100,000 of them being saved in that period and then no more until the Fulness of the Gentiles is complete.
<p>| 11:12-18 | Jesus being hungry and finding no fruit on the Fig Tree curses the tree. | This at first may seem almost beneath Jesus; but the choice by Jesus at this particular time corresponds with the last 3 and one-half years that the Jews have for salvation until the Fulness of the Gentiles if complete. |
| 11:17 | Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:1: you have made My Father's house a den of thieves. | The temple message of Jeremiah, quoted from Isaiah, was that the people of God lived as they desired, then said in the Temple worship of Jerusalem that they were safe in order to go out and live the same way next week. |
| 11:20-24 | THE PARABLE OF THE WITHERED FIG TREE. | In this outline for Mark, when we can put together more than one parable, like the two here, with a subject in common, then we have made a giant step on our outline and on spiritual understanding. Even more is this true in chapter 4 of Mark where Jesus tells in rapid succession 4 parables and Mark records all four of them. |
| 12:1-12 | THE PARABLE OF THE WICKED WINEDRESSERS. | A person who hears and heeds religious teachings can be so close to the kingdom of God, yet miss it because of their cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, and other things like the rich young ruler who sought to keep the commandments, but went away from Jesus sorrowful not willing to make the choice of God over mammon. |
| Mark 12:34 | Jesus Himself | Jesus Himself in the great teachings on eschatology of Mark 13 and Matthew 24. |
| 12:10 | Psalm 118:22,23 | Jesus, realistically, uses kingdom and nation in the manner we most often think as countries; but against each other as the signs that will continue to happen from the time of Jesus to the end. The beginning of the sorrows continues through all the phases of biblical history of eschatology and revelation right up to the end. Carroll teaches that each nation has an angel, some good and some bad but all under the power of God, who seek contrary gospels like Michael for Israel and the angels of the Persians another goal. |
| 12:36 | Psalm 110:1 |  |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>13:14</th>
<th>Daniel 11:31 and 12:11: there are three “abominations of desolation”</th>
<th>One by the Syrian Antichocus during the time of the Greek Empire; one by the Roman general Titus, later Caesar; and one by the man of sin they foreshadow.</th>
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<td>ANOTHER PARABLE OF THE FIG TREE.</td>
<td>As we start putting together the real meaning of these parables, you can bet that much of it has to do with characteristics of the kingdom like that of a withered fig tree, and we begin to like Daniel’s two three and one half years and the interpretation by Carroll.</td>
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<td>PARABLE OF THE PORTER.</td>
<td>Then once we can get the previous ones together we must meld into it this parable from Jesus.</td>
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<td><strong>Mark 14:25</strong></td>
<td>Jesus Himself</td>
<td>Here the kingdom of God is the completed kingdom of God, when the kingdoms of this world become synonymous with the kingdom of heaven, and Christ has the Lord’s Supper with His original disciples again. Those who foolishly think of the Lord’s Supper as a sacrament that saves and forgives sins, do not see the redeemed of heaven taking the Lord’s Supper with Jesus.</td>
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<td><strong>14:27</strong></td>
<td>Zechariah 13:7: The DAY of the LORD</td>
<td>All of you first disciples will “stumble” because of Jesus, scattered like sheep.</td>
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<td><strong>14:43-52</strong></td>
<td>In the Garden before the arrest and subsequent crucifixion of Jesus, Simon Peter cut off with a sword the right ear of Malchus, a servant of the high priest; and Jesus while remanding the disciples, touched his ear and healed him.</td>
<td>Jesus did not want a kingdom that would be won by war and the sword, like the kingdom of David that his own people wanted; and He reminded the disciples how He could call 12 legions of angels from the Father for rescue, of course one or one legion would be sufficient; and certainly 12 would be enough for a revolution and the re-establishment of a physical kingdom like that of David.</td>
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<td><strong>Mark 15:43</strong></td>
<td>Mark, the Apostle Paul, Peter and James, and the Holy Spirit</td>
<td>Joseph of Arimathea was one of the few who entered through the eye of the needle into the kingdom of God, although a member of the most hypocritical Sanhedrin of Jesus time.</td>
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<td><strong>15:28</strong></td>
<td>Isaiah 53:12—Jesus will be crucified between common criminals that are thieves.</td>
<td>This is what happened at the crucifixion as recorded by the Gospel writers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>15:34</strong></td>
<td>Psalm 22:1: Jesus would say “My God, My God what have you forsaken me.”</td>
<td>Jesus did say that on the cross.</td>
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