

The Doctrine of Deliverance

As we begin to study this next portion of scripture we come upon a common underlying theme found all through out scripture, which can be termed the doctrine of deliverance. This subject is hugh in size, so in an effort to concentrate our thoughts toward the study of the life of the Apostle Paul, let's only note in passing some brief examples of the doctrine of deliverance as noted in scripture apart from the life of the Apostle Paul.

Before we examine some scriptural examples of the doctrine of deliverance, let's define what deliverance means. The word "deliverance" itself is broad in scope, but in the light that we want to think of it in this portion of our study let's define "deliverance" as being set free from, or rescued from, or released from something, or someone that was holding one back from being rescued, or set free. There are 25 Hebrew words, and 14 Greek words that translate into our English "deliverance" in one form or another. So obviously the study of the doctrine of deliverance is very broad in scope, wide in breadth, and hugh in size.

The doctrine of deliverance is found from GENESIS through REVELATION. The ark God told Noah to build safely delivered Noah and his family from the flood. {Study GENESIS 6-9.} The prayers of Abraham delivered Lot and his family from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. {Study GENESIS 18 & 19.} The mighty hand of God manifest through Moses delivered the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt after over four hundred years of being held in bondage! {Study EXODUS 1-15.} Jericho was delivered into the hands of Joshua and the children of Israel after they followed the instructions of God found in JOSHUA 6. The hand of the Lord was Almighty in delivering the Midianites into the hand of Gideon in JUDGES 6 and 7.

Young David knew that the Lord delivered him out of the paw of the lion, and the paw of the bear, and that the Lord would deliver him out of the hand of Goliath in 1 SAMUEL 17. Later David wrote in PSALMS 18:1 *I will love thee, O LORD, my strength. 2 The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. ...17 He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me. 18 They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay. 19 He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me. ...43 Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people; and thou hast made me the head of the heathen: a people whom I have not known shall serve me. ...48 He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man. ...50 Great deliverance giveth he to his king; and sheweth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore.* (Note that David references the Lord his perfect Deliverer seven times in this chapter as his deliverer, showing us once again that the number seven is a number that has to do with SPIRITUAL PERFECTION, or SPIRITUAL COMPLETION.) {Study also 2 SAMUEL 22.}

In PSALMS 34 David wrote: *1 I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. 2 My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. 3 C magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. 4 I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. 5 They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. 6 This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. 7 The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. 8 C taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. 9 C fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. ...17 The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. 18 The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.*

Remember the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in DANIEL 3? They came up against King Nebuchadnezzar, and we read the following account starting in DANIEL 3:14 *Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach,*

and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? 15 Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands? 16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, C Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. 17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, C king. 18 But if not, be it known unto thee, C king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. 19 Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated. 20 And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. 21 Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. 22 Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. 23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. 24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, C king. 25 He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. 26 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire. 27 And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them. 28 Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. 29 Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort. 30 Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon.

In DANIEL 6, Daniel was delivered out of the mouth of many lions when he was cast into the lions den. Let's read that account starting in verse 16: Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee. 17 And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel. 18 Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of musick brought before him: and his sleep went from him. 19 Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions. 20 And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, C Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? 21 Then said Daniel unto the king, C king, live for ever. 22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, C king, have I done no hurt. 23 Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God. 24 And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their

children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den. 25 Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. 26 I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. 27 He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. 28 So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

All of these Old Testament examples that we have quickly referenced concerning the doctrine of deliverance point to the fact that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is our Deliverer. In LUKE 4 Jesus preaches in the synagogue of Nazareth where He was brought up, and we read the following account starting in verse 16, where Jesus reads from ISAIAH 61:1 & 2. LUKE 4:16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. 17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, 18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. 20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. Note in verse 18 that Jesus came ...to preach deliverance to the captives... Who are the captives, and what are they captives of? The captives are those held in bondage to someone or something. Initially everyone is held in bondage to sin, For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, (ROMANS 3:23). All need deliverance from sin, and Jesus Christ is the deliverer. PSALMS 18:2 The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. Jesus came to preach deliverance to the captives. The word deliverance here comes from the Greek word "aphesis" (number 859 in the Strong's Greek Concordance), meaning freedom or pardon. "Aphesis" is translated into English; remission (9 times), forgiveness (6 times), deliverance (1 time here in LUKE 4:18), and liberty (1 time also in LUKE 4:18). That means that this word "Aphesis" is found seventeen times in the New Testament. Seventeen was the number which means VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS. Another way of saying this is that Jesus came ...to preach... VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS ...to the captives! Brother Hawkins stated this in his comments on this portion of scripture: "Bondage, common to man, comes in many forms, and affects the spirit, soul, and body. Jesus healed many people who were bound by sickness and disease, and even loosed some from the chains of death; but he delivered many more bound by sin and unrighteousness. He did it by the message he preached. Faith in His Message can deliver the captives, bound by the world, the flesh, and the devil." {End of quote from Brother Hawkins.} This then is the essence of the doctrine of deliverance.

The Apostle Paul, as Saul of Tarsus met Jesus Christ the Deliverer on the road to Damascus. At that time Saul of Tarsus was delivered from all his sins, and was delivered from the bondage of the law. Paul wrote in ROMANS 7:6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. When Paul was delivered from all his sins, and was delivered from the bondage of the law on that road to Damascus, Jesus told him a little of how he was to become a preacher of the doctrine of deliverance. Again this is found in that famous portion of scripture we have referenced many times in this study found in ACTS 26. ACTS 26:16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18 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.

