

This moment was the most important moment in Saul of Tarsus' young life, as is the instant anyone is born again. Here begins a new life in Christ Jesus, whereby we might *...grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen....* (2 PETER 3:18).

## The Sentence

The accounts of ACTS 9 and ACTS 22 of what happened next differ a little from what we read next here in ACTS 26. Both ACTS 9:6 and ACTS 22:10 tells of Saul of Tarsus asking the Lord, *...Lord what wilt thou have me to do? Or, What shall I do, Lord?* This question asked of Saul of Tarsus to the Lord Jesus Christ is not mentioned in Paul's testimony to king Agrippa, why? Again we see that Paul was careful here in his testimony not to draw the attention to himself, but to point the way to Christ. Had Paul mentioned to king Agrippa his own questioning of Jesus, it would have taken the spotlight away from the Lord, and placed it back on himself. Clearly Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, was trying to get king Agrippa to see Jesus, and to answer for himself that question Paul had asked him back in ACTS 26:8 *Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?*

The words Jesus uses in ACTS 26:16-18 really answer the question what Saul of Tarsus was to do any way. ACTS 26:16-18 is one sentence of instructions from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, spoken to Saul of Tarsus while blinded by His brightness on the road to Damascus. A life time of information, and instruction to Saul of Tarsus is found in this one sentence. This one sentence of heavenly advice changed Saul of Tarsus to the Apostle Paul. Remember that Saul's name means: "desired," or "requested," or "asked for," because king Saul was the king the Hebrew children of Israel had desired or requested for themselves. Paul on the other hand means: "little." Saul was the Hebrew name of Saul of Tarsus, a name given him by his Jewish parents. His Greek or Roman name, which in Paul's day all Jews had a Greek or Latin name, was Paul. Saul of Tarsus, the "desired," or "asked for" young leader of the Jews, in one sentence became "little" in the eyes of the world. In one sentence Saul of Tarsus became Paul the "little" apostle, for even Paul himself wrote in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:9 *For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.* In one sentence Jesus changed the "requested" young Jewish leader, to a "little" teacher, minister, and preacher unto that lowly group collectively known as the Gentiles. Paul later wrote of that "little" place Jesus gave him in this one sentence on the road to Damascus, stating in EPHESIANS 3:8 *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;...* . This one sentence from The Just One carried Saul of Tarsus forward on a profound earthly journey that lifted him to the loftiest of heights, the limits of which he still hasn't seen the end of! This one sentence of powerful heavenly words changed the course of millions down through the centuries. This one sentence of Jesus put in motion a New Testament worthy of faith, who then lead and inspired thousands of others to follow Jesus as he followed Christ! This one powerful sentence spoken by the King of Kings was acted upon by the faith of Paul for more than twenty years before he could reveal the secrets of Jesus words, and when he did reveal the content of the Lord's instructions, it was before another king! Imagine carrying within you one sentence of words so profound, that you couldn't even speak of it for more than twenty years! How awesome is just one sentence spoken by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? I myself have thought long and hard about what Jesus told Paul on the road to Damascus, and I still can't fully wrap my arms around all that He can say in just one sentence! No wonder then that Paul wrote in EPHESIANS 2:7 *That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.* Think about this too for a moment, how long did it take Jesus to change the course of the chiefest of sinners, and make him the chiefest Apostle? Just one sentence. Jesus can change any life in just one sentence, and it starts with believing His words of JOHN 3:7 *...Ye must be born again.* Saul of Tarsus spent the rest of his life, as the Apostle Paul, trying to exhaust all that Jesus told him he would do in this one sentence, and it took him over thirty years of daily pursuing to get to the place where he could say: *...I have fought a good fight, I have*

*finished my course, I have kept the faith: 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... 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 & 8.*

Here is the sentence that turned out to be the life sentence for Saul of Tarsus. 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 there is no way to exhaust the thoughts that are in this one sentence, for 2 TIMOTHY 2:9 tells us: *...the word of God is not bound.* So let's begin to examine this life changing sentence giving by Jesus to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. The very first thing Jesus tells old Saul of Tarsus is: *But rise, and stand upon thy feet...* . Laying around in the dirt isn't going to get it done. Jesus wanted Saul's undivided attention, so Jesus requested that he get up, forget those things that are behind, and stand at attention before the Lord, and listen unto His instructions, for He had some very important things for Saul of Tarsus to hear, and focusing on the dust of the path you just came isn't going to take you where the Lord wants you to go. (Now I know that isn't exactly how it is worded here in scripture, but that is the concept behind these words of Jesus.)

You have to start someplace if you ever want to go on with God. Being born again is the first step, but that is just the beginning. Saul of Tarsus didn't know what to do next, having grown up with a religion full of "do's" and "don'ts," so when he wanted to know what to do next, Jesus simply told him... *But rise...* . There is forgiveness in these words. There is hope in these words. There is comfort in these words. There is encouragement in these words. There is direction in these words *...but rise...* . *Wilt thou go with this man?* Rebekah was asked back in GENESIS 24:58. She said *"I will go."* Thus she embarked on the greatest journey of her life, which culminated with her marriage to Isaac, putting her in the lineage of Christ, and in the Old Testament hall of fame. In order for her to go on her journey with Eliezer, she first had to *...but rise...* and mount the camel provided for her journey. Saul of Tarsus was presented this same opportunity on the road to Damascus, though he didn't realize all the significance of it at this point in time, for in order to be a race course runner one has to first pay attention to the word of the Lord. *Wilt thou go with this man?* If your answer is yes, then the next thing to do is simply *...But rise, and stand upon thy feet...* and pay close attention to the instructions of the Lord. For one to be a good leader, he or she must first learn to be a good follower, and Jesus was now encouraging Saul of Tarsus to pursue after His instructions. Of course we know Saul of Tarsus followed Jesus instructions, starting with *...but rise...* which lead him to the place where one day the words of THE SONG OF SOLOMON 2:10 rang true: *My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.* The journey that took Saul of Tarsus, the chiefest of sinners from the dust, and made him the Apostle Paul, the Apostle unto the Gentiles, the chiefest Apostle behind Jesus; this journey that raised up the poor out of the dust, and lifted up the beggar from the dunghill, and set him among princes, and made him inherit the throne of glory, (Paraphrasing from 1 SAMUEL 2:8); this journey started with these two simple words: *But rise...* . These seem to be very simple instructions to follow, but are they? No wonder Paul was later able to write in 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.*

ACTS 26:16 *But rise, and stand upon thy feet...* . There is a word that describes the action Jesus is here requesting of Saul of Tarsus, and that word is "persuade." Jesus is requesting Saul of Tarsus to have the confidence, and faith, and trust to believe, (which is what "persuade" means), that he can rise and stand upon the solid Rock. Of course the solid Rock, the sure foundation upon whom we can place our faith, confidence, and trust is none other than our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ Himself, the Captain of our salvation! ISAIAH 28:16 states it like this: *Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste* (shall not be moved). David, who at an early age

was taught by his mother to put his faith, trust and confidence in the Lord, wrote the following about the sure foundation upon whom his feet was standing: 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. ...31 For who is God save the LORD? or who is a rock save our God? ...46 The LORD liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted.* The Apostle Paul himself later wrote in 1 CORINTHIANS 3:11 *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* Again in EPHESIANS 2:20 Paul wrote about being...*built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;...*

There are several Greek words that translate into our English "persuade," but the one which accomplishes the winning over, or changing of one's mind is the Greek word "peitho" {pi'-tho}, number 3982 in The Strong's Greek Concordance. It is also translated trust, obey, to have confidence, and believe. Some scriptural example on how "peitho" {pi'-tho} is used to encourage our faith are: PHILIPPIANS 1:6 *Being confident <3982> of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:...* . 2 CORINTHIANS 1:9 *But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust <3982> in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:...* . ROMANS 8:38 *For I am persuaded <3982>, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* The persuading of Saul of Tarsus by Jesus Christ, which later lead Paul to pen these scriptures all started with these loving persuasive words of Jesus, which He spoke on the road to Damascus, recorded here in ACTS 26:16 *But rise, and stand upon thy feet:...* . And spiritually speaking Saul of Tarsus couldn't stand on his past fleshly efforts, so he was left with no other option than to trust the urging of Jesus. *But rise, and stand... upon the solid Rock, the firm foundation of Jesus.*

ACTS 26:16 *But rise, and stand upon thy feet:...* . Jesus was encouraging Saul of Tarsus to stand upon the solid Rock, as we noted above. The phrase "stand upon" is only found fourteen times in scripture, and fourteen is again the number having to do with DELIVERANCE or SALVATION. In ACTS 26:17 Jesus tells Saul of Tarsus that He was *...Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee,...* . Beyond that Jesus was telling Saul of Tarsus that he would be the one sent to tell the Gentiles about SALVATION. When Jesus tells Saul of Tarsus to "stand upon," He is also indicating that He wants Saul to be fixed upon the solid Rock; for him to be firm in his standing; to become established on His firm foundation, and to learn that *...the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his...* 2 TIMOTHY 2:19.

ACTS 26:16 *But rise, and stand upon thy feet:...* . There are twenty "thy feet" statements found in scripture; twenty being the number that has to do with REDEMPTION. (As we go through all of this we begin to see how Jesus was emphasizing His DELIVERANCE, SALVATION, and REDEMPTION to Saul of Tarsus.) The Lord told Moses in EXODUS 3:5 *...put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.* The same thought could apply to Saul of Tarsus, for where ever the Lord speaks is Holy ground, for He is Holy. PSALMS 99:5 *Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy.* PROVERBS 4:26 states: *Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.* In one sense this speaks of walking by faith, which thought Jesus is expressing to Saul of Tarsus when He requests him to *But rise, and stand upon thy feet:...* .

Another thought that is conveyed by these words of Jesus concerns standing at attention. In the military when one stands at attention, there is no speech allowed; the eyes are to be fixed in a forward posture gazing at a distant object; and it is a means of saluting a superior officer. Obviously such a posture demands concentration, and puts one in a position where he, or she, can carefully listen to any message being given. When Jesus tells Saul of Tarsus *...But rise, and stand upon thy feet:...* He is doing so as a superior officer giving orders to a soldier. EXODUS 15:3 states: *The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name.* The Lord Jesus had chosen Saul of Tarsus to be *...a good soldier of Jesus Christ...* (2 TIMOTHY 2:3 & 4). Jesus had orders for this good soldier to follow, and needed Saul of Tarsus to learn of the warfare of the believer, and how to fight the good fight of faith... (1 TIMOTHY 6:12). The very first step in becoming a good soldier is to pay

attention, and follow the instructions and orders of the Lord. In order for Saul of Tarsus to do so, he needed to first *...But rise, and stand upon thy feet:...* ACTS 26:16.

After Jesus requests that Saul of Tarsus *...But rise, and stand upon thy feet:...* in ACTS 26:16, He begins giving His newest soldier His orders, starting with these words: *...for I have...*. When the Lord says *...for I have...* He means: *...for I have...* not maybe I have, or I think I have. 2 CORINTHIANS 1:18-20 tells us: *But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. 19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. 20 For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.* In other words when Jesus says something to you, you can take it to the bank. His word is better than gold, and pays exceeding dividends that will continue on for ever! PSALMS 119:160 tells us: *Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.*

Let's look at some of the forty-four *...for I have...* statements of the Lord found in scripture, starting with what the Lord told Moses. EXODUS 10:1 *And the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him: 2 And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that ye may know how that I am the LORD.*

NUMBERS 21:32 *And Moses sent to spy out Jaazer, and they took the villages thereof, and drove out the Amorites that were there. 33 And they turned and went up by the way of Bashan: and Og the king of Bashan went out against them, he, and all his people, to the battle at Edrei. 34 And the LORD said unto Moses, Fear him not: for I have delivered him into thy hand, and all his people, and his land; and thou shalt do to him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon. 35 So they smote him, and his sons, and all his people, until there was none left him alive: and they possessed his land.*

NUMBERS 33:50 *And the LORD spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho, saying, 51 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye are passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan; 52 Then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places: 53 And ye shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein: for I have given you the land to possess it.*

Joshua succeeded Moses as the leader of the children of Israel, who lead them into their promised land of Israel. After crossing over the Jordan River, we read this encounter that Joshua had with the Lord in JOSHUA 5. JOSHUA 5:13 *And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? 14 And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? 15 And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so. The captain of the LORD'S host is none other than Jesus. HEBREWS 2:9 & 10 tells us: *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.* The point we need to see here is that Joshua knew it was the Lord speaking to him here, and Joshua believed the word of the Lord, and followed His instructions, as all good soldiers must do. Then in JOSHUA 10 we read this encounter, where the Lord gives Joshua one of these *...for I have...* statements. JOSHUA 10:6 *And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp to Gilgal, saying, Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us. 7 So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour. 8 And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear them not:**

*for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee.*

Gideon too was told by the Lord a *...for I have...* statement, which by now we should realize are some very powerful words. JUDGES 7:7 *And the LORD said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place. 8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all the rest of Israel every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men: and the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley. 9 And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand.*

One time to the prophet Samuel the Lord said: *...How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons...* 1 SAMUEL 16:1. If you look up the rest of the *...for I have...* statements of the Lord found in scripture, you will see that the Lord also spoke more *...for I have...* statements to Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Haggai, Zechariah, the Apostle Peter, and the Apostle Paul, just to mention a few. The point being, when the Lord makes one of His *...for I have...* statements, it means something significant, for the Lord does not waste words, or use words idly. The Lord's *...for I have...* statements are followed with action words; verbs, the action of which only He could perform. When the Lord says *...for I have delivered...* or *...for I have redeemed...* or *...for I have chosen...* or *...for I have created...* and other statements of this magnitude, He is emphasizing the things that only He can do. For example when the Lord says in JEREMIAH 31:25 *For I have satiated (abundantly satisfy) the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul...* who else could do such a thing? Only Jesus can completely satisfy the weary soul.

