

To those in Athens the words of the Apostle Paul were to them "new doctrine;" "some new thing." ACTS 17:19 *And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? 20 For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean. 21 (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)* An expounded translation of this portion reads: "So they took him by the sleeve, and brought him to the Mars' Hill auditorium saying, Will you make clear to us what is this new teaching of yours, for the things you are saying sound strange to us: we are consequently interested to know what it means. (Now everybody in Athens, and even the foreign visitors to Athens, found no time for anything else than to be telling or hearing some new ideas.)" ACTS 17:32-34 tells us of three kinds of listeners that heard Paul's sermon here on Mars' hill: (1) the mockers; (2) those that would hear more later; and (3) those who immediately loved the doctrine of Paul, and believed.

Paul's sermon on Mars' Hill

Paul's sermon on Mars' hill is found in ACTS 17:22-31. This is the second complete sermon we have of Paul's found so far in the book of ACTS. Paul's first sermon that we have a complete record of was preached in the Jewish synagogue in Antioch in Pisidia back in ACTS 13:16-41, which we termed a "master piece" sermon. {Review pages 133-201 of these notes}. Paul's sermon at Antioch in Pisidia was really a sermon unto the Jews, which reached out also unto the Gentiles who were present. However here in Athens on Mars' Hill, Paul's sermon was preached exclusively unto the heathen Gentiles. Furthermore it was an impromptu sermon. In other words this was one of those sermons where Paul was "instant in season" like he admonished the Apostle Timothy to be in 2 TIMOTHY 4:2. 2 TIMOTHY 4:2 reads: *Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.* To be "instant in season" means to be of a mind set that is always ready, and always willing to do whatever the Lord wants you to do at a moments notice, even if it means preaching a sermon to a bunch of rebellious heathens, like the Apostle Paul was called to do here at Athens. (The Apostle Paul had himself first witnessed such a sermon by Stephen back in ACTS 7.) The Lord had been working this particular sermon out in Paul's mind ever since he arrived at Athens, for recall the words of ACTS 17:16 concerning Paul: *....his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.* Keep this also in mind as we read and study this sermon on Mars' hill, that even though Paul was preaching to a bunch of non-believing heathens, Paul did so, not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power of the Holy Ghost, and in the Spirit of the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, who shed His precious life's blood as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins. {See 1 CORINTHIANS 2:4, ROMANS 8:39, 1 PETER 1:19, and ACTS 10:43}. This kind of the love of God is lacking in so many sermons today, for the focus of the majority of Pastors is on what you have, and you achieving the worlds best, and not on what God wants you to have, and achieving God's best. In other words instead of focusing on Jesus, they focus upon man. The Apostle Paul always had his focus upon Jesus. In 1 TIMOTHY 2:4-6 Paul wrote concerning God our Saviour: *Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; 6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.* Here at Athens, now was the due time in which the man Christ Jesus was introduced unto the Athenians here at Mars' Hill.

We will read this sermon on Mars' Hill from Conybeare's translation of ACTS 17:22-31:

Ye men of Athens, all things which I behold bear witness to your carefulness in religion. For as I passed through your city, and beheld the objects of your worship, I found amongst them an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom, therefore, ye worship, though ye know Him not, Him declare I unto you.

God, who made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands. Neither is He served by the hands of men, as though He needed anything; for it is He that giveth unto all life, and breath, and all things. And He made of one blood all the nations of mankind, to dwell upon the face of the whole earth; and ordained to each the appointed seasons of their existence, and the bounds of their habitation. That they should seek God, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us, for in Him we live and move and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said:

‘For we are also His offspring.’

Forasmuch, then, as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by the art and device of man.

Howbeit, those past times of ignorance God hath overlooked; but now He commandeth all men everywhere to repent, because he hath appointed a day wherein He will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all, in that he hath raised Him from the dead.

The King James translation of Paul’s sermon on Mar’s Hill reads: ACTS 17:22 *Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars’ hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. 23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. 24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; 25 Neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; 26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; 27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: 28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. 29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device. 30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: 31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*

The reason I give two translations here of Paul’s sermon on Mars’ Hill is for clarity of understanding. Different translations shed light on the true meaning of what was said. No doubt Paul preached this sermon in Greek, and as we all know, much can be lost in translating from one language unto another. However as we go over this sermon we should be able to understand what Paul was saying unto these Athenians of different philosophy.

The introduction statement found in verse 22 comes across in the King James translation a little harsher than was probably stated by Paul. ACTS 17:22 *Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars’ hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.* The problem comes with the word “superstitious.” Most all of the other translations of this verse do not use the word “superstitious,” but rather make reference to the fact that these Athenians were very devout and extremely religious. Conybeare probably best captures the true mood of this introduction, and the graceful courtesy of the Apostle Paul by giving this translation: “Ye men of Athens, all things which I behold bear witness to your carefulness in religion.”

Paul then goes on in verse 23 to note their “devotions.” ACTS 17:23 *For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions,...* . The word “devotions” speaks to the Athenians objects

of worship, and these objects of worship were varied, and many in Athens, for they had thousands of statues, a large number of shrines, altars, temples, and a plurality of gods. We noted earlier that there were over 30,000 statues, all objects of worship, in Athens at the time Paul visited there. {See again page 387 of these notes}. In ACTS 14:15, while at Lystra, Paul had experienced some of the same kind of thing, and told the Lystrians that they *...should turn from these vanities unto the living God*. The word "vanities" found in ACTS 14:15 means; devoid of force, truth, success, result, useless, of no purpose. Essentially Paul was also noting that the Athenians too were worshipping things devoid of force or truth, things that were useless and of no real purpose, however Paul did not at this point come right out and tell them as much. Rather he was making it clear to them that he believed in a different God than they were worshipping. So Paul goes on to say unto them in verse 23 *...as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.*

Conybeare also leaves out the word "ignorantly" in verse 23, as do many other translators. Again Conybeare probably best captures the essence of Paul's statement here, saying: "Whom therefore, ye worship, though ye know Him not, Him declare I unto you." Paul was not calling these educated Athenian's ignoramuses, but rather was pointing out to them something they did not know, and that being THE UNKNOWN GOD that they worshipped without knowing His name.

The word "ignorant" in one form or another is used by the Apostle Paul over twenty times in scripture. Most of the time it is used in reference to something that someone didn't know, or a lack of knowledge of someone concerning something. That was his meaning here in verse 23, literally meaning: "(what God) not knowing (ye worship)."

Several times Paul makes it known in scripture that he wishes those he is writing to not to be ignorant of something, usually an important doctrine. In ROMANS 1:13 we read: *Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.* Again in ROMANS 11:25 Paul writes: *For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.* To the Corinthians Paul wrote: 1 CORINTHIANS 10:1 *Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;... .* 1 CORINTHIANS 12:1 *Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.* 2 CORINTHIANS 1:8 *For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life:.... .* To those at Thessalonica Paul wrote in 1 THESSALONIANS 4:13 *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.*

Paul also pointed out in his writings that there were those who were bound and determined to be steadfast in their ignorance, and not willing to receive true Light upon their darkened heart. Paul makes this known in EPHESIANS 4:17 & 18, where we read: *This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:.... .* {More on these verses next page of these notes}. Again in 1 CORINTHIANS 14:38 we read: *But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.* There will be plenty in Athens that will choose to be ignorant of knowing Paul's doctrine, but the Apostle Paul at this time was not calling any of them ignorant, or ignoramuses. Rather He is politely pointing out to them something they didn't know, though they were well educated; they just had no education, no learning, no knowledge of the only true God the Apostle Paul was telling them about.