Now you may be asking what does the above portion of scripture have to do with the doctrine of deliverance? The doctrine of deliverance sets the captive free, and such freedom can only be found in Christ Jesus. {See again LUKE 4:18 above.} JOHN 8:36 *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* The doctrine of deliverance opens the eyes of the blind; turns them from darkness unto light. {See again ACTS 26:18 and LUKE 4:18 above.} The doctrine of deliverance frees the sinner from the power of Satan, and turns them unto the greater power of God. {See again ACTS 26:18.} The doctrine of deliverance delivers us from this present evil world. {See GALATIANS 1:4.} The doctrine of deliverance preaches the gospel to the poor, and gives them which believe an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Christ Jesus. {See again ACTS 26:18, and LUKE 4:18.} The doctrine of deliverance heals the sick, cleanses the leper, raises the dead, and casts out devils! {Study MATTHEW 10:8; ACTS 19:12-20; and ACTS 20:9-12.} The doctrine of deliverance heals the broken hearted. {Again see LUKE 4:18.} The doctrine of deliverance is for Jew and Gentile alike. The doctrine of deliverance is what spread Paul's gospel throughout all Asia, so that they all heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. {See again ACTS 19:10.} The doctrine of deliverance is in part what *...turned the world upside down...* as noted in ACTS 17:6. The doctrine of deliverance is what allowed the name of Jesus to be magnified there at Ephesus. {See ACTS 19:17.} The doctrine of deliverance is what caused the word of God to grow and prevail there at Ephesus! {See ACTS 19:20.} The doctrine of deliverance further separates the Bride of Christ as His wife who hath made herself ready! {Study REVELATION 19:7.} The Bride of Christ will know the doctrine of deliverance like Old Testament overcomer David who penned those words we read in PSALMS 34:17 *The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. 18 The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.* {See page 513 above.}

Having now introduced this doctrine of deliverance, let's us step back for a moment from our verse to verse studying of what took place during the life of the Apostle Paul, and consider Ephesus from the perspective of the bigger picture of some of what God sees from above.

When the Apostle Paul came again unto Ephesus here in ACTS 19, I doubt if he really knew that he was coming into the city that Brother Copley notes "was the center of witchcraft and magic, by which the sorcerers claimed to work miracles." {End of quote from Brother Copley.} There was idol worship, and the associated witchcraft that went right along with idol worship, in every city Paul had visited in his journeys as an Apostle. None of these things moved Paul in a way that would prevent him from visiting such cities, rather he knew that he was sent by Jesus Christ, as we noted in ACTS 26:18 above, into such idol worshipping cities as Ephesus: *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.* The Apostle Paul also knew the facts of 1 JOHN 4:4, which states in part: *...greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.* It was in this prominent idol worshipping city of Ephesus that the Apostle Paul was allowed to preach for three years! It was in this city of Ephesus so full of witchcraft and magic that we read in ACTS 19:11 *And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: 12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them. ...17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. 18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. 19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. 20 So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.*

The power of God that was so greatly manifest here at Ephesus, and described for us in these verses, has to rank right up there as being among the high water mark portions of scripture found in the book of ACTS, and ranks right up there with the facts

noted in ACTS 5:12-16. (ACTS 5:12-16 reads: *And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. 13 And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. 14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.) 15 Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. 16 There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.*)

This doctrine of deliverance that Paul preached greatly impacted the business of the idol makers in Ephesus, as hinted at a little in verse 19. ACTS 19:19 *Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.* The Apostle Paul and his preaching turned so many away from idol worship here at Ephesus that ACTS 19:23-41 records of a great uproar at Ephesus against the Apostle Paul and his doctrine. This uproar was three years in the making there at Ephesus, and the end result was the lasting legacy of the doctrines of the Apostle Paul, and his teachings concerning Jesus Christ. The Lord took one of the chief idol worshipping cities, the center of witchcraft and magic, and with one Apostle who taught the doctrine of deliverance, the Lord in time showed them the loftiest levels of teaching found in scripture! Oh what a Savior!

Two epistles were written to these very same Ephesians. Brother Copley again notes: "Ephesus was the most prominent city of that province (Asia) and the center of its trade. The Apostle (Paul) likewise made it the center of his operations for Christ. That assembly is a type of the most fully developed believers; therefore Paul wrote to them as he did, and they are the first on the list of the seven representative churches to which John wrote." {End of quote from Brother Copley.} Of course the two epistles that were written unto these Ephesian Saints are the book of EPHESIANS, and the portion of scripture found in REVELATION 2:1-7.

Brother Hill loved the book of EPHESIANS. No doubt it was his favorite book in the Bible. He taught us out of it many times. He called it the high water mark of scripture. His Bible shows the wear and tear of many hours of study in the book of EPHESIANS. Here is some of what Brother Hill wrote in his notes concerning EPHESIANS. "The book of EPHESIANS gives us the loftiest levels of teaching found in the Bible, bringing to the redeemed the great purpose of God in their lives. No one regardless of how brilliant they may be can ever hope to cope with it's depths. "The natural man can not." We must be born again, and receive the life, and the mind of Christ, then as Jesus said receive into our lives the Holy Spirit who is sent to guide us into all the truth." {End of quote from Brother Hill.}

Brother Hill also wrote a booklet entitled "The Warfare of the Believer," which came from a series of sermons he preached on from EPHESIANS 6:10-18. Brother Hill's booklet is an excellent study resource on this portion of EPHESIANS. Hopefully you have this booklet for your own study purposes.

The Apostle Paul wrote in EPHESIANS 6:12 *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.* The Apostle Paul wrote this verse because of the many experiences he had along these lines every where he went. And certainly the uproar that Paul experienced at Ephesus was just one of the many experiences he had *...against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.* Even before this uproar at Ephesus, and before *...God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.... ...and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified....So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed,...* before any of this could be written we know that the Apostle Paul went up *...against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.* High water mark portions of scripture like the epistle to the EPHESIANS, and the verses we just read from ACTS 19:11-20, didn't come without a spiritual battle *...against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the*

darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. No wonder then that the Apostle Paul wrote unto the Corinthians in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:32 *...I have fought with beasts at Ephesus,...* . It is also no wonder then that this doctrine of deliverance was so pronounced, and highlighted here at Ephesus.