Thus we note that the Lord called into action his newest soldier with these words of ACTS 26:16 *But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose...* . As we go through this remarkable sentence that Jesus spoke unto Saul of Tarsus we will see the magnitude of why He appeared unto him. We will find that Jesus appeared unto Saul of Tarsus to make him a minister, to make him a witness, to make him a preacher, to make him an Apostle unto the Gentiles, to make him see things he hadn't yet even imagined, to reveal truths unto him that weren't before this time made known, to show him a race course that ultimately leads to God's best, to reveal the truth of Christ in his heart; all of this so that Saul of Tarsus could expound of the exceeding riches of His grace, and the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which He was now beginning to make known unto Saul of Tarsus! {Study EPHESIANS 1:19 and 2:7.} And this really only begins to describe why Jesus appeared unto Saul of Tarsus.

We mentioned that the word "appeared" is an action word. It comes from the Greek word *optanomai* {op-tan'-om-ahee} or *optomai* {op-tom-ahee}, number 3700 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, meaning: to allow one's self to be seen. In essence Christ appearance here to Saul of Tarsus, our Apostle Paul, put him on an equal footing with the kingdom Apostles, and other eyewitnesses of Christ, who Luke mentions in LUKE 1:2 as being eyewitnesses from the beginning (of the days of Jesus), and ministers of the word. Many of these very same eyewitnesses witnessed Jesus showing Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen (*optanomai* {op-tan'-om-ahee} or *optomai* {op-tom-ahee}), of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, as is noted in ACTS 1:3. This is part of the meaning when Paul writes in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:8 *And last of all he was seen (optanomai {op-tan'-om-ahee} or optomai {op-tom-ahee}), of me also, as of one born out of due time.* Twice in ACTS 26:16 we find this Greek word (*optanomai* {op-tan'-om-ahee} or *optomai* {op-tom-ahee}) used, which in itself is sufficient testimony as to why Jesus "appeared" unto Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. Jesus told Saul of Tarsus...*I have appeared unto thee... and ...I will appear unto thee...* again. With such powerful words, and by His appearing unto him, Jesus was entrusting Saul of Tarsus with an awesome responsibility; that being the Apostle unto the Gentiles! With this responsibility came *...the care of all the churches...* 2 CORINTHIANS 11:28. With this calling came manifold trials, tests and temptations, of

which the Lord told Ananias of Damascus that He Jesus Christ Himself would show Saul of Tarsus ...*how great things he must suffer for my name's sake...* ACTS 9:16. With this calling came a gospel message through which Jesus Christ Himself will judge the secrets of men, (study ROMANS 2:16)! This gospel message came to Saul of Tarsus, our Apostle Paul, from The One full of Grace and Truth, starting here with His appearance unto him on the road to Damascus, and brought him to the place where he could later write in EPHESIANS 3:8 *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;...*

This awesome appearance by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to Saul of Tarsus here on the road to Damascus, started Saul on a journey that lead him to a greater epiphany, if one could imagine such a thing. An epiphany is an appearance or manifestation of a supernatural being, which is what Saul of Tarsus actually witnessed on the road to Damascus. The greater epiphany will come to those who love His appearing!!! At the end of his earthly journey the Apostle Paul wrote of looking forward to such an appearing by Jesus, stating in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6 *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.* At approximately the same time late in his life the Apostle Paul wrote unto Titus these words: TITUS 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Certainly Saul of Tarsus wasn't looking for Jesus appearing when He appeared unto him on the road to Damascus, but as he grew in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul longed for that day when he would see Jesus again, not only as His Lord and Saviour, but as his Bridegroom!!! Such a passion for Christ began that day on the road to Damascus when Jesus first appeared unto him, and began to reveal His gospel message unto that chiefest of sinners, the least of all saints, showing him the unsearchable riches of Christ, causing him to lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race that was set before him, ever pressing on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and looking for, and loving His appearing! What an epiphany! What an appearance that will be. Those who love His appearing already see Christ in everything everyday! May we, like Brother Hill at his home going, reach out with open arms to leap into the loving embrace of our precious heavenly Bridegroom!! (The Greek word for epiphany is epiphaneia {ep-if-an'-i-ah}, number 2015 in The Strongs Greek Concordance, used in the following six scriptures: 2 THESSALONIANS 2:8; 1 TIMOTHY 6:14; 2 TIMOTHY 1:10; 4:1; 4:8; and TITUS 2:13.)

ACTS 26:16 *But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose,...* . Of course we all know by now the reason Jesus appeared unto Saul of Tarsus, was simply stated by Paul in his own words of ROMANS 11:13 *...I am the apostle of the Gentiles,...* . However Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus didn't know this yet, for Jesus hadn't made this known to him until this point in time. Only the Lord can appoint an Apostleship anyway, so we see why Jesus as Commander in Chief was speaking to his newest soldier this way, and why He demanded Saul of Tarsus' full attention. Jesus stated to Saul of Tarsus: *...I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee...* . The Greek word that here translates "to make" is procheinomai {prokh-i-rid'-zom-a-hee}, number 4400 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, and is only found twice in scripture. The other time is in ACTS 22:14 where we read Paul's recalling the words of Ananias of Damascus: *And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth.* Procheinomai {prokh-i-rid'-zom-a-hee} here is translated "hath chosen." Procheinomai means: to put into the hand, to deliver into the hands, to take into one's hands, to choose, or to appoint for one's use. It was by the tender hands of the Lord that Saul of Tarsus was to be made into the Apostle Paul, because Saul of Tarsus was hand picked by Jesus to be the Apostle unto the Gentiles!

Now that Saul of Tarsus was a believer, Jesus could use Saul's unique Pharisee upbringing, and his advanced education of Old Testament scriptures, learned at the feet of Gamaliel, to reveal the mystery of the thing kept secret since the world began



(ROMANS 16:25). ROMANS 16:25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,... . What is this mystery? Paul summarizes it like this starting in EPHESIANS 3:2 *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:...* . The mystery here mainly concerns the church age where repentance is given unto the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name, (study ACTS 15:14). Jesus was announcing this very same thing unto Saul of Tarsus here in ACTS 26:17 & 18, where the Lord reveals one of the main reasons for His appearance unto Saul at this time was to send him unto 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.*

This mystery of EPHESIANS 3:6 ...That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel... has a depth to it that contains other mysteries revealed unto Paul, which very few Christians ever grasp, or ever see, mainly because their pastors and teachers don't know, and haven't been properly taught what it means to be a joint-partaker with Christ, which is exactly what the word "partaker" expresses in EPHESIANS 3:6. For example, how many Christians believe in ranks in the resurrection? God only knows the answer to such a question, of course, but most Christians (if you ask them) believe that the whole church is the Bride of Christ. Yet 1 CORINTHIANS 15:22 & 23 reads: *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.* {Review pages 810-812 of these notes.} Thus it remains a mystery to the majority of Christians that only a very small rib portion from the church will be in that company of Saints known as the Bride of Christ. Paul teaches in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:45 *The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.* The last Adam is a reference to Christ. ROMANS 5:14 further tells that Adam ...*is the figure of him that was to come.* Again "...him that was to come..." references Christ. GENESIS 2:21 & 22 records: *And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; 22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.* Eve was her name, and she became Adam's wife. During this mysterious church age in which we are still living, the church, the collective body of Christ, (EPHESIANS 5:30 *For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.*); this body of believers, like Adam in GENESIS 2, has fallen into a deep sleep, yet a rib portion remains awake, and is being built into that choice company of tried Saints that will forever be known as The Lamb's wife, The Bride of Christ!! This actually is the "great mystery" Paul speaks about in EPHESIANS 5:30-33, noting in verse 32 *This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.* To Bridal Saints Paul writes in 1 THESSALONIANS 5:6 *Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.* This is written to Christians of this church age. Sinners are dead in trespasses and sins according to EPHESIANS 2:1, and thus are not asleep. The Bridal Saints are watching for His soon appearing, and know the facts of another mystery revealed unto the Apostle Paul, that being the mystery of final change, also called the exit mystery, talked about in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:51 *Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

Now that we have taken a deep glance into the calling Jesus was giving His newest disciple, let's examine His orders a little closer. Jesus tells Saul of Tarsus here in ACTS 26:16 *...I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister...* . We noted above the importance of the Greek word translated "to make" (procheirizomai {prokh-i-rid'-zom-ahee}, number 4400 in The Strong's Greek Concordance), meaning that the Lord had chosen Saul of Tarsus for a purpose, and that purpose included being a minister, a witness, a teacher, a pastor, an evangelist, and most importantly an Apostle to the Gentiles! The magnitude of such a calling can not really be put into words, but we will try.

The phrase "to make thee" begins our examination of how the Lord Jesus Christ intended to take this strict law abiding Pharisee, and make him a premiere grace Saint! The phrase "to make thee" is only found in five scriptures, so thus it has grace written all over it. Five, recall, is the number of GRACE. The One full of Grace and Truth, Jesus Christ Himself, is the only One who can pour out the spirit of grace on any of us, and He did so on the cross of Calvary! In his letter of prophecy, Zechariah wrote these words of the Lord: ZECHARIAH 12:10 *And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.* Saul of Tarsus met his Saviour, full of Grace and Truth {JOHN 1:14} on this road to Damascus, where Jesus immediately began to reveal His Grace and Truth unto him.

The five scriptures that contain the phrase "to make thee" are: DEUTERONOMY 26:19 where the Lord told Moses to tell the children of Israel that they were a peculiar people, and that He promised them (in part) *...to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the LORD thy God, as he hath spoken.* The second scripture is found in 1 CHRONICLES 17:21 David is worshipping and praying unto the Lord, and asks Him *...And what one nation in the earth is like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem to be his own people, to make thee a name of greatness and terribleness, by driving out nations from before thy people, whom thou hast redeemed out of Egypt?* Third, in DANIEL 10:14 we find Daniel receiving a revelation from Michael the archangel who told him this: *Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days.* Our forth scripture where we find the phrase "to make thee" is in our text of 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...* . The fifth time is found in a statement Paul wrote unto Timothy in 2 TIMOTHY 3:15 *And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.* All five of these "to make thee" statements are very powerful words of scripture, words of the Lord, and words from the Lord. The last text, though written unto Timothy, applies to all who learn the holy scriptures, for it is *...the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.* May we treasure each word we read in our Bible as we...grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.... 2 PETER 3:18.

Let's zero in on what the Lord told Saul of Tarsus He was going "to make thee." *I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister...* Jesus told Saul of Tarsus here in ACTS 26:16. There a nine Greek words that translate into English "minister." The particular Greek word used here is huperetes {hoop-ay-ret'-ace} (number 5257 in the Strong's Greek concordance) meaning: an under rower acting under another's direction; an assistant, or servant. Quiet a change for one who was used to being the leader, to be told he was going to be a servant, yet at the same time Jesus would be using Saul of Tarsus' leadership qualities in ordaining him the Apostle unto the Gentiles. For Saul of Tarsus to become the Apostle Paul he first needed to follow the direction of his new Commander in Chief, for a good leader is always first a good follower, and as we noted previously, Jesus was now encouraging Saul of Tarsus to



pursue after His instructions. {Review page 883 of these notes.} An under rower tugs hard on the oar, but the Ship Master guides the vessel.

Especially take note here that it is the Lord who makes one a minister. The ministry was not a course in his life that Saul of Tarsus chose for himself, for up to this point in time he has been persecuting the ministers of Jesus Christ. It is always the Lord who appoints true ministers. Late in his life Paul wrote this unto Timothy: 1 TIMOTHY 1:12 *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;...* Jesus put Paul into the ministry on the road to Damascus, even though Paul, as Saul of Tarsus, wasn't yet made the minister Christ told him he would be. For Jesus ...to make thee a minister... took some personal instruction, which we read of happening to Paul in GALATIANS 1:11 & 12: *But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.* Again note what Paul wrote in EPHESIANS 3:7 *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.* In COLOSSIANS 1:25 Paul wrote: ...I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;...

