

Brought Forth from Above



*ONLY Two Possibilities, with NO Middle Ground
from Above, OR from Below*

**A Study about the Necessity of
Christians Availing Themselves of
That Which Comes from Above,
Not from Below**

Arlen L. Chitwood

The birth, “of God [*lit.*, ‘out of God’]” (John 1:13), or “again [*lit.*, ‘from above’]” (John 3:3, 7), is almost universally taught in Christendom as having to do with a birth experienced by unsaved individuals, occurring at the moment they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and pass “from death to life.” That is, the Spirit breathing life into an unsaved individual, based on Christ’s past, finished work at Calvary, is looked upon as the birth “out of God,” “from above,” seen in these verses.

The problem is that this is *NOT* the manner in which the matter is introduced in John 1:13; *NOR* is this the manner in which the matter is continued in John 3:3, 7; *NOR* is this the manner in which the matter is seen in James, I Peter, and I John.

This is *NOT* to say that the Divine work surrounding an unsaved individual believing on the Lord Jesus Christ and being saved is *NOT* to be viewed in the same manner, *i.e.*, as being brought forth “out of God,” “from above.” Rather, it is to say that the verses being used (John 1:13; 3:3, 7; James 1:18; I Peter 1:3, 23; I John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18) *do NOT refer to this initial work of God through the Spirit*. Instead, they refer *to subsequent works of God through the Spirit* — subsequent works (pl.) because that connected with the bringing forth “out of God” is not the same in each instance.

The work surrounding an unsaved individual, “dead in trespasses and sins,” passing “from death to life,” can *ONLY* be a divine bringing forth “out of God,” “from above.” However, Scripture *NEVER* uses the type terminology seen in the referenced verses from John’s gospel, his first epistle, James, and I Peter relative to this divine work, unless possibly a verse such as Isaiah 66:8 would be referring to this facet of Israel’s future acceptance of Christ.

There can be *NO* divine work performed among man (either saved or unsaved man) apart from this work occurring “out of God,” “from above.” *Such would be impossible*.

And, in this respect, the verses from John’s gospel, his first epistle, James, and I Peter do describe the source of the work of salvation by grace (for it is *the same, it has to be* — *i.e.*, *out of God, from above*), though these verses do *NOT* pertain to this work per se.

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“And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not...

Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God” (I John 2:28; 3:6a, 9).

Cover Photograph: Wellington, New Zealand Harbor Entrance, 1956

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Arlen L. Chitwood

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RUTH
ESTHER
BY FAITH
RUN TO WIN
LET US GO ON
MOSES AND JOHN
END OF THE DAYS
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THE BRIDE IN GENESIS
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WE ARE ALMOST THERE
SIGNS IN JOHN'S GOSPEL
SALVATION OF THE SOUL
HAD YE BELIEVED MOSES
THE MOST HIGH RULETH
THE SPIRITUAL WARFARE
THE STUDY OF SCRIPTURE
FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN
MYSTERY OF THE WOMAN
COMING IN HIS KINGDOM
SEVEN, TEN GENERATIONS
REDEEMED FOR A PURPOSE
JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST
THE RAPTURE AND BEYOND
FROM ACTS TO THE EPISTLES
MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM
PROPHECY ON MOUNT OLIVET
NEVER AGAIN! OR YES, AGAIN!
THE TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE
ISRAEL — FROM DEATH TO LIFE
JUDE — ACTS OF THE APOSTATES
O SLEEPER! ARISE, CALL...! (JONAH)
THE TIME OF THE END (REVELATION)
MIDDLE EAST PEACE — HOW? WHEN?
SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH
MESSAGE IN THE GOSPELS, ACTS, EPISTLES
ISRAEL — WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

CONTENTS

FOREWORD	vii
I. EXCEPT A MAN (I)	1
BROUGHT FORTH FROM ABOVE, NOT FROM BELOW	
II. EXCEPT A MAN (II)	13
BROUGHT FORTH FROM ABOVE, NOT FROM BELOW	
III. EXCEPT A MAN (III)	25
BROUGHT FORTH FROM ABOVE, NOT FROM BELOW	
APPENDIXES	
I) SAVED FOR A PURPOSE	37
II) THE NESHAMAH	43
III) THE HOPE	49
SCRIPTURE INDEX	55

FOREWORD

Verses referring to a *birth (a bringing forth)* “out of God,” or “from above,” are found in four New Testament books. This expression appears in John 1:13; 3:3-8, James 1:18, I Peter 1:3, 23, and I John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18.

Contrary to popular interpretation, contextually, *NOT* a single reference in any one of these four books where the expression “born again [‘born from above’],” “born of God,” or “begat” is used *has anything to do with an unsaved individual being eternally saved*. Rather, *EVERY single reference, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, is set within a context having to do with the saved and concerns different facets of teaching pertaining to the saving of the soul in relation to the proffered kingdom*.

Erroneously relating these verses to the unsaved and eternal salvation in any one of the four books where these expressions are found is, accordingly, a misinterpretation of Scripture; and this misinterpretation is *EXACTLY* the same as that made elsewhere in Scripture by those advocating Lordship Salvation, *i.e., taking verses which have to do with issues surrounding the salvation of the soul, removing them from their contexts, and applying them to salvation by grace*.

And removing verses from their contextual settings and misapplying them in this manner *should NOT be taken lightly, for this NOT ONLY results in doing away with that dealt with by the specific verses and contexts, but it ALSO often results in a corruption of the simple message of the gospel of grace*.

In these particular verses, however, misusing that stated in the different texts would *NOT* really affect Biblical teachings pertaining to salvation by grace, for salvation by grace, of necessity, occurs through *EXACTLY the same means seen in these verses*.

When an unsaved individual is saved through faith in Christ, that person is “born again [‘born from above’]”; that person is *brought forth out of God*.

It would be *impossible* for an individual to be saved in any other manner, for *NOTHING* within the scope of a Divine work on man’s behalf can be brought to pass any other way. Any Divine work on behalf of an individual, whether saved or unsaved, has to be a work *from above, out of God* (note, for example, a Divine work of this nature, expressed after another fashion, in verses such as Rom. 12:2; II Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:10).

While it would be Biblically correct to say that an unsaved person passing “from death unto life” (being eternally saved) has been *born from above, brought forth out of God, this is NOT the terminology used in Scripture relative to one’s eternal salvation*. And relating the verses where these expressions are used to the unsaved and eternal salvation, *though the terminology would be correct*, could be done *ONLY* by removing these verses from their respective contexts; and, as previously noted, this would result in missing the interpretation which the Spirit of God originally intended.

For this reason, *these particular verses should NOT be used with respect to eternal salvation by grace through faith*. Rather, these verses should *ALWAYS* be understood and dealt with in the light of their respective texts and contexts.

And, if the latter is done, many existing interpretative problems surrounding these verses will cease to exist, for these interpretative problems exist *mainly* because of the erroneous manner in which these verses are almost universally interpreted and understood.

And possibly the major interpretative problem in this realm exists through seeking to understand sin in the life of a believer by that stated in I John 3:9; 5:18 (where the expression, “born of God,” *brought forth out of God*, is used in both references) in the light of that previously stated in I John 1:8-10.

But, contextually, exactly the same thing is being taught and dealt with about sin in the life of a believer *in all three places*. John deals with sin in the life of a believer from one perspective in the first chapter and another in the third and fifth chapters.

The whole of the matter is *EXACTLY the same in all three places*. But to properly understand the verses in chapters three and five in the light of those in chapter one, a person must understand what is meant in I John 3:9; 5:18 by the expression, “born of God,” *brought forth out of God*.

This is *the key*; this is *fundamental and primary*. And this *key* is what is discussed throughout the pages of I John.

In the third and fifth chapters of this book, John simply provides additional commentary for that introduced in the first chapter; and he provides this additional commentary through a means seen so often throughout Scripture. John does this through viewing *the same thing from another perspective*. He simply provides *a different facet of the same truth*.

1

Except a Man... (I)

Brought Forth from Above, NOT from Below

“There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles [‘signs’] that thou doest except God be with him.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again [‘born from above’], he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb and be born?

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit [‘out of water and Spirit’], he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again [‘born from above,’ ‘brought forth from above’]” (John 3:1-7).

(This is the first of three chapters dealing with *the birth from above, being brought forth out of God*, in John’s gospel, James, I Peter, and John’s first epistle.)

The birth from above is introduced in John’s gospel in the first chapter (vv. 11-13) and is expanded upon and dealt with more fully in the third chapter (vv. 3ff).

In the first chapter, this birth is seen having to do with individuals *being brought forth completely apart from anything connected with man, through a work associated solely and completely with God:*

“...not of [‘out of’] blood, nor of [‘out of’] the will of the flesh, nor of [‘out of’] the will of man, but of [‘out of’] God” (v. 13).

And this Divine work, textually, has to do with those to whom Christ came 2,000 years ago — *the Jewish people*. *Through receiving the Christ, believing*, the Jewish people were given the “power [‘right’] to become the sons of God [Gk., ‘children of God’]” (v. 12).

Then in the third chapter, the words, “from above,” are used relative to this birth, with the subject matter being *signs*, and *the proffered kingdom* (vv. 1-3). *And, AGAIN, the Jewish people are in view.*

Nicodemus, a Pharisee, a teacher among the Jewish people, had come to Jesus “by night.” Nicodemus referenced *the signs* being performed, acknowledging that he and others (apparently other religious leaders) knew that the One performing these signs in the presence of the people could only be “a teacher come from God.”

In His response, Jesus remained *completely* within the scope of the subject at hand, though He moved beyond the thought of *signs* and dealt with the heart of the matter. Jesus immediately dealt with the necessity of *the birth from above* (previously introduced in John’s gospel as *a birth out of God* [1:13]) — *an absolute necessity* if an individual were to “see” that to which the signs pointed, *the kingdom of God*.

During Moses and Joshua’s day, and during Elijah and Elisha’s day, *signs* had been manifested in the presence of *the Jewish people* in connection with *the Old Testament theocracy*.

In this respect, drawing from the Old Testament Scriptures, a manifestation of signs surrounding Christ’s first coming, of necessity, *could ONLY have had to do with the Jewish people in relation to the proffered kingdom*.

Nicodemus’ query and Jesus’ response emanated from a background and setting of this nature. Though Nicodemus may have understood the reason for signs and that which they portended, he didn’t understand what Jesus meant when He called attention to the birth from above as a necessity for *seeing* the kingdom. His thoughts shifted *from* that of “signs” to Jesus’ statement concerning *the birth from*

above (vv. 3, 4), and Jesus then went on to explain the matter (vv. 5ff).

("Seeing" the kingdom in v. 3 should not be understood as something different than "entering" the kingdom in v. 5. Though two different Greek words are used, the same word translated "see" in v. 3 [*horao*] is used farther down in the same chapter [v. 36] in a synonymous sense to "enter" — *i.e.*, *not seeing life* in v. 36 can only, textually, be viewed as synonymous with *not entering into life* [cf. Matt. 5:20; 7:21; 19:17].

In this respect, John 3:5ff simply forms commentary for that which had previously been stated in v. 3.)

Thus, this birth, this bringing forth, in John's gospel is seen as a birth *out of God* (1:13) and/or a birth *from above* (3:3, 7). And this is in perfect keeping with the manner in which this birth is seen in all of the other New Testament passages where it is referenced — James 1:18, I Peter 1:3, 23, and I John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18.

In John 3:3, 7, the wording in the Greek text relating to this birth is different than it is in I Peter 1:3, 23 (two words are used in John, and a compound word is used in I Peter), but the English translation in both instances should be the same — *born from above*.

Then, in I John, the translation throughout (ten usages) is seen to be the same as in John 1:13 — *a birth, a bringing forth, out of God*. And, in James 1:18, a different Greek word is used.

(*Gennaō*, the Greek word for "begotten" or "bringing forth," is used throughout the references in John, I Peter, and I John.

In John 3:3, 7, the word *gennaō* appears with another Greek word, *anōthen*, which means "from above." Though *anōthen* could be understood and translated "again," this translation would not really follow the manner in which this birth had previously been introduced in John 1:13 [a birth *out of God*]. Thus, understanding *anōthen* in its primary sense — "from above" [cf. John 3:31; 19:11] — forms a more natural flow of thought from that previously seen in the first chapter.

Then, in I Peter 1:3, 23, *gennaō* appears in a compound form, *anagen-naō*. The preposition *ana*, which has the primary meaning of "up," has been prefixed to the word. And though the preposition prefixed to the word in both verses is usually translated "again" in English translations [an acceptable and correct understanding and translation of the word in many instances], this would not really be in keeping with either the

primary meaning of the preposition or the manner in which this birth [a bringing forth] is expressed in both John's gospel ["out of God" and "from above"] and his first epistle ["out of God"].

The correct understanding and translation of *anagennao* in I Peter 1:3, 23 should be the same as that seen through the use of *gennao* and *anathen* together in John 3:3, 7 — *born from above*, a birth or a bringing forth which is introduced in John's gospel and continued in his first epistle as being *out of God*.

Then in James 1:18, the Greek word *apokueo* is used. This is a medical term which refers to *that which occurs at the end of a pregnancy* — "a bringing forth," "a giving birth.")

Out of God, from Above

The birth "out of God" (John 1:13) or "from above" (John 3:3, 7) is almost universally taught in Christendom as having to do with *a birth experienced by unsaved people*, occurring at the moment they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and pass "from death unto life."