One last thought before we get back to our verse by verse study of the life of the Apostle Paul as found in ACTS. Recall from our introduction of Ephesus, that "Ephesus" is found seventeen times in scripture, and seventeen is the number that has to do with VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS. A VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS often comes after a tremendous spiritual battle *...against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.* That is why the Holy Ghost had the Apostle Paul write unto these Ephesian Saints these words from which Brother Hill wrote his book entitled "The Warfare of the Believer" found in EPHESIANS 6:10-18: *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.*

The Apostle Paul, being thus equipped with the spiritual armour of God that he explained for us in EPHESIANS 6:10-18, has this account of his ministry at Ephesus found in ACTS 19:11-20. ACTS 19:11 *And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: 12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them. ...17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. 18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. 19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. 20 So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.*

In ACTS 19:11 we find the word "special" associated with "miracles." The word "special" comes from the Greek word "tuchon," which can be found in the explanation section of word 5177 in the Strong's Greek Concordance, and as used here means: "not common or ordinary." In other words the miracles that were performed by the hands of Paul here at Ephesus were "not common or ordinary" miracles, if there is such a thing. And it seems from reading many commentaries on this portion of ACTS that there were deeds accomplished by Jewish exorcists that were perceived by some as ordinary miracles. However what God did here at Ephesus through the hands of Paul in terms of miracles far exceeded anything ever witnessed here at Ephesus in times past. The fact of the matter is that these miracles were so special *...that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks....* *...So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.* {ACTS 19:10 & 20.}

The word "miracles" is found 27 times in scripture. 27 is the number that has to do with THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL. Obviously this is exactly what the Apostle Paul was doing there at Ephesus, preaching the gospel. ACTS 19:8-10, which we have already studied, confirms that Paul indeed was everyday preaching the gospel there at Ephesus. ACTS 19:8 *And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. 9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. 10 And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.*

Interestingly the word "preaching" is also found 27 times in scripture, twelve times in association with the Apostle Paul. In ACTS 15:35 we read that Paul was "...teaching and preaching the word of the Lord,..." Sometimes like in ACTS 20:9 Paul was long in preaching. In ACTS 20:25 and 28:31 we find that Paul was "...preaching the kingdom of God..." In ROMANS 16:25 we find that Paul was "...preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began..." In 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18 we find that Paul was "...preaching of the cross..." Three verses later in 1 CORINTHIANS 1:21 we find Paul telling us that "...it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." A few verses later we find the Apostle Paul stating in 1 CORINTHIANS 2:4 *And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power...* 1 CORINTHIANS 15 we know as the resurrection chapter. Paul writes in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:14 *And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.* In 2 CORINTHIANS 10:14 we find that Paul was also "...preaching the gospel of Christ..." In 2 TIMOTHY 4:17, probably his last letter, the Apostle Paul writes: "...that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear..." And finally in TITUS 1:3 Paul writes: *"But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour."* So we note the importance of THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL in Paul's gospel.

Recall in ACTS 26:16 that the Lord Jesus told the future Apostle Paul on the road to Damascus that *...I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee.* Jesus was there telling Paul to preach the gospel. Within a couple of days of this event, Jesus told Ananias of Damascus in ACTS 9:15 & 16 this concerning the future Apostle Paul -- *But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.* The Greek word translated "bear" in verse 15 (number 941 in the Strong's Greek Concordance) is found 27 times in New Testament scripture. So we could say verse 15 it like this: *But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:...*

Now note in ACTS 9:16 the phrase "great things." "Great things" is a phrase found in only 27 scriptures in the Bible. "Great things" is a phrase that often points us upward unto God. In 1 SAMUEL 12:24 we find Samuel encouraging the children of Israel with these words: *"...fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you."* The reference is also unto God in the following "great things" found in the book of JOB. JOB 5:9 *Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number...* JOB 9:10 *Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number.* JOB 37:5 *God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend.* In PSALMS we read some more "great things" concerning God. PSALMS 71:19 *Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto thee!* PSALMS 126:3 *The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.* In LUKE 1:49 Mary the Mother of Jesus cries out in praise unto God, stating: *For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.* These are but a few of the 27 scriptures where we find the phrase "great things." 27 being the number that has to do with THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL could be found stated this way in ACTS 9:16 -- *For I will shew him how THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL will cause him to suffer some "great things" for God's cause.*

Armed with this knowledge then we could read ACTS 9:15 & 16 like this: *But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL before the Gentiles, and to THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL before kings, and to THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL before the children of Israel: For I will shew him how THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL will cause him to suffer some "great things" for my names sake. {For more on the number 27 review page 401 of these notes.}*

ACTS 19:11 *And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: 12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.* The "special miracles" noted in verse 11 equates to the "great things" we just referenced above. We can also think of these verses like this: And God wrought great things, special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

ACTS 19:12 *So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.* This verse really summarizes the doctrine of deliverance. That is to say the sick were healed from their ailments, and the possessed were set free from the evil spirits that possessed them.

Let's take a moment and compare ACTS 19:11 & 12 with what took place back in ACTS 5:12-16. Here in ACTS 19:11 & 12 we read: *And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: 12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.* And ACTS 5:12-16 reads: *And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people;... 15 Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. 16 There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.* In comparing these two portions of scripture we note that miracles were credited unto the hands of the Apostle's, and in both portions of scripture the Apostle's were full of the power of the Holy Ghost. In ACTS 5 we find the sick and possessed seeking out the Apostle's, and coming unto them. In ACTS 19:12 we find the Apostle Paul sending out handkerchiefs or aprons unto the sick and possessed. The teaching here is that there was no limit on the distance from Paul and his doctrine that couldn't be reached. If someone was five miles away and sick, the Apostle Paul could still pray for them over a handkerchief, and they be delivered. It wasn't the Apostle Paul who did the healing anyway, it was our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who did the healing. The same doctrine is still true today. If someone is two thousand years away from the Apostle Paul, as we almost are today, we can still reach out to the same healing Jesus, and be healed and delivered from all our diseases. ISAIAH 53:5 *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.* PSALMS 103 {A Psalm of David.} *1 Bless the LORD, C my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. 2 Bless the LORD, C my soul, and forget not all his benefits: 3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.* Even The Apostle Paul wrote in HEBREWS 13:8 *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* All full overcomers know this to be a fact.