Back to our text of ACTS 26:16, not only did Jesus tell Saul of Tarsus that He was going ...to make thee a minister... but He also stated that He was going ...to make thee... a witness.... The word "witness" (like the word "minister") has varying degrees, or levels associated with it. There are twelve Greek words that translate into our English "witness," and each has a level of importance associated with it's meaning. The highest degree of importance to the word "witness" is what the Lord gave Saul of Tarsus here when He stated ...I have appeared unto thee... to make thee... a witness.... The word "witness" used in our text come from the Greek word *martus* {mar'-toos}, (number 3144 in the Strong's Greek Concordance), from which we get our English word martyr, meaning one who bears witness by his death! The meaning to Saul of Tarsus was that Jesus was going to bring him to the point where he, like Stephen before him, would be willing to die for the witness of Jesus Christ. Before Saul of Tarsus would ever get to this point, Jesus was going to reveal Himself unto him, and show Himself in profound ways, outwardly, and inwardly, thus making Saul of Tarsus one of the greatest witnesses of His mighty power for those of us living during this church age. For one to be willing to die for Christ's sake, one must first be willing to live for Jesus also, which brings us to the more common meanings of "witness." The word "witness" also speaks of ones declaration of something he knows to be true; or to state positively to be true what one has seen, or heard, or knows to be a fact.

We can see both of the above meanings of the word "witness" brought out in the following statements of Paul, which I will give in the chronological order they were made. In GALATIANS 2:20 Paul wrote this before he left on his last journey to Jerusalem: *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* In one respect Paul was saying here, I am a witness for Jesus Christ, yet I am willing to die for Christ; willing to be identified with Him in death as a martyr for Jesus, yet if I remain living, I will carry on my witness for Him, who loved me, and gave Himself for me. I am a winner either way. In ACTS 21:13 Paul stated: *Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.* His meaning here was that he was willing to be a martyr for Jesus; a "witness" like Stephen before him. Late in life Paul again acknowledged his "witness" for Jesus, stating in PHILIPPIANS 1:21 *For to me to live is Christ, and to die (even as a martyr) is gain.*

When Jesus said here in ACTS 26:16 these words to Saul of Tarsus... I have appeared unto thee... to make thee... a witness... He was putting him on equal footing with those Apostles ordained before him. Look at this statement from ACTS 1:22, where Matthias is chosen to be part of the Apostleship, and ministry of the twelve kingdom apostles: *Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness <3144> with us of his resurrection.* Here on the road to Damascus Saul of Tarsus was a "witness" of Jesus resurrection, which in part lead Paul to ask king Agrippa in ACTS 26:8 *Why should it be thought a thing incredible*

with you, that God should raise the dead? Essentially Paul was here also telling king Agrippa, "I have personally witnessed Jesus resurrection, just like those apostle before witnessed His resurrection, who ...from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word... (LUKE 1:2)."

Ananias of Damascus affirmed Saul of Tarsus' calling to be a "witness" of Jesus, to declare, and affirm the fact that Jesus Christ is indeed risen from the dead; that He is the One and only way, the Saviour of mankind, who came into the world to save sinners. Ananias acknowledged all of this in his statement to Saul of Tarsus noted in ACTS 22:15 *For thou shalt be his witness <3144> unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.* Keep in mind Saul of Tarsus heard a lot of things about Jesus as he was persecuting Christians before he got saved. Now that he had himself "witnessed" the resurrected Jesus whom he formerly persecuted, Saul of Tarsus could confirm that these things he "witnessed" concerning Jesus were indeed true.

One more thing we need to review here in our text of ACTS 26:16-18 on what the Lord told Saul of Tarsus He was going "to make thee." *I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness... .. now I send thee,...* . To be sent forth with orders from the ultimate Commander in Chief is part of what is being discussed here in Jesus giving His instructions to His newest soldier in the army of the Lord. We have found that Jesus told Saul of Tarsus that He was going to make thee a minister and a witness,... and with these words of verse 17 ... *now I send thee,...* Jesus was going "to make thee" (Saul of Tarsus), an Apostle! By definition an Apostle is a delegate, a messenger; he that is sent; or one sent forth with orders, and the word Apostle comes from a root word meaning to send, to send forth, to send away, or to send out. We can then think of Jesus statement to Saul of Tarsus like this: *I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness... and an ...apostle of the Gentiles... (ROMANS 11:13)! Saul of Tarsus didn't take this calling of being the ...apostle of the Gentiles... lightly. The following scriptures bare this out.*

ROMANS 1:1 *Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,* 2 *(Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)* 3 *Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;* 4 *And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:* 5 *By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:* 6 *Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:* 7 *To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.* ROMANS 11:13 *...I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:... .* 1 CORINTHIANS 1:1 *Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God,... .* 1 CORINTHIANS 9:2 *If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.* 1 CORINTHIANS 15:9 *For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.* 2 CORINTHIANS 1:1 *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,... .* GALATIANS 1:1 *Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;).* EPHESIANS 1:1 *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,... .* COLOSSIANS 1:1 *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,... .* 1 TIMOTHY 1:1 *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope;... .* 1 TIMOTHY 2:7 *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. 2 TIMOTHY 1:1 *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,... .* 2 TIMOTHY 1:11 *Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.* TITUS 1:1 *Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect,... .*

Thus we see that it was Jesus Christ who called Saul of Tarsus to be an Apostle here in ACTS 26:16-18, *...I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness... .. now I send thee,... "to make thee" an Apostle unto the Gentiles! The scriptures that we referenced above shows that the Apostle Paul heeded, and followed the instructions given him of Jesus Christ, but what was the cost of being made a minister, a witness, and an Apostle unto the Gentiles by our Lord and Saviour? There is*

no way that Saul of Tarsus could ponder such a question at this point in time as the Lord was anointing him the Apostle unto the Gentiles, however we can consider this question, and we will. As for Saul of Tarsus, he was three days without sight after this point in time, and spent his hours of blindness praying as noted in ACTS 9:9-11, during which time he to could further evaluate the cost of being made a minister, a witness, and an Apostle unto the Gentiles by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, if he could even comprehend such a thing.

Before we consider the cost to Saul of Tarsus of being made a minister, a witness, and an Apostle unto the Gentiles, let's first remind ourselves of the cost to Jesus Christ to be our Saviour. The Apostle Paul over the years pondered the immeasurable love shown to mankind when Jesus took those seven perfect steps down from His throne in glory to be our Saviour. Finally in PHILIPPIANS 2, after years of considering Christ's humbling spirit, Paul wrote: PHILIPPIANS 2:5 *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.* Around this same time Paul wrote in HEBREWS 2 the following statements concerning Jesus: 7 *Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: 8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. 9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.* With these thoughts in mind, any cost to any of us to run the race course set before us is well worth it. Paul stated it like this in 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.* In short, Jesus paid it all, and all to Him I owe.

So what was the cost to Saul of Tarsus of being made a minister, a witness, and an Apostle unto the Gentiles? All things! To become a Christian cost Saul of Tarsus all the things he had considered important in his life up until this point in time in his life. It cost him his career, his friends, his earthly goals, his self righteous attitude, his Pharisee upbringing, and at least temporarily, it cost him his family. All the things he had before considered important, in this instant in time, had now become of no value to him. A new life, and a door of opportunity, with a totally new group of "all things" eternally important was now being opened unto Saul of Tarsus as Jesus told him here in ACTS 26:16-18, *...I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness... now I send thee,...* "to make thee" an Apostle unto the Gentiles!

Let's look for a moment at this group of "all things" important that the Lord would make known unto Paul after He made him the Apostle unto the Gentiles, and showed him more about "these things," and "those things" spoken of in ACTS 26:16. The phrase "all things" is found in over 200 scriptures, and the Apostle Paul uses this phrase "all things" in 80 scriptures that he wrote. {Review also pages 194 and 357 of these notes.} The full overcomer latches on to Paul's "all things" statements. For example each full overcomer knows 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.* This scripture is a building block for our daily lives. Here on the road to Damascus Jesus was calling Saul of Tarsus according to His will, and His purpose, and revealing His "all things" important. To the Ephesian elders back in ACTS 20:35 Paul stated: *I have shewed you all things,...* and the same statement applies to those who have studied all of Paul's epistles: *I have shewed you all things.* In ROMANS 8:31 & 32 we find these words of Paul: *What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* Again speaking of the Lord, Paul wrote in ROMANS 11:36 *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.* Here in lies the secret of "all things" important, for

Paul, (and all overcomers), must see Christ in "all things." Paul emphasizes this point again when he writes in 1 CORINTHIANS 2:9 & 10: *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.* Jesus emphasized this very same point of importance of the Holy Ghost being the One sent to reveal "all things" to those who receive the Holy Ghost when He stated in JOHN 14:26 *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

Note in COLOSSIANS 1 how many "all things" statements Paul made concerning Jesus Christ. 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. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. 19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; 20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.* Stated another way, Jesus is to have preeminence in "all things."

EPHESIANS 1:22 & 23, speaking of Jesus, tells us that God *...hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.* By the time Paul wrote these statements above in COLOSSIANS and EPHESIANS, he had fully learned the cost of being made a minister, a witness, and an Apostle unto the Gentiles, so he was able to write the following statement found in PHILIPPIANS 3:8 *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,...* Along the way Paul had also learned the wisdom of another fact in his life found written in PHILIPPIANS 4:13 *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

So we find in Saul of Tarsus' life that the cost of being made a minister, a witness, and an Apostle unto the Gentiles, was "all things" he formerly held dear in his life before Christ, temporal things, which he gladly exchanged for a new set of "all things" measured with a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory... (study 2 CORINTHIANS 4:17). Shortly, as he went on with the Lord, Paul learned the truth of 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.* He quickly learned, like John the Baptist had said in JOHN 3:35 that *...The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.* All full overcomers acknowledge this, and are found in REVELATION 4:11 worshipping and saying: *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.*

Having now considered a little of the "all things" that was the cost of Saul of Tarsus being made a minister, a witness, and an Apostle unto the Gentiles by our Lord and Saviour, let's now consider some more thoughts about "these things," and "those things" spoken of in 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;...*

Recently on a Wednesday night we were given a Bible study on the phrase "these things," which is found in over 275 scriptures. Let's here narrow our focus down to "these things," which Saul of Tarsus had been a witness too, so far in his young life, at the point in time Jesus arrested him on the road to Damascus. Recall back in LUKE 24 that after His resurrection Jesus appeared unto ten of his disciples, and gave them the following instructions: LUKE 24:46 *And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: 47 And that repentance*

and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 And ye are witnesses of these things. Saul of Tarsus wasn't witness of these very same things, yet he was a witness...*of these things which thou hast seen*,... thus putting him on equal footing with those that were Apostles before him. Saul of Tarsus now too had personally witnessed our resurrected Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This appearance then validated all of the testimonies concerning Jesus Christ that he had heard while persecuting the church of God, and administering pain and suffering, even death unto Christians. Their testimonies were a large part *...of these things which*... Saul of Tarsus had witnessed, and seen, and heard. Their testimonies of Jesus Christ is a large part of what pricked his conscience, as the Lord had noted to him when He stated *...in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks...* ACTS 26:14.

We have often mentioned the important testimony of Stephen, and the words he spoke before the Sanhedrin council. None of the disciples of Christ were in attendance as Stephen spoke his defence sermon before his false accusers, and the Sanhedrin council. So how is it that we have a word for word record of his sermon of ACTS 7? It was by the power of the Holy Ghost that Stephen's sermon pricked the heart and conscience of one Saul of Tarsus, of whom scripture records *...the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul...* ACTS 7:58, as they stoned Stephen to death. So powerful and inspired were the words of Stephen that Paul was later able to recall word for word Stephen's sermon that had so deeply pricked his conscience, and Luke wrote it down. I dare say that probably not a day went by where Paul didn't have a thought pass through his mind about Stephen, and the witness that Stephen was to him. Certainly Saul of Tarsus' conscience daily recalled Stephen's testimony, thus Stephen's witness became a large part *...of these things which*... Saul of Tarsus had witnessed, and seen, and heard. Evidence of Stephen's memory in Paul's mind is found in ACTS 22:20 where Paul makes known to all the Jews assembled at Jerusalem: *And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.* Sanctified imagination takes me to heaven on the day the Apostle Paul was beheaded for the testimony of Jesus Christ, and I see Stephen waiting number one in line behind Jesus to greet the former Saul of Tarsus, and thank him for listening to his final sermon, and accepting Jesus as his Saviour on the road to Damascus. Then I see Stephen turn to Jesus and say thank you for your grace, and answering my final prayer: *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge....* ACTS 7:60.