That is, the Spirit breathing life into an unsaved individual, based on Christ's finished work at Calvary, is looked upon as the birth "out of God," "from above," seen in these verses.

The problem is that *this is NOT the manner in which the matter is introduced in John 1:13; NOR is this the manner in which the matter is continued in John 3:3, 7; NOR is this the manner in which the matter is seen in James, I Peter, and I John.*

This is NOT to say that the Divine work surrounding an unsaved individual believing on the Lord Jesus Christ and being saved is not to be viewed in the same manner, i.e., as being brought forth "out of God," "from above." Rather, *it is to say that the verses being used (John 1:13; 3:3, 7; James 1:18; I Peter 1:3, 23; I John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18) DON'T refer to this initial work of God through the Spirit. Instead, they refer to subsequent works of God through the Spirit — subsequent works (pl.) because that connected with the bringing forth "out of God" is NOT the same in each instance.*

The work pertaining to an unsaved individual, "dead in trespasses and sins," passing "from death unto life," *can ONLY be a Divine bringing forth "out of God," "from above."* *It has to be, for this is the way that the matter is presented throughout Scripture, begin-*

ning in the opening verses of Genesis chapter one. Ruined man is *completely incapable* of bringing himself out of his ruined state.

A Divine work MUST occur.

However, Scripture *NEVER* uses the type terminology seen in the referenced verses from John's gospel, James, I Peter, and I John relative to this Divine work, unless possibly a verse such as Isa. 66:8 would be referring to this facet of Israel's future acceptance of Christ.

There can be *NO* Divine work performed among man (either saved or unsaved man) *apart from* this work occurring "out of God," "from above." *Such would be IMPOSSIBLE.*

And, in this respect, the verses from John's gospel, James, I Peter, and I John *DO describe the source of the work of salvation by grace* (for it is the same, it has to be — *i.e., out of God, from above*), though these verses *DO NOT pertain to this work per se.*

The problem, as previously noted, is that Christians have been quick to remove these verses from their respective contexts and misapply them, making these verses deal with something which *the verses DON'T deal with at all.*

And, through so doing, that work of God which the Spirit intended, as He moved men to pen these verses, *is done away with.*

The remainder of this chapter will show, in all places where the birth from above is referenced (the Gospel of John, James, I Peter, I John), *WHY the verses dealing with this subject MUST be looked upon as pertaining to different facets of God's work among the saved, NOT to one facet of His work among the unsaved.*

The Gospel of John

When Christ came to Israel the first time, He came to a people capable of spiritual perception and discernment, else He could not have appeared on the scene calling for the nation's repentance and proclaiming the kingdom as being "at hand."

Christ came to a disobedient nation, though to a saved generation of Jews, to a nation which had been sacrificing and availing itself of the blood of the paschal lambs year by year. And Christ was born *King* in the nation's midst, presenting Himself as *the God-sent Deliverer in this respect* — deliverance from the consequences

of centuries of disobedience, which had resulted in a complete reversal of conditions pertaining to the nation's calling (Lev. 26:14-39; Deut. 28:15-67).

Israel's spiritual condition and position at this time was that of *a son being chastened because of disobedience* (cf. Zech. 1:14, 15).

Or, to place the matter within another frame of reference, it was that of *God dealing with an adulterous wife who had been caught up in harlotry among the nations* (cf. Jer. 3:1-3).

And, viewing the matter from either vantage point, *it is evident that the whole of Christ's message to Israel had to do with things beyond the thought of eternal salvation, particularly since "signs" and "the kingdom" were in view.*

His message had to do with *deliverance relative to the nation's condition, within the proclaimed kingdom.* And deliverance effected through receiving the Christ, believing, for the Jews at this time (*whether in the offer of the kingdom preceding the events of Calvary or the re-offer following*) *MUST be understood accordingly.*

(For more detailed information along these lines, refer to the author's book, *From Acts to the Epistles*, particularly the first four chapters.)

Those Jews receiving the Christ at His first coming in John 1:12, 13, through believing on His name, were said to be "born...of God ['brought forth out of God']" and given the right to become "the children of God." And, as previously noted, such an act centered around *deliverance, with the kingdom in view, NOT eternal salvation.*

These were Jews, part of a nation which comprised God's first-born son (Ex. 4:22, 23), though a disobedient son, being given the right to become "children of God" through *receiving the Christ and being brought forth out of God.* And acceptance, belief on the part of the people, could only have had to do with *the MANNER in which Christ presented Himself to the Jewish people (a REGAL manner), along with the message being proclaimed (the KINGDOM being "at hand").*

It may at first sound strange to take one who is already a son and view him as a child, *but NOT so. This is EXACTLY the manner in which it HAD TO occur in Israel then or MUST occur in Christendom today.*

Israel had been called out of Egypt under Moses as *God's firstborn son to rule at the head of the nations, with the nations being blessed*

through Israel. And this entire thought must be carried over into the deliverance which Christ was offering Israel as the One greater than Moses.

God's firstborn son was again being called forth for EXACTLY the same purpose. But at this time, unlike during Moses' day, a disobedient son was being dealt with.

The matter can be clarified through referencing two passages of Scripture — John 8:31-44 and Heb. 12:5-8.

In the former passage (John 8:31-44), Jews rejecting Christ were looked upon as *children of the Devil* (vv. 37-44). And Jews receiving Christ, according to John 1:12, 13, had been removed from this position and given the right to become *the children of God*.

In the latter passage (Heb. 12:5-8), *sons are seen being trained from the vantage point of a child*. The Greek word translated "chastening," "chasteneth," and "chastisement" in this section has to do with *child-training*. The passage deals with *sons presently being child-trained*, with a view to Christ one day bringing "many sons unto glory" with Him (Heb. 2:10), or, as stated in Rom. 8:19, a "manifestation of the sons of God."

(For additional information on the child-training of sons, refer to the author's book, *God's Firstborn Sons*, Ch. III.)

John 1:12, 13 had to do with God taking His disobedient sons (individuals within the nation forming His firstborn son), performing an act similar to that seen in Col. 1:13 (causing them to change sides with respect to two kingdoms), and then child-training His sons with a view to that which sonship implies — *rulership*.

And Jesus' discourse to Nicodemus involved exactly the same thing. It was simply a continuation and expansion of another facet of that which began to be developed earlier in the gospel account.

Being brought forth *from above* in chapter three, previously described as *out of God* in chapter one, had to do with being brought forth "out of water and Spirit" (literal rendering from the Greek text).

In the type having to do with the Israelites under Moses, this could only have drawn from the experiences of the Israelites during the Red Sea passage and beyond. It could only have pointed to that seen on the eastern banks and beyond — resurrection life (removed from the place of death [from the waters of the Sea]),

with God, through His Spirit, then leading them away from Egypt and the Sea toward another land.

(For additional information on John 3:5 and the typology of the Red Sea passage, refer to Ch. II, pp. 21-24, in this book. Also refer to the author's book, *Redeemed for a Purpose*, Ch. IX, pp. 126-129.)

John 1:11-13 deals with *the child-training of disobedient sons*, and John 3:3-8 deals with *particulars surrounding this child-training*.

A deliverance of SAVED individuals, a deliverance with REGALITY in view, is seen throughout.

James

James 1:15-18 shows *a begetting, a bringing forth from both below and above*. Verse fifteen shows the former (*from below*), and verse eighteen the latter (*from above*).

In verse fifteen, the Greek words *tikto* ("to beget," "to bring forth") and *apokueo* ("to bring forth," "to give birth [as seen in a medical respect]") are used in a somewhat synonymous sense, with *apokueo* showing "results." *Tikto* is used in the first part of the verse ("bringeth forth sin"); and *apokueo* is used in the latter part of the verse showing *the results*, in the sense of "sin" having given birth to ("bringeth forth death").

Then in verse eighteen, *apokueo* is used relative to *life instead of death*, as seen in verse fifteen. And this word is used relative to *the power of the Word in a Christian's life, effecting, giving birth to, the metamorphosis — the results of the power of the Word* (ref. the author's book, *Salvation of the Soul*, Ch. IV):

"Of his own will begat he us with the Word of truth..."

Thus, these two words are used in James relative to Christians either being brought forth from below (through that associated with sin, *resulting in death*) or being brought forth from above (through the Word, *resulting in life* [cf. Rom. 8:11-14]).

I Peter

God bringing individuals forth in I Peter 1:3, 23 has to do with

additional commentary on that seen in John 3:3-8. But, rather than the message being drawn from events surrounding the offer of the kingdom to Israel and having to do with a re-offer of the kingdom to Israel (as in John's gospel), the message in I Peter is directed to the one to whom the kingdom of the heavens was offered after it had been taken from Israel (*cf.* Matt. 21:33-45; I Peter 2:9, 10).

The message in I Peter is seen directed to *the one new man* "in Christ," to Christians. And it is a simple matter to see in both verses in I Peter chapter one (vv. 3, 23) that the birth from above — being brought forth *from above, out of God* — has to do with saved individuals, not with the unsaved.

I Peter 1:3 should literally read:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us from above with respect to a living hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ out of the dead."

Being brought forth *from above* in this verse is with respect to *a living hope*, made possible through *the resurrection of Jesus Christ from among the dead*. Christians have been saved for a purpose, and that purpose is seen in the entirety of this verse, along with the verses which follow (vv. 4ff).

That is to say, Christians have been saved (*a PAST bringing forth from above*) *with a view to their being brought forth from above (PRESENT aspect of salvation)*, which has to do with *a living hope*, a hope made possible through Christ's resurrection. And this hope has to do with *a FUTURE inheritance inseparably connected with the saving of the soul* (vv. 4-10).

The salvation presently possessed by every Christian has to do with *Christ's death*. It has to do with *death and shed blood*. This is the unchangeable manner in which matters were set forth in Genesis, beginning with chapter three.

This is why Paul, when first going to Corinth and dealing centrally with unsaved individuals, proclaimed one message alone — "Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (I Cor. 2:1, 2).

The gospel of grace involves *death and shed blood*. Then, *burial and resurrection* form continuing parts of the overall gospel message and have to do with present and future aspects of salvation.

Seen within the type beginning in Exodus chapter twelve, *death* and *shed blood* would have to do with that involved in the slaying of the paschal lambs and the proper application of the blood.

The death of the firstborn, with God being satisfied, occurred at this point. But *burial* and *resurrection* are seen at points beyond — at the Red Sea passage, and on the eastern banks of the Sea.

Being brought forth from above in I Peter 1:3 has to do with *resurrection*, NOT with *death and shed blood*. It has to do with realizing *a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from among the dead*. Thus, it can ONLY have to do with *present and future aspects of salvation*, NOT with the *past aspect* (which is the “why” of the explanation in John 3:5ff to Christ’s statement in v. 3).

A different facet of the same thing is seen in I Peter 1:23. The begetting from above is accomplished “through the living and abiding word of God” (NASB). And it is plain from continuing verses (vv. 24, 25) that verse twenty-three is referring to the written word, which is “quick [‘alive’], and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword...” (Heb. 4:12a).

The picture in I Peter 1:23 is that of *the metamorphosis* (cf. Rom. 12:1, 2; Col. 3:10) — the indwelling Spirit taking the implanted Word and effecting spiritual growth from immaturity to maturity (James 1:18, 21). This work of the Spirit is spoken of in I Peter 1:23 as something *brought forth from above* (*out of God*); and this can be experienced ONLY by the saved, for:

- 1) The person must first possess spiritual life in order for spiritual growth to occur.
- 2) The saving of the soul rather than a Christian’s presently possessed salvation is in view (James 1:21; I Peter 1:3-9).

(For additional information on *the implanted Word* and *the metamorphosis*, refer to the author’s book, *Salvation of the Soul*, Chapters III, IV.)

I John

Individuals being brought forth out of God in I John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18 has to do with additional commentary on that seen

in both John 1:11-13 and John 3:3-8, along with being perfectly in line with that seen in I Peter 1:3, 23.

I John though is slightly different than I Peter. Though it is evident that I John was written to Christians (as I Peter), the book was *ALSO* evidently written for the same purpose as John's gospel.

The structure of I John runs *parallel* with parts of John's gospel, particularly the opening three chapters of the gospel, along with the stated purpose in chapter twenty (vv. 30, 31).

Note that John began his epistle as he had begun his gospel — taking the reader all the way back to the beginning (*cf.* John 1:1; I John 1:1). Then, after dealing with matters in this respect, along with singling out Christ and pointing to His true identity (*EXACTLY* as seen in the gospel account), John immediately places matters within the confines of the typology of the tabernacle. He calls attention to sin, confession of sin, and forgiveness of sin.

Though it is not dealt with in so many words, there appears to be an allusion and call to Israel in this respect (paralleling the call for "repentance" in the gospel accounts). The Jewish people had sinned, but forgiveness could be forthcoming, if... And this allusion and call to Israel continues at places throughout the epistle in matters related to being brought forth *out of God*.

Note, for example, that being brought forth *out of God* in I John 5:1-5 is identical to that seen in John 1:11-13; 20:30, 31. In both places, being brought forth *out of God* has to do with believing that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God."