Part of this doctrine of deliverance that we have been talking about in this section of our study concerns the deliverance from the power of Satan. The Lord Jesus actually introduced the Apostle Paul to the doctrine of deliverance from the power of Satan the day that Paul got saved on that road to Damascus. Satan lost old Saul of Tarsus as his agent of Christian havock at that very same time, because Jesus mightily delivered old Saul of Tarsus from the power of Satan on that road to Damascus. Again recall these words of Jesus spoken to Paul on the road to Damascus: ACTS 26:16 *But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18 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.* Imbedded in this text is the acknowledgment of "the power of Satan," from which the Apostle Paul was instructed to preach the doctrine of deliverance from.

In our study of the life of the Apostle Paul we have earlier discussed some facts concerning "the power of Satan," and this is not a point we want to over emphasize, nor

is it a subject we want to neglect either. {Study again pages 33 & 34, and 120 & 121.} The Apostle Paul faced opposition from Satan every day, and every hour of every day in his life. All full potential full overcomers will too. That is one reason Paul wrote what he did concerning the warfare of the believer in EPHESIANS 6. EPHESIANS 6:12 *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.* The Apostle Paul wasn't wrapped up in focusing on "the power of Satan" and Satan's influence on the world around him, but as we have also noted many times before, the Apostle Paul had his eyes clearly focused upon running the race to win Jesus as his Bridegroom from the time this truth was revealed unto him. However as we continue studying this 19th chapter of ACTS we are going to see some of the different workings of "the power of Satan" that took place here at Ephesus. We are also going to see the greater power of God, and the deliverance that only He can give from "the power of Satan."

This "power of Satan" is manifest throughout all scripture because God ordained it so, God allows "the power of Satan" to be manifest here on earth in order to bring the full overcomers to that lofty inheritance that is theirs in Christ Jesus. Scriptures from EZEKIEL 28 and ISAIAH 14 reference Satan. EZEKIEL 28:13 thru 15 tells of God creating Satan. EZEKIEL 28:13-15 reads: *Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. 14 Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. 15 Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.* Furthermore ISAIAH 14:13 and 14 tells us this of Satan's iniquity: *For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.* The essence of this statement is that Satan is power hungry; that is he want to be like the most High, who is God. So God for now has made Satan "the prince of the power of the air" as noted in EPHESIANS 2:2. EPHESIANS 2:2 *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:...* Satan even tempted Jesus with worldly power LUKE 4:6 tells us: *And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.* ISAIAH 14:15 foretells of the end of Satan: *Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.* Read REVELATION 20 to see how this is going to happen.

Yet for now we find Satan constantly before the throne of God accusing the brethren before our God day and night. {Study REVELATION 12:10 for confirmation of this statement}. The question arises then, why does God still allow Satan access before the throne of God? God allows access of Satan before the throne of God so that God can use Satan as a tool to achieve part of the work that needs to be accomplished in the life of a believer. To be a full overcomer requires many obstacles in the life of a believer to overcome. If Satan can be used of God as an instrument of some of these many obstacles then so be it; for this is part of those all things that work together for good to them that love God, and to them who are the called according to his purpose {paraphrasing ROMANS 8:28}. What the full overcomer learns in walking with God is that "the power of Satan" is real, and is a greater force than any man can deal with, but as 1 JOHN 4:4 states: *...greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.* You see we believers have a greater power in us than he that is in the world, and God wants the believer to yield to the greater power of the Spirit of God and grow up in Him and become that full overcomer. 1 JOHN 4:1 *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. 4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome*

them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. Amazing then isn't it that Satan himself is used as a tool of God partly as an instrument to bring the full overcomer to occupy the wonderful place in Heaven that Satan himself once held! No wonder then that the Holy Spirit left for us such encouraging scriptures as 1 PETER 4:12 & 13 and ROMANS 8:18. 1 PETER 4:12 *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.* ROMANS 8:18 *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* No wonder also that Satan fights against the potential full-overcomers so intensely!

We learned in our MEANING OF THE BIBLE NUMBERS study that there are eighteen names in scripture for Satan. (The number eighteen has to do with BONDAGE.)

Satan has six proper names; (1) Satan, (found 55 times in scripture), (2) Beelzebub, (found 7 times in scripture), (3) Devil, (mentioned 61 times in scripture), (4) Lucifer, (one time ISAIAH 14:12), (5) Dragon, (found 19 times in scripture), and (6) Prince, (as in EPHESIANS 2:2, prince and power of the air).

There are six names in scripture showing Satan in type; (1) Adder, (PSALMS 91:13 with ROMANS 16:20), (2) Adversary, (1 PETER 5:8), (3) Belial, (2 CORINTHIANS 6:15), (4) Leviathan, (ISAIAH 27:1), (5) Star, (REVELATION 8:10 & 11), (6) and Wormwood, (REVELATION 8:11).

There are six other names we find in scripture for Satan; (1) Tempter, (MATTHEW 4:3), (2) Destroyer, (1 CORINTHIANS 10:10), (3) Devourer, (MALACHI 3:10 & 11), (4) Serpent, (GENESIS 3:1,2, 13-15; 2 CORINTHIANS 11:3, REVELATION 12:9 & 20:2), (5) Wicked One, (MATTHEW 13:19 & 38; 1 JOHN 2:13 & 14; 3:12; 5:18), and (6) Enemy (MATTHEW 13:39; ACTS 13:10; ISAIAH 59:19).