Thus we glimpse some *...of these things which*... Saul of Tarsus had witnessed, and seen, and heard before Jesus arrested him on the road to Damascus. Again here in ACTS 26:16 Jesus told Saul of Tarsus *...I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen,...* . One of "these things" Saul of Tarsus had witnessed, and seen with his own eyes, probably every day of his life, was the scriptures! Yet in his unbelief, the scriptures were nothing more than dead words to Saul of Tarsus. Jesus stated in JOHN 5:39 & 40: *Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. 40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.* An expounded translation of this text reads: "You pour over the scriptures, for you imagine that you will find eternal life in them, and it is these that bear witness of Me, yet you do not want to come to Me in order to have life." The reason the scriptures meant nothing to those to whom Jesus was speaking was because of their unbelief of Him. And so he tells them further in JOHN 5:46 & 47: *For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. 47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?* The very second Saul of Tarsus believed Jesus was his Messiah as the Lord appeared unto him on the road to Damascus, the scriptures he thought he knew so well took on a whole new perspective, yet it would take the power of the Holy Ghost, and the revelation of Jesus Christ to unfold the deep hidden meanings, and even the mystery which was kept secret since the world began unto him, as we noted earlier. {See again page 888 of these notes.} Here on the road to Damascus Jesus was making known unto Saul of Tarsus that in "these things" of scripture which you have seen, you really haven't seen nothing yet! But I will *...make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen,...* . No wonder then that the Apostle Paul was constantly reasoning with the Jews out of the

scriptures, having witnessed them since a youth, and having them fully revealed unto him after his salvation. {See ACTS 17:2}.

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;...* There is a little transition between "these things" and "those things" indicated here. Jesus points out to Saul of Tarsus here that "these things" he has seen represent the things past and present he has learned and witnessed of the Lord. The statement "those things," as presented by Jesus here, speaks of things future, some of which contain *...unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter...* (2 CORINTHIANS 12:4). Of course Saul of Tarsus had no idea at this point in time what "those things" would be, but would later write the believer to also *...seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God...* (COLOSSIANS 3:1).

Let's now consider a little *...of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;...* "Those things" is quite a statement; very thought provoking. "Those things" has a lot of undeveloped possibility in it. The statement "those things" is very hard to put brackets around. "Those things" takes a new born believer who essentially knows nothing about the deeper things of God, and potentially puts him on the throne of glory ruling and reigning with Jesus Christ! "Those things" brings a new born Christian from zero, and takes him into the ages to come where The Almighty God might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.... (see EPHESIANS 2:7). In short, the statement "those things" opens an endless package of eternal benefits to the believer. To Saul of Tarsus the statement *...those things in the which I will appear unto thee;...* contained the genesis of what Paul later called "my gospel," by which *...God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ...* (ROMANS 2:16), and by Paul's gospel given unto the Gentiles was the word of God fulfilled... (COLOSSIANS 1:25). So we begin to realize that the words of Jesus spoken unto Saul of Tarsus: *...of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;...* is a very profound, and deeply enduring statement.

More than seventy times we find the phrase "those things" in scripture. Twenty six of "those things" statements can be attributed to Paul, and interestingly the number twenty six is the number associated with THE GOSPEL, or GOOD NEWS. Thus the Holy Ghost sees to it that Paul's gospel is pointed to in studying the phrase "those things." Stated another way, when Jesus speaks to Saul of Tarsus the phrase "those things" He is unfolding a long list of "those things," which became doctrines taught by Paul.

There is a long list of "those things," which are doctrines taught by Paul. In this study on the life of the Apostle Paul we have written chapters on the Doctrine of Eternal Security, the Doctrine of the Holy Ghost, the Doctrine of Water Baptism, the Doctrine of the Laying on of Hands, the Doctrine of Prophecy, the Doctrine of Separation, the Doctrine of Deliverance, and the Doctrine of Resurrection. Though none of these doctrines are necessarily unique to the Apostle Paul, it is through his expounding on "those things" found in these different doctrines that builds up the Saints in this church age, and gives us an inheritance among all them which are sanctified by faith in Christ Jesus, (review ACTS 20:32). And these afore mentioned doctrines of Paul just begin to scratch the surface of "those things" found in Paul's gospel. Paul's gospel teaches about "those things" of the natural man, the spiritual man, and the carnal man. Paul's doctrine also teaches about the two natures, and the two heads, (the first man Adam, and the second man Adam, which is Christ Jesus).

Additionally one of "those things" Paul expounds upon is the mystical body of Christ. For example, in EPHESIANS 5:23 we read this statement written by Paul: *...Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.* That is a very simple statement *...Christ is the head of the church,* not a Pope, not some other man, but *...Christ is the head of the church.* Essentially Paul is restating here one of "those things" he made note of earlier in this same epistle to the EPHESIANS. EPHESIANS 1:22 *And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.* So we see that *...Christ is the head of the church... Which is his body.* This is the mystical body of Christ. "This Body is viewed as an organism of which we are all members, having one



Head and one life.” (Quoted from Sister Bodie). Again in COLOSSIANS 1:18 the Apostle Paul speaking of Jesus writes: *And he is the head of the body, the church:...* . In 1 CORINTHIANS 12:27 we read this statement made unto believers: *Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.* Then in ROMANS 12 Paul wrote: *4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.* Again in 1 CORINTHIANS 12 we read: *12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For the body is not one member, but many.* What we have just covered concerning the mystical body of Christ describes and defines “my church” that Jesus referenced in MATTHEW 16:18, and is one more *...of those things in the which I will appear unto thee...* that Jesus spoke about to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus, which is the body of Christ that all believers from this church age are a part of. This mystical body of Christ is called by James in ACTS 15:14 *...a people for his name.* “A people for His name” can most simply be defined as Christians. Christians are believers in Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour.

Another of “those things” shown by Jesus unto the Apostle Paul, and emphasized in Paul’s gospel is the doctrine of Grace. The word “grace” is found 170 times in scripture, and is one of “those things” revealed unto the Apostle Paul, starting here on the road to Damascus. Moses wrote the word “grace” eighteen times; Peter wrote it ten times; John seven. The word “grace” is used 99 times by the Apostle Paul in his writings! What this means is that no other inspired writer of scripture wrote about, nor probably appreciated the grace of God more than the Apostle Paul did. Paul learned on the road to Damascus: *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.* {EPHESIANS 2:8 & 9}. Grace is one of “those things” highlighted by the Apostle Paul.

Some more of “those things” emphasized in Paul’s gospel is the importance of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, a subject which Brother Hawkins taught on at the 2005 church camp. And where do we learn “those things” of the doctrine of the Bride of Christ? This is one of the many doctrines emphasized by the Apostle Paul, and why bridal Saints will know Paul’s gospel. Part of “those things” related to Paul’s bridal teaching is the doctrine of ranks in the resurrection, the doctrine of being a full overcomer, and a New Testament worthy of faith, the doctrine of a race course runner, the doctrine of having God’s best, the doctrine of the hope of His calling, the doctrine of the glory of His inheritance, and the doctrine of suffering with Christ Jesus.

We mentioned earlier (review page 888 of these notes) that some of “those things” taught in Paul’s gospel includes seven mysteries not found in other scriptural records, which are: (1) the mystery of Israel’s blindness, (ROMANS 11:25); (2) the hidden mystery, (ROMANS 16:25; 1 CORINTHIANS 2:7; COLOSSIANS 1:26, and EPHESIANS 1:9); (3) the mystery of translation, (1 CORINTHIANS 15:51-53 and 1 THESSALONIANS 4:15-17); (4) the great mystery of the bride, which unfortunately remains a great mystery in most churches today simply because they do not have the Holy Ghost to teach them the truth, and if they do they fail to see Paul’s doctrine of ranks in the resurrection, (EPHESIANS 5:32); (5) the mystery of Godliness, (COLOSSIANS 2:2 and 1 TIMOTHY 3:16); (6) the mystery of iniquity, (2 THESSALONIANS 2:7); and (7) the mystery of faith, (1 TIMOTHY 3:9).

“Those things” of Paul’s gospel was given him specifically for this church age, and was primarily given him to reach the Gentiles as noted in ACTS 26:16-18. “Those things” of Paul’s doctrine were given him to teach us about Christ Jesus, and His eternal plan for us. “Those things” of Paul’s teaching came by the revelation of Jesus Christ, and the Lord told him here in ACTS 26:16 *...of those things in the which I will appear unto thee...* and GALATIANS 1:11 *But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.* “Those things” of Paul’s gospel were given him to fill up the word of God, (COLOSSIANS 1:25); to lay the foundation in our lives, (1 CORINTHIANS 3:11 *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*); to establish us (ROMANS 16:25); to build us up in Christ Jesus as noted in ACTS 20:32, EPHESIANS 2:20-22, and COLOSSIANS 2:7), to give us an eternal inheritance (ACTS 20:32; ROMANS 8:17; EPHESIANS 1:11, 14, and 18); to instruct us the high calling we

have in Christ Jesus (PHILIPPIANS 3:14), so we can reign with Him (2 TIMOTHY 2:12). Thus we begin to see why this statement made by Jesus *...of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;*... is so profound, and took the Apostle Paul the rest of his life to fully express.

No wonder it took Paul over twenty years to even again make mention (at least unto us) *...of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;*... these remarkable words of Jesus spoken unto him on the road to Damascus. And these were words *...of those things...* fit for a king to hear, and not only king Agrippa, (who probably didn't ever correctly value the depth of Paul's testimony), but for the ears of just men made perfect... (see HEBREWS 12:23). These just men made perfect are born again believers to whom is written these words in REVELATION 1:5 & 6 *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.* Those kings I am making reference to are those *...full of eyes before and behind...* (REVELATION 4:6). These particular kings are full of the Holy Ghost. These kings are those who gladly received "those things" in Paul's gospel message, and have *...kept the word of my patience...* (REVELATION 3:10). These kings follow Paul as he followed Christ unto the unsearchable riches of "those things" found in Christ. These kings know Paul's gospel, know it is the Word of God, and see the uniqueness in Paul's gospel. These kings have learned that "those things" of Paul's gospel alone tells us of the race course, of winning Christ as Bridegroom, of a better resurrection. These kings know that "those things" in Paul's gospel reveals the whole counsel of God, and how to put on the armour of light, how to put on the new man, how to put on the whole armour of God; and how to, as the elect of God, to put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, and charity, and how we may grow up into Him in all things. These kings have learned "those things" that Paul's gospel alone tells us; that we are more than conquerors through him that loved us, which is a good kingly quality to know. These kings know that we are to be established in "those things" of Paul's gospel, to the end that Christ Jesus may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints. These kings have learned the mysteries of Christ, revealed unto Paul, that were hidden in ages past, and written in his epistles. These kings know "those things" that Paul's gospel teaches, of how we are to rule and reign with him, as kings, and priests; as the full overcomers in the Bride of Christ taken from this church age! These kings love His appearing, and are constantly looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith, as they patiently run the race that is set before them. These kings are redeemed Saints who know "those things" of Paul's gospel!

Jesus is proud of Paul's gospel, and *...of those things in the which...* He Himself appeared unto him, and taught him, thus in REVELATION 19:16 He has on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, which is a quotation from "those things" of Paul's gospel found in 1 TIMOTHY 6:15 *...KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.* Amazingly in REVELATION 19 Jesus, as *...KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS...* leads a mighty army composed of those He *...hath made...* *...kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* (REVELATION 1:6). Do we as potential *...kings and priests unto God and his Father...* fully appreciate *...both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which...* were revealed unto Paul in his gospel?

Let's focus upon some of "those things" statements that we can attribute to Paul, and see how "those things" of God magnified through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, with the guidance of the Holy Ghost, through the pen of Paul, that He might make known unto us the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory, (see ROMANS 9:23). We have mentioned this next statement found in COLOSSIANS 3:1 before (see page 895 of these notes): *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.* I have a note written in my Bible over the little word "If" in this verse, indicating that the original Greek reads "since." Thus COLOSSIANS 3:1 more correctly reads: *Since ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.* Another scholar notes that this verse should read: *Seeing then*

that ye are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. The whole point of Paul's statement here remains the same for us however, which is to *...seek those things which are above...* . Sister Bodie in her commentary of COLOSSIANS 3:1 states: "these words *...seek those things which are above...* are very emphatic in the Greek. They mean "abide in these heavenly places, stay there where Christ is sitting." He is staying there, abiding in the place of power, the right hand of God, and we are to do likewise." {End of quoting Sister Bodie.} To rephrase all that is said here we should think of COLOSSIANS 3:1 like this: "Seeing then that ye are risen with Christ, and seated with Him in the heavenlies, we should focus upon, and seek those things which are above."

To *...seek those things which are above...* mandates eyes of faith. All of the Old Testament worthies of faith had eyes of faith, and so will all of the New Testament worthies of faith. Even though the term eyes of faith is not found in scripture, the teaching of having eyes of faith is found all throughout scripture. For example when the Apostle Paul prays in EPHESIANS 1:18 *The eyes of your understanding being enlightened,*.... he is asking the Lord that our spiritual eyes of faith be opened to behold those things of the Lord in the same Light God sees those things. Stated another way, we are to see those things of God with our spiritual eyes of faith; eyes enlightened by the Holy Ghost, and without our spiritual eyes being enlightened we can not behold those deeper things of God.