This is exactly what the Jewish people *were called upon to believe in both the offer and re-offer of the kingdom*. Both the words "Christ" and "Son," textually, have *regal* implications — *the Christ* (*the Messiah*, the One Who was to rule and reign); and *the Son* ("Sonship," implying *rulership*, for only *Sons* can rule in God's kingdom). This was the One to Whom God would one day give the sceptre and place on His "holy hill of Zion" (Ps. 2:6, 7; Dan. 7:13, 14; Rev. 11:15).

The signs in John's gospel were given to effect *belief among the Jewish people that Jesus was the Christ, God's Son, Who would one day take the sceptre and reign*. This is seen connected with being brought forth *out of God* in John 1:11-13, and this is seen *EXACTLY the same way* in I John 5:1-5.

In the preceding respect, I John, undoubtedly written during the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel (as John's gospel), would have to be viewed much like Rom. 1:16 (*cf.* Rom. 2:5-16) — "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

(For information concerning the time of the offer and subsequent re-offer of the kingdom to Israel, refer to the author's book, *Signs in John's Gospel*, Ch. 1 pp. 11, 12.)

Being brought forth *out of God* in I John (mentioned ten times in six verses [2:29; 3:9 (twice); 4:7; 5:1 (three times); 5:4; 5:18 (twice)]) has to do with exactly the same thing as seen in John's gospel (chs. 1, 3), in James (1:18), or in Peter's first epistle (1:3, 23). It has to do with *works of the Spirit among the saved (which are not necessarily identical in each instance), connected with a child-training of sons.*

For example, note that being brought forth in this manner has to do with believing the truth about Jesus being the Christ, God's Son, in John 1:11-13 and I John 5:1, 5; and in John 3:5, James 1:18, I Peter 1:3, 23, and most of the references in I John, the thought of being brought forth in this manner has to do with maturity in the faith.

Within the scope of being brought forth *out of God* in I John, *only that which is of God will manifest itself.*

This will explain why mainly perfect tenses are used in the Greek text throughout I John, pointing to a past, completed action, existing during present time in a finished state (eight of the ten usages in I John are in the perfect tense, as well as John 3:6, 8 and I Peter 1:23) — a tense structure showing *present action among believers surrounding that which is out of God, based on a past Divine work.*

Also, this will explain why sin cannot exist within the scope of that brought forth *out of God* in I John 3:6, 9; 5:18. Anything connected with the world, the flesh, and the Devil *MUST exist outside the scope of that brought forth out of God.* And, conversely, things such as abiding in Him, keeping His commandments, and love *MUST exist within the scope of that brought forth out of God.*

The whole of the matter is really that simple and easy to understand. A person is either active in one sphere or the other. There is no middle ground (cf. Matt. 12:30; Luke 11:23).

2

Except a Man... (II)

Brought Forth from Above, NOT from Below

“There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles [‘signs’] that thou doest except God be with him.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again [‘born from above’], he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb and be born?

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit [‘out of water and Spirit’], he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again [‘born from above,’ ‘brought forth from above’]” (John 3:1-7).

John introduces *a bringing forth out of God* (1:13), *a birth [a bringing forth] from above* (3:3-7), in the opening part of his gospel. And the context surrounding John’s introduction is in relation to *the Jewish people, signs, and the proffered kingdom* (1:11, 12; 3:2, 3).

John then calls attention to the same thing — *a bringing forth out of God* — ten times in his first epistle (2:29; 3:9 [twice]; 4:7; 5:1 [three times]; 5:4; 5:18 [twice]).

And from the subject matter of I John and the context surrounding these ten usages of the expression, it appears quite evident that the message pertaining to the matter is simply *a continuation of that introduced in his gospel (to the Jew ONLY during the original offer of the kingdom [when the recorded events occurred (Matt. 10:5, 6; 15:24)], and "to the Jew FIRST" during the re-offer [when both the gospel and first epistle, because of their subject matter, were undoubtedly written (Rom. 1:16; 2:9, 10)]). BUT, during the re-offer, as seen in the referenced verses from Romans, the message, though not the re-offer of the kingdom itself, was "ALSO to the Greek ['Gentile']."*

(The "re-offer" of the kingdom itself was *SOLELY Jewish*. Even though *the message* was to both Jew and Gentile during this time [saved Jews as distinguished from saved Gentiles], the "re-offer" of the kingdom was "to the Jew" *ALONE*, as in the original offer.

This re-offer of the kingdom *had NOTHING to do with the one new man "in Christ."* Rather, it was this *new man* who carried the message to Israel. The original offer and the subsequent re-offer of the kingdom had to do with *the entire nation of Israel, not with individual Jews and, particularly, not with saved Gentiles.*

Both the offer and the re-offer had to do with *the SAME thing, attended by the SAME signs*, for it is *the Jew* who requires a sign [I Cor. 1:22]. It had to do with *repentance on the part of the entire nation. The matter was either ALL [the entire nation repenting] or NOTHING in this respect.*

For additional information on this subject, refer to the author's book, *Signs in John's Gospel*, Ch. I, pp. 11, 12, along with material beginning on p. 15 in this chapter. Also, note the way James began his epistle, written during this time.)

Then, the matter of being *brought forth from above* in I Peter (1:3, 23), contextually, has to do with Christians, with those taken from both the Jews and the Gentiles. It has to do with *the one new man, a new creation "in Christ,"* where the distinction between Jew and Gentile does not, it cannot, exist (Eph. 2:11-15; 3:1-6; cf. Gal. 3:26-29).

From a contextual standpoint, whether dealing with *being brought forth from above, out of God*, from John's gospel, his first epistle, James, or I Peter, *it would be quite FORCED and UNNATURAL to view any of these texts as referring to an unsaved person believing*

on the Lord Jesus Christ and passing “from death unto life.”

Though this is what Bible students and teachers invariably do, *such should NEVER be the case. The various contexts simply will NOT allow this type interpretation of any one of these passages.*

And though *a bringing forth from above, out of God*, is what occurs when an individual is saved (it has to occur, else salvation could not be effected, for salvation is brought to pass entirely through Divine intervention — a bringing forth from above), the texts in these three books *should NOT* be used in this manner. Salvation by grace is simply *NOT the subject at hand*.

Though using these verses relative to salvation by grace may result in positive end results (i.e., result in individuals being saved), there is *a negative consequence which CANNOT be ignored*. Using these verses in this erroneous manner will *DO AWAY with the exact teaching which the Spirit intended when He moved John, James, and Peter to pen the various things which they recorded*.

This type usage of these verses will *DO AWAY with the thought of saved individuals being brought forth out of God relative to a REVEALED GOAL — in the overall message of the kingdom (to the Jew ONLY during the time of the offer of the kingdom, to the Jew FIRST and ALSO the Gentile during the time of the re-offer of the kingdom [Christians referenced by “Gentile”], and to Christians ALONE since that time)*.

Offer, Re-offer of the Kingdom

In verses such as Rom. 1:16; 2:9, 10; 10:12 (cf. Gal. 2:2; Eph. 3:6; Col. 1:27) — referring to both *the Jews* and *the Gentiles* — a distinction was made between *two groups of saved individuals* during the time when the kingdom of the heavens was being *re-offered to Israel* (from 33 A.D. to about 62 A.D.).

A distinction, using terminology of this nature relative to the saved — Jew and Gentile — was necessary at that time, for the generation of saved Jews both preceding and following Calvary was still alive and being reckoned with on the basis of *repentance and the kingdom* (the same generation of Jews which had rejected and crucified their *King* [cf. Matt. 2:2; John 19:14-19]).

However, a distinction of this nature would be unnecessary

following the time when the kingdom was being re-offered to Israel.

Actually, following the close of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel, *referring to saved Jews and Gentiles in this manner would have been out of place.*

And the reason is evident. During the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel, as previously stated, God dealt with a *generation of Jews whose origin preceded Calvary — a saved generation of Jews, else there could have been NO offer or subsequent re-offer of the kingdom.*

However, the re-offer of the kingdom *could continue ONLY as long as this generation of Jews remained alive and on the scene.*

But once this generation began to be replaced by a new generation, whose origin followed Calvary, *the re-offer of the kingdom could NOT be continued.*

A saved generation of Jews, to whom the offer could be extended, no longer existed, necessitating a CLOSE to the re-offer of the kingdom.

Those comprising the previous generation would have availed themselves of the blood of the slain paschal lambs preceding Calvary, and their rejection of the Christ as the nation's King *could NOT have done away with that which had previously occurred.*

It could NOT have done away with a previous vicarious death of the firstborn, which God could ONLY have clearly recognized, as He had previously done during and since Moses' day (Ex. 12:1-13).

To think otherwise and say or infer that the events of Calvary could have done away with *the previous vicarious death for those comprising that generation* would be to open the door for *the same thing to have occurred with ALL previous generations, taking the matter ALL the way back to Moses, with Moses himself being included.*

However, any generation of Jews born following Calvary (from the first century until today) could fulfill God's requirement pertaining to the necessity of the death of the firstborn through death and shed blood, as seen in Exodus chapter twelve, *ONLY ONE REVEALED WAY.*

The Paschal Lamb had been slain, the One foreshadowed by all the paschal lambs slain from Moses to Christ. This part of the Passover had been fulfilled.

Thus, following the time of Christ's death, *God no longer rec-*

ognized a continued slaying of paschal lambs.

And, following this time, for anyone (Jew or Gentile, no distinction existed) to realize a vicarious death of the firstborn, to be saved, *that person HAD TO avail himself/herself of the blood of the Paschal Lamb Who had died in their place. That person HAD TO believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Accordingly, following the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel, the expressions “Christians” or “the Church of God” would be the proper terminology used relative to the saved. Following this time, “Jew” and/or “Gentile” would refer to the unsaved rather than, as in certain previous times, to two groups of saved individuals.

(Note though that the same distinction and terminology used following the close of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel — “Christians,” “the church of God” — was also used during the time of the re-offer [Acts 11:26; I Cor. 10:32].

But, during this time, because those to whom this re-offer was being extended were not part of the Church of God, though saved [*Jews, comprising the nation at large but refusing to believe that Jesus was the Christ, their Messiah, the One Who would rule and reign*], the distinction and terminology as seen in Rom. 1:16 [“Jew” and “Greek (referring to saved Gentiles)”] had to exist as well.)

John's Gospel

John's gospel is where the matter of being *brought forth from above, out of God*, is introduced, in so many words, in the New Testament. John though doesn't introduce something new in Scripture. He simply uses different terminology to describe something which should have been well-known by the Jewish people, for *a bringing forth from above, a bringing forth out of God*, is seen over and over throughout not only Israel's history but Scripture as a whole.

And an expected understanding of this truth from Scripture would have been particularly true for Israel's religious leaders.

This is why Nicodemus in John 3:1ff *would have been expected to immediately recognize that to which Christ referred (cf. John 7:45-52), which accounts for Christ's sharp rebuke when he failed to do so.*

The truth of the matter concerning exactly what is involved becomes increasingly evident as one studies and understands the Old Testament Scriptures to which Jesus alluded in His conversation with Nicodemus. And, in line with Jesus' rebuke of Nicodemus, *a person could ONLY expect to find matters set forth in this manner — a bringing forth from above, out of God — not only at the outset of Scripture but continuing throughout, which is EXACTLY what is found in the Old Testament.*

This is the way *Scripture begins, establishing an unchangeable pattern for the manner in which Scripture MUST continue.*

Note how this is seen in the opening thirty-four verses of Genesis:

1) Genesis 1:1-2:3

This opening section of Scripture forms a skeletal framework which sets forth, at the beginning, *a pattern which ALL subsequent Scripture MUST follow, a foundational framework upon which the WHOLE of subsequent Scripture rests.* God set forth, at the beginning of His Word, in skeletal form, that which He was about to open up and reveal concerning His plans and purposes for man and the earth.

The remainder of Scripture is simply commentary, providing all the sinews, flesh, and skin to cover the skeletal, foundational framework set forth at the beginning.

The opening thirty-four verses of Genesis reveal:

- a) A Creation (1:1)
- b) A Ruin of the Creation (1:2a).
- c) A Restoration of the Ruined Creation, occurring over six days time (with the creation of man occurring on the sixth day, following the completion of God's restorative work [1:2b-31]).
- d) A Seventh Day of Rest (2:1-3).

Chapter two deals with details, commentary, pertaining to man from chapter one; and the first part of chapter three deals with the ruin of the new creation (man's fall, his ruin). Then, the remainder of Scripture covers God's restorative work as it pertains to man — restoring the ruined creation over six days, 6,000 years,

with a view to the seventh day, a seventh 1,000-year period.

The pattern concerning how God restores a ruined creation *has forever been SET at the beginning*, in the opening thirty-four verses of Scripture.

God worked six days to restore a ruined creation, and He then rested the seventh day. *And this SET pattern — SET perfectly at the beginning — of necessity, MUST be followed in any subsequent restoration of a ruined creation, whether pertaining to the earth or to man.*

And, as Scripture reveals, a subsequent ruin occurred almost 6,000 years ago. And, as Scripture also reveals, God began a restorative work at that time, a work following the established pattern, covering six days, 6,000 years (*cf.* II Peter 1:15-18; 3:3-8).

Then, once this latter restorative work has been completed, exactly the same thing will occur as seen in Gen. 2:1-3. There will be a seventh day of rest, a concluding 1,000-year day — the prophesied, long-awaited Messianic Era.