The object of their ignorance was THE UNKNOWN GOD, whom the Athenians had built an altar unto. Paul was introducing Jesus unto these Athenians, whom, if they believed on Him, would cure their ignorance of THE UNKNOWN GOD. Brother Copley noted so many years ago that "the world is full of Athenians today. They abound in Christendom. Oh, the sadness of it. Everybody is religious. Everybody goes to church on

Sunday. But God is to the most of them "unknown." They ignorantly worship, if the empty, hypocritical form may be called worship."

Paul will use another form of the word "ignorant" in verse 30: "...*And the times of this ignorance God winked at;...*" This Greek word is found four times in scripture, and also denotes a lack of knowledge, or perception of someone, or something. {In the Strongs Greek Concordance it is number 52, agnoia (ag'-noy-ah)}. Twice this word is used by Peter, and twice this word is used by Paul. Peter used this word "ignorance" in a sermon to the Jews expressing their lack of knowledge or perception concerning Jesus Christ. This sermon is found in ACTS 3 after Peter and John prayed for the lame man at the gate of the temple, who was then immediately healed. A multitude of people heard this sermon, found in ACTS 3:12-25, which you can study on your own, however for now let's review verses 12-17, which emphasizes the fact that the Jews as a whole were ignorant of Jesus Christ, that is ignorant of who He really was. ACTS 3:12 *And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? 13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. 14 But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; 15 And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. 16 And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. 17 And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.* In other words Peter was saying that these Jews had no idea what they were doing, for they crucified their Saviour in their ignorance. In other words these Jews, who should have know better, were ignorant regarding Jesus Christ. ACTS 4:4 goes on to record that more than 5000 (if you study it out) were saved after this sermon, thus ending their "ignorance" of who Jesus Christ really was. To many of these very same Jews Peter writes in 1 PETER 1:13 *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:...* Here the word "ignorance" expresses the former unregenerate condition of those who became believers.

Paul, here in his sermon on Mars' Hill, was telling the Gentiles that they too were ignorant regarding God; that they had no idea who He was, or what He had done. Sometime later the Apostle Paul, with a few more years experience under his belt in dealing with the Gentiles, writes the following concerning this same word "ignorance" in EPHESIANS 4. EPHESIANS 4:17 *This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.* Here we see the idea of a willful blindness; in other words they willingly make a choice to remain ignorant, in this case, of the things of God. ROMANS 1:28 further expresses this same idea: *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;...*

We have now looked at the introductory statements of Paul's Mars' Hill speech found in verses 22 & 23 of ACTS 17. Inspired by the Holy Ghost, and with a heart full of the love of God, the Apostle Paul has quickly acknowledged the distinguished audience he was addressing, yet he deliberately failed to praise any one of them. Just as quickly Paul pointed out what he has observed as their vain objects of worship. Then the Apostle Paul declares unto them that he is about to introduce to them the one true living God, and in the process he will introduce to them Jesus Christ.

Before we look at the body of this impromptu sermon note the following. First of all in this sermon to the Gentiles there was no direct reference made to Old Testament scripture. These Athenians had no idea what the Old Testament scripture even was.

Secondly in this sermon note that the Apostle Paul made reference unto himself only four times; all in his introductory remarks. Four is the number that has to do with MAN'S WEAKNESS or HUMAN WEAKNESS, and is an EARTHLY NUMBER, and certainly the

Apostle Paul knew his own short comings, which is why he didn't focus upon himself. All preachers, and teachers, and evangelists, and pastors would do well to note how few times the Apostle Paul mentioned, or made reference unto himself in a sermon. On your own go back and look at the sermon Paul preached in the synagogue of the Jews in Antioch of Pisidia in ACTS 13:16-41 and see if you can find any reference Paul made unto himself. We don't need to hear in a sermon about "me, myself, and I," but rather we need to hear about God the Father, and His precious Son Jesus Christ who took those seven steps down from heaven to become a man, and our Saviour, and we further need to hear about how Jesus prayed unto God the Father to send unto us the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, who is our teacher and guide to bring us unto the place where we can have God's best!

The third main thing we need to see in this sermon of Paul's was his tremendous focus he had upon Jesus Christ, and God the Father who raised Him from the dead. In the main body of this sermon on Mars' Hill, Paul will make reference to the God head well over a dozen times. I dare say all good sermons must make reference unto the triune God several times more than anyone, or anything else is mentioned, otherwise the sermon will be void of content. Thank God we had an Apostle to follow who focused upon Jesus Christ and His place in the triune Godhead far above anything, or anyone else. Truly once old Saul of Tarsus got a glimpse of our lovely resurrected Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, and was blinded by the light of His glory, his focus remained upon Him throughout the rest of his life. With his focus upon Jesus Christ, old Saul of Tarsus had his name changed in scripture by the Holy Ghost to properly reflect who he really was, Paul, whose name means "little." It is with "little" that the Lord can do much. All the gospel records tell of Jesus feeding over five thousand with a "little" boys lunch. "Little" David slew big giant Goliath with a "little" sling shot! The "little" Paul became the great Apostle unto the Gentiles, who wrote more than half of the books in the New Testament! The full overcoming Philadelphia church of REVELATION 3 have but "little" strength, yet trusting in the power of His might, and by keeping the word of His patience, they (we) become the full overcoming company also known as the Bride of Christ! They follow the "little" Apostle Paul as he follows Christ. {1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*} It is but "little" wonder then that we find this "little" sermon of Paul's that makes Mars' Hill the famous place that it still is today.

Paul's short sermon on Mars' Hill really only has two parts to it; the introduction, and the main body of the sermon. Paul was cut off before he could finish this sermon, yet the Holy Ghost still had full reign here, and even though there was no concluding statement given by Paul in this sermon, his mission at Athens was accomplished.

The main body of Paul's sermon on Mars' Hill is found in verses 24-31 of ACTS 17. In his introductory remarks Paul told these Athenians that he would make known unto them this "unknown God," whom they had in their ignorance of Him had made an altar unto. So Paul says in ACTS 17:24 *God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;... .* Again Paul makes a similar statements in verses 25, 26 & 28: 25 *...he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;* 26 *And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;...* 28 *For in him we live, and move, and have our being;...* . We noted above that the educated Athenians didn't know any scripture, so the Apostle Paul didn't quote any Old Testament scripture to them, at least in the same fashion as he did to the Jews, who were very familiar with Old Testament scripture. Yet, in a sense, Paul educated these Athenians with Old Testament scriptural facts without quoting unto them Old Testament scriptures. Paul makes known unto them that it was *God that made the world and all things therein,...* . Let's review some of the Old Testament scriptures which cover these same facts, that God hath made the world and all things therein, and hath made of one blood all nations of men, and hath determined even the bounds of their habitation.

GENESIS 1:1 *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.* GENESIS 1:21 *And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.* GENESIS 1:27 *So God created man in his own image, in the image*

of God created he him; male and female created he them. GENESIS 5:1 This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him;... GENESIS 5:2 Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. 2 KINGS 19:15 And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. NEHEMIAH 9:6 Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee. JOB 33:4 The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life. PSALMS 74:17 Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter. PSALMS 89:12 The north and the south thou hast created them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name. PSALMS 100:3 Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. PSALMS 111:4 He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD is gracious and full of compassion. PSALMS 134:3 The LORD that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion. PSALMS 136:7 To him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever. PSALMS 148:1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights. 2 Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts. 3 Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. 4 Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. 5 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created. 6 He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass. PROVERBS 16:4 The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. PROVERBS 20:12 The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them. ISAIAH 40:12 Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? ISAIAH 40:25 To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. 26 Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth. ...28 Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. ISAIAH 42:5 Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: 6 I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; 7 To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. ISAIAH 43:1 But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. 2 When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. 3 For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. 4 Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. 5 Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; 6 I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; 7 Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him. 8 Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears. 9 Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and shew us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth. 10 Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. 11 I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour. 12 I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when

there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I am God. ISAIAH 44:2 Thus saith the LORD that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee. ISAIAH 45:8 Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the LORD have created it. ISAIAH 45:12 I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded. ISAIAH 45:18 For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else. JEREMIAH 10:12 He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion. JEREMIAH 32:17 Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee. JEREMIAH 51:15 He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding. ZECHARIAH 12:1 The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.