Essentially the Apostle Paul encouraged the Jews in HEBREWS 12 to also focus upon with eyes of faith, and *...seek those things which are above...* when he wrote: HEBREWS 12:22 *But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. 25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: 26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. 27 And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: 29 For our God is a consuming fire. If that is not focusing upon *...those things which are above...* then what is?*

One more example of having eyes of faith to *...seek those things which are above...* is found in ROMANS 4, where the Apostle Paul defines Abraham to be the father of the faithful, who sought God above for those things he couldn't see any other way but by faith. ROMANS 4:16 *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, 17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. 18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. Abraham saw *...those things which be not as though they were.**

We have just shown a few examples of how the statement Jesus made to Saul of Tarsus concerning *...those things in the which I will appear unto thee...* required Saul having eyes of faith to see those things. And Saul of Tarsus had to see many of those things revealed unto him with his eyes of faith, but there were some of those things shown Paul that others could see with their own eyes too. Paul writes in ROMANS 15:17 *I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God. 18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, 19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. Paul spent his whole life from that day on the road to Damascus expounding upon Jesus Christ and of *...those things which pertain to God.* When Paul finally got to Rome we find this noted of him*

in the last two verses of ACTS 28. ACTS 28:30 *And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, 31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.*

When we get to ACTS 27 we will read of Paul journey from Caesarea towards Rome. There is quiet a bit of spiritual symbolism in ACTS 27 pertaining to sailing the seas of this present church age. Brother Copley notes that "God appointed the Apostle Paul to be the house-keeper of the Church of Christ thru out this age. His doctrine and practice should have been allowed to pilot the saints over the sea during the past 1900 years." {End of quoting Brother Copley.} Now nearly two thousand years have passed since Paul was anointed the Apostle unto the Gentiles, whose gospel message concerning Jesus we are to learn, know and follow if we are to successfully navigate life's tempestuous sea. Those that don't follow Paul as he followed Christ are headed for ship wreck. ACTS 27 contains much information about a serious ship wreck because Paul's spiritual advice was not followed. We read this in ACTS 27:10 & 11 where Paul says to those in charge of him: *Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives. 11 Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul.* Thus we learn that *....those things which were spoken by Paul...* are to be heeded, for he received his guidance from the Holy Ghost, and Jesus Christ who showed him *...those things in the which I will appear unto thee...* as noted in ACTS 26:16. We must pay close attention to *....those things which were spoken by Paul...* for he spoke of *...those things which pertain to God,....teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ.*

This brings us to another statement Paul wrote in his later writings unto the Philippian Saints. PHILIPPIANS 4:9 *Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.* Here we see the importance of learning those things of Paul, and receiving those things, and hearing those things of Paul's gospel, and seeing those things in his own life, those magnificent changes made in Paul's everyday life by yielding unto the Lord, and also seeing how *....those things which were spoken by Paul...* made positive changes in the lives of many Christians down through this church age, and influenced many to run after God's best. Paul here in PHILIPPIANS 4:9 put a bracket around *...Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me...* by adding "do," meaning do these thing in your own life, and avoid the ship wreck of ACTS 27 in your own life. And the only way to "do" all of *...Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me...* is with the careful wisdom and guidance of the Holy Ghost, whom Paul here references as "the God of peace." The Apostle Paul is the only writer to reference the "God of peace" in scripture, which he does in the following five scriptures: ROMANS 15:33; ROMANS 16:20; PHILIPPIANS 4:9; 1 THESSALONIANS 5:23; and HEBREWS 13:20. Study these five scriptures and you will see for yourself that the "God of peace" references the Holy Ghost. {See again page 92 of these notes.} HEBREWS 13:20 & 21 reads: *Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

One final scripture that probably best sums up our discussion of *...those things in the which I will appear unto thee...* takes us to PHILIPPIANS 3:13 & 14, where Paul writes: *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* Here we find a balance, which on one side has *...those things which are behind...* and on the other side *...those things which are before...* . Study PHILIPPIANS 3 and see that when Paul references *...those things which are behind...* he is speaking of those things of his flesh that he formerly had put his confidence in. In PHILIPPIANS 3:7 & 8 Paul mentions *...those things which are behind...* being reckoned by him as a loss so that he could pursue *...those things which are before...* . PHILIPPIANS 3:7 & 8 reads: *But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for*

Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,... . To win Christ Paul realized that he had to forget *...those things which are behind...* and reach forth *...forth unto those things which are before...* . Paul's focus, and his encouragement here to the New Testament full overcomer was on winning Christ; not as Saviour, because Christ is already the Saviour of the world to those that believe on Him; but rather on winning Christ as Bridegroom! *Those things which are before...* then is *...the high calling of God in Christ Jesus...* mentioned in PHILIPPIANS 3:14. This *...high calling of God in Christ Jesus...* is the reason Paul wrote in PHILIPPIANS 3:17 *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.* The perfectly balanced Christian life then forgets *...those things which are behind,* and reaches *...forth unto those things which are before...* pursuing the *...high calling of God in Christ Jesus...* following Paul's example of focusing on, and setting your affection on those things above, not on those things on the earth. {COLOSSIANS 3:2 *Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*} The full overcomer will find that the balance of *...those things which are behind...* and *...those things which are before...* tips heavily towards the *...those things which are before...* side, for they are constantly looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of their faith... (HEBREWS 12:2). With such a view those things of earth become strangely dim, and *...those things which are before...* becomes more and more in focus, for the full overcomer seeks *...those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God...* (COLOSSIANS 3:1).

We now begin to see how this one sentence statement of ACTS 26:16-18, made by Jesus unto Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus, carried him through the rest of his life. There was no way Saul of Tarsus could ever have wrapped his arms around all that is contained in just this part of ACTS 26:16 *...those things in the which I will appear unto thee...* in one hour, or one day, or one week, or even one month. It took the power of the Holy Ghost, and several other appearance by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ unto Paul to fully reveal those things which are eternally important concerning Christ; those things of Christ; those things in Christ; those things by Christ; those things through Christ; and those things unto Christ. Yes, the list of *...those things which are before...* is endless, and will take the ages to come to fully explore *...those things which are before.*

Before we move on to examine ACTS 26:17 in more depth, note in this sentence of ACTS 26:16-18 that Jesus used the word "thee" five times in his exhortation to Saul of Tarsus. In summary Jesus told Saul of Tarsus that He (1)*...appeared unto thee...* and (2) *...will appear unto thee...* again, (3) *...to make thee a minister and a witness...* (4) and to *...send thee...* unto the Gentiles, and at the same time (5)*...Delivering thee from the...* unbelieving Jews and the unbelieving Gentiles. The underlying theme in these five "thee" statements hints that Jesus was going to make this legal Pharisee a grace preaching Apostle! That was just one more of those things we can marvel at for eternity, *...the riches of His grace!*

Moving on to ACTS 26:17 we begin to see more of the purpose, and calling that Jesus was giving Saul of Tarsus here on the road to Damascus. ACTS 26:17 *Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee...* . "The people" references the Jews, and "the Gentiles" references the non Jews. Let's look at this word "delivering." From Jesus perspective this is one of *...those things which are before...* in the life of Saul of Tarsus. Had Saul of Tarsus in his life as a Pharisee ever needed to be delivered from the Jews before? I seriously doubt it. The word "delivering" as used here signified to deliver by rescuing from danger. Had Saul of Tarsus ever been in danger with the Jews? Not yet. Those Christian Jews whom Saul of Tarsus had been persecuting were really no danger to him, for he had so called authority from the high priest to back up his actions. However, now a Christian himself, Saul of Tarsus would be highly pursued by the unbelieving Jews. Imagine the reward on his head. ACTS 9:23 tells how *...the Jews took counsel to kill him.* ACTS 9:29 further informs how the Grecian Jews went about to slay him. In 2 CORINTHIANS 11:24 Paul tells: *Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.* A couple of verses later Paul writes of being *...in perils*

by mine own countrymen,... and we have seen in this study how the unbelieving Jews everywhere Paul went set out to kill him. Most recently in ACTS 23:12-14 we read how: *...certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. 13 And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy. 14 And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul.* Yet here on the road to Damascus Jesus had told Paul that He would be the One *...Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee,...* . And we have seen time and time again that Jesus did deliver Paul from the Jews. And time and time again Jesus delivered Paul from the Gentiles whose minds had sometime become evil afflicted against Paul. {See ACTS 13:50; 14:2 & 19 for starters.} Jesus was showing Saul of Tarsus here that He would be his deliverer, just like he had been to David, just like He is to every Christian. GALATIANS 1:3-5 tells of *...our Lord Jesus Christ, 4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: 5 To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Just think about that for a few minutes!

Here is some of what David wrote about the Lord, his 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. ...17 He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for 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.* PSALMS 34:19 *Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.*

There is another meaning of the word “delivering” here, and that is “to select.” Another term often used with the word “select” is “ordained,” for “ordained” means to “appoint, select, or choose.” Jesus was telling Saul of Tarsus here on the road to Damascus that he was selecting him to be a minister, and a witness, and a delegate, and a messenger, in other words an Apostle unto the Gentiles! What a calling.

There is a one more profound and much deeper meaning here conveyed in the word “delivering”. Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words tells that the Greek verb *exaireo* {ex-ahee-reh'-o} (number 1807 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance) used here in ACTS 26:17, also means: to take out, or to take out for oneself! We read this statement of James in ACTS 15:14 *Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.* “A people for His name” means Christians. Christians properly defined are believers in Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour. Such believers are termed by many other names also, such as Sons of God, children of God, brethren, disciples, Saints, all of these are scriptural terms. One commentator expounded this verse like this: “to take out of them a people for his name; for Himself, for His own glory, to call upon His name, to bear His name, and support His Gospel, His cause, and His interest.” In these nearly two thousand years since James spoke his words of ACTS 15, millions upon millions of Gentiles have become believers, having accepted Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour. Taken out of this “people for His name” also comes a rib portion of people who will be called “Mrs. Jesus,” “The Bride of Christ,” “The Lamb’s wife.” In REVELATION 19:7 we read: *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.* The bridal message was revealed unto Paul, in time, as the scriptures were opened unto him by the Holy Ghost, and by the revelation of Jesus Christ as fore told here in ACTS 26:16-18. Little did Saul of Tarsus know here in ACTS 26:17 that the Lord Jesus Christ was also “delivering” him to take out a people for Himself; a people who would be close followers of Paul as he followed Christ; a people who too would learn from Paul about the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; a people who would suffer with Christ so that they too could reign with Christ, and forever be known as the Bride of Christ! Having now noted this profound meaning of “delivering” we could think of ACTS 26:17 in one respect like this: “To take out for Myself, thee, and those unto whom I now send thee, a people for My name, even My Bride!”

There is one more very important element noted here in Jesus statement to Saul of Tarsus found here in ACTS 26:17 *Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee,...* and this is where Saul of Tarsus is anointed the Apostle Paul. A definition from Strong's Concordance, which we have many times before gone



over, tells us that an apostle is a delegate, messenger, he that is sent, one sent forth with orders. Apostle comes from a root word meaning to send, to send forth, to send away, or to send out. Here in verse 17 we find Jesus telling Saul of Tarsus that He was sending him out unto the Gentiles, meaning Jesus was making, and going to make Saul of Tarsus the Apostle to the Gentiles that he later became. Paul didn't make himself an Apostle, never sought the office of an Apostle, nor did he ever have a thought of becoming an Apostle, rather it was the Lord Jesus Christ who made Paul an Apostle, and Jesus did this here in ACTS 26:17. The Apostle Paul never forgot this, (how could he), and often acknowledged that it was Jesus Himself who made him the Apostle that he was, and gave him the gospel he preached.

There are plenty of scriptures in Paul's gospel which also reference this fact. Here is a review of some of these scriptures in the order we find them in the Bible. ROMANS 1:1 *Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,* 2 *(Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)* 3 *Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;* 4 *And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:* 5 *By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:* 6 *Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:* 7 *To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.* ROMANS 11:13 *...I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:...* . 1 CORINTHIANS 1:1 *Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God,...* . 1 CORINTHIANS 9:2 *If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.* 1 CORINTHIANS 15:9 *For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.* 2 CORINTHIANS 1:1 *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,...* . GALATIANS 1:1 *Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;).* EPHESIANS 1:1 *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,...* . COLOSSIANS 1:1 *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,...* . 1 TIMOTHY 1:1 *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope;...* . 1 TIMOTHY 2:7 *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.* 2 TIMOTHY 1:1 *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,...* . 2 TIMOTHY 1:11 *Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.* TITUS 1:1 *Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect,...* . And so we see that it was Jesus Christ who called Paul to be an Apostle, and He did so on the day Saul of Tarsus got saved. All together Paul references himself as an "Apostle" fifteen times in scripture; fifteen being the number of REST, thus showing (in one respect) that Paul rested in the fact that Jesus had anointed him the Apostle unto the Gentiles!