During the six days in the restoration of the ruined material creation in Genesis chapter one, the first thing seen is the movement of the Spirit (v. 2b). Then, beyond that, each day of God's restorative work, from the first day, continuing through the sixth day, *begins EXACTLY the same way* — “And God said...” (vv. 3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24).

The movement of the Spirit, seen at the beginning of God's restorative work on the first day, *can ONLY be understood as continuing throughout the six days* — *seen moving when God began His work on the first day and continuing to move throughout God's work during the six days, with matters in this respect brought to a climax at the time God breathed into man “the breath of life” (2:7).*

Though this movement of the Spirit is not referred to beyond the initial statement in verse two (describing activity on the first day), a continued movement during all six days is evident. God does not act in the manner seen throughout His complete restorative work apart from His Spirit (evident, for example, from Christ's ministry while on earth almost two millennia ago — performing miraculous signs through the power of the Spirit [Matt. 12:24-32]).

And a continued movement of the Spirit is evident through the statement concerning God breathing into man “the breath

of life” in Gen. 2:7 (providing detail concerning God’s creation of man in ch. 1, vv. 26-28), for God performs a work of this nature through His Spirit alone (e.g., note Ezek. 37:1-14 [“Spirit” and “breath” in this passage are translations of the same word in the Hebrew text — *Ruach* — which, depending on the context, can be understood as either “Spirit” or “breath”]).

Now, with the preceding in mind and understanding that Gen. 1:1-2:3 is foundational to all subsequent Scripture, note something as it would pertain to the statements in John’s gospel, his first epistle, James, or I Peter relative to *being brought forth from above, out of God*. God’s work in this respect *DOESN’T* occur just at the beginning (Gen. 1:2b-5). *Rather, it occurs throughout the WHOLE of the restorative process* (vv. 6-25).

That would be to say, in that which this complete restorative work foreshadows, God’s work *DOESN’T* stop with the salvation which we presently possess (*an initial Divine work* having to do with the salvation of the spirit, a past and completed work, foreshadowed by Divine activity occurring on day one).

Rather, God’s work *continues* throughout that seen during the other five days (*a continued Divine work* having to do with the saving of the soul, a present and yet to be completed work, foreshadowed by Divine activity occurring on days two through six).

That is, viewing *a bringing forth from above, out of God*, in the original foundational type, such a Divine work is seen throughout the restoration, from beginning to end, else there could have been no complete restoration.

And such *MUST* be equally true in that which these opening verses of Scripture foreshadow, the ruin and restoration of a subsequent creation — *that of man*.

Then, EXACTLY as seen in the first chapter of Genesis, there MUST be a bringing forth from above, out of God, throughout man’s restoration — throughout not only the salvation of the spirit but the salvation of the soul and body as well — else, exactly as in Genesis chapter one, *there can be NO complete restoration, something vitally necessary if man is to have a part in activities on the seventh day*.

Thus, in man’s restoration, it *should NOT* be thought strange to see this continued restoration stated after the manner seen in

John's gospel, in his first epistle, in James, or in Peter's first epistle.

In fact, in the light of the way Scripture begins (a manner in which it can only continue), it should actually be thought strange if this continued restoration, foreshadowed by events on days two through six, was seen *after any OTHER manner in these sections of Scripture*. In the light of the way Scripture begins and, of necessity, continues, seeing an allusion to the matter in John's gospel, his first epistle, James, and Peter's first epistle *could ONLY be very natural*.

(For a more exhaustive treatment of Gen. 1:1-2:3, refer to the author's book, *The Study of Scripture*, Chapters I-IV.)

2) Exodus 12ff

Old Testament commentary on the opening thirty-four verses of Scripture, as it would pertain more particularly to that seen in John 3:3, 5, can possibly best be seen by beginning in Exodus chapter twelve and continuing through the book of Joshua. And this large section of Israeli history is something Nicodemus should have been quite familiar with, allowing him to understand Christ's statement in the light of the Old Testament Scriptures. But Nicodemus failed to make the proper association, accounting for Christ's sharp rebuke.

In this respect, note Jesus' explanatory statement in John 3:5 (explaining that which he had stated in verse three) in the light of Israeli history, beginning with the institution of the Passover in Exodus chapter twelve.

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit [Gk., 'Except a man be born (brought forth) out of water and Spirit'], he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Note how the type, beginning in Exodus chapter twelve, will open the whole of Christ's statement to one's understanding. The type will shed light upon and help explain the antitype, which is exactly what the type is supposed to do. This is the way God designed the type in relation to its antitype.

A) Out of Water

It is evident that Nicodemus *would NOT* have associated Christ's statements in John 3:3, 5 with the events in Exodus chapter twelve

— the Passover. The Passover, the first of seven Jewish festivals given to the Israelites under Moses (*cf.* Lev. 23:1ff), had to do with events which Nicodemus would have known that the nation had kept, which Israel had been observing year after year for centuries of time.

And, being among Israel's religious leaders, he *could ONLY have been among those participating in these events.*

The conversation between Christ and Nicodemus in John 3:1ff *could ONLY have been a conversation between Christ and a person who had already experienced the death of the firstborn, as seen in Ex. 12:1ff.* And, beyond this, according to that clearly seen and stated in both the text and context, the subject matter had to do with *the Jewish people and the kingdom* (a people who could only be viewed as saved, having availed themselves of the blood of slain paschal lambs, with the firstborn having died vicariously).

This conversation *could have had NOTHING to do with eternal salvation*, which, of necessity, would have related to the events of Exodus chapter twelve.

That to which Jesus referred *could ONLY be seen in the type as having to do with events beyond the Passover in Ex. 12:1ff.* *It could ONLY have been understood as having to do with a continued Divine work* beyond that foreshadowed by the events of day one in Genesis chapter one. *It could ONLY have been understood as having to do with a continued Divine work* seen in that foreshadowed by the events occurring throughout days two through six of this chapter — *a CONTINUED bringing forth from above, with a GOAL in view.*

In the original type in Gen. 1:1-2:3, this GOAL is seen as *man exercising regality during a seventh day of rest.* In the type beginning in Exodus chapter twelve, this GOAL is seen as *the Jewish people realizing an inheritance in another land, within a theocracy.*

And both types point to different facets of *EXACTLY the same thing occurring during EXACTLY the same time* — *events during the 1,000-year Messianic Era, which will be the seventh millennium following six millenniums of Divine restorative work.*

Born out of water from John 3:5, in the type beginning in Exodus chapter twelve, can only have to do with the Red Sea passage following the Passover. The Israelites (who had experienced the death of the firstborn) were then taken down into the Sea, symbol-

izing *burial following death* (taken down into the place of death) and raised up out of the Sea, symbolizing *resurrection* (raised up out of the place of death) and placed on the eastern banks of the Sea (Ex. 12-15).

They stood on the eastern banks of the Sea through *supernatural means, wherein resurrection power was exhibited*. And they stood in this position with a view to *an inheritance in another land, within a theocracy*.

The Israelites, passing through the Sea, had gone down into *the place of death*. Only the dead are to be buried, and *the death of the firstborn* had just occurred.

Thus, *a burial MUST also occur*. But beyond burial, with a vicarious death of the firstborn, *there MUST also be a resurrection*.

The Israelites, following the death of the firstborn, possessed spiritual life. Thus, they *had to be raised* from the place of death *to walk* “in newness of life” — something having to do with *the spiritual man alone*, for this resurrection had nothing to do with the man of flesh. He was to be left in the place of death.

This is pictured during the present dispensation through the act of baptism. A person (a Christian), having experienced the death of the firstborn vicariously (through the blood of the Paschal Lamb, Who died in his stead), is placed down in the waters. He then, within the symbolism involved, finds himself in *the place of death*, beneath the waters.

But, because the One providing the vicarious death conquered death, the Christian can be removed from the waters and find himself in the position of *having been raised with Christ* (Col. 2:12; 3:1ff).

And in this position — wrought through *supernatural, resurrection power* — the Christian is *to walk* “in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4), with a view to *an inheritance in another land, within a theocracy*.

It is going down into the place of death because of the death of the firstborn, and it is rising from this place, as Christ was raised, because the person possesses spiritual life.

And this rising has to do with *the spiritual man ALONE*, for, again, this resurrection has nothing to do with the man of flesh. He is to be left in the place of death.

(The Israelites under Moses in the type could walk out on the eastern banks of the Sea, in resurrection power, because of the totality of that seen in the previous death of the paschal lambs — *resurrection following a vicarious death.*

BUT, the pursuing Egyptian pharaoh and his army were left beneath the waters of the Sea, for there had been NO previous vicarious death of the firstborn.

THEN, the antitype of either today — those who HAVE and those who HAVE NOT experienced a vicarious death of the firstborn — is clear, allowing the complete matter to be quite readily seen and understood.)

B) Out of Spirit

In John 3:5, Christ not only referred to *a birth (a bringing forth) out of water* in the preceding respect, but He also referred to *a birth (a bringing forth) out of Spirit* as well.

In the type, this is seen through the Israelites, on the eastern banks of the Sea, being led by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, as they moved toward *an inheritance in another land, within a theocracy.*

And the antitype is evident. A Christian, *raised from the waters* to walk “in newness of life,” has the indwelling Spirit to lead him into all truth, as he moves toward *an inheritance in another land, within a theocracy.*

There must be a resurrection in view. Then, the one raised from the place of death *must follow the man of spirit*, allowing the Spirit to fill and lead him throughout his pilgrim journey (*cf. Eph. 5:18, 19; Col. 3:16*).

And the entire matter rests upon that initially seen and set forth in an unchangeable fashion in Gen. 1:2b-25 — the ruined creation removed from its watery grave and completely restored over six days time by means of a work of the Spirit throughout.

This is why both “water” and “Spirit” are set forth side-by-side in John 3:5; and this is why the epistles, drawing from the types, go to such great lengths to call all the various facets of this matter to a Christian’s attention.

ONLY through this dual means can a Christian be successfully led to the goal of his calling. Only through this dual means can a Christian enter into the kingdom of God.

3

Except a Man... (III)

Brought Forth from Above, NOT from Below

“There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles [‘signs’] that thou doest except God be with him.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again [‘born from above’], he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb and be born?

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit [‘out of water and Spirit’], he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again [‘born from above,’ ‘brought forth from above’]” (John 3:1-7).

John, in his gospel, introduces the thought of being “born...of God [‘brought forth out of God’]” in the first chapter (vv. 11-13).

Then, in the third chapter, John records the account of Jesus referring to the same experience, using slightly different wording, in His conversation with Nicodemus: “Except a man be born again [‘born from above,’ ‘brought forth from above’]...” (v. 3).

Nicodemus, a leading teacher among the Pharisees in Israel, had come to Jesus “by night,” acknowledging that no one could perform *the signs being manifested* apart from Divine power.

And Jesus responded after the same fashion previously seen in chapter one, calling attention to the necessity of an individual being *brought forth out of God, brought forth from above* (vv. 1-7).

In chapter one, Christ had come unto “his own [‘His Own things’]” (v. 11a [“own” in this part of the verse is neuter in the Greek text]), which, in the light of His having been born “King of the Jews” (Matt. 2:2), would, of necessity, have referred centrally to *things REGAL in nature* (e.g., note “the sure mercies of David [lit., ‘the holy things of David’]” in Acts 13:33, 34).

Then, with respect to His Own things and His offer of the kingdom of the heavens to the nation of Israel, “his own [‘His Own people’] received him not” (v. 11b [“own” in this part of the verse is masculine in the Greek text, referring to *the Jewish people to whom Christ came*]).

Then in chapter three, after Nicodemus had acknowledged that no one could perform *the signs being manifested* apart from God’s power, Jesus’ response had to do with one single, overall subject: *the Jewish people in relation to these signs and the kingdom*.

The signs being manifested in Israel’s midst reflected upon *the nation’s condition, showing that which the Jewish people could have, IF...*

Israel was sick, as depicted, for example, in Isaiah chapter one — “from the sole of the foot even unto the head” (v. 6a) — and all of the signs which centered around supernatural healing showed *that which the nation could experience IF the Jewish people would repent*.

That’s why the command, to “repent,” preceded the announcement concerning “the kingdom”:

“Repent ye [a plural imperative (a command) in the Greek text, referring to *the nation at large*]: for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand” (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:5-8).

And, in the light of the signs to which Nicodemus called attention — which dealt with Israel’s condition, showing that which the nation could have, *IF...* — Jesus called attention to *the necessity of being brought forth from above*. That is to say, in Jesus’ response to

Nicodemus, in the light of both the signs being manifested and the message being proclaimed, He could have had *ONLY one thing centrally in mind through His statement concerning the birth from above, the bringing forth from above.*

The entire matter, whether looking at the immediate context or the larger context of Christ's statement, *would have to be understood as an allusion to the necessity of Divine healing for those in Israel (that to which the signs pointed), which could come from only one place, from above* (Hosea 5:13-6:2).

This healing would be *INDIVIDUAL* ("except a man..." [vv. 3, 5]), though it *MUST, as well, encompass the nation at large* ("Repent ye" [Matt. 3:2]). *The entire nation MUST repent.*

Thus, the whole of that seen in the first and third chapters of John's gospel relative to being *brought forth out of God, from above*, has to do with *the Jewish people, signs, and the kingdom.*

There is NOTHING here about eternal salvation, as is invariably, though erroneously, proclaimed using these verses.