We have just noted 6 proper names of Satan, plus 6 names of Satan in type, plus 6 other names of Satan; 6+6+6, or in other terms, 666. Note this connection to Satan in the following verse: REVELATION 13:18, which reads: *Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.* Note that first of all this number 666 is the number of the beast. In the book of REVELATION there are two Greek words translated "beast". The first word "beast" is "zoon" meaning a living being or living creature, such as those of REVELATION 4. The second word "beast" in REVELATION is "theron" meaning a wild beast, a venomous beast, and metaphorically speaks of a brutal, bestial man, savage, ferocious. Secondly note in REVELATION 13:18 that this number 666 *...is the number of a man...* Brother Copley notes that it is a depraved man, Satan assisting him. He is to us anti-Christ. So the number 666 is commonly referred to as the number of the beast, or anti-Christ.

We also learned in our MEANING OF THE BIBLE NUMBERS study that there are three different meanings for the number six. The number six has to do with MAN; SATAN; or SATAN'S INFLUENCE OVER WORLDLY MAN. The sixth character mentioned in the Bible is that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan. {REVELATION 12:9.} (1) God the Father, (GENESIS 1:1), (2) God the Son, (GENESIS 1:26 & JOHN 1:1 & 2), (3) God the Holy Spirit, (GENESIS 1:2), (4) Adam (GENESIS 1:27; 2:7), (5) Eve (GENESIS 1:27; 2:21 & 22), and (6) the serpent (GENESIS 3:1-15).

Here are three scriptures that point out exactly who this serpent refers to. REVELATION 12:9 *And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.* REVELATION 20:2 *And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.* 2 CORINTHIANS 11:3 *But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*

The following verses from GENESIS 2 & 3 show how Satan beguiled Eve through his subtilty. GENESIS 2:16 *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* In GENESIS 3 we read how that old serpent, Satan, deceived Eve, and how Adam went along with that deception. GENESIS 3:1 *Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast*

of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. (We see in this statement that Eve had heard with her ears God's one and only command given unto her.) 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. In eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve sinned. They sinned in that they didn't believe the word of God and the one and only command that He gave them. ROMANS 5:12 tells us: *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*

There is a wonderful deep truth hidden in GENESIS 3:6. GENESIS 3:6 *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.* Adam didn't have to eat of fruit, for Adam wasn't deceived like Eve was. 1 TIMOTHY 2:14 tells us: *And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.* There was a lot of thought that took place before Adam willingly ate of the fruit. Adam didn't want to be alone, apart from his Bride, his lovely Eve, so he willingly also ate of the fruit. ROMANS 5:14 tells us that Adam *...is the figure of him that was to come.* 1 CORINTHIANS 15:45-47 further tells us of the first man Adam, who is of the earth, earthy, and the second man Adam who is the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven. The second man Adam, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, didn't want to be alone either, apart from His lovely Bride, so He too, like the first man Adam willingly was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin, so that He too would someday have a Bride. 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21 *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* ROMANS 5:8 further tells us: *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

Yes it is true that Satan beguiled Eve. ROMANS 8:28 is also true, and was true in Adam's and Eve's day too. ROMANS 8:28 *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.* Satan beguiled Eve, thus *...Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: {ROMANS 5:12}.* Satan beguiled Eve, which in turn caused sin to enter into this world, yet God caused even this event to work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. EPHESIANS 2:4-7 explains it like this: *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.* Satan beguiled Eve, and God used this event to introduce the doctrine of deliverance. The ultimate deliverance is to be set free from sin, and made worthy and ready to be a part of that exclusive company that will be forever known as the Bride of Christ! Satan beguiled Eve, and God used this event to introduce some deep Bridal message truths that we here have briefly touched upon.

The Pharaoh of Moses day was asked nine times of God to "Let my people go." {See EXODUS 5:1; 7:16; 8:1; 8:20; 8:21; 9:1; 9:13; 10:3; and 10:4}. (Nine is the number that has to do with FINALITY and DIVINE COMPLETENESS). Six scriptures record Moses' Pharaoh calling for the magicians (sorcerers) for help. {See EXODUS 7:11; 7:22; 8:7; 8:18; 8:19; and 9:11}. Again, six is the number that has to do with MAN; SATAN; or SATAN'S INFLUENCE OVER WORLDLY MAN. If you will take the time to study the six times Pharaoh called for the sorcerers in the six portions of scriptures above, you will see that when their enchantments worked, they only made matters worse. The sorcerers too were deceived by Satan, *...that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world...* {REVELATION 12:9}. The statement Jesus made unto the Pharisees in JOHN 8:44

applies also to the sorcerers. JOHN 8:44 *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*

Do you think the Apostle Paul ever thought about Moses' sorcerers? He not only thought about them, but in his studies under Gamaliel, he knew their names. He shares this information in 2 TIMOTHY 3:8 *Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.* "Reprobate" means: not standing the test.

There are also six scriptures in DANIEL showing both king Nebuchadnezzar and king Belshazzar calling upon magicians (sorcerers) for guidance, {see DANIEL 1:20; 2:2; 2:27; 4:7; 4:9 and 5:11}. Thus we find it rather common in scripture for the leaders to be influenced by the magicians (sorcerers). (If you want to study this subject out further look up the words: magicians, sorcerers, astrologers, soothsayers, stargazers, monthly prognosticators, false prophet(s), observer(s) of times, diviners, dreamers, adversary, enchanter(s), charmer(s), necromancer, witch, wizard, witchcraft(s), eloquent orator, consulter with familiar spirits, exorcists, and cunning artificer; 21 different names found in scripture describing Satan's followers. 21 is the number of SIN. There may be more.)

The point of mentioning the sorcerers and magicians and astrologers here is to note that they were not any match for the man of God they were dealing against. DANIEL 1:20 records: *And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.* Thus Daniel was promoted in the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar, and back in EXODUS Moses was able to lead the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

Consider Job. The Lord asked Satan to consider Job in JOB 1:8, which reads: *And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?* Again in JOB 2:3 we read: *And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.* We find Satan's name mentioned fourteen times in the book of JOB, all in the first two chapters. {See JOB 1:6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 2:1, 3, 4, 6, & 7.} Fourteen is the number that has to do with DELIVERANCE or SALVATION. In other words God used Satan to teach Job, and you and me, the doctrine of deliverance.