The Apostle Paul incorporated the following thoughts concerning creation in the following portions of his epistles. EPHESIANS 3:1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, 2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: 3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) 5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: 7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. 8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; 9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: 10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, 11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: 12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. COLOSSIANS 1:12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: 13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: 14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: 15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. COLOSSIANS 3:9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; 10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: 11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

The full overcomers have learned these lessons well of their creator, and we find them around the throne of God in heaven saying in REVELATION 4:11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

We have shown a little how the Apostle Paul used his knowledge of Old Testament scripture in this sermon on Mars' Hill. Paul makes a reference to a fact found in DEUTERONOMY 32:8 when he states in ACTS 17:26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;... . "The bounds of their habitation" are found in DEUTERONOMY 32:8 & 9, which reads: When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. 9 For the LORD'S portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. {See again page 365 of these notes for further

information on DEUTERONOMY 32.} Let me quote what Brother Copley had to say about this. "This is a wonderful truth. ...God knew how many Israelites there would be, and set the boundaries of all the nations in view of their comfort and welfare. Then the Lord has ordered the geography of the nations, not that they might become rich and great, and vie with one another and fight for one another's territory, but that "they should seek the Lord." God has sought to reveal Himself thru His Son Jesus Christ, to all the nations, that out of them he might gather a people for His name. But Satan has busied himself in blinding men to the truth in view of inducing them to follow and worship him." (End of quote from Brother Copley).

After making it perfectly clear that God hath made the world and all things therein, and hath made of one blood all nations of men, and hath determined even the bounds of their habitation, the Apostle Paul also made it perfectly clear that all men should "seek the Lord" as Brother Copley also noted above. Paul states in ACTS 17:27 *That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:...* . This is the last time in scripture we find the phrase "seek the Lord." Here the Gentiles are encouraged to "seek the Lord" as the children of Israel have been encouraged to do for centuries before. Moses encouraged the children of Israel in DEUTERONOMY 4:29 *But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.* David encouraged the children of Israel in 1 CHRONICLES 16:7 *Then on that day David delivered first this psalm to thank the LORD into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.* 8 *Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people.* 9 *Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works.* 10 *Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.* 11 *Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually.* PSALMS 34 is a Psalm of David's, and in verse 10 he wrote: *The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.* The first four verses of PSALMS 105 read: 1 *Give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.* 2 *Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.* 3 *Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.* 4 *Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore.* PROVERBS 28:5 tells us: *Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all things.* HOSEA 10:12 reads: *Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.* In total the phrase "seek the Lord" is found twenty-seven times in scripture. Twenty-seven is the number that has to do with the PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL, and that is exactly what the Apostle Paul was doing here on Mar's Hill. Paul was preaching the gospel; New Testament gospel.

The Apostle Paul had used his knowledge of the Old Testament to bring forth New Testament gospel. The Old Testament essentially reached out to the Jew, the children of Israel, but the New Testament reaches out to all men everywhere. We find Paul reaching out to all men every where in this most powerful statement found in ACTS 17:30 *...but now commandeth all men every where to repent:...* . Conybeare's translation of this portion again reads: "...but now He commandeth all men everywhere to repent,..." . Two phrases in this portion of scripture show us that this is New Testament gospel. The first phrase is "but now." "But now" brings us to right now, today in New Testament times. In 2 CORINTHIANS 6:2 Paul writes: *...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.* The second phrase found in our statement of ACTS 17:30 that defines Paul's New Testament preaching is the phrase "all men." New Testament preaching reaches down to "all men" everywhere. In 1 TIMOTHY 2 Paul explains this fact further. 1 TIMOTHY 2:1 *I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;* 2 *For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.* 3 *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;* 4 *Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.* 5 *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;* 6 *Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.* 7 *Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.*

(Verity is another word for truth, but means more than truth as viewed from the surface. This kind of truth has its roots grounded in the only One full of grace and truth, which is the pure truth found only in our pure Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Study JOHN 1:14.) In 1 TIMOTHY 4:10 we read: *For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.* Now read again our text: ACTS 17:30 *...but now commandeth all men every where to repent:...* . So we see that not only does New Testament preaching reach down to “all men” everywhere, but that New Testament preaching also right now ...commandeth all men every where to repent:... .

We have covered the topic of repentance all throughout this study. {See pages 32, 59, 61, 100, 168, 169, 172, 173, 193, 242, 294, and 327 of these notes.} Two portions of scripture, one from the Old Testament, and one from the New Testament pretty well summarize this topic. 2 PETER 3:9 tells us this: *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.* EXODUS 34:6 & 7 in part states the topic of repentance like this: *...The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin,....* And now we have again noted that the topic of repentance is up to date New Testament preaching, for our text of ACTS 17:30 tells us: *30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:...* . All men every where are commanded in this New Testament time to repent.

One more important thing to note concerning the word “repent” here again in scripture that has to do with New Testament preaching. A while back we did a study on REVELATION 2 & 3, which has to do with the seven representative churches of this present church age. Seven is a prominent number found throughout all of REVELATION. Seven is the number of SPIRITUAL COMPLETION or SPIRITUAL PERFECTION, which is a fact all race course runners should be very familiar with. By now you are probably wondering what all of this has to do with the word “repent.” The word “repent” is found exactly seven times in REVELATION 2 & 3. The word “repent” found in REVELATION 2 & 3 is the same exact word found in our text of ACTS 17:30. It is number 3340 in the Strong’s Greek Concordance, the Greek word *metanoeo* {met-an-o-eh'-o}. Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words explains it’s meaning like this: “*metanoeo* {met-an-o-eh'-o}, literally, to perceive afterwards (*meta*, after, implying change, *noeo*, to perceive; *nous*, the mind, the seat of moral reflection), in contrast to *prono*, to perceive beforehand, hence signifies to change one’s mind or purpose, always, in the New Testament, involving a change for the better, an amendment, and always, except in LUKE 17:3, 4, of repentance from sin.” {End of quote from Vine’s.} The seven times we find the word “repent” in REVELATION 2 & 3 is in the following verses: REVELATION 2:5 (twice), written unto the church of Ephesus; REVELATION 2:16 written unto the church of Pergamos; REVELATION 2:21 & 22 written unto the church of Thyatira; REVELATION 3:3 written unto the church of Sardis; and REVELATION 3:19 written unto the church of Laodicea. Notice that the church of Smyrna and Philadelphia are left out of this exhortation to repent. Why? Because these churches figure the full overcomers from this church age, who were SPIRITUALLY COMPLETE, or SPIRITUALLY PERFECTED having already repented from all of their sinful deeds, and having laid aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and ran with patience the race that was, and is set before them, and us, always looking unto Jesus, whom they too recognize as their Lord and Saviour, but more than that, they look unto Jesus as their soon coming Bridegroom, and the author and finisher of our, and their individual faith. {Study HEBREWS 12:1 & 2.} In other words the Smyrna and Philadelphia Saints latched onto Jesus as their first preeminent love, and with their focus completely 100% on Him they had His best for themselves always in the fore front of their mind, thus they had nothing to repent of, having already given all their burdens and cares to Him, thus they were, and are, complete and entire, lacking nothing, and the full overcomers God wants them to be.