Rather, the texts (in both chs. 1, 3) deal with *a saved people, in need of healing*; and the signs referenced in chapter three have to do with *the same people in relation to being healed, entering into the kingdom, and realizing an inheritance therein.*

And the continued use of the expression *brought forth out of God, from above*, relative to Christians in the New Testament, of necessity, *could ONLY be understood along the SAME lines.* Though signs would no longer be manifested (I Cor. 1:22; cf. Acts 2:4-12; I Cor. 13:8-10; 14:22), *spiritual healing could ONLY have to do with the SAME END — realizing an inheritance in the kingdom.*

As in Israel, it would be necessary for saved individuals (Christians) to be *brought forth out of God, from above* (no matter what their condition); and this would *ALWAYS, EXACTLY as previously seen in the camp of Israel, occur in relation to the proffered kingdom.*

The kingdom of the heavens was being offered to Israel at the time referenced by the events in John's gospel. And, because of Israel's refusal to repent, climaxed by the nation's rejection and crucifixion of the One Who had made the offer and performed the miraculous signs, this part of the kingdom (the heavenly sphere) was taken from Israel (Matt. 21:33-45).

Then a new nation, *the one new man* “in Christ,” was called into existence to be the recipient of that which Israel had rejected, which had been taken from the nation (Eph. 2:11-15; 3:1-6; I Peter 2:9, 10).

In this respect, *EXACTLY* the same overall teaching set forth in John 1:12, 13; 3:3-8 — *pointing to the necessity of a Divine work within a person’s life* — *would hold just as true among Christians today as it did among the Israelites 2,000 years ago.*

And the reason for and goal of this Divine work would be *EXACTLY the same* as seen among the Israelites in time past — *entrance into and realizing an inheritance in the proffered kingdom.*

With these things in mind, the remainder of this chapter will center around that seen in James, I Peter, and I John when reference is made to being *brought forth from above, out of God.*

(Relative to the type sickness in which the Jewish people found themselves 2,000 years ago [which continues with Israel today] and the type sickness in which Christians can find themselves during the present dispensation, note several distinctions.

“Israel” was both *God’s firstborn son and God’s former wife* [though *a disobedient son* who was being chastened and *an adulterous wife whom God had divorced, set aside* (Isa. 50:1; Jer. 3:8-14; Zech. 1:12-15)].

This dual position which Israel occupied had to do with *REGALITY* [only firstborn sons can rule in the human realm; and also within the human realm, within a theocracy, as established in the opening chapters of Genesis, the King in the theocracy (God) *MUST possess a consort queen* (Israel, in this case) to rule with Him]. *This dual position occupied by Israel was/remains at the heart of all Israeli disobedience, placing it central within Israel’s sickness.*

“The Church,” on the other hand, is *NOT presently God’s firstborn son; NOR* has there ever been *a marriage* between Christians and Christ. Both *adoption* and *marriage*, involving exactly the same thing as seen in the camp of Israel — *regality* — is *future* for Christians.

Christians are presently undergoing *child-training as sons* [Heb. 12:5-8], with a view to *a future adoption* [Rom. 8:14-23]. And, in the antitype of Boaz redeeming the inheritance and taking Ruth as his wife (Ruth 4:1ff), Christ will one day redeem the inheritance and take those Christians for His wife who had previously allowed child-training as sons [Rev. 5-19a].

Thus, *BOTH the adoption and marriage* for Christians are future. But still, as in Israel’s case, this dual position which will one day be occupied by Christians [firstborn sons and Christ’s wife], can only be *at the heart*

of all Christian disobedience — something which would place that held out before Christians and being spurned by numerous Christians *at the CENTER of all spiritual sickness seen within Christendom today.*

For more detailed information on *firstborn Sons* [Christ, Israel, and the Church], along with information on *the redemption of the inheritance* [through which those Christians shown worthy at the judgment seat will become Christ's wife], refer to the author's books, *God's Firstborn Sons* and *Ruth.*)

James

The epistle of James was written to deal with *faithfulness*, from several vantage points.

In the first chapter faithfulness has to do with *enduring temptation* (vv. 2-12) and, correspondingly, with *having been brought forth from above* (v. 18). And enduring temptation in this manner is seen having to do with *crowns in relation to the saving of the soul* (vv. 12, 21).

Then chapter two, having to do with another facet of *the SAME thing*, centers around works emanating out of faith, bringing faith to its proper goal (vv. 14-26).

And this goal is *the SAME as that seen in chapter one, having to do with crowns and the saving of the soul, with a view to an inheritance in the kingdom* (cf. James 2:5; I Peter 1:9; Heb. 11:1ff).

And the remaining three chapters have to do with *different facets of the SAME subject, ending again with the saving of the soul* (5:19, 20).

The manner in which James presents a bringing forth from above in the first chapter can be of immense help in understanding this overall subject, for James presents not only *a bringing forth from above* but he precedes this by presenting *a bringing forth from below* (vv. 15-18).

And it is Christians who are seen in both instances, *EITHER exercising faith and being brought forth from above or not exercising faith and being brought forth from below. NO middle ground exists. It is EITHER one or the other* (Matt. 12:30; Luke 11:23).

Verse fifteen shows *a bringing forth from below*; then verse eighteen shows *a bringing forth from above*. In verse fifteen, the Greek words *tikto* ("to beget," "to bring forth") and *apokueo* ("to bring

forth," "to give birth" [as seen in a medical respect]) are used in a somewhat synonymous sense, with *apokueo* showing "results." *Apokueo* is a medical term which refers to that occurring at the end of a pregnancy — "a bringing forth," "a giving birth."

Tikto is used in the first part of the verse ("bringeth forth sin"); and *apokueo* is used in the latter part of the verse showing *the results*, in the sense of "sin" having given birth to ("bringeth forth death").

Then in verse eighteen, *apokueo* is used relative to *life instead of death*, as seen in verse fifteen. And, again, the word is used in a *medical respect*. *Apokueo* is used in this verse relative to *the power of the Word in a Christian's life, effecting, giving birth to, the metamorphosis — the results of the power of the Word* (ref. the author's book, *Salvation of the Soul*, Ch. IV):

"Of his own will begat he us with the Word of truth..."

Thus, these two words are used in James relative to Christians either being brought forth from below (through that associated with sin, *resulting in death*) or being brought forth from above (through the Word, *resulting in life*).

I Peter

The Epistles of I, II Peter were written to encourage Christians who were being tried and tested by holding up before them prizes, rewards, compensations, which are described in the epistles as *the salvation to be revealed, the salvation of the soul*.

And, in connection with the reason why these epistles were written, Peter opens his first epistle in the same manner that John opened his gospel — by referencing *the birth from above, the bringing forth from above*, in two different places.

1) A Living Hope, an Inheritance, a Salvation (1:3-9)

According to I Peter 1:3-9, those to whom Peter was writing (vv. 1, 2) had been *brought forth from above* "unto ['with respect to'] a living hope by ['through'] the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." And they had been brought forth in this manner with

respect to *an awaiting inheritance* associated with a *future salvation*, *the salvation of their souls*.

An individual is saved *with a purpose in view*. And the whole of that purpose is seen in I Peter 1:3-9.

The initial, Divine work pertaining to salvation (having to do with the salvation of the spirit) is with a view to a continued Divine work pertaining to salvation (the salvation of the soul), EXACTLY as seen in and foreshadowed by God's initial restorative work occurring on the first day in Genesis chapter one.

And His continued restorative work, occurring during time foreshadowed by Divine activity on the subsequent five days, is with a view to EXACTLY the same thing seen in the foundational type — a seventh day of rest.

It is evident from both the text and context that *the bringing forth from above* in I Peter 1:3 would parallel the Divine work seen in days two through six in Genesis chapter one, not the Divine work seen on the first day. *The bringing forth from above* has to do with things beyond the Spirit's initial work of salvation, through breathing life into the one having no life. In the type in Ex. 12ff it would move to the point of *resurrection* (note text in I Peter), which would be typified by the Israelites on the eastern banks of the Red Sea in chapters fourteen and fifteen, with a *hope, inheritance, and salvation* set before them (*ref.* Chapter II in this book).

The natural reading and understanding of the text, in the light of the context and Old Testament typology, would have to do with a *Divine work among Christians (a work among the saved, NOT the unsaved) relative to a present hope, which has to do with a future inheritance and salvation*.

This is "that blessed hope" in Titus 2:13, which, according to the manner in which the Greek text is worded (*ref.* Appendix III in this book), must be understood as "the appearing of the glory of the great God, Who is our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The purpose for a Divine work continuing in Christians, whether foreshadowed by the Old Testament types or seen in verses such as I Peter 1:3-9, has to do with events of the seventh day, with the land (a heavenly land) set before them. This is what the epistles are about, *which MUST be recognized if a proper and correct interpretation and understanding of the epistles is to be achieved*.

2) *Through the Word of God (1:23)*

In Rom. 12:2 Christians are commanded:

“And be not conformed to this world [‘age’]: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove [‘that you may learn by experience,’ Weymouth] what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.”

The Greek word translated “conformed” is *sunschematizo*. This is a compound word with the preposition *sun* (“with”) prefixed to the verb form of the word *schema* (“outline,” “diagram”). The English word “scheme” is an Anglicized form of the Greek word *schema*. The word has to do with a schematic outline, and the thought inherent in this compound Greek word (*sunschematizo*) and the negative command is *NOT to outline or diagram your life in accordance with the present age*.

This negative command is then followed by a positive command. Immediately following, the Christian is commanded to, instead, be “transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

The Greek word translated “transformed” is *metamorphoo*. This is the word from which our English word “metamorphosis” is derived. This word refers to *an inward change* brought about completely apart from the power of the individual himself. Unlike the thought of “conformed” in the preceding part of the verse, the Christian is powerless to bring about the *metamorphosis*.

Then, the word “renewing” is a translation of the Greek word *anakainosis*; and the action of the preceding verb (“transformed,” referring to the inward change) directs attention *to a continuous renewing process, one which is to keep on taking place*.

In II Cor. 4:16 we are told that “the inward man is renewed [*lit.*, ‘is being renewed’] day by day.” This renewing process is *to keep on taking place day in and day out for the entire duration of the pilgrim walk here on earth*.

Then, Col. 3:10 reveals how this renewing process, the renewing of the mind, is accomplished:

“And have put on the new man, which is renewed [*lit.*, ‘is being renewed’] in knowledge after the image of him that created him.”

Note the word “knowledge” in this verse. The regular Greek word for “knowledge” is *gnosis*, but the word used in Col. 3:10 is an intensified form of this word — *epignosis*. This is the word *gnosis* (knowledge) with the prefix *epi* (upon). *Epignosis*, thus, means “knowledge upon knowledge,” i.e., “a mature knowledge.”

The word translated “renewed” is a past participle of *anakainoo* (the same word used in Rom. 12:2 and II Cor. 4:16) and could be better translated, “being renewed.” The only way a Christian can acquire this mature knowledge, which allows the Spirit of God to progressively work *the metamorphosis* in his life, is through receiving the living Word of God into his saved human spirit, “day by day.”

Christians *MUST* allow God to continue “breathing in” life. The living, God-breathed Word *MUST* be allowed to flow into man’s saved human spirit or there can be *NO metamorphosis*.

The renewing of the inward man, “day by day,” through receiving “the implanted word,” producing the metamorphosis in one’s life, is the manner in which the salvation of the soul is presently being effected.

And this *metamorphosis* is that referenced in I Peter 1:23. It has to do with *a continued Divine work in the life of the believer relative to those things seen leading into this verse — hope, inheritance, salvation.*

I John

John’s first epistle, as the Book of Hebrews, is not addressed to anyone, though that is not the case with his second and third epistles. This could only be by Divine design, for the internal evidence appears to almost certainly place the writing of the book during the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel, which would be before about 62 A.D. And this internal evidence would also appear to clearly indicate that the identity of those for whom the epistle had been written would be understood through the book’s contents and the times in which it was written.

The structure of I John, as seen in Chapter I of this book, runs parallel with parts of John’s gospel. From the subject matter of John’s gospel, it is evident that John wrote his gospel during the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel. And from the parallels between John’s gospel and his first epistle, it appears evident

that John wrote his first epistle during this time as well.

John's first epistle, in this respect, would have been written first and foremost for *the SAME purpose seen in his gospel* (e.g., note the declared, parallel purpose seen in the writings of both books — cf. John 20:30, 31; I John 5:1-5, 11-13).

This epistle would have been written to reach John's brethren, the Jewish people, with a message which began on the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter two (vv. 1ff) and was terminated about thirty years later in Rome, as seen in Acts chapter twenty-eight (vv. 17-28).

But this epistle would also have been written to the saved being taken from among the Gentiles, though in the order seen in Rom. 1:16; 2:9, 10 — "...to the Jew first, and also to the Greek ['Gentile']."

And, beyond about 62 A.D., for the remainder of the present dispensation, there would be *ONLY one group* which could possibly be understood as those to whom the epistle would be addressed — *the one new man* "in Christ," Christians, where no distinction between saved Jews and saved Gentiles exists (Gal. 3:26-29).

1) *Contrasts in I John*

The whole of I John would, in a sense, be a commentary on that stated in Luke 11:23:

"He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth."

There is *no middle ground* in Luke 11:23 (cf. Matt. 12:30). A person who is not for Christ is seen to be against Christ; and a person who does not gather with Christ (leads or brings together), instead, scatters (the opposite, he disperses).