Late in his life the Apostle Paul wrote this statement concerning his ministry, and Apostleship: 1 TIMOTHY 1:12 *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;* 13 *Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.* 14 *And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.* 15 *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.* 16 *Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.* 17 *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

So far we have spent twenty pages of notes reviewing some of the things Jesus told Saul of Tarsus in this one sentence of ACTS 26:16-18, and we haven't even begin to look at what Jesus said here in ACTS 26:18! And there is a lot more information to examine in verse 18. The reason Jesus anointed Saul of Tarsus to be the Apostle unto the Gentiles is given in verse 18, which was *...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.* Before we begin probing the depths of this verse, realize that Saul of Tarsus had a choice here, which was to follow Jesus instructions, or not to follow His leading. Saul of Tarsus choose to follow Jesus admonition, and tells king Agrippa in ACTS 26:19 *Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:...* . Thank God for such a willing heart, but Jesus knew what was in his heart way before He appeared unto him. JEREMIAH 17:10 states it like this: *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.* So important is this verse that Jesus quotes it again in REVELATION 2:23 once again making known: *...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.* Stated another way concerning Saul of Tarsus, Jesus knew the heart of Saul of Tarsus, and knew that from a youth Saul of Tarsus had tried to be obedient unto the Lord, having tried his best to follow the law of Moses, yet until accepting Jesus as his Saviour, Saul of Tarsus was dead in his trespasses and sins, and had no hope of ever pleasing God. All of that changed right here on the road to Damascus as he accepted Jesus as his Messiah, and now this willing heart of Saul of Tarsus could properly be directed to follow, and do the will of God, which in his case was to be the Apostle unto 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...* as Jesus told him here in ACTS 26:18.

There is a lot of eye opening truth to examine here in ACTS 26:18, and Jesus explains this by contrasts through which this legal Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus, could now begin to see the exceeding grace of God. These contrasts include the opening of blind eyes to see things; to see things eternal; to see things immortal; to see things everlasting; to see things impossible to describe; to see things that couldn't formerly be seen; to see things from a heavenly perspective; and to make manifest these things, and those things which Saul of Tarsus himself had seen, and was to see according to ACTS 26:16. In verse 18 Jesus begins to show Saul of Tarsus the contrast between darkness, and light, meaning spiritual darkness, and eternal light. Along with this Jesus contrasts unbelief with belief. Here also Jesus tells of the contrast between the power of Satan, and the exceeding power of God, which Saul himself was also now experiencing. In verse 18 Jesus begins telling Saul of Tarsus about the contrast of being a sinner, and receiving the forgiveness of sins. Along with this we begin to see the difference between sinner, and saint. Here in verse 18 also is expounded by the Lord the contrast of having nothing, to receiving an eternal inheritance. Contrasted also in this verse is unholy with sanctification, and no doubt you can add to this list of differences, many other contrasts hinted at in just this one verse. One more great difference being introduced here by Jesus unto Saul of Tarsus was the contrast between law, and grace, a fundamental truth greatly expounded upon in Paul's gospel!

Before we probe the depths of verse 18 let's first notice a bit of irony here. We know from ACTS 9:8 & 9, and from ACTS 22:11 that Saul of Tarsus was left blind from the brightness of the glory of the Light of Jesus shown him on this road to Damascus. Here in ACTS 26:18 Jesus tells Saul of Tarsus that he was being sent unto the Gentiles to open their eyes, while at the same time Saul of Tarsus physical eyes were blinded. The very second Saul of Tarsus received the Holy ghost some three days later, ACTS 9:18 tells us *...immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith,...* . The scales that fell from Saul's eyes were given to him of the Lord to protect his eyes from that blinding light that Paul saw in the way on the road to Damascus a few days earlier. In one sense its show us of God's great love and thoughtfulness towards us in every aspect of our lives. Had the Lord not given Saul "scales" to protect his eyes, he may very well have been physically blind the rest of his life. The scales falling off are also representative of the truth that can only be revealed by the Holy Spirit. Those who haven't been filled with the Holy Ghost have "scales" over their spiritual eyes, which keep them from seeing all the deeper truths God would like them to see. That's why being filled with the Holy Ghost is such an eye opening experience. It's kind of like going from 20/200 vision to better than 20/20. Jesus told his disciples in JOHN 16:12 - 15: *I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear*

them now. 13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will shew you things to come. 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. 15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you. How can you be guided into all the truth without the Holy Ghost? You can't. Further how can you see all the truth without the guidance of the Holy Ghost? You can't. If you haven't received the Holy Ghost since ye believed (see ACTS 19:2 - 6) then there are "scales" over your spiritual eyes. The irony here in ACTS 26:18 is that the blinding of Saul of Tarsus eyes was really a spiritually an eye opening experience for him. That blinding Light of Jesus forever changed his life. This experience gave Saul of Tarsus a clear eternal vision that never left him. Paul later wrote in 1 CORINTHIANS 2:9 *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* Such truths were starting to be revealed unto Saul of Tarsus here on the road to Damascus.

The key word that unlocks the treasure found in ACTS 26:18 is the little word "open." We have just shown a little bit of irony here on how Saul of Tarsus' blind eyes had to be opened in order for him to be sent unto the Gentiles *...To open their eyes...* ACTS 26:18. Peter had to learn in ACTS 10:34 *...that God is no respecter of persons...* yet that had always been the case with God. JAMES 1:17 tells us: *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.* "No variableness" means no variation, no change, so we see that God has never changed, and has never been a respecter of persons, nor never will be. HEBREWS 13:8 reads; *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* Peter was a kingdom Apostle whose ministry was mainly to the Jews as was all the kingdom Apostles, yet they did preach a little unto the Gentiles as noted first in ACTS 10. However the Apostle Paul was being sent unto the Gentiles to be their, and our Apostle, as noted here many times before. The Jews are God's chosen people, but God always would *...have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth...* (1 TIMOTHY 2:4). All throughout scripture there were Gentile believers, such as Job, Noah, and Rahab just to mention a few. But during this church age, as mentioned in these notes many times before, God specifically *...did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name...* ACTS 15:14. Here in ACTS 26:18 we are told that Saul of Tarsus is being sent unto the Gentiles *...To open their eyes.* (I am not sure we can ever appreciate the challenge to the mind of this Pharisee trained Jew of what it meant for him to be sent unto the Gentiles in the first place. Yet not one time do we ever hear or read of him complaining about this either. He reached beyond the bounds of his Jewish upbringing, humbled himself, and honored the ministry unto the Gentiles that the Lord gave him. Study out ROMANS 11:13 and see how this was. ROMANS 11:13 *For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office...*.)

The Greek word translated "open" here in ACTS 26:18 is anoigo {an-oy'-go}, number 455 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, and is used seventy-seven times in New Testament scripture. Even though I don't know the meaning for the number seventy-seven, I do know that we write 77 by placing two sevens together, thus showing SPIRITUAL PERFECTION, or SPIRITUAL COMPLETION side by side with SPIRITUAL PERFECTION, or SPIRITUAL COMPLETION, which in itself shows some significance. The importance of this word "open," and the best illustration of *...to open their eyes...* is probably found in Jesus address unto the church of Philadelphia in REVELATION 3:7 & 8, where we find the Greek word anoigo {an-oy'-go} used three times. REVELATION 3:7 *And*

*to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth <455>, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth <455>; 8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open <455> door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.*

Of the seven churches mentioned in REVELATION 2 & 3, the church of Philadelphia represents the full overcomers from this present church age who are alive at Jesus soon second coming. (The church of Smyrna figures those full overcomers from this church age who died before the Lord Jesus Christ came back). The full overcomers from this present church age get to know Jesus on a more personal, and closer level than the remaining five churches. How did they achieve this close relationship? By seeing the things found in the Word of God with their open eyes of faith. They have learned to follow the advice of scripture, which they know to be the Word of God. Truly their eyes have been opened. They have opened their ears to hear, and opened their hearts to fully receive the Word of God. Obviously too they have opened their Bible. Unique to the seven churches is the following fact: Jesus mentions only to this church of Philadelphia that they kept His word (verses 8 & 10). The full overcomers of the Philadelphia fully know, and have seen with their open eyes of faith ROMANS 10:17 *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* Those of Philadelphia have kept the word of God; they have studied it intimately; they know what it says like a long love letter from their lover Jesus Christ. They are not swayed by world opinion. They have embraced such statements as found in JAMES 4:8 *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.* The Philadelphian saints knowledge and faith in the Word of God is the key of David referenced in REVELATION 3:7. These full overcomers of Philadelphia represent the rib portion company that will be in the bride of Christ: Saints full of open eyes before and behind and within.... Paraphrasing REVELATION 4:6.

REVELATION 3:8 *I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open <455> door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.* Dear potential full overcoming Saint, the fact is as a son of God you have already beheld the urging of the Lord, recorded in REVELATION 3:20, and opened the door unto Him. REVELATION 3:20 reads: *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open <455> the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.* Jesus then goes on to state 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.* All of this is possible to every believer because he, or she opened the door to let Jesus come into their heart, but not every believer wants to be a full overcomer. Not every believer wants to be a race course runner. Not every believer wants to let the Lord have His way in their heart and life. The Philadelphian Saint does want to be a full overcomer. Brother Copley notes that "Jesus opens a "door in heaven," that the full overcomers may enter in; for they shall reign con-jointly with Christ after they likewise with Him judged Christendom, the world and angels --{study 1 CORINTHIANS 6}. They entered the open door of privilege on earth, accepting all the truth and walking in all the light, constantly looking for more and engaged in the divinely ordained good works," (End of quote from Brother Copley). Truly the Philadelphian Saint is glad Paul was sent unto the Gentiles ...*To open their eyes.*

Jesus states in REVELATION 3:8 ...*behold, I... ..set before thee an open <455> door...*, which ...*no man can shut.* It is important to note that ...*no man can shut...* this open door of opportunity, which is set before the potential full overcomer whose eyes are opened to walk through, by faith, and explore the height, and width, and depth, and length of God's limitless love towards us. This eliminates the excuse then that so many Saints make of why they can't have God's best, because somebody hindered them. GALATIANS 5:7 & 8 reads: *Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? 8 This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.* So and so person may indeed hinder you along the way if your focus is upon so and so person, or so and so circumstance for that matter. The full overcomer recognizes that there will be obstacles to overcome, (even somebody, or even a bunch of somebody's) to overcome, but their eyes remain open, and their focus remains upon Jesus Christ the Author and Finisher of their faith. In the end the fact remains that Jesus still holds the door open, which no

man can shut. Do you see with open eyes of faith Jesus holding the door of overcoming opportunity open for you? No man can shut this door. In HEBREWS 12:2 we find the full overcomer *...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.* And all of this was made possible for us to know because Saul of Tarsus was sent unto the Gentiles, and became the Apostle Paul *...To open their eyes...* to such truths.

ACTS 26:18 starts out saying *...To open their eyes,...* . Here is another interesting thought. For the most part the natural man's focus is upon "me, myself, and I." Watch or listen to any interview on a talk show, and you will hear a lot of "me, myself, and I." Seldom is the focus upon the great I AM. The Lord God is the great I AM. The Old Testament worthies of faith learned to focus their eyes on the Lord, the great I AM. Abraham, when known as Abram, was told by the Lord: *...I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward...* (GENESIS 15:1); *...I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it...* (GENESIS 15:7); and *...I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect...* (GENESIS 17:1). Unto Isaac we read this statement made by the Lord in GENESIS 26:24 *And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.* The Lord appeared unto Isaac's son Jacob, who later is called Israel, and in GENESIS 28:13 & 15 we read these words of the Lord spoken unto Jacob: *...I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;... 15 ...I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.* Again in GENESIS 35 we read these words of God spoken unto Jacob: *10 And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. 11 And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; 12 And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.* One more time in GENESIS 46 God spoke to Jacob: *2 And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. 3 And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: 4 I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.* In EXODUS 3 God appeared unto Moses out of the burning bush and told him in verse 6 *...I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.* In verse 8 God told Moses this about the children of Israel: *...I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.* Moses then questioned God about how he was to tell the children of Israel about God, and God told Moses in verse 14 *...I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.* Moses did all that was told of him by God, the great I AM, and EXODUS 3:31 tells that the children of Israel believed him! Numerous other times the Lord told Moses *I am the LORD*. The point of mentioning all of the above scriptures is for us to realize that in order to be a New Testament worthy of faith we need to get our eyes off of "me, myself, and I," and turn our focus upon the Lord God the great I AM. In PSALMS 46:10 and 11 we read: *Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. 11 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.*

So when Jesus tells Saul of Tarsus here in ACTS 26:18 that he has appeared unto him for the purpose of sending him unto the Gentiles *...To open their eyes,...* He is telling Saul of Tarsus that He wants him to preach unto the Gentiles, and for them to also know who Jesus Christ is. The Gentiles need also to know that Jesus Christ said: *...I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live...* JOHN 11:25. Jesus wants the Gentiles to know that *...I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness...* JOHN 12:46. That

...I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.... JOHN 8:12. That ...I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world....JOHN 8:23. That ...Before Abraham was, I am.... JOHN 8:58. That ...I am that bread of life.... JOHN 6:48 That ...Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.... JOHN 10:7-11. That ...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.... JOHN 14:6. So we note in one sense that Saul of Tarsus was being sent unto the Gentiles ...To open their eyes,... to the great I AM.

Eyes speak of the ability to take in light. LUKE 11:34 in part states it like this: *The light of the body is the eye:...*. Again in JOHN 8:12 above we found that Jesus said *...I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.* In JOHN 1 we read the following: JOHN 1:4 *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. ...7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.* "All men" includes the Gentiles, unto whom Saul of Tarsus was sent *...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. THE SONG OF SOLOMON 1:15 *Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes.* The doves eyes symbolize discernment by the Holy Ghost. It is by the power of the Holy Ghost that spiritual eyes are opened, that *...the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them...* 2 CORINTHIANS 4:4. Paul writes in 2 CORINTHIANS 4:6 *For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* The Holy Ghost empowers the full overcomer to take in the full portion of the glorious gospel of Christ.

Dr. Vicky Moots recently gave a lesson in the Kansas City meeting on the importance of sun light to our physical well being, and made the comparison to ones spiritual well being. And we know that often times scripture gives examples of natural things to explain the spiritual. She explained the importance of getting twenty minutes of unprotected sun light a day, for sunshine creates vitamin D in our bodies. A lack of sun light leads to depression, and artificial light is no substitute for the real thing. She also explained that people who use sun tanning booths to get their tan are three times as likely to have certain forms of cancer. The fact that vitamin D is created when exposed to the sun has certain health benefits. For example vitamin D helps the body use the calcium and phosphorus from food, and regulates normal cellular differentiation, thus aiding in the prevention of cancer. Also vitamin D aids insulin secretion. A lack of vitamin D also leads to chronic fatigue, weight loss, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, autoimmune diseases, and even osteoporosis. So we see that there are certain important God created benefits to sunshine. This is even indicated in GENESIS 1 where we read: 3 *And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. ...14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: 15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. 16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. 17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, 18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.*

If sun light is so good, imagine the benefits of Son Light! The Son Light is of course Jesus, the one mentioned above who is *...the Light, that all men through him might believe....* JOHN 1:7. Again we read above these words of Jesus: *I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness....* JOHN 12:46. And the benefits of Son Light will also be manifest in the Holy city where we



read in REVELATION 21:23 *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.* The potential full overcomer takes in as much Son Light as they can everyday here on earth, realizing that *...the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them...* 2 CORINTHIANS 4:4. If in the natural twenty minutes of sunlight has such health benefits as we noted above, imagine the eternal benefits of what twenty minutes of Son Light a day, or more can do for us! His Son Light then can, and should even shine through our own lives *...as lights in the world...* that is noted in PHILIPPIANS 2:15. PHILIPPIANS 2:14 *Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; 16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.*

Indirectly we have already begun a discussion of turning the Gentiles *...from darkness to light*,... this concept being revealed unto Saul of Tarsus here in ACTS 26:18. Here are some interesting scriptural facts concerning darkness and light. "Darkness" is mentioned before "light" in scripture. The word "darkness" is found in 162 times in the bible, and the word "light" is found 272 times in scripture, thus we find far more "light" in the word of God than we do "darkness." Interestingly the first scripture, and the last scripture in the Bible that mentions "light," mentions it twice, which in itself reveals the sufficient testimony, the sufficient witness that The Word of God, Jesus, is still the "light of the world," and "the light of life" mentioned in JOHN 8:12. 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.* Often times implied with the word "darkness" is blindness, hopelessness, desolation, evil, gloominess, blackness, death, and such things that are anti-Christ. Implied with the word "light" is the benefits we have in Christ Jesus, which are really innumerable!

We know that the book of REVELATION really is a Revelation of Jesus Christ, as noted in REVELATION 1:1, and find it interesting that the word "light," which we associate with Jesus Christ, is mentioned seven times in REVELATION; seven being the prominent number noted in REVELATION, and seven being the number that points to SPIRITUAL PERFECTION, or SPIRITUAL COMPLETION. The word "darkness" is only found one time in REVELATION, that being in the following verses: REVELATION 16:10 *And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, 11 And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.* Here the "darkness" could be felt much like the plague of "darkness" in the land of Egypt before the first born were slain. We read of this in EXODUS 10:21 *And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt. 22 And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days: 23 They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.*

When Jesus Christ died for the sin of the world upon the cross we read in MATTHEW 27:45; MARK 15:33; and LUKE 23:44 that there was "darkness" over the whole earth from the sixth hour until the ninth, showing the "darkness" of the sins Christ died for. COLOSSIANS 1:12-14 explains Christ's work on the cross like this: 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.* This just begins to explain a little about the greatness of God's enlightening power through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which is express like this in LUKE 1:78 & 79: *Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, 79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.*

We noted above that the first and last scripture that mentions "light," mentions "light" twice. Let's look at these two portions of scripture. GENESIS 1:1 *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the*

face of the waters. 3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. Here we find the first mention of "light" in GENESIS 1:3, where "light" is found twice. A double portion of "light" is also found in verse 4, where again we also note that "light" is good, the inference being Jesus as the "Light" of the world is good. The Holy Ghost saw to it that the last mention of "light" in scripture gives double credit once again to the Lamb of God as being the light of the Holy city of heaven. This is first noted in REVELATION 21:23 *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.* Then in REVELATION 22 we read: 1 *And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.* 2 *In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.* 3 *And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:* 4 *And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.* 5 *And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.*

When Jesus tells Saul of Tarsus here on the road to Damascus *...I have appeared unto thee... to ...send thee... unto...the Gentiles... ..To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light...* I am confident he had no idea of the depth, length, height, width, nor eternalness or magnitude of what Jesus was telling him here. Thank God that the Holy Ghost enabled the Apostle Paul to expound unto us the scriptures, and gave Paul the wisdom to write in 2 CORINTHIANS 4:6 about *...God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* Actually Paul had quiet a bit to say about darkness and light, contrasting the power of Satan's darkness with the power of God's light. In 1 CORINTHIANS 4:5 Paul wrote: *Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.* In 2 CORINTHIANS 6:14 we read these words of wisdom given by Paul: *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?* Next let's look at this discourse in EPHESIANS 5:1-16. *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; 2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. 3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; 4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. 7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them. 8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: 9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) 10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. 12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. 13 But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. 14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. 15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.* In COLOSSIANS 1:12 & 13 darkness and light are contrasted like this: *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:...* In 1 THESSALONIANS 5 Paul once again contrasts darkness and light explaining that the coming of the Lord should be anticipated by those who walk in the light of the Lord. 1 THESSALONIANS 5:1 *But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. 2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a*

*thief in the night. 3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. 4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. 5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.*

One more thought about the words "darkness," and "light" found in Paul's own gospel record. In the above paragraph we saw how Paul often times contrasted darkness and light, just as Jesus told him to do on the road to Damascus. In Paul's final epistles of PHILIPPIANS, 1 & 2 TIMOTHY, and TITUS he no longer used the word "darkness," however he continued to use the words "light," and "lights" to express the Light of Jesus found in sons of God. Let's look at these scriptures before we finish this thought. In PHILIPPIANS 2:14 *Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; 16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.* Here we see Paul's focus was upon Christ, and seeing His light shining in their own lives. In 1 TIMOTHY 6 Paul writes to Timothy: *13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; 14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: 15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; 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 everlasting. Amen.* Here we see Paul giving Timothy a charge to keep his focus upon the Light of Jesus Christ. Then later in 2 TIMOTHY 1: 8-11 Paul again expounds upon this thought of the Light of Jesus, writing: *Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; 9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, 10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: 11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.*

Here's the conclusion I came to thinking about the Lord telling Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus to send him unto...the Gentiles... *...To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light,...* . Paul during his life did exactly as the Lord told him he would. It was the brightness of the Light of Jesus that blinded him for a season on the road to Damascus. Those that were with Saul of Tarsus had to lead him by the hand to Damascus, and he was without sight until Ananias of Damascus came and laid his hands on Saul of Tarsus, and at that instant Saul of Tarsus was filled with the Holy Ghost, was given back his eye sight, (LUKE 11:34 *The light of the body is the eye...*), and from that point on the Holy Ghost took Paul by the hand and directed him into following the Light of Jesus found in the word of God. PSALMS 119:105 became a living reality to Paul: *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.* Also PSALMS 36:9 became alive to Paul: *For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.* As Paul progressed down life's path way, he being full of the Holy Ghost, found the wonderful Light of Jesus getting brighter and brighter as each day progressed. For example, how can he write the joy book of the Bible, PHILIPPIANS, from the darkest of prisons without a clear vision of the Light of Christ? He can't. There is no focus on his own dark situation as Paul writes in PHILIPPIANS 3:8 *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing*

*I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* Thus we note the focus of Paul grew more and more on the Light of Christ, who had first appeared unto him as a blinding Light on the road to Damascus. Sure Paul turned the Gentiles from darkness to light, but the Light of Jesus became overwhelming, and foremost in his heart and mind as he ran his race course. Thus with such a frame of mind the things of earth became strangely dim, and the Light of Jesus that had blinded him on the road to Damascus became once again so bright to him as he finished his race course that his focus was upon *...our Lord Jesus Christ... who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; 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 everlasting. Amen...* quoting again from 1 TIMOTHY 6:14-16. Thus with Jesus clearly in view, and having Christ's fully illuminating his heart, the Apostle Paul could write Timothy: *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 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...* 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 & 8. Paul loved Jesus appearing so much that he could only talk about the light of Jesus as he left the darkness of this world. Paul's last request to Timothy included these words: *Do thy diligence to come before winter,... and ...when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments....* 2 TIMOTHY 4:21 & 13. The parchments reference the Old Testament scriptures, which to Paul were *...the light of the LORD...* referenced in ISAIAH 2:5.

ACTS 26:18 again reads: *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.* In examining this scripture we have skipped over, until now, the concept Jesus was explaining to Saul of Tarsus of *...to turn them...* that is to turn the Gentiles from something, unto something far more important; a way of life far superior to living and walking in darkness. We looked at the vast difference between darkness and light, and have tried to briefly show the innumerable benefits that the believer has walking in the Light of the Lord. And we will examine shortly the vast difference, and infinite possibilities that exist when a soul is turned *...from the power of Satan unto God.* But for we now need to explain the magnitude of what it means *...to turn them...* here. In simplest terms *...to turn them...* means: to reverse course; to turn from something near, towards something else, thus showing an immediate and decisive change. Such change is often explain with the word "convert" meaning to cause a person to turn from something, such as is indicated by our text of turning the Gentiles *...from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God...* The Greek word used here in ACTS 26:18 that translates into "turn" is *epistrepho* {ep-ee-stref'-o}, number 1994 in our Strong Greek Concordance, a word used 39 times in the New Testament. The number 39 has a meaning of CHANGE, and this is exactly what Jesus was telling Saul of Tarsus here on the road to Damascus. That He was mightily going to use Saul of Tarsus in the ministry to make a tremendous positive CHANGE in the lives of millions of Gentiles! The way this CHANGE would be manifest is to "turn" the Gentiles from the darkness of sin unto the Light of our lovely Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and to "turn" them from the power of Satan unto the exceeding greater power of God.

Of course we know this ministry of opening of Gentile eyes, and turning them *...from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God...* reached way beyond the life time of Paul, but Jesus wasn't letting Saul of Tarsus know this fact, for it was only Saul of Tarsus responsibility to preach the gospel, and it was the Holy Ghost's responsibility to *...reprove the world of sin...* causing souls to turn to Christ, (see JOHN 16:8). And we have seen throughout this study on the life of Paul the magnitude of the CHANGE brought into Gentile lives as they turned unto the Lord. One such example is found in ACTS 17:6 where we find those who had heard and opposed Paul's ministry crying out: *...These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.* Obviously a tremendous CHANGE had been observed in those who believed the Lord because of Paul's preaching to accuse him of turning the world upside down. A similar charge was made in Ephesus after Paul had spent the majority of three years there,

where it was announced by Demetrius before all the silversmiths: ACTS 19:26 *Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands.* When Paul got to Jerusalem in ACTS 21, the Jews laid hands on him accusing Paul of turning men every where against the Jewish traditions, implying that he was the man who had turned the world upside down. ACTS 21:28 words it like this: *...This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place.*

Specific references are also made in scripture to certain other times when in Paul's ministry the Gentiles turned in mass *...from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God...* and one such mention is in ACTS 13 where Paul and Barnabas were found in Antioch in Pisida. ACTS 13:46-48 records what happened there after preaching unto the Jews for two consecutive Sabbath day services. ACTS 13:46 *Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.* 47 *For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.* 48 *And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.* We mentioned above in ACTS 17:6 how that Paul was accused by the Jews of Thessalonica of turning the world upside down. To these very same Thessalonica converts Paul wrote in 1 THESSALONIANS 1:9 *For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;... .* {For more thoughts on this topic, review page 32 of these notes}.