Back to ACTS 17. By now it should be perfectly clear to us that the Lord, through Paul, was encouraging these Athenian Gentiles to seek was our lovely Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, *Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For*

by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. {COLOSSIANS 1:15-17.} Paul also knew that these very same Athenian's had a mind set that there was a Godhead whose image could be engraven, or carved in art. So Paul, with divine guidance of the Holy Ghost, briefly addresses this subject in verses 28 and 29. Recall that Paul has introduced these Athenians to the fact that that God hath made the world and all things therein, and hath made of one blood all nations of men, and hath determined even the bounds of their habitation. Furthermore the Apostle Paul also made it clear that all men should "seek the Lord," and then proceeds to tell these Athenians: *...28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. 29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.* (ACTS 17:28 & 29.) If you have a Scofield Bible you may have a note in verse 28 referencing the writings of Aratus and Cleanthes. These were the certain Greek poets Paul was referencing in verse 28 who made the statement Paul quoted: *"For we are also his offspring."*

Aratus was a Greek poet, and a native of Cilicia, as was Paul, and Cleanthes wrote a Greek hymn using almost the same words as Aratus, which reads:

*"Thou who amid the Immortals art throned the highest in glory,
Giver and Lord of life, who by law disposest of all things,
Known by many a name, yet One Almighty for ever,
Hail, CZeus! For to Thee should each mortal voice be uplifted:*

OFFSPRING ARE WE TOO OF THINE, we and all that is mortal around us."

Of course we know that the Apostle Paul didn't worship Zeus, but rather he quoted the Greek poet here to further grasp the attention of his educated Greek audience, who were seeking to learn something new. Paul was well studied in Greek having grown up in the Greek city of Tarsus, and more than this one time Paul references Greek literature. For example, in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:33 Paul quotes from a Greek comedy when he states: *"evil communications corrupt good manners."* Again in TITUS 1:12 Paul quotes from a poet who lived in the 6th century B.C. when he writes: *"The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies."*

The point Paul was driving home here in Athens was that there is a God who hath made the world and all things therein, and hath made of one blood all nations of men, and hath determined even the bounds of their habitation, and that this God who created all things is not Zeus. So he emphasizes in verse 29 *Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.* The word "Godhead" is found three times in New Testament scripture, and Paul is the one who uses this word all three times. Each time Paul uses the word "Godhead" he is using a different Greek word. Here in verse 29 the word "Godhead" is used to identify the divine Deity, which is the one true God. The next time Paul uses the word "Godhead" is in ROMANS 1:20. ROMANS 1:18 *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; 19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, 23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.* In this passage the word "Godhead" declares how much of God may be known from the revelation of Himself, which He has made in nature, from those signs of Himself which men everywhere may trace in the world around them. The third time Paul uses the word "Godhead" is in COLOSSIANS 2:9 where Paul makes known that the fullness of the Godhead is found in Jesus Christ, who was, and is, the absolute and perfect God. COLOSSIANS 2:8 & 9 reads: *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. 9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead*

bodily. The Apostle Paul, as Saul of Tarsus, personally witnessedall the fulness of the Godhead bodily... on the road to Damascus, for the brightness of that glorious Light associated withall the fulness of the Godhead bodily... blinded him for three days! However in the process of being blinded, Paul's spiritual eyes were also opened, and very much enlightened so he too could witness for himself who Jesus really was.

Note last sentence which the Apostle Paul was allowed to speak on Mars' Hill, found in ACTS 17:30 & 31: ACTS 17:30 *And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:* 31 *Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* There is a dividing line brought forth in these two verses; a point in time when a magnificent change took place. That point in time ended "*the times of this ignorance*" referenced in verse 30. "*The times of this ignorance*" is a statement concerning the Gentiles, who essentially were in darkness up until this point in time. This point in time alluded to in the above verses is when God raised Jesus from the dead as noted in verse 31. Let's see how this is.

ACTS 17:30 itself is divided into two parts: "*the times of this ignorance,*" and "*but now.*" The first part of ACTS 17:30 reads: *And the times of this ignorance God winked at;... .* The phrase "winked at" comes from the Greek word *hupereido* {hoop-er-i'-do} (number 5237 in the Strong's Greek Concordance,) and simply means to overlook, to take no notice of, or to not attend to. The Amplified version of this portion of scripture reads: "Such former ages of ignorance God, it is true, ignored and allowed to pass unnoticed." Implied in this portion of scripture is the fact that "*the times of this ignorance*" is now past, and we have entered another age, which also is a true statement. The previous age or dispensation was the age of the law, however the Gentiles were never under the law in the first place. This present age is the age of grace. Let's think of it like this; this current grace age we are now living in is this "*but now*" age, which is the time Paul was speaking of here in ACTS 17:30. JOHN 1:17 tells us: *For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* In the spirit of ACTS 17:30, think of JOHN 1:17 like this: *For the law was given by Moses, but (now) grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* ROMANS 10:4 further tells us of this "*but now*" grace age, stating: *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* "Every one that believeth" reaches down to the Gentiles, as well as to the Jew.

When Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to Jerusalem when He was forty days old, they met a just and devout man named Simeon, who by the unction of the Holy Ghost prophesied these words over baby Jesus: *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.* {LUKE 2:29-32.} I suppose one could say that "*the times of this ignorance*" referenced in ACTS 17:30 began to end when Jesus came on the scene, and began to shed light upon this old dark world. Simeon certainly seen the Light at this time and essentially said: *Lord, (but) now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.* Simeon prophesied of this light of Jesus in LUKE 2, which we just read, and the Apostle John also wrote of this very same light in many different places; using carefully chosen words which were penned after Jesus death and resurrection, and after John had many years of thought, and experience under his belt being full of the Holy Ghost. In 1 JOHN 1:1-3 we read: *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; 2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) 3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* Note how the Apostle John penned how Jesus lightened this old dark world in the following verses from the gospel of JOHN. JOHN 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* (In REVELATION 19:13 John makes it further known that Jesus Christ is also called "The Word

of God.”) 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. (John the Baptist.) 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. Later in the book of JOHN, the Apostle John wrote: JOHN 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. When shall a follower of Jesus have the light of life? Answer: but now. Again in JOHN 12:46 we read these words of Jesus: I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. Truly Jesus was the true Light that lightened this old dark world. So John wrote again in JOHN 3:16-19 the following: For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

Then some years after His resurrection Jesus appeared unto Saul of Tarsus, and told him that he was making him the Apostle to the Gentiles: To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. {ACTS 26:18.} It took years of special training for the Lord to bring old Saul of Tarsus to the place where he became the Apostle Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, but by ACTS 17 he was that Apostle preaching to the Gentiles about resurrected Jesus, how that He is the true Light of this old dark world. Later still in life the Apostle Paul would write more of this, and state in EPHESIANS 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light... . Paul was writing this statement in EPHESIANS 5:8 unto believers, as he also was the following statement made specifically unto enlightened Gentile believers in EPHESIANS 2:13 -- But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. In total the Apostle Paul uses the phrase “but now” twenty-seven times from ACTS through HEBREWS. Twenty-seven is the number that has to do with the PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL. {See again pages 49, 50, 52, and 401 of these notes.} ACTS 17:30 from the Amplified Translation reads: “Such former ages of ignorance God, it is true, ignored and allowed to pass unnoticed, but now He charges all people everywhere to repent -- that is, to change their minds for the better and heartily to amend their ways, with abhorrence for their past sins.” Again this is New Testament gospel preaching at it’s finest.