Though this is the manner in which all things in the whole of Scripture have been set, this is a major, marked feature of I John. Contrasts of this nature, apart from any middle ground, are seen *over and over* in I John. And if sharp contrasts between numerous things in the epistle are recognized, with proper Scriptural divisions made between the two, many of the problems which people have with I John will cease to exist.

Note a few things, for example, in the first chapter:

“Life” exists in connection with the Son, Who is God, the Word made flesh; and, apart from the Son, *life does NOT exist* (vv. 1, 2; cf. John 1:1-4a, 14; I John 5:12). A person *EITHER* has “fellowship” with the Father and with His Son or he *DOESN'T*. “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.” (v. 5b; cf. John 1:4b, 5). And a person *EITHER* walks in the light and experiences fellowship with the Father and with His Son or he walks in darkness and does *NOT* experience this fellowship (vv. 3-7).

Middle grounds do NOT exist at any point in the preceding, or elsewhere in I John, or elsewhere in Scripture in contrasts of this nature.

And understanding that contrasts of this nature are seen over and over in I John will help one to not only better understand why the Spirit moved John to use the expression “brought forth out of God” ten times in this short epistle but also why *sharp contrasts* are seen every time this expression is used.

2) “Brought Forth out of God”

John’s first use of this expression in his first epistle is in 2:29. In the context leading into this verse, reference is made to “little children” (v. 28), which, in the light of the overall text and verses such as Matt. 18:3 and Rom. 8:14-23, *can ONLY be an allusion to individuals undergoing the child-training as sons seen in Heb. 12:5-8.*

And this training, which is with a view to *NOT being* “ashamed before him at his coming,” will allow individuals to be among those one day adopted as firstborn sons, who will subsequently occupy *regal positions in the kingdom with God’s Son.*

It is individuals being child-trained in this manner who are seen in connection with “righteousness.” And this is something which is said to emanate from God — ...“every one that doeth righteousness is born of him [‘is brought forth out of God’]” (v. 29b).

“Righteousness” of the nature seen here — *a righteousness connected with child-training as sons* — can come from *ONE place alone.* Such a righteousness can come *ONLY from above, out of God.*

The second use of the expression, “brought forth out of God,” in John’s first epistle is in 3:9 (cf. v. 6), where it is used twice. The expression is used in connection with *NOT being able to sin.* Note

also the last use of the expression in this epistle, in 5:18, where it is used twice *EXACTLY the same way* — *again, in connection with NOT being able to sin*. In both verses the expression appears immediately before and after the statement pertaining to *an inability to sin*.

This would appear to run counter to that seen in the opening chapter where sin is seen in the lives of believers, with a person said to make God a liar if he states that he doesn't and can't sin (vv. 8-10). But I John 3:9 and 5:18 *do NOT* run counter to I John 1:8-10 at all. Different parts of different contrasts are in view in each instance.

In the first chapter, matters have to do with an individual walking in darkness rather than light (vv. 5-7). In the third and fifth chapters, matters have to do with that which emanates from God, which would be in connection with the light from chapter one. *Sin simply CANNOT exist within the latter.*

To say that it could would be to say that sin can exist with God or within that which emanates from God.

The next use of the expression, "brought forth out of God," in John's first epistle is in 4:7. Here the expression is used in connection with "love" — "...every one that loveth is born of God [is brought forth out of God], and knoweth God [Gk., *gnosis*, referring to *an experiential knowledge* of God (cf. I John 2:3, 4)]." And the preceding should be easy enough to understand, for the next verse goes on to state that "God is love," with verse seven dealing with the type love emanating from God, where sin, darkness, etc. *cannot exist*.

The next use of the expression, "brought forth out of God," is in 5:1, 4, where it is used four times in connection *with believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; with loving, keeping His commandments, and overcoming*. And any exposition, in the way of an explanation, at this point should be unnecessary. Comments have been made on how the expression is used in all of the other six places where it appears in I John, and it is used exactly the same way in these verses.

A person understanding how the expression is used in the other six places, or in John's gospel, or in James, or in I Peter, should be able to simply read I John 5:1-5 and understand exactly what is meant — *believing* "that Jesus is the Christ...the son of God," *which can come ONLY from above* (cf. John 1:12, 13; 3:3-7; 20:30, 31).

Appendix I

Saved for a Purpose

A Purpose Which Has to Do with Regality

Man has been, is being, and will be saved for *a revealed purpose*. There is *a revealed GOAL* in view; and, relative to salvation, *that GOAL is ALWAYS the SAME in Scripture*, regardless of what aspect of man's salvation is in view.

That GOAL is the SAME for the whole of man's salvation — spirit, soul, and body. And that *GOAL* has to do with *man being placed back in the position for which he was created in the beginning*, which will be realized during the Messianic Era.

(This is the manner in which Scripture presents *salvation* throughout, with the unchangeable foundational pattern set in the opening verses of Genesis.

The inhabited world to come will not be placed in subjection to angels, as the present world [Heb. 2:5]. *This is the clear message seen throughout Scripture — man ultimately realizing the purpose for his creation in the beginning.*

A new order of Sons is about to be brought on the scene [Rom. 8:18-23] — *Christ and His co-heirs*. And, from a Scriptural standpoint, *man's salvation centers on that coming day when this new order of Sons will hold the sceptre and rule the earth.*)

Man invariably deals with salvation in relation to *eternity and going to heaven*, while seldom mentioning salvation in relation to *the Messianic Era and the kingdom of the heavens*.

Scripture, on the other hand, presents the matter in a *completely inverse fashion*.

Scripture *ALWAYS* deals with salvation, first and foremost, in relation to *the Messianic Era and the kingdom of the heavens*. *Heaven* (the present dwelling place of God) and *the ages beyond* are mentioned at times, but not relative to salvation in the same sense that man relates them to salvation.

Man is *NOT* going to spend either the Messianic Era or the eternal ages which follow in the place known today as *heaven*.

And, in relation to *the eternal ages* which follow the Messianic Era, God is *NOT* going to dwell in this place either. God is going to dwell on *the new earth* throughout the ages comprising eternity.

And even when Scripture does deal with saved man in *heaven* (e.g., Christians following death, or Christians following the rapture) matters are *always* completely consistent with the way Scripture elsewhere deals with saved man. If future time comes into view, reference is made to things pertaining to the Messianic Era, *NOT* the ages beyond (though in several instances the Messianic Era is connected with and seen as the first of these ages, though separate and distinct from them [e.g., Luke 1:33; Eph. 2:7]).

The Messianic Era, Ages Beyond

During the Messianic Era, man will dwell both on a restored earth and in the heavens above this restored earth, with there being a Jerusalem above and a Jerusalem below (capital cities both over and on the earth, with Christians [along with certain O.T. saints] inhabiting the city above, and Israel inhabiting the city below).

During this era, there will be a rule from the heavens over the earth. And this rule, as today, will originate with God in heaven and progress through rulers placed in the heavens in relation to this earth.

Today, *this rule progresses from God through Satan and his angels* (though rebel rulers), who reside in the heavens above the earth.

But during that coming day *this rule will progress from God through His Son and His Son's co-heirs*, forming His wife, who will reside in the new Jerusalem above the earth.

A rule of the preceding nature, from the heavens over the earth, *MUST* continue during the Messianic Era, for this is the manner in which God established the government of the earth in the beginning. Such a rule *MUST* continue as long as the earth remains, which will be until the end of the Messianic Era — to the full end of the seven days, the 7,000 years, set forth in the foundational type at the beginning (Gen. 1:1-2:3).

A rule from the heavens over the earth (one province in God's kingdom) is not only the way in which God originally established the government of the earth but the way in which He evidently established His government throughout all other parts of the universe as well (all other provinces in His kingdom).

And this can NEVER change in relation to any one province, for "the heavens do rule" (cf. Dan. 4:25, 26).

Thus, God's Son, with His co-heirs, *MUST rule throughout the Messianic Era in EXACT accord with the way God established the government of the earth in the beginning.*

Such a governmental rule will have to continue during this time, for the present earth will not pass out of existence until the end of the Messianic Era (Rev. 21:1-5).

God's Son, with His co-heirs, will rule over the earth for 1,000 years — the earth's coming Sabbath, foreshadowed by the seventh day in Gen. 2:1-3 (cf. Ex. 31:13-17; Heb. 4:1-9). They will rule for 1,000 years to effect order where disorder has prevailed for millenniums in one province in God's universe.

And once order has been restored, the kingdom will be delivered up to God the Father, that God might be "all in all [*i.e.*, permeate all, be 'everything in all things']" (I Cor. 15:24-28).

Then, once order has been restored and the kingdom has been delivered up to the Father, the present heavens and earth will pass out of existence. A new heavens and a new earth will be brought into existence, and the new earth will become the place in the new heavens (as the earth today, suspended at a point in the heavens) from whence universal rule will emanate.

God will move His throne to the new earth, the Son will sit with His Father on this throne (called "the throne of God and of the Lamb"), and saved man will exercise power from this throne as well (II Peter 3:10ff; Rev. 21:1ff; 22:1-5).

Regality, the Earth, the Universe

Therein lies man's destiny, not going to heaven per se. Man's destiny has to do with regality, the earth, and the universe — first, ruling over this present earth from the new Jerusalem above the earth

(during the Messianic Era); then, ruling out in the universe from the new Jerusalem on the new earth (during the ages which follow).

Salvation in Scripture is ALWAYS dealt with in relation to the scope of Scripture; and Scripture deals centrally with everything moving toward a seventh day, a seventh 1,000-year period.

Events during this coming day, the Messianic Era, *MUST be brought to pass FIRST.*

And therein lies *the REASON* why Scripture deals with man centrally in relation to this time, with the ages beyond seldom being in view (regardless of which aspect of salvation is being dealt with — past, present, or future).

ONLY following the Messianic Era can the ages which lie beyond this era be brought into view in all their fullness.

During the present time they are briefly dealt with in Scripture so that man can have some understanding of God's plan for the ages, where the whole of the matter — 6,000 years, followed by a 1,000-year Messianic Era — will eventually lead. But *ONLY following the Messianic Era* will matters move beyond that dealt with extensively in Scripture.

ONLY THEN will God begin to open up and fully reveal that which will occur during the period which man thinks of today as eternity.

And the manner in which Scripture presents this whole matter — particularly as it relates to man's salvation — has become very difficult, practically impossible, for most Christians to see and grasp. These Christians have been taught wrong for years — not necessarily concerning *how to be saved*, but concerning *the purpose for salvation and that which lies ahead for redeemed man.*

And because this erroneous teaching surrounding salvation has become so ingrained within their way of thinking, attempts to present salvation from the correct Biblical perspective is usually met with askance looks, opposition, or antagonism on almost every hand.

When that depicted by the woman placing the leaven in the three measures of meal in Matt. 13:33 occurred — which could *ONLY* have been very early in the dispensation, having to do with an attempt on Satan's part to corrupt all Biblical doctrine pertaining to the Word of the Kingdom — *EVERYTHING related to*

the Word of the Kingdom began to be adversely affected. And this working of the leaven, of necessity, would extend even into the Biblical scope of salvation by grace.

This would have to be the case because of the inseparable connection salvation by grace has with the Word of the Kingdom. It is man passing “from death unto life” which places him in a position where he can realize *the salvation of his soul*.

And matters become even more negative surrounding the relationship which salvation by grace has with the kingdom through the message of those advocating Lordship Salvation — a message widely proclaimed throughout Christendom today.

Those proclaiming this message take things having to do with the Word of the Kingdom and bring these things over into and apply them to the message of salvation by grace (*i.e.*, things having to do with present and future aspects of salvation are removed from their respective contexts and applied to things having to do with past aspects of salvation).

And, through this means, those proclaiming this message not only remove the kingdom from view but they do two other things in the process:

- 1) *They destroy the message pertaining to the Word of the Kingdom.*
- 2) *And they usually corrupt the message pertaining to salvation by grace through faith.*

(Note the material in the three chapters of this book, having to do with *HOW* the verses in John’s gospel and his first epistle, James, and I Peter, pertaining to being brought forth from above, *are almost always handled by Christians as having to do with the unsaved and salvation by grace.*

When misusing these verses in this manner, the message surrounding salvation by grace remains unaffected, for man is saved through a bringing forth from above. But note what this does to the correct message set forth by these verses. The correct message is done away with.

The same thing is seen when erroneously dealing with John’s gospel as a whole after a very similar fashion, stating that the

message in this gospel has been written to the unsaved [citing John 20:30, 31], telling them how they can be saved [through believing on God's Son]. The message surrounding Salvation by grace would again remain unaffected, for believing on God's Son is the message that effects salvation.

BUT, like being brought forth from above in this gospel [plus in James, I Peter, and I John], believing on God's Son throughout John's gospel is used in a completely different manner entirely. It is used relative to *Israel, signs, and a re-offer of the kingdom during the Acts period.*

And when the preceding is ignored, *a correct message pertaining to salvation by grace CAN be proclaimed, BUT the central message of the gospel, that clearly stated in John 20:30, 31, is done away with.*

[For information on the preceding, refer to the author's books, *Message in the Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Signs in John's Gospel*].