In JOB there are forty two chapters of the severe testings that Job went through because he loved and feared God. In the end we find that Job had a better, and closer understanding of God. His heart had been drawn more towards God because of what God took him through. JOB 42:1 *Then Job answered the LORD, and said, 2 I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. 3 Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. 4 Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. 5 I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. 6 Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.* Note that Job had open ears to hear the Word of God spoken to him. After this time of testing and trial, God blessed Job, who already was the greatest man of the east, and we read in JOB 42:10 *...the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.*

We have now reviewed some background information concerning the opposition of Satan, and have noted how we are no match for Satan in our own strength, and how Satan is no match for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for once again *....greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.* {1 JOHN 4:4.} We have also noted how that God uses Satan and his devices as a tool to help bring the full overcomer to occupy the wonderful place in Heaven that Satan himself once held! {Review page 521 of these notes.} Further we have noted how God used Satan to introduce to us the doctrine of deliverance! And how the ultimate deliverance is to be set free from sin, and made worthy and ready to be a part of that exclusive company that will be forever known as the Bride of Christ! {Review page 523 of these notes.} Armed with all of this information

let's continue our studies of the life of the Apostle Paul, and see what happened next here in Ephesus.

ACTS 19:13 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. 14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? 16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

In this portion we find seven sons of the chief of the priests named Sceva, here called vagabond Jews, and exorcists. There is no indication that they confronted Paul in any fashion, however they were very familiar with the Apostle Paul, and what was taking place at Ephesus because of his ministry. (Make no mistake, Paul did face much opposition here at Ephesus from ungodly men. Paul wrote in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:32 *...I have fought with beasts at Ephesus...* but this opposition is not attributed unto these seven sons of Sceva. Later we will read in ACTS 19:24 of a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who called together workmen of like occupation, among who no doubt was Alexander the coppersmith, (2 TIMOTHY 4:13), who did Paul much evil, and no doubt it was men of this sort who were the "beasts at Ephesus.") Again we read in ACTS 19:10 that because of Paul's ministry, *...all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.* For all the good that was being done in Ephesus by Paul's ministry, Satan had a counterfeit. The preaching of Paul had greatly impacted Satan's stronghold here at Ephesus, as we will continue to see by studying the rest of ACTS 19. So we find these seven sons of Sceva being sent by Satan to counter, or turn in an opposite direction, the message of Paul. As we learned above, these efforts of Satan will fail in the end, and will be used of God to bring a bigger positive effect, which will also be the case here at Ephesus.

The connection between the seven sons of Sceva, and the Apostle Paul, if there was a connection, was the fact that those possessed with evil spirits were being delivered from the evil spirits by the Apostle Paul, and the seven sons of Sceva were attempting to do the same thing, counterfeiting the work and power of the Lord. The above scriptures give a detailed definition on who these counterfeits were. They were Jews, like the Apostle Paul. To the outsider they may have even appeared similar to the Apostle Paul in dress. Paul we know was a Pharisee, who dressed as a Pharisee. These seven sons of Sceva may have worn clothing that gave them away as being religious sons of a Jewish chief priest. These seven sons of Sceva were called "vagabond Jews" in verse 13. The meaning of a "vagabond" was "to wander from place to place, without any settled habitation," and to the outsider the Apostle Paul may have fit this description also. The Apostle Paul already had a reputation for delivering those possessed from the evil spirits, as we read in ACTS 19:11 & 12 -- *And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: 12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.*

These seven sons of Sceva were called in verse 13 "exorcists." An exorcist denotes those who went about pretending to be able to expel evil spirits, or to cure diseases by charms, incantations, etc. Verse 13 tells us that they further *...took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.* "We adjure you" means: "we bind you by an oath," but there was no power behind these words, and certainly the power that is in the name of Jesus wasn't behind these idle words of the unbelieving sons of Sceva. They lacked the power that the Apostle Paul wrote the spiritual Ephesian warriors about in EPHESIANS 6:10 *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.* This is the real power that enabled the Apostle Paul to perform so many miracles there at Ephesus. These seven sons of Sceva's exorcism attempted to cast out the evil spirits *...by Jesus whom Paul preacheth...* but they themselves were unbelievers, and lacked the power of Jesus in their own lives, thus their efforts were futile. Recall what Jesus told His disciples in MARK 16:17 & 18 -- *17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall*

lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. These seven sons of Sceva lacked the power of Jesus in their own lives, because, as we noted above, they were unbelievers, and thus were counterfeits.

These seven sons of Sceva were sons of a counterfeiter. Sceva means "mind reader." There is only one true "mind reader," and that is God. GENESIS 6:5 states: *And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* PSALMS 94:11 *The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.* ROMANS 8:26 *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.* 27 *And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.* JEREMIAH 17:10 *I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.* REVELATION 2:23 *...and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.*

ACTS 19:15 *And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?* 16 *And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.* Earlier in this portion {review page 523 of these notes} we noted how that when Moses' Pharaoh called for the sorcerers, and when their enchantments worked, they only made matters worse. The seven sons of Sceva here very quickly made matters worse for themselves too. No doubt they were trying to make some money off of imitating Paul, but since they lacked much, being unbelievers, they were powerless to achieve their worldly goals. Too bad for them that they didn't know JAMES 2:19. JAMES 2:19 reads: *Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.*

We read this account in LUKE 10 concerning Jesus disciples. LUKE 10:1 *After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.* ...17 *And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.* 18 *And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.* 19 *Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.* 20 *Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.* The Apostle Paul also wrote in ROMANS 13:1 *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.* It was events like this that inspired the Apostle Paul to write to these very same Ephesian Saints that portion of scripture we have read before in EPHESIANS 6:11-18. EPHESIANS 6:11 *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.* 12 *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.* 13 *Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.* 14 *Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;* 15 *And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;* 16 *Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.* 17 *And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:* 18 *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.*