Why was it that ...the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent? ACTS 17:31 gives the answer: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. Verse 31 is a very powerful statement, which went right over the heads of those that heard it, and has gone right over the heads of most that have read it too!

We mentioned earlier how that the Athenians were ignorant of Old Testament scripture, but the Apostle Paul was an expert in Old Testament scripture if ever anyone was an expert in Old Testament scripture. And here in ACTS 17:31 Paul once again incorporates Old Testament scripture in his sermon. Specifically note the words “he will judge the world in righteousness” found in verse 31. Here Paul really references three different PSALMS: PSALMS 9, 96, and 98. PSALMS 9:1-10 reads like this: 1 I will praise

thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works. 2 I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High. 3 When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence. 4 For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right. 5 Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever. 6 O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them. 7 But the LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment. 8 And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness. 9 The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. 10 And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee. Here note how verse 8 is quoted in ACTS 17:31- Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained. PSALMS 96 in part reads: 10 Say among the heathen that the LORD reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously. 11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. 12 Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice. 13 Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth. Again note how part of verse 13 is quoted in ACTS 17:31- Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained. Then PSALMS 98 states: 1 C sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. 2 The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen. 3 He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. 4 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. 5 Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. 6 With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King. 7 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. 8 Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together. 9 Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity. Again part of PSALMS 98:9 is quoted here in ACTS 17:31- Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.

Having just read these three verses we can see how the Apostle Paul, like King David centuries before, encouraged himself in the Lord, and he did so by knowing the scriptures. We read in 1 SAMUEL 30:6 *And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.* I often heard Brother Hill quote that "David encouraged himself in the LORD" while encouraging each of us to do the same. In the margin of his notes Brother Hill wrote this concerning the statement "David encouraged himself in the LORD:" "this is the coming back point for all of us."

We have now shown how ACTS 17:31 is in part an expounded translation of Old Testament scripture. The phrase "judge the world" is actually found in exactly seven scriptures. By now we should all know that the number seven is the number that has to do with SPIRITUALLY PERFECTION or SPIRITUAL COMPLETION. On your own you can further study these seven scriptures, which are: PSALMS 9:8; PSALMS 96:13; PSALMS 98:9; JOHN 12:47; ACTS 17:31; ROMANS 3:6, and 1 CORINTHIANS 6:2.

It is very interesting how the Holy Ghost inspired the Apostle Paul to preach these words: ACTS 17:30 *And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:* 31 *Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* Recall that Mars' Hill (Aeropagus) was the place in Greece where their supreme court met, and was famous for the justice and correctness of their decisions. {Review pages 391 & 392 of these notes.} Now Paul has told them of a superior Judge who will judge the world in

righteousness. Further recall that *the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.* {ACTS 17:21.} To have explained unto them whom "THE UNKNOWN GOD" was certainly some new thing to these Athenians. To further explain that God through Jesus Christ was "the creator of the world and all things therein" was also new doctrine to the Athenians. On Mars' Hill here in verses 30 and 31 Paul told these Athenians something else new; for he introduced new Pauline doctrine concerning Jesus Christ the righteous Judge, whose judgments will be righteous and true, and far superior to any judgments that the supreme court of Greece could ever give. {Study REVELATION 16:5; 16:7; 19:2 & 19:11 for starters.} Specifically in verse 31 Paul has introduced Jesus Christ as this righteous Judge, yet the Athenians didn't let Paul expound upon whom *...that man whom he hath ordained...* is. So we will expound upon *...that man whom he hath ordained*, which is Jesus Christ our Lord.

We mentioned that this is new Pauline doctrine, that Jesus Christ is the Righteous Judge, which is a true statement considering the point in time in Paul's life when he makes this statement. Keep in mind that up to this point in the life of Paul he has not written one epistle that we now have in New Testament scripture. No doubt Paul had been preaching this doctrine concerning Jesus Christ as the Righteous Judge for some time, yet this is the first chronological recorded mention of Paul noting this fact in scripture. We can see that the Holy Ghost was inspiring the Apostle Paul's thinking along these lines, so that in the near future in his life he would write more on this doctrine. Later in ROMANS 2:16 Paul would write: *In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.* {Review pages 124 & 125 of these notes.} This is why we need to know Paul's gospel, and one of the reasons we have been doing this study on the life of the Apostle Paul, to expound upon his gospel teaching. By the time Paul wrote 2 TIMOTHY he had already written, and finished preaching all of his gospel. Note this statement of 2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8 -- *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* Between the times these two statements from ROMANS 2 and 2 TIMOTHY 4 were made, Paul taught a lot of doctrine concerning Christ the Righteous Judge. And this seems to be an excellent place in our study to expound on this subject further.

Brother Hawkins wrote an excellent tract entitled "The Judgment Seat of Christ," giving some wonderful thoughts on Jesus Christ the Righteous Judge. Brother Hill also noted that this is an excellent tract. (If you don't have a copy of that tract it can be found on the internet through links on the Living Waters Tabernacle web site.) I will reference some thoughts from this tract in the following discussion.

Paul wrote the following: ROMANS 14:10 *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.* 2 CORINTHIANS 5:10 *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* Both of these scriptures have to do with "the judgment seat of Christ." Brother Hawkins correctly notes this of 2 CORINTHIANS 5:10: "This scripture often strikes fear in the hearts of dear Christian people, because the time and purpose of this ministry of Christ is misunderstood. There are those who teach that God diligently keeps records of every misstep and evil deed, and then on "judgment day" all the secrets He has kept over the years, will be made manifest for everyone to see." "...PRAY TELL. WHAT GOOD WOULD THAT DO? How would a display of such works of iniquity glorify God, or magnify redemption? It is vitally important to realize that God's incentive for overcoming is not FEAR, but DIVINE LOVE. Fear is a very strong human emotion, but only Divine Love never fails and will overcome every obstacle. Those who promote such thoughts violate some of the most beautiful Scriptures of God's Word. What shall we do with the following statements of God? "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us" (PSALMS 103:12). "Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." (ISAIAH 38:17). "Who is a God like unto thee,

that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (MICAH 7:18-19). "For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (HEBREWS 9:26). "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin" (HEBREWS 10:17-18). All of these beautiful verses attest to the fact that our sins were laid upon Christ, and when we accept Him, we will never be judged for them again. Christ has borne that judgment and they have been put out of God's sight forever, by the blood of the sacrificial Lamb of God."

Again we read these two scriptures: ROMANS 14:10 *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.* 2 CORINTHIANS 5:10 *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* Brother Hawkins goes on to say: "When do we appear before this judgment seat? Some people suppose that Paul's use of the word "shall" (in ROMANS 14:10) indicates that it is at a future time. As 2 CORINTHIANS 5:10 states, the reward will be received at a future time, for it is an eternal one. However, judgment must occur now. Paul declares in 1 CORINTHIANS 11:32, "*But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord...*" Peter corroborates his statement by saying, "*For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?*" (1 PETER 4:17). Chastening, which is a direct result of judgment, is taking place in our lives now. Likewise, Peter is referring to God's people as being the house of God, and this is where judgment begins - TODAY." (End of quoting from Brother Hawkins tract on "The Judgment Seat of Christ.")

Brother Hawkins then goes on to note qualities of Jesus Christ the Righteous Judge that are described by the Apostle John in REVELATION 1. We covered this subject ourselves when we did the study on "Hearing" (the Word of God). The following are high lights from that study.

REVELATION 1:9 *I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.* 10 *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,...* Verse 9 plainly states that John wrote the book of REVELATION from the island of Patmos. Verse 10 is called by Brother Copley "the key verse of the book" of REVELATION. Verse 10 is the first of five vision view points in the book of REVELATION. Each view point has it's own chronology. (The other four view points are: REVELATION 4:2; 13:1; 17:3; and 21:10). Brother Copley notes that the Greek records verse 10 this way: "I became (or came to be) in spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a voice, loud as of a trumpet." Note here first of all how that the word "the" is not in the original Greek. Thus verse 10 should more properly read: *I was in Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,...* The next and probably most important point to know in verse 10 is what is meant by the phrase "the Lord's day." "The Lord's day" does not refer to Sunday like so many commentaries of this portion read. Those who embrace such a statement miss out on what is really taking place in the whole book of REVELATION. Simply put "the Lord's day" refers to the end of this present Church age when Christ will take His own throne in heaven and begin His millennial reign.

Now let's read verse 10 again: *I was in Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,...* Here we see John caught in Spirit to that day beyond this present Church Age, when he heard a voice behind him. John in verse 12 then turns and looks back from the view point of "the Lord's day," and describes the scene of what was going on during the Church Age in these seven representative churches, which is found in REVELATION chapters 2 & 3. Before John is allowed to describe the events of REVELATION 2 & 3, he makes note of who it was that he heard behind him in verse 10, and as we read on we find it was the Judge, The Lord Jesus Christ, who was walking in the midst of the candlesticks, whose voice he heard.

REVELATION 1:11-20 introduces Jesus Christ as the judge of this church age. John hears a voice behind him in REVELATION 1:11 Saying, *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.* 12 *And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;* 13 *And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.* 14 *His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;* 15 *And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.* 16 *And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.* 17 *And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: 18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.* 19 *Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;* 20 *The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.*

John gives a nine-fold signified description of Jesus as judge in verses 13-16. The number nine is a complete number in itself, for it means: FINALITY or DIVINE COMPLETENESS.

REVELATION 1:13 *And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot,...* The first description that John gave concerning this majestic vision of the Son of man was of His clothing. He was ... *clothed with a garment down to the foot,...* that is, a long flowing garment just like the priests had. If verses 13-16 describe Jesus as judge then why wasn't this garment like that of a judge? Well essentially it was a similar garment. In 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 Jesus is called "the righteous judge." Recall several civil trials in the New Testament. Who were the accused brought before? The answer is the high priests. Study MATTHEW 26; MARK 14; LUKE 22; JOHN 18; ACTS 4; 5; 7; 22 and 23. During this present church age we also have a High Priest. HEBREWS 8:1 tells us: *...We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;...* HEBREWS 3:1 tells us that our high priest is Christ Jesus, stating: *Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;...* It was Jesus Christ, the High Priest of this Church Age, also known as "the righteous judge" who John saw in the midst of the candlesticks.

The second description that John gave concerning the clothing of this majestic vision of the Son of man was of the golden girdle about the paps: verse 13 -- *...and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.* Gold speaks of the deity or divine life of God. The "paps" speak of the breast. The breasts speak of comfort and nourishment, a place close to the heart. Thus the function of the golden girdle about the paps being displayed by Jesus Christ here in REVELATION 1:13 is to show Him as a Judge, and as "the righteous judge" He cannot show any comfort and nourishment, or His affectionate nature, especially when pronouncing a sentence. He is at that time *...girt about the paps with a golden girdle.* Brother Copley states: "He notes closely all the evidences for and against the one being examined, and gives sentence accordingly." We see these sentences passed out to the seven churches in REVELATION 2 & 3 by Christ "the righteous judge." Also in REVELATION 15:6 & 7 we find seven angels having their breasts girded with golden girdles, and they are given seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, meaning that they are not allow to show any mercy in their executing God's judgment on the Christ rejecting world.

Next in REVELATION 1:14 we see the third point in our nine-fold description of Jesus as judge. REVELATION 1:14 *His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow;...* His head and his hairs being white like wool, and being white like pure snow speak of His agelessness, or His eternalness, His heavenliness, and His deity. White symbolizes purity, innocence, and righteousness. Wool (undyed) symbolizes purity and whiteness. None could be purer than Lamb's wool from the Lamb of God. ISAIAH 1:18 mentions both the white snow, and wool, stating: *Come now, and let us reason together,*

saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. These symbols of white snow, and white wool found in REVELATION 1:14 point us to the purity, and holiness, and the majesty of Jesus. The scene John was witnessing suggests majesty, purity, holiness, and the eternalness of Jesus Christ.

Fourth in our nine-fold description of Jesus as judge comes the statement from REVELATION 1:14 *...and his eyes were as a flame of fire.* Eyes, of course, are for seeing. Fire accomplishes two functions; burning, and purifying. A by-product of fire is heat and light. Fire, by its pure, penetrating, all consuming agency, symbolizes the holiness of God. These piercing eyes of Jesus Christ the Righteous Judge are able to look deeply into the heart of man. Men look on the outward appearance, but God looks upon the heart. To the prophet Samuel the Lord spoke in 1 SAMUEL 16:7 concerning choosing a king for Israel: *But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.*

The fifth point in our nine-fold description of Jesus as the righteous judge is found in this statement from REVELATION 1:15 -- *And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace;...* Brass is always symbolic of judgment. A study of the altar in the tabernacle in the wilderness found in EXODUS 27:1-8, and called by different names in EXODUS 29:37; 30:28; and 38:30, is symbolic of the cross upon which our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was made, once and for all, a sacrifice for sin. In other words: the brazen altar pointed to Calvary where our sins were judged. The fine brass spoken of here in REVELATION 1:15, Brother Copley points out, speaks of intricate judgment, and the burning brass flames out scathing, unsparing judgment. The feet, of course, are for walking. We see here a picture of Christ the righteous judge as he walks among the churches, judging the flesh where He walks, and judging in the minutest manner.

Since Christ is the "righteous Judge" as 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 points out, (2 TIMOTHY 4:8 *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*), when does He judge? 1 PETER 4:17 tells us: *For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?* When does Christ judge the church? Now, *...For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God...*, and again that time is now. 1 CORINTHIANS 11:31 *For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.* Here judgment and chastening are explained at the same time. We are not to judge ourselves at some future time, but rather we are to judge ourselves now. We are not chastened of the Lord in some future time, we are chastened of the Lord now. Even before this Paul wrote in 1 CORINTHIANS 6:2 *Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?* So what we see here is that there is a group of people, you and me, Christians of this church age who judge themselves now, and at a future time with Christ we will judge the world. JUDE 14 *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.* ROMANS 2:16 *In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.* 2 CORINTHIANS 5:10 *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* Again 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

The sixth point in our nine-fold description of Jesus as the righteous judge is found in the last part of REVELATION 1:15: *...and his voice as the sound of many waters.* Why do you suppose Jesus voice sounded to John in the best way he could describe it *...as the sound of many waters?* It was the chorus of the "cloud of witnesses" whom John couldn't see because of the glory of Jesus, echoing in agreement with everything they heard from the voice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! This is not a silent "cloud of

witnesses," but rather a respectful "noise of an host," whose voices echoing together in agreement with Christ the Righteous Judge sounded like the noise of "many waters." Recall in EZEKIEL 1 that Ezekiel saw a vision of glory that he too had trouble finding the words to describe, like all who have witnessed this scene have. EZEKIEL 1:24 records: *And when they (this "cloud of witness") went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings.* The noise of the overcomers wings sounded to Ezekiel like the noise of great waters; in other words the sound of many waters. Daniel too witnessed such a scene in DANIEL 10, and here is what he had to say starting in verse 4: *And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel; (HID ih kel) 5 Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: (YOO faz) 6 His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.* The voice of a multitude is what John called ...the sound of many waters.