Usually though, unlike the preceding, taking verses which apply to other than salvation by grace and using them as salvation verses to reach the unsaved, *corrupt and/or destroy BOTH messages — BOTH the messages of salvation by grace and the Word of the Kingdom [e.g., using verses such as Matt. 7:21-23 or the Matt. 13 parables as relating to salvation by grace].*

And a proclamation of ANY and/or ALL of the preceding is rampant throughout the Churches of the land today, again, because of the working of the leaven over almost two millenniums of time.)

Interestingly enough, those who proclaim *a correct salvation message per se but ignore the kingdom in relation to the message*, and those who proclaim *a lordship salvation message (who, through this means, destroy one message and corrupt the other)*, form two major groups in Christendom today.

Those from these two groups remain at almost complete odds with one another on the message of salvation by grace; but when it comes to correctly relating this message to the kingdom, it can only be said of both groups that they have been similarly, adversely affected by the same leavening process which is rampant in the Laodicean Church of today.

Appendix II

The Neshamah

The Breath of God
Absolutely Necessary for Life

The roots of *ALL* Biblical doctrine can be found in the Book of Genesis. This is the book of beginnings; and *ALL Scripture beyond Genesis MUST, after some fashion, reach back and draw from this book.*

The *creation* of Adam from the dust of the ground, and the removal of a rib from Adam's side, occurred on the sixth day of the restoration account in Genesis chapter one. But *the methods* which God used to bring about both Adam's creation and the formation of Eve from a portion of Adam's body were not revealed until a subsequent summary statement in chapter two.

Most of the second chapter is taken up with certain specifics concerning that which had previously occurred on the sixth day in the preceding chapter, and the account of these things is rich beyond degree in Biblical study.

The second chapter of Genesis is the point where the origin of numerous Biblical doctrines can be traced, doctrines which cannot be properly understood apart from this chapter.

In the account of the creation of man we are given an insight into certain truths concerning "life," derived from God. The means which God used in both man's creation and the subsequent impartation of life into His new creation are given in Gen. 2:7:

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath [*the Neshamah*] of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7).

First, man existed as a lifeless form, previously fashioned from “the dust of the ground.” Creation in and of itself did not produce life in man. Life was imparted only *after* man’s creation, a life produced by means of *the breath of God*. And it is here that “life” in relation to man is *first mentioned* in Scripture.

And through the impartation of this life, an unchangeable principle is set forth. God, at the very beginning of His revelation to man, set forth *the unchangeable means* which He would use to impart life to the one without life, at any future point in time — *physical or spiritual life*.

The Hebrew word translated “breath” in Gen. 2:7 is *Neshamah*. *The Neshamah* of God produced “life.” The word “God” in this verse is a translation of the plural noun, *Elohim*, pointing to the fact that not only the Father, but also the Son and the Holy Spirit were instrumental in producing this life.

Thus, man’s life in the beginning was derived from the triune God through what is called *the Neshamah*.

Genesis 2:7 provides insights into things far beyond the simple fact that God created man and then imparted life to man. This verse provides insights into man’s salvation today — both the salvation of the spirit and the salvation of the soul:

First, the impartation of life to unredeemed man, who is “dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1), *MUST follow the pattern (type) established in Genesis*.

Unredeemed man, as Adam prior to the impartation of *the Neshamah* of God, is lifeless; and, if he is to possess life, *it MUST be derived through the same means as life was originally imparted to Adam*.

Second, once this life is imparted, *it MUST also be continued and sustained*.

In this respect, Scripture clearly reveals that *the Neshamah of God is INSEPARABLY connected with LIFE in relation to man from beginning to end*.

A first-mention principle was established in Gen. 2:7, revealing that “life” — past, present, and future — *MUST always emanate*

from the SAME source, through the SAME means, set forth in this verse.

God ALONE initially “imparts” and subsequently “continues” and “sustains” life; and this is ALWAYS accomplished, in its ENTIRETY, through the Neshamah of God.

Impartation of Life to the Unsaved

Unregenerate man today comes into a right relationship with God solely through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit on the basis of Christ’s finished work at Calvary. Through the work of the Spirit, man passes “from death unto life” (John 5:24).

The word “Spirit” in the Greek text is *Pneuma*, a word which also means “breath.” It is used in the sense of “breath” in the New Testament through showing “life” being produced by *breathing in* or “death” being wrought by *breathing out*.

In Luke 8:55, life was restored to a young girl by her “spirit [breath]” returning; and in Luke 23:46, Christ terminated His life on the Cross by giving “up the spirit [*lit.* He ‘breathed out’]” (cf. James 2:26).

The Holy Spirit is the One Who generates life in lifeless man, and the expression used in both the Hebrew and Greek texts relative to this life being produced is “breathing in.” God, through the instrumentality of the Spirit, “breathes life into” unregenerate man today.

The impartation of life to man in Gen. 2:7 though is not the original type dealing with the work of the Spirit in relation to man’s salvation. The original type is found in the opening verses of the first chapter (vv. 2b-5), and Gen. 2:7 forms a subsequent type, providing additional details.

And this latter verse, providing the first mention of “life” in relation to man, *MUST be in complete agreement with and understood in the light of that revealed in the original type.*

The original type in Gen. 1:2b-5 reads:

“...and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness...”

These verses outline the beginning of the restoration of a creation which was reduced to a state of ruin because of an act of Satan (*the earth* becoming a chaos because of Satan's aspirations to be "like the most High" [Gen. 1:2a; Isa. 14:12-14]).

And these verses, in turn, set forth in type the beginning of the restoration of a creation which was brought into a ruined state through another act of Satan.

Satan brought about Adam's fall, through the woman, by using a similar means to the one which had previously brought about his own fall — "...you will be like God" (Gen. 3:1ff).

This established pattern (type) relative to the restoration of a ruined material creation *relates EXACTLY how the restoration of man — a subsequent ruined creation — MUST occur today.*

The Spirit of God moved in the first chapter of Genesis, effecting a beginning of the earth's restoration. And the first thing recorded immediately following the Spirit's movement was the placement of light alongside the previously existing darkness, with a division established between the light and the darkness.

The Spirit of God, in like manner, moves today effecting the beginning of man's restoration (the salvation of his spirit). And the first thing which God does for man is to place light alongside the previously existing darkness, with a division established between the light and the darkness (pertaining to a division between the spirit and the soul [Heb. 4:12], inseparably associated with a division between the new and old natures [Gal. 4:22-31; 5:16-23]).

Note Paul's words in II Cor. 4:6; 5:17a:

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ...

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature ['creation']..."

And Gen. 2:7, a subsequent type from a different perspective (life produced in that which was lifeless), is an account portraying additional details relating to the same truth. The Spirit of God — *the Neshamah* — wrought order out of chaos in Genesis chapter one; the Spirit of God — *the Neshamah* — produced life in Genesis

chapter two; and the Spirit of God — *the Neshamah* — brings order out of chaos, producing life in unregenerate man today.

“Life” produced in unregenerate man has to do with a movement of the Spirit, connected with an impartation of breath (*the Neshamah*), based on the finished work of the Son at Calvary.

This allows light to come into existence where only darkness had previously existed, producing a division between man’s redeemed spirit and his unredeemed soul.

Impartation of Life to the Saved

Once life has been generated, *that life MUST then be continued and sustained.*

Life is *generated* through “breathing in” (initial work of the Spirit), *retained* through the “breath remaining” (abiding/indwelling work of the Spirit), and this life is *sustained* through a “continued breathing in” (a continued work of the Spirit).

Sustenance for life, a “continued breathing in,” is what is involved in II Tim. 3:16.

This verse, studied in the light of Gen. 2:7, is the key which will unlock the door concerning *the Neshamah* of God in relation to saved man. In the preceding respect, this verse both demonstrates the power of the Word of God and reveals the reason Christians are commanded to “receive the implanted word.”

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (II Tim. 3:16, 17, NIV).

The word “God-breathed” in II Tim. 3:16 is a translation of the compound Greek word *Theopneustos*, which is simply the word for “God” (*Theos*) and the word for “breath,” or “Spirit” (*Pneuma*) added. Thus, the translation “God-breathed” is not only a very literal translation, but, in the light of Gen. 2:7, it is the best of all possible translations.

“The Word of God” is, thus, here identified with *the Neshamah* of God. The Word of God was given through the instrumental-

ity of the Holy Spirit (II Peter 1:21), and is the element which the indwelling Holy Spirit uses to sustain the life which He Himself originally imparted and presently continues. Thus, *the Neshamah* of God refers to *BOTH the Spirit and the Word*. “Life” emanates from *BOTH* (II Cor. 3:6; Heb. 4:12; James 2:26), and the relationship existing between *BOTH* prohibits any separation.

The Word of God, because of its very origin and nature, is *the ONLY thing* which the Holy Spirit, Who gave the Word, can use to effect man’s spiritual growth toward maturity.

The Neshamah of God (the Holy Spirit), Who imparted life, uses *the Neshamah* of God (the living, implanted Word, which He moved men to pen) to sustain this life. And, through this sustenance — nourishment for this life — a person is made “wise unto salvation” (II Tim. 3:15).

And this continuing work of the Spirit is something seen in the remaining five days of God’s restorative work in Genesis chapter one.

God’s work on the first day relates to the impartation of life (the salvation of the spirit), His work on the remaining five days relates to sustaining that life (growth unto maturity, the salvation of the soul), and this is all with a view to the seventh day of rest (the Messianic Era).

Appendix III

THE HOPE

The God-Provided Encouragement, Motivation

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ [*lit.*, ‘Looking for that blessed hope, which is the appearing of the glory of the great God, Who is our Saviour Jesus Christ’];

Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:11-14).

(“Hope” as it is used in both the N.T. and in Christian circles is seldom the same. And this is particularly true concerning “that blessed hope” in Titus 2:13.

“That blessed hope” in this verse is almost universally used, and consequently abused, in Christian circles to reference *the rapture*. And this is done even in the face of what the verse itself states.

“That blessed hope,” as clearly seen in both the text and context, has to do, *NOT with the rapture, but with “the appearing of the glory of Christ,” i.e., with Christ’s appearance in all His glory at the end of the Tribulation.*

Beyond the preceding, *the rapture is NEVER presented in Scripture as “a hope.”* The manner in which “hope” is used in this verse, contextually, has to do with the expectation of something which, for Christians, may or may not be realized — *Christians having a part with Christ in His glory when it is revealed in that coming day [cf. Titus 1:2; 3:7].*

The tragedy of misusing Titus 2:13 after the manner seen throughout Christendom today is the same tragedy seen through the misuse of any passage of Scripture after a similar fashion. The subject which one attempts to erroneously deal with [*the rapture, in this case*] is often *corrupted*, and that which the passage actually does deal with [*Christ’s appearance in glory, in this case*] is invariably *destroyed*.)

According to I Peter 3:15, Christians are to be “ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you *a reason of the hope that is in you* with meekness and fear.” This is called, in introductory verses to the book, “a lively [‘living’] hope”; and it is made possible through “the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1:3). Christ lives, and those “in Christ” are being called *to live, beyond resurrection, in glory with Him*.

Hope in I Peter is associated with “an inheritance” (1:4), a future “salvation” (1:5 [“the salvation of your souls”; v. 9]), and “honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (1:7; cf. 4:12, 13).

When Christ appears, Christians will appear with Him in glory; and it is different facets of this entire matter — ruling as co-heirs with Christ, realizing the salvation of their souls — concerning which Christians are exhorted *to always be ready to provide a response to anyone who asks “for a reason of the hope” which lies within*.

In Heb. 6:11, 12, the “hope” to be held by Christians is laid out in a very simple fashion: that “through faith and patience [present]” they would be able to “inherit the promises [future].”

Exercising “faith” is simply *believing that which God has to say about a matter*, resulting in the person who exercises faith acting accordingly. Hebrews chapter eleven is the great chapter on faith, toward which everything in the preceding part of the book builds: “By faith Abel...By faith Enoch...By faith Noah...By faith Abraham...”

(Contextually, the words “through faith” or “by faith,” throughout Heb. 11, *can be understood ONLY ONE WAY*.)

Note the verses leading into ch. 11 [10:35-39], dealing with those who “believe [exercise ‘faith’] to the saving of the soul” [v. 39]. Then ch. 11 simply continues this thought, showing different facets of the way ch. 10 ends, *different facets of exercising faith “to the saving of the soul.”*

In this respect, each time “through faith” or “by faith” is used throughout the eleventh chapter, “the saving of the soul,” leading into this chapter, *should be understood as THE OBJECT of faith — i.e., “through faith [to the saving of the soul]...” or “by faith [to the saving of the soul]...”*

Then Hebrews chapter twelve, immediately following, forms *the capstone to the whole matter*. The fifth and last of the five major warnings comes into view — a direct reference to the rights of the

firstborn (all the warnings have to do with these rights, though viewed from different facets of the overall subject) — and Christians are exhorted to run the race set before them after such a fashion that they will one day be accorded the privilege of realizing these rights.

Exercising “patience [*lit.*, ‘patient endurance’]” has to do with the manner in which one runs the race (*cf.* 12:1).

This is *a race of the faith* (I Tim. 6:12; Jude 3), to be run continuously for the entire duration of the Christian life. This is a race over the long haul — not one for sprinters, but *one for marathon runners* (though the runners may be called upon, at times, to sprint in the race). And Christians are *to properly pace themselves so that they will be able to victoriously complete the race.*

The “inheritance” lying out ahead is the object of a Christians’ *hope*; and one day realizing that which God has promised is, within the text, to be wrought *through patient endurance in the race of the faith.* “Faith” and “patient endurance” are inseparably linked after this fashion with the subject at hand — *inheriting the promises.*

Hebrews 10:23-25 presents a companion thought. In verse twenty-three, Christians are told:

“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering [*lit.*, ‘Let us hold fast *the confession of OUR HOPE* without wavering’].”