We are looking deep into ACTS 26:18 where Jesus has appeared unto Saul of Tarsus, and told him that He was sending him unto 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.* There are two turning points mentioned here; the turning the Gentiles *...from darkness to light;...* and secondly turning them *...from the power of Satan unto God...* which concept we will now look into. As we transition from our thinking *...from darkness to light...* into the turning the Gentiles *...from the power of Satan unto God...* let's examine a thought Jesus brought out as he was being arrested by the chief priests, and captains of the temple. This is found in LUKE 22:52 & 53, which reads: *Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves? 53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.* The power of darkness equates to the power of Satan, or *...the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience...* noted in EPHESIANS 2:2. Jesus reference to those chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders which came out to arrest Him in LUKE 22:52 & 53 of their hour, and the power of darkness shows it was God who was going to allow them to accomplish the evil that was in their hearts, which evil is equated to the power of darkness manifest by the prince of the power of the air. God permitted the power of darkness to descend upon Jesus so He could conquer the power of darkness, and the power of Satan, and the power of death. The Apostle Paul stated this fact like this in HEBREWS 2:9 *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.* 10 *For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.* 11 *For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,* 12 *Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.* 13 *And again, I will put my trust in him.* And again, *Behold I and the children which God hath given me.* 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 of death, that is, the devil;* 15 *And deliver them who*

through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Jesus conquered the power of Satan, and the power of darkness, and the power of death when He finished that final seventh step down from glory mentioned in PHILIPPIANS 2:5-8, when Jesus became obedient even unto the death of the cross. How many portions of scripture there are that attempt to explain the marvelous, eternal, everlasting loving work Jesus accomplished upon the cross, which scriptures seem to numerous to count. Christ's love for us is explained, and shown throughout scripture in so many different ways, giving us ample opportunity to believe in Him. COLOSSIANS 1:12-14 again explains Christ's work on the cross like this: *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.*

John the Baptist declared in JOHN 1:29 *...Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.* Jesus finished taking away the sin of the world upon the cross when *...He said, It is finished: and He bowed his head, and gave up the ghost...* JOHN 19:30. We noted earlier {see page 908 of these notes} this thought: when Jesus Christ died for the sin of the world upon the cross we read in MATTHEW 27:45; MARK 15:33; and LUKE 23:44 that there was darkness over the whole earth from the sixth hour until the ninth, showing the darkness of the sins Christ died for. COLOSSIANS 1:12-14 explains Christ's work on the cross like this: *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.* We have also explained how God permitted the power of darkness to descend upon Jesus so He could conquer the power of darkness, and the power of Satan, and the power of death, which He did upon the cross. Remember that the Apostle Paul noted this concerning Jesus in 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.* The three hours of darkness mentioned in MATTHEW 27:45; MARK 15:33; and LUKE 23:44 above further shows how God could not look upon sin with any degree of allowance, a fact Brother Hill often noted. HABAKKUK 1:13 also states this fact: *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity:...* One point we need to see here is that Jesus *...delivered us from the power of darkness...* as He was made sin for us upon the cross! Thank you Jesus for loving us so!!!

You may wonder why the gospel record of JOHN doesn't record the three hours of darkness that we noted in MATTHEW 27:45; MARK 15:33; and LUKE 23:44. The reasons for this may be manifold, but one explanation as to why the gospel record of JOHN doesn't record the three hours of darkness over all the earth is because the gospel of JOHN portrays Jesus as the flying eagle, the eternal ageless one, the Light of the world, and the Light of life spoken of in JOHN 8:12. There is no darkness found in Jesus, only Light, heavenly Light, Light from above, eternal Light. JOHN 1:1-5 records: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was 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.* We noted earlier in this study how that Jesus, The Lamb of God, is found to be the eternal Light of the heavenly Jerusalem recorded in REVELATION 21:23. As we patiently wait for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, we look heavenward for the eternal ageless One, and the appearing of His glorious Light. In 1 PETER 2:9 we read: *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:...* Jesus, the heavenly eternal ageless one, typified by the king of birds, the flying eagle, overcame the darkness of this world soaring to heavenly heights, so JOHN 16:33 records the following words of Jesus: *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.* MATTHEW, MARK, and LUKE all record the three hours of darkness that we noted as Jesus was made sin for us upon the cross, but only JOHN records Jesus final words here on earth *...It is finished...* JOHN 19:30, which statement we also noted in the paragraph above.



Jesus told Saul of Tarsus here in ACTS 26:18 that He was going to enable Saul to turn the Gentiles *...from the power of Satan unto God...* meaning Saul of Tarsus would be to main one used to turn the Gentiles from the power of Satan unto the One who possesses superior and far greater power, that being God! To Christian believers the Apostle John phrased it like this in 1 JOHN 4:4 *...greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world...* which conveys the concept that the Spirit that is from God, and the power that is from God is far greater, and much superior than any inferior power Satan, or his followers can come up with. The term “much more” comes to mind, a phrase found forty times in scripture, and often times the words “much more” describe what can be accomplished by turning ones life over to the greater power of God. For example in ROMANS 5:20 we read in part: *...But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:...* This then just begins to introduce the superior eternal products (if you will) that God has to offer, such things as forgiveness of sins, eternal life, an eternal inheritance, redemption, sanctification, a crown of glory, a body like unto Christ’s glorious body, eternal peace, everlasting joy, endless satisfaction, and an opportunity to rule and reign with Jesus Christ. And here in our text of ACTS 26:18 we see that it was Jesus who was giving Saul of Tarsus the authority to preach unto the *...Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ...* EPHESIANS 3:8, turning them *...from the power of Satan unto God.*

Notice the words Jesus carefully used here: *...the power of Satan unto God.* Jesus didn’t tell Saul of Tarsus that he would be turning the Gentiles who would listen from the power of Satan unto the power of God, though that thought is implied here. In scripture we find several “power of” statements. For example we read of “the power of the dog” in PSALMS 22:20 “the power of evil” in HABAKKUK 2:9, “the power of the enemy” in LUKE 10:19, “the power of darkness” noted above in LUKE 22:53 and COLOSSIANS 1:13, “the prince of the power of the air” in EPHESIANS 2:2, “the power of death” in HEBREWS 2:14, and “the power of the first beast” in REVELATION 13:12. All of these “power of” statements that we just mentioned can in one fashion or another be associated with *...the power of Satan...* found in our text of ACTS 26:18. And in scripture there is only one “power of Satan” statement, but there are thirteen “power of God” references. Additionally there are more “power of” statements associated with the superior “power of God” than there are with *...the power of Satan.* Statements like “the power of my Lord” noted in NUMBERS 14:17, “the power of his works” PSALMS 111:16, “the power of the Highest” found in LUKE 1:35, “the power of the Holy Ghost” ROMANS 15:13, “the power of our Lord Jesus Christ” 1 CORINTHIANS 5:4, “the power of Christ” 2 CORINTHIANS 12:9, “the power of his might” EPHESIANS 6:10, “the power of his resurrection” PHILIPPIANS 3:10, “the power of an endless life” HEBREWS 7:16, and “the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ” REVELATION 12:10. So that our focus would properly be turned *...from the power of Satan unto God...* and upon the things above, Paul wrote in ROMANS 13:1 this fact: *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.* This statement alone should be enough to note that the greater power is of God, and from God, so once again we see the truth of 1 JOHN 4:4 *...greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*

Let’s examine the word “power” found here in ACTS 26:18, and compare the “power of Satan” with “the power of God.” The word “power” used here in ACTS 26:18 is number 1849 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance, *exousia* {ex-oo-see'-ah} which denotes freedom of action, or the right to act. When used of God this power is absolute and unrestricted. When used of Satan this power is a God given liberty, which might sound a little strange until the concept mentioned above in ROMANS 13:1 is believed, and that being: *For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.* Recall in JOB 1 & 2 that the tempter, Satan, came before God, and the following discourse took place. JOB 1:6 *Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. 7 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. 8 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? 9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? 10 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work*

of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. 11 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. 12 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

Note first of all that Satan hadn't even noticed Job, and it was the Lord who pointed out Job unto Satan. Secondly the Lord allowed Satan the power to do the things he was going to do unto Job, yet Satan was instructed by the Supreme Power ...*only upon himself put not forth thine hand*. Satan had to honor God's supreme power. Of course Satan wasn't satisfied with the results of Job's suffering, so we read this next discourse between God and Satan in JOB 2. JOB 2:1 *Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD.* 2 *And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.* 3 *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.* 4 *And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.* 5 *But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.* 6 *And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.* Note here again that it is God who permitted Satan to have the limited power to do what Satan did to Job, and certainly Job suffered because of it, but in the end Job proved God to be the superior power, and Satan never did get the satisfaction of seeing Job curse God to His face, in part because Job knew in his heart the fact we read above in 1 JOHN 4:4 ...*greater (greatest, or stronger) is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*

The first concept we need to see here is that the "power of Satan" is limited by the greater power of God. Realize that no man is a match to the power of the prince and power of the air, that being Satan. Yet as believers we have living within us Jesus Christ, and He is the One ...*greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.* JOHN 1:12 states this of Jesus: *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:...* Further more we have been given the gift of the Holy Ghost, and as many as have received the Holy Ghost since they have believed, as evidenced by the speaking with other tongues (study ACTS 2:4; 10:44-46; and ACTS 19:2-6), have received additional spiritual power referenced by Jesus in ACTS 1:8 *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:...* Brother Hill used to always make note of the fact that the word "power" used in ACTS 1:8 comes from the same Greek word that we get our English word dynamite from. This "power" references miracle working power, the same power as was manifest by, and in Jesus Christ, which power was the Apostles after Pentecost, and used by Stephen, and by Paul and Barnabas, and potentially by all who have been filled with the power of the Holy Ghost. Truly ...*greater (greatest, or stronger) is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.* Yet as a man, none of us by ourselves are a match to the power of Satan. We are talking spiritual power here.

Do you remember that Jesus Himself as a man was tempted of Satan? This story is found in MATTHEW 4; MARK 1; and LUKE 4. LUKE 4:1 reads: *And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,...* Here we see that Jesus was full of the Holy Ghost, and what follows is the mighty evidence of what the greater power of the Holy Ghost can accomplish through a man full of the Holy Ghost. LUKE 4:2 *Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.* Imagine how hungry Jesus as a man would have been after eating nothing for forty days. Satan preys on perceived weakness, and knew that Jesus was hungry, so we read Satan's first temptation of Jesus: LUKE 4:3 *And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.* Note that Satan didn't doubt that Jesus had the power to turn the stone into bread, if He was the Son of God. Satan here first tries to get Jesus to doubt that He was the Son of God, hoping that for a moment Jesus would yield to this tactic and turn the stone into bread just to prove to Satan that He was the Son of God. Rather than yield to Satan's devices, Jesus full of the Holy Ghost, whipped out His sharper than twoedged sword, and then answered Satan with the Word of God. (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 discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.) LUKE 4:4 records how Jesus answered Satan (quoting from DEUTERONOMY 8:3): *And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.*

That ended round one, but Satan had another subtle tactic up his corruptible sleeve as he continued to tempt Jesus with things the natural man can be tempted with. But Jesus wasn't a natural man, for 1 CORINTHIANS 2:14 spells it out for us like this: *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* Jesus was full of the Holy Ghost when Satan began his the second episode of tempting Jesus, which we read in the following verses: LUKE 4:5 *And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6 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. 7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.*

As we examine this portion realize some facts. First of all JOHN 8:44 records Jesus own words, which tells us this of Satan: *...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.* How much of what Satan told Jesus here in LUKE 4:5-7 then were true statements, and how much were lies coming from the father of lies? In LUKE 4:6 did Satan have the power to give Jesus "all this power" to rule over "all the kingdoms of the world?" A couple of portions of scripture tells us other wise. One is found in ROMANS 13:1, which we have noted at least twice above: *For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.* Recall also these next four statements from DANIEL. DANIEL 4:17 *...the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men. DANIEL 4:25 ...the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. DANIEL 4:32 ...the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. And DANIEL 5:21 ...the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.* So we see that Satan was really trying to deceive Jesus with this statement of LUKE 4:6 *...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.*

The second fact we need to note concerns what is said in LUKE 4:5 *And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.* Where is such a place that gives a vantage point of "all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time?" Satan didn't have this kind of power, so we see that Satan tempted Jesus in his mind, trying to control Jesus thoughts. But as a man full of the Holy Ghost Jesus didn't have the unbelieving mind that Satan was so used to dealing with; minds full of the vain imaginations we read of in ROMANS 1:21. And as a man full of the Holy Ghost Jesus was able to live up to the kind of spiritually encouraging words Paul wrote in 2 CORINTHIANS 10:4 & 5 -- *(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God,...* So we begin to see a little clearer what dominated the mind of Christ, which was the things of God. As a man full of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God ruled His mind. Paul wrote the following words to Christians: 1 CORINTHIANS 3:16 *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* The Apostle Paul stated it like this in PHILIPPIANS 2. PHILIPPIANS 2:5 *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* The mind that was in Christ Jesus was a humble mind, a mind aware that He had already given up far more power than Satan could ever

offer Him, and Jesus willingly, and humbly did this to be the One and only Saviour of mankind! The mind that was in Christ Jesus was a likeminded mind with God the Father. Jesus stated in JOHN 4:24 *God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.* Such was the mind of Christ, that is a mind, a spiritual mind in tune with God the Father. Realizing this, note the following facts from ROMANS 8. ROMANS 8:5 *For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.* 6 *For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.* 7 *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* Such was not the mind of Christ.

The third fact we need to be aware of in this second episode of Satan tempting Jesus here in LUKE 4:5-7 is what Satan tells Him in verse 7: *If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.* Of course this is just another lie of Satan, and there