On this portion of scripture Brother Copley wrote: "let us learn a lesson here, not to attempt by our own strength to repulse demons, or cast out sickness. Let us not make a fleshly use of the name of Jesus. Yelling at demons with multiplied words of apparent authority, stamping the floor vehemently, gesticulating as in a frenzy, etc., is not necessarily the power of God. That only provokes a grin from evil spirits. Spiritual forces must be met with spiritual weapons. "Faith is the victory," faith in God's word; faith employing the "Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God," defeats the foe. The weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strong holds" -- 2 CORINTHIANS 10:4. Therefore, we need to "walk in the Spirit," lest we attack

the enemy at the wrong time, or in the wrong manner.” {End of quote from Brother Copley.} On your own also review ACTS 13:8-11 and ACTS 16:16-18. {See again pages 117-122, and pages 329-334 of these notes.}

ACTS 19:16 *And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.*

There are a couple of points to note in this verse. First of all we again see that a man possessed with a devil, when provoked, is no match for the natural man. The natural man will loose this fight all the time. In MARK 5 we find the story of the maniac of Gadara who was possessed with an unclean spirit. And we read starting in MARK 5:3 *Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: 4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him.* Note in these verses that “...no man could bind him,... ..neither could any man tame him.” The seven sons of Sceva too soon found that were no match for one man possessed with an evil spirit. As Brother Copley pointed out above “spiritual forces must be met with spiritual weapons,” and these seven sons of Sceva lacked spiritual weapons, being unbelievers themselves.

This brings us to the second point of note in this verse, which is these seven sons of Sceva lacked spiritual weapons, being unbelievers themselves, and thus were exposed as the frauds they were when *....they fled out of that house naked and wounded.* There is a spiritual application to be noted here. Spiritually naked means to be without Jesus; void of Christ righteousness. Before sin entered into the world we find Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. GENESIS 2:25 tells us: *And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.* Sin entered into the world in GENESIS 3, and ROMANS 5:12 tells us: *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:...* In GENESIS 3 we read: 7 *And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.* 8 *And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.* 9 *And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?* 10 *And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.* 11 *And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?* 12 *And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.* ...21 *Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.* And so we find the first shedding of blood here in scripture, which foreshadowed the fact that without shedding of blood there is no remission for sin. {See HEBREWS 9:22}. EPHESIANS 1:7 speaks of Jesus Christ: *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;...* This is how our sinful naked spiritual condition is clothed, with Christ's righteousness. ISAIAH 61:10 reads: *I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.*

Spiritual nakedness is the condition the Lord finds the church of Laodicea in, as He notes in REVELATION 3:17 *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:...* Those of Laodicea are naked because they have not clothed themselves with the garments of salvation. Such is the condition of so many today, further showing us that Jesus is coming soon!

You probably have heard the statement that the best form of advertising is word of mouth. Well that is exactly what happened here in Ephesus after they all heard what happened unto the seven son of Sceva, as we find in the following verses.

ACTS 19:17 *And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.* 18 *And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.* 19 *Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.* 20 *So*

mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Let's look at these four verses a little closer. In the portion we just studied in ACTS 19:13-16, we pointed out some facts found in scripture on how Satan has always been in opposition to the wonderful works of God. We have also noted how that God uses Satan as a tool to achieve part of the work that needs to be accomplished in the life of a believer, and how that Satan himself is used as a tool of God partly as an instrument to bring the full overcomer to occupy the wonderful place in Heaven that Satan himself once held! We noted how Satan first opposed Adam and Eve, yet in the end the Lord Jesus Christ was magnified through the testimonies of Adam and Eve. (Think about it.) We also noted how Moses faced opposition from Pharaoh and his sorcerers, men inspired of Satan, and in the end the name of the Lord Jesus Christ was magnified through the testimony of Moses. We noted how Daniel faced opposition from Satan in the decrees of Nebuchadnezzar, and in the end the name of the Lord Jesus Christ was magnified through the testimony of Daniel. Also we noted how Job faced opposition from Satan, and in the end the name of the Lord Jesus Christ was magnified through the testimony of Job. Now here at Ephesus we have found opposition from Satan in many forms. There were those who spake evil of the teachings of the Apostle Paul, and there were also men inspired of Satan to discredit the works of the Apostle Paul, known as the seven sons of Sceva, through whom we now find the name of the Lord Jesus Christ was magnified through the testimony of Paul!

Thus we read in ACTS 19:17 *And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.* We can think of this verse like this in the light of the theme of this portion of our study: Because of the doctrine of deliverance that Paul preached, ...*this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.*

The word "magnified" is megaluno {meg-al-oo'-no}, number 3170 in the Strong's Greek Concordance, and means to make great, to enlarge, and to show great. In the sense that this word "magnified" is used here in verse 17 it shows that the name of the Lord Jesus was made greater and larger in scope than anyone, or anything that had ever been "magnified" before at Ephesus!