And the whole idea, contextually, behind Christians assembling together today (v. 25) is to “consider one another” and “provoke [one another] unto love and to good works,” with this *HOPE* in view.

Christians are to assemble together *to discuss* that which lies out ahead, *pray* for one another, and *exhort* one another; and they are to do this “so much the more,” as they “see the day approaching [*that coming day when their HOPE will be realized*]” (vv. 24, 25).

This is “that blessed hope” in Titus 2:13, which is to be *a purifying HOPE.* And Christians are exhorted to “live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world,” *with a view to one day realizing this HOPE* (v. 12).

(“That blessed hope,” as previously seen, is *NOT Christ’s return per se* [particularly *NOT His return for Christians at the end of this present dispensation, as is often taught*]. Rather, “that blessed hope” has to do

with “the glorious appearing [*lit.*, ‘the appearing of the glory’] of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” [v. 13], a glory which will not be revealed until Christ returns at the end of the Tribulation. And the “hope” aspect has to do with *the expectation [which may or may not be realized] of our having a part with Christ in His glory when it is revealed.*

The subject matter of Titus, the context of Titus 2:13, and the construction of the Greek text of this verse would *ALL necessitate the previous understanding of this verse.*

*The subject matter in Titus has to do centrally with life in the coming age, the Messianic Era, not with eternal life, nor with the rapture [cf. 1:2; 3:7 (contextually, the word translated “eternal” in both verses — Gk., *aionios* — should be translated, “age-lasting,” i.e., referring to “age-lasting life”)].*

[*Ref. Appendix I, “Aion, Aionios,” in the author’s book, Message in the Gospels, Acts, Epistles.*]

The context of Titus 2:13 has to do with *present proper Christian living, with a view to life with Christ in His kingdom in the coming age* [1:13; 2:12-14].

And in the Greek text of Titus 2:13, “the appearing of the glory” is a *further explanation and description of “that blessed hope”*; also, in the continuing part of the verse, the structure of the Greek text is the same as in the previous part: “Our Saviour Jesus Christ” is a further explanation and description of “the great God.”

With these things in mind, the verse could be better translated,

“Awaiting that blessed hope, which is the appearing of the glory of the great God, Who is our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

And, as previously stated, this “hope” surrounds *the thought of Christians having a part with Christ in His glory at this time — a central teaching of the Book of Titus.*

Titus 2:13, much like I Thess. 1:10; 5:9; II Thess. 2:1, 3; Rev. 3:10, is another one of the verses Christians have misused, attempting to apply the verse and the expression from the verse, “that blessed hope,” to the rapture.

And, as also previously seen, the tragedy of this can be seen in what this does to the true subject matter of the verse [also in the previously referenced verses in I, II Thessalonians and Revelation.]

With Confidence and Rejoicing

Christians are to hold fast the *hope* set before them after a revealed two-fold fashion — *with confidence and rejoicing* (Heb. 3:6). The word “confidence” is a translation of the Greek word, *parresia*, meaning “to be bold, courageous, open, or plain” about a matter; and the word “rejoicing” is the translation of the Greek word, *kauchema*, meaning “to take pride in something,” resulting in the person having “something to boast about.”

Parresia is used a number of times in the New Testament in the sense of being “open” or “plain” about matters, with nothing being hidden.

Jesus spoke *openly* and *plainly* to His disciples and the people of Israel (Mark 8:32; John 16:29; 18:20), though, because of the nation’s rejection of Him, the day came when He “walked no more *openly* among the Jews” (John 11:54). And it was because of this same rejection that Jesus had previously begun to teach through the use of parables (Matt. 13:10-15).

Parresia is also used in the New Testament a number of times in the sense of being “bold” or “courageous” about matters. Peter and John, standing before Annas the high priest, and others, exhibited “boldness” as Peter spoke; and those hearing Peter “marvelled,” recognizing that both men exhibited these qualities *because* “they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:5-13; *cf. v. 31*).

Then Paul, at the end of his epistle to the Ephesians, requested prayer on his behalf: “that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth *boldly*, to make known the mystery of the gospel” (6:19).

(Note that the thought of “openness” or “plainness” would also have to be included within the idea conveyed by “boldness” in the preceding passages [*cf. II Cor. 3:12; 7:4; see also Phil. 1:20; I Tim. 3:13; Heb. 4:16*].)

Then the word *kauchema* (translated “rejoicing”), or the verb form of this word (*kauchaomai*), is also used a number of times in the New Testament. The word is translated three different ways in Scripture (KJV) — “boast,” “glory [used in the sense of ‘boast’ or ‘pride’],” and “rejoice” (*cf. Rom. 2:23; 4:2; 5:2; II Cor. 1:14; 5:12; 9:3*).

The thought of “rejoicing” (as in Heb. 3:6; cf. Phil. 1:26; 2:16), rather than being derived from the meaning of *kauchema*, appears to be derived more from the result of what this word means. That is, *kauchema* means “to take pride in something,” resulting in the person having “something to boast about”; and “rejoicing” would emanate out of the person being placed in this position.

Firm unto the End

When a Christian is told to be “ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you,” he is to be open about the matter, he is to exhibit plainness of speech, he is to be bold and courageous as he expresses himself, and he is to take pride in the matter, for he has something to boast about.

He has been extended an invitation to ascend the throne with “the King of kings, and Lord of lords” to rule as co-heir with Him in His kingdom. He possesses the *hope* of having a part in what Scripture calls, “so great salvation” (Heb. 2:3), which is the greatest thing God has ever designed for redeemed man.

And this is what Christians are to be open and plain about. They are to tell it *exactly* as it is, regardless of what others may say or think. And they are to be bold and courageous as they tell it as it is, knowing that they have something of *incalculable value*, something *they can boast about* (cf. Matt. 10:32, 33; II Tim. 2:10-13).

Christians have been saved for *a revealed purpose, which has to do with future regality, as co-heirs with Christ in the kingdom.*

Christians are to set their course straight and hold it there, not deviating; and they are to hold their course, after this fashion, “firm unto the end” (Heb. 3:6), allowing them to one day realize “so great salvation,” the salvation of their soul.

Scripture Index

<i>Genesis</i>		
Chapter 1	43	
1:1-2:3	18, 20	
.....	22, 39	
1:2a.....	46	
1:2, 3, 6, 9.....	19	
1:2b-5.....	45	
1:2b-25.....	24	
1:14, 20, 24.....	19	
Chapter 2	43	
2:1, 3, 7.....	19	
2:7.....	18, 20, 43-47	
3:1ff.....	46	
<i>Exodus</i>		
4:22, 23.....	6	
Chapter 12.....	20, 29	
Chapters 12-15.....	23	
12:1ff.....	21, 22, 31	
12:1-13.....	16	
31:13-17.....	39	
<i>Leviticus</i>		
23:1.....	22	
26:14-39.....	6	
<i>Deuteronomy</i>		
28:15-67.....	6	
<i>Ruth</i>		
4:1ff.....	28	
<i>Psalms</i>		
2:6, 7.....	11	
<i>Isaiah</i>		
1:6.....	26	
14:12-14.....	46	
50:1.....	28	
66:8.....	5	
<i>Jeremiah</i>		
3:1-3.....	6	
3:8-14.....	28	
<i>Ezekiel</i>		
37:1-14.....	19	
<i>Daniel</i>		
4:25, 26.....	39	
7:13, 14.....	11	
<i>Hosea</i>		
5:13-6:2.....	27	
<i>Zechariah</i>		
1:12-15.....	28	
1:14, 15.....	6	
<i>Matthew</i>		
2:2.....	15, 26	
3:2.....	26, 27	
4:17.....	26	
5:20.....	3	
7:21.....	3	
7:21-23.....	42	
10:5, 6.....	14	
10:5-8.....	26	
10:32,33.....	54	
12:24-32.....	19	
12:30.....	12, 29	
Chapter 13.....	42	
13:10-15.....	53	
13:33.....	40	
15:24.....	14	
18:3.....	35	
19:17.....	3	
21:33-45.....	9, 27	
<i>Mark</i>		
8:33.....	53	
<i>Luke</i>		
1:33.....	38	
8:55.....	45	
11:23.....	12, 29, 34	
<i>John</i>		
Chapters 1, 3.....	11, 27	
1:1-5, 14.....	35	
1:1, 11-13.....	11	
1:11.....	26	
1:11-13.....	1, 8	
.....	10, 12, 13, 25	
1:12, 13.....	2, 6	
.....	7, 28	
1:13.....	3, 4	
3:1ff.....	17	
3:1, 3, 5.....	22	
3:1-5.....	2	
3:1-7.....	1, 25, 26	
3:1-8.....	13	
3:3, 5.....	20, 21, 27	
3:3, 5, 7.....	3	
3:3, 7.....	4	
3:3-8.....	8, 10, 28	
3:5.....	22, 24	
3:5, 6, 8.....	12	
3:31, 36.....	3	
5:24.....	17	
7:45-52.....	17	
8:31-44.....	7	
11:54.....	53	
16:29.....	53	
18:20.....	53	
19:11.....	3	
19:14-19.....	15	
20:30, 31.....	10, 11	
.....	41, 42	
<i>Acts</i>		
2:1ff.....	32	
2:4-12.....	27	
4:5-13, 31.....	53	
11:26.....	17	
13:33, 34.....	26	
28:17-28.....	34	
<i>Romans</i>		
1:16.....	12, 14	
.....	15, 17, 34	
2:5-16.....	12	
2:9, 10.....	14	
.....	15, 34	
2:10.....	7	
2:23.....	53	
4:2.....	53	
5:2.....	53	
6:4.....	22	
8:11-14.....	8	
8:14-23.....	28, 35	

8:18-23.....	37	3:10.....	10, 33	2:26.....	45, 48
8:19.....	7	3:16.....	24	5:19, 20.....	29
10:12.....	15	<i>I Thessalonians</i>		<i>I Peter</i>	
12:1, 2.....	10	1:20.....	52	1:1-9.....	30
12:2.....	32, 33	5:9.....	52	1:3-9.....	31
<i>I Corinthians</i>		<i>II Thessalonians</i>		1:3-9, 23-25.....	10
1:22.....	27	2:1, 3.....	52	1:3-10, 23.....	9
2:1, 2.....	9	<i>I Timothy</i>		1:3, 23.....	3, 4
10:32.....	17	6:12.....	51	.....	7, 12, 14
13:8-10.....	27	<i>II Timothy</i>		1:4, 5, 7, 9.....	50
14:22.....	27	2:10-13.....	54	1:23.....	32, 33
15:24-28.....	39	3:15.....	48	2:9, 10.....	9, 27
<i>II Corinthians</i>		3:16, 17.....	47	3:15.....	50
1:14.....	63	<i>Titus</i>		4:12, 13.....	50
3:6.....	48	1:2.....	49	<i>II Peter</i>	
3:12.....	53	1:2, 13.....	52	1:15-18.....	19
4:6.....	46	2:11-14.....	49	1:21.....	48
4:16.....	33	2:12, 13.....	51	3:3-8.....	19
5:12.....	53	2:12-14.....	52	3:10ff.....	39
5:17.....	46	2:13.....	31, 49	<i>I John</i>	
7:4.....	53	3:7.....	49, 52	1:1.....	10, 11
9:3.....	53	<i>Hebrews</i>		1:3-7.....	35
<i>Galatians</i>		1:2.....	54	1:5-10.....	34
2:2.....	15	2:5.....	37	2:3, 4, 28, 29.....	35
3:26-29.....	14, 34	3:6.....	54	2:29.....	3, 4, 10
4:22-31.....	46	4:1-9.....	39	.....	12, 13, 33
5:16-23.....	46	4:12.....	9, 46, 48	3:6.....	12
<i>Ephesians</i>		4:16.....	53	3:6, 9.....	35
2:1.....	44	6:11, 12.....	50	3:9.....	3, 4, 10
2:7.....	38	10:23-25.....	51	.....	12, 13, 34
2:11-15.....	14, 27	10:35-39.....	50	4:7.....	3, 4, 10
3:1-6.....	14, 27	Chapter 11.....	50	.....	12, 13, 34
3:6.....	15	12:1.....	51	5:1, 4, 18.....	3, 4, 10
5:18, 19.....	24	12:5-8.....	7	.....	12, 13, 34
6:19.....	53	.....	28, 35	5:1-5.....	11
<i>Philippians</i>		<i>James</i>		5:1-5, 11-13.....	34
1:20.....	53	1:2-12, 15-18, 21.....	29	5:1-5, 12, 18.....	35
1:26.....	54	1:15, 18.....	8, 30	<i>Jude</i>	
2:16.....	54	1:18.....	4, 12	3.....	51
<i>Colossians</i>		1:18, 21.....	10	<i>Revelation</i>	
1:13.....	7	1:21.....	9	3:10.....	52
1:27.....	15	2:5, 14-26.....	29	Chapters 5-19.....	28
2:12.....	23			11:15.....	11
3:1ff.....	23			21:1-5.....	39
				22:1-5.....	39