Interesting to me is the fact that we find the phrase "many waters" fourteen times in scripture. Fourteen is the number of DELIVERANCE or SALVATION. The full overcomers are the ones with the loudest voices of appreciation for their deliverance from sin, and their salvation by the blood of Jesus, thus they draw closest to Him, and are in agreement with everything He does, and has done in their lives. They have ears to hear with open hearts of faith, and believe what they hear, and follow by faith the instructions given unto them from the Lord. {For more scriptures concerning "many waters" see REVELATION 14:2 and 19:6}. The phrase that we read in EZEKIEL 1:24 of "great waters" is found sixteen times in scripture. Sixteen is the number of LOVE. The full overcomers are the ones who are in LOVE with Jesus the most. They LOVE His appearing, (see 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 above.) In glory they are a part of His appearing, seen as a part of the "clouds" which surround Jesus at all His appearances.

The seventh point in our nine-fold description of Jesus Christ the Righteous Judge in REVELATION 1:13-16 brings us to the "seven stars." REVELATION 1:16 *And he had in his right hand seven stars:...* Verse 20 takes any mystery out of who the "seven stars" are. REVELATION 1:20 *The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.* These "seven stars" are what John terms "the angels," which really is the messengers, or specifically the pastors of these seven churches.

REVELATION 1:16 *...and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword:...* This statement brings us to our eighth point in our nine-fold description of Jesus as the Righteous Judge in REVELATION 1:13-16. To the Bible student there is no mystery here. HEBREWS 4:12 tells us that the Word of God, (whom Jesus is), is sharper than any twoedged sword. HEBREWS 4:12 *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* David slew Goliath with Goliath's own sword. There was none like it. {See 1 SAMUEL 21:8 & 9}. The sword of Goliath became famous to the children of Israel as a symbol of the power of the Word of God. Let me quote Brother Copley's comments on this portion from REVELATION 1:16: "This sword is none other than the word of God. "piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, etc," as cited above. And that word is judging us now, reproofing, correcting and instructing us. If we yield to its faithfulness today, we will escape its condemnation and not be ashamed at His coming. There is no getting by the fact that our continual attitude to God's written word will determine our present victory and joy and our eternal sphere and reward." (End of quote from Brother Copley.) As the righteous judge, Jesus is using the Word of God to judge us now, to reprove us now, to correct us now, to instruct us now, to build us up now. Our every thought and intent of the heart is being judged or evaluated now as His word goes forth.

The number nine is a complete number in itself, for it means: FINALITY or DIVINE COMPLETENESS, and we have come to the final ninth point in our nine-fold description of Jesus as the Righteous Judge in REVELATION 1:13-16. REVELATION 1:16 *...and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.* What a bright countenance John

witnessed. Others too in scripture have witnessed this same bright countenance, called in some scriptures the glory of the LORD. The glory of the Lord casts a bright light, which shines brighter than the noonday sun. {See Paul's description in ACTS 26:13.}

In EXODUS 33 & 34 we get some idea of the brightness of the glory of the LORD. In EXODUS 33 we find Moses asking the Lord to show him His glory. EXODUS 33:18 *And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. 19 And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. 20 And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. 21 And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: 22 And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: 23 And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.* In EXODUS 34 we find Moses called by God to the top of mount Sinai. In verse 6 the Lord passed before Moses. Verse 28-30 reads: *And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments. 29 And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. 30 And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him.* Then in verse 35 we find this statement: *35 And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone:...* After getting just the faintest glimpse of the brightness of glory of the LORD Moses face shined with the afterglow.

EZEKIEL too got a glimpse of the Lord's glory, and the following verses from EZEKIEL explain what he saw. EZEKIEL 1:4 *And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire. ...13 As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning. ...27 And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. 28 As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake. ...8:2 Then I beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire; and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber. ...10:4 Then the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD'S glory.*

We know when Ezekiel saw the brightness of the Lord's glory that He fell upon his face, for he records in EZEKIEL 1:28: *...And when I saw it, I fell upon my face,...* In DANIEL 10 Daniel saw a vision of the glory of the Lord, and writes that he "retained no strength," and that he was upon his face, and his face was towards the ground. {See DANIEL 10:1-9}. Saul of Tarsus when he saw the brightness of the Lord's glory on that road to Damascus, he too fell to the earth (ACTS 9:4, 22:7, and 26:14). In REVELATION 1:17 we read that the Apostle John when he saw the brightness of the Lord's glory stated: *And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead.* We find each of these men who witnessed the brightness of the Lord's glory literally on their face before the Lord. We also find each of these men who witnessed the brightness of the Lord's glory are told to arise in some fashion or another, and witness the truth that the glorious Light would reveal unto them. All of these men witnessed the brightness of the Lord's glory, and unto each of these men was revealed formerly hidden mysteries, which only the brilliance of the creator could bring to light. It is this same brightness of the Lord's glory that will lighten the new Jerusalem in REVELATION 21, where we read: *23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it,*

and the Lamb is the light thereof.... . REVELATION 1:16 ...and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

The question each of us need to ask ourselves then is: "how much Light of the brightness of the Lord's glory will I allow in my life?" The full overcomers answer: "Let the True Light shine brilliantly in me." Jesus is the True Light. In REVELATION 19:10 and 22:8 we find John again falling down to worship, but in these instances he was falling before full overcomers. Their brilliance was as the Lords, or why else would John make such a mistake? The full overcomers are those who are surrounded with the Light of the brightness of the Lord's glory. The full overcomers allow this Light of the brightness of the Lord's glory to shine in their daily lives. Let's see one aspect of how this is.

Today we find Jesus sitting on the right hand of God. Several scriptures point this out, for example HEBREWS 1:1-3. HEBREWS 1:1 *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;*... . (Note once again here in verse 3 the brightness of Jesus glory, which is the same brilliance that John witnessed in REVELATION 1:16.) MARK 16:19 is another scripture that records where Jesus went after He was received up into heaven, stating: *So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.* What is Jesus doing there, now at the right hand of the Majesty on High? ROMANS 8:34 gives us the answer, stating: *...It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.* So we see that Jesus is now at the right hand of the Majesty on High ever making intercession for us. HEBREWS 12:1 & 2 tells us that we are too be like the Old Testament worthies of faith, and run the race of faith that is set before us, looking unto the Light of the brightness of the Lord's glory for our daily help and daily guidance. HEBREWS 12:1 & 2 reads: *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.* Note again that we find Jesus in the brightness of His glory sitting on the right hand of God. HEBREWS 4:16 calls the throne of God the throne of grace. HEBREWS 4:16 also tells us: *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* It is before this throne of grace that the full overcomer learns to worship. JOHN 4:23 *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.* The full overcomer hears with open ears and open hearts of faith the word of God, and with a whole heart worships God, giving the Lord glory and honour and thanks. {See REVELATION 4:9-11.} This is how the full overcomer allows this Light of the brightness of the Lord's glory to shine in their daily lives, thus they walk in brilliance of the Light of the Lord. To the full overcomer Jesus says in REVELATION 3:21 -- *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

We have been examining the facts found in Paul's sermon given on Mars' hill, and have now seen who it is that will judge the world in righteousness. Of course that man whom God ordained for this task is none other than Jesus Christ, whom Paul was introducing in his abbreviated sermon here on Mars' hill. The last words of this Holy Ghost inspired sermon are found in ACTS 17:31, which again reads: *Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*

Let's look at the word "assurance" here in verse 31. In the King James version of the Bible we find the word "assurance" exactly seven times! Seven we all know by now is the number of SPIRITUAL COMPLETION or SPIRITUAL PERFECTION. The number seven in one fashion or another always points us to the perfection of God. Recall these words from GENESIS 2, and see in them the SPIRITUAL COMPLETION or SPIRITUAL PERFECTION of God. GENESIS 2:1 *Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.* 2 *And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.* 3 *And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.* The full overcomers, who are the ones who will be found to be spiritually complete, and spiritually perfect, worship the Lord with a whole heart seven days a week. The full overcomers will have *...the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ...* spoken of in COLOSSIANS 2:2. The full overcomers will have *...a true heart in full assurance of faith...* that is spoken of in HEBREWS 10:22. And the full overcomers will have *...the full assurance of hope unto the end...* that is found in HEBREWS 6:11. The full overcomers are the worthies of faith.

The same Greek word that is translated "assurance" here in ACTS 17:31 is also translated "faith" 239 times in the New Testament. It is the Greek word *pistis* {pis'-tis}, number 4102 in the Strong's Greek Concordance. Twenty four times "faith" (*pistis* {pis'-tis}, number 4102 in the Strong's Greek Concordance) is found in HEBREWS 11, the chapter that has to do with the Old Testament worthies of faith. Twenty four is the number that has to do with the PRIESTHOOD. In REVELATION 5:8-10 we find all the worthies of faith from both the Old Testament and the New Testament, and here is what is said concerning them: 8 *And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.* 9 *And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;* 10 *And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.* Note what the Apostle John wrote concerning kings and priests in REVELATION 1. REVELATION 1:3 *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.* 4 *John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;* 5 *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,* 6 *And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* Aren't you glad that you are one of the ones who believed this statement found in ACTS 17:31 *...he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead...?*

ACTS 17:31 *Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* Recall during Paul's visit to Athens that it was mainly the Epicurean and the Stoick philosophers who brought Paul up to Mars' hill to hear what he had to say, especially wanting to hear about the resurrection. ACTS 17:18-21 again reads: *Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babblers say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.* 19 *And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?* 20 *For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean.* 21 *(For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)* Here on Mars' hill Paul preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection, stating these very words: *...whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* Since this is the doctrine they wanted to hear about, I am sure the Apostle Paul was rather

shocked at their reaction noted in ACTS 17:32 *And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.*

Now we are not going to cover in detail the subject of the resurrection of the dead at this point in our lesson, for we have already noted that this is a large topic to discuss. {Review pages 391 and 392 of these notes.} Let's here however consider the phrase found in ACTS 17:31 *...raised him from the dead.* The Holy Ghost inspired this phrase to be used exactly seven times in scripture, our SPIRITUAL COMPLETION or SPIRITUAL PERFECTION number. I suppose it fitting that these words completed Paul's abbreviated sermon here on Mars' hill too, for those that heard these words made the choice to continue listening to Paul, or not. Most chose to mock, or put off until later the hearing of the Word of God. Those that wanted to hear more sought Paul out in private, and he no doubt told them essentially what we read in ROMANS 10:9 *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* {The seven scriptures where the phrase *...raised him from the dead...* can be found are: JOHN 12:17, ACTS 13:30, ACTS 17:31, ROMANS 10:9, GALATIANS 1:1, EPHESIANS 1:20, and COLOSSIANS 2:12.}

ACTS 17:32 *And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.* We noted above that the subject of the resurrection of the dead is a large topic to discuss. The Apostle Paul discussed this topic every where he went. To the Corinthians Paul wrote the resurrection chapter, which we know at the 15th chapter of 1 CORINTHIANS. Study that chapter out on you own. Let me read some of what Paul wrote in this chapter. 1 CORINTHIANS 15:12 *Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: 14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. 15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. 16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: 17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. 18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. 20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. 21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.*

The mocking attitude of those at Athens concerning the resurrection was nothing new in scripture. Jesus Himself had a similar encounter with unbelieving Sadducees in MATTHEW 22. Before we read some verses from MATTHEW 22 note what Luke wrote concerning the Sadducees in ACTS 23:8. ACTS 23:8 *For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both.* Then in MATTHEW 22 we find Jesus encountering Sadducees who questioned Him about the resurrection, which they themselves didn't believe in. MATTHEW 22:23 *The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him, 24 Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. 25 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: 26 Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. 27 And last of all the woman died also. 28 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her. 29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. 30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. 31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, 32 I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. 33 And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine.* If you read on in MATTHEW 22:34 you will notice that these words put the Sadducees to silence, and in the process of silencing the Sadducees, Jesus educated them on the resurrection, and gave them facts concerning angels. Note what else he told them in verse 29: *...Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.* I ask myself this question: how many preachers are there out

there today who ...do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God? I suspect the answer is way too many.

ACTS 17:32 *And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.* 33 So Paul departed from among them. The words "from among them" is a statement of FINALITY or DIVINE COMPLETENESS. The number nine is the number associated with FINALITY or DIVINE COMPLETENESS, and the words "from among them" is a statement found nine times in scripture. This is also a statement of separation. God separated the children of Israel "from among them" of Egypt as noted in EXODUS 7:5; NUMBER 14:13; PSALMS 136:10 & 11. God also wanted His people to put "from among them" strange gods as noted in JUDGES 10:16; and 2 CORINTHIANS 6:16-18. In our text of ACTS 17:33 the subject of Jesus and the resurrection separated the Apostle Paul "from among them" of Athens.

ACTS 17:34 *Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.* The word "cleave" in this sentence carries the thought of to stick like glue. We note here that Dionysius the Areopagite was one of these who believed Paul, and clave unto him. The indications are that Dionysius was a member of the Court of Areopagus; in other words he was one of the judges of this supreme court at Athens. Obviously Dionysius wanted to hear more about Jesus Christ the Righteous Judge, whom Paul introduced here on Mount Areopagus, Mars' Hill. Here is what Brother Copley noted of Dionysius in his study book on ACTS: "The meaning of his name "divinely touched," agrees with his religious pedigree. Church history states of him, being Heliopolis in Egypt at the time of Christ's death, on observing the supernatural darkness, he exclaimed, "Either the God of nature suffers, or sympathizes with one who suffers." He was burnt as a martyr for the truth in A.D. 95." {End of quote from Brother Copley.}

Dionysius the Areopagite was, no doubt, the most famous of the Athenians who believed Paul. A woman named Damaris is the only other believer of Athens mentioned by name, who herself is now famous having been mentioned in scripture. Brother Copley had some interesting thoughts concerning Damaris, stating: "The name Damaris means "little woman," or "a yoke-bearing wife." Damaris must have become a striking Christian character in that heathen city; else why does the Holy Spirit single her out and quote her in connection with Dionysius. Her name beautifully describes the Bride of Christ. She is little, apparently, when compared with the world's women. She is not afraid of toil and burden-bearing. "Her price is above rubies" PROVERBS 31:10." {End of quote from Brother Copley.}

ACTS 17:34 is how the 17th chapter of ACTS ends. It leaves me wondering what happened to these certain people, who, for a while, stuck like glue to the Apostle Paul. Did they follow Paul to Corinth? Did they run the race to win the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus? The answers to these questions will have to wait until we too are home with our lovely Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The Apostle John explained to us a little of why we only have certain things left to us in the Holy Scriptures. JOHN 20:30 *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.* JOHN 21:24 *This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. 25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.*

The reason we don't have more information given us here is because the Holy Ghost gave us the information we need to believe. May we be like those of Athens who clave unto Paul, and not like those who waited for another day to receive the things of God. We do not read that that day ever came. "Now is the day of salvation" 2 CORINTHIANS 6:2 tells us.