The word "magnified" is found in twenty-one scriptures; sixteen in the Old Testament, and five in the New Testament; LOVE + GRACE. Who better to magnify the LOVE of God, and the GRACE of God than our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? In 1 JOHN 4:9 we read: *In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.* Thus we see the LOVE of God magnified through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In ROMANS 8:38 and 39 we find the Apostle Paul chronicling ten items that shall not, nor can not, nor will not ever ...*be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Thus again we see the LOVE of God magnified through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul also wrote many times about the GRACE of God, which is magnified through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. For example in 1 CORINTHIANS 1:4 Paul writes: *I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;...*

David, a man after God's own heart, (see 1 SAMUEL 13:14, and ACTS 13:22) wrote or said the following words magnifying our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: 2 SAMUEL 7:26 *And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts is the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee.* PSALMS 35:27 *Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.* PSALMS 40:16 *Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified.* PSALMS 70:4 *Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified.* PSALMS 138:2 *I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*

In the same spirit of a full overcomer, the Apostle Paul too wrote words from a dungeon prison that magnified our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. PHILIPPIANS 1:19 *For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, 20 According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.*

Having considered a little about the word magnified here in verse 17, let's go back and look at verse 15 again. ACTS 19:15 *And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? Who was magnified in this question? It certainly wasn't the seven sons of Sceva. The evil spirit magnified Jesus first, and Paul second. We have already noted how Paul always magnified Jesus first, so we can think of the evil spirit's statement like this: "Jesus I know, and because Paul magnifies the name of Jesus every where he goes, and uses the name of Jesus in every thing he does, then Paul I know too, but who are you, you seven sons of Sceva?" So in essence what we find in ACTS 19:15 is that the evil spirit, although unwittingly, magnified Jesus first too! This also further proves what is said in JAMES 2:19 as being a fact. JAMES 2:19 again reads: *Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.**

Who was ...the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified... unto here at Ephesus? ACTS 19:17 informs us that ...the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified... ...to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus... . This does not mean that all the Jews and Greeks dwelling at Ephesus agreed with the teachings of Paul, or accepted the doctrine of deliverance that Paul preached in the name of Jesus. Never the less ...the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified... here at Ephesus, and verses 18 through 20 describe what took place next.

ACTS 19:18 *And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. 19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. 20 So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.*

In verses 18 and 19 we get a better picture of what the majority in Ephesus believed in before Paul came upon the scene. "Their deeds" described in verse 18, and their "curious arts," and their "books" mentioned in verse 19 make reference to the arts of magic, sorceries, incantations, soothsaying, charms, exorcisms, and the sleight of hand practiced by so many at Ephesus, and many other places around the world Paul had visited. Recall in ACTS 17:16 that when Paul was in Athens ...his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Paul saw similar things here in Ephesus, which inspired much of his teaching on the doctrine of deliverance; things also which inspired him to write statements like those we read in EPHESIANS 6:12. EPHESIANS 6:12 *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. "The darkness of this world" is what Jesus sent the Apostle Paul to turn the Gentiles from, as we have so often noted in this study the scripture found in ACTS 26:18 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. Here at Ephesus no doubt all of these things mentioned in verses 18 & 19 had some association with the famous Ephesian goddess Diana, whom Luke references in ACTS 19:24, 27, 28, 34 and 35.*

Ephesus, the capitol of Paul's Asia, built the first temple to the Greek goddess Diana in 580 B.C. The second temple to Diana was built during the reign of Alexander the Great. The temple of Diana was approximately 420 feet long, and 238 feet wide, with 127 sixty foot high columns supporting the roof structure. Many of these supporting columns were donated by a different king. A large portion of the treasury of Western Asia was stored up in the temple of Diana. Coneybeare and Howson note that the temple of Diana was the equivalent to what the Bank of England was in their day, as far as the amount of wealth stored therein. Further more many people made their living at the temple selling souvenirs, shrines, articles of sorcery, and such like. The images of goddess Diana showed she had numerous rows of breasts numbering in some accounts up to fifty-three. At Ephesus games were celebrated in honor of the goddess Diana, thus

uniting Ephesus politically with the many other cities of Asia. ACTS 19:27 notes that the great goddess Diana was worshipped by "all Asia and the world."

These Ephesians were caught up in idolatry and witchcraft, and the associated lusts of the flesh, very much like the world of today. Consider again what the Apostle Paul was inspired to write unto the churches of Galatia in GALATIANS 5. GALATIANS 5:16 *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. 18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* Note in verse 20 the words "idolatry," and "witchcraft." "Idolatry" means the worship of false gods, image worship, wholly given to idols, and the sin of the mind against God. "Witchcraft" means sorcery, magical arts, often found in connection with idolatry and fostered by it, and includes the use of drugs, medicine, spells, incantations, and such like. Look up the Greek word for sorcerer or sorcery, and it will lead you to the English word pharmacy, which signifies the use of medicine, or drugs. The point being is that the world we live in today is really not that much different than the world Paul witnessed when he came to Ephesus. Today we have the so called "American Idol." And the huge pharmacy companies advertise all the time in our media today. So again these Ephesians were caught up in idolatry and witchcraft, and the associated lusts of the flesh, very much like the world of today.

However there are many today, like in Paul's day who believed, and came and confessed their sins, and turned their lives wholly over unto the Lord. ROMANS 10:9 & 10 tells us: *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. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* This too is the doctrine of deliverance, for what greater deliverance is there than the deliverance from sin?

The Mighty Word of God

ACTS 19:20 sums up this doctrine of deliverance preached at Ephesus, stating: *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.* This may be the most important verse in ACTS 19! Certainly there is much food for thought contained in these nine simple words. Of course we will examine this verse much closer.

The Greek word translated "mightily" here, (number 2904 in the Strong's Greek Concordance, *kratos* {krat'-os}), is only found in twelve New Testament scriptures, and is only translated one time as "mightily." Each time this word *kratos* is used, it shows the strength, and the power, and the dominion of the Lord, thus these words are used in the translation of *kratos* into English. Here are the twelve verses where the adverb *kratos* is found, and as we look at these verses note for yourself the mighty power of the Lord described in each of these twelve statements.

LUKE 1:51 *He hath shewed strength <2904> with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.* ACTS 19:20 *So mightily <2904> grew the word of God and prevailed.* EPHESIANS 1:19 *And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power <2904>,... .* EPHESIANS 6:10 *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power <2904> of his might.* COLOSSIANS 1:11 *Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power <2904>, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;... .* 1 TIMOTHY 6:16 *Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power <2904> everlasting. Amen.* HEBREWS 2:14 *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power <2904> of death, that is, the devil;... .* 1 PETER 4:11 *If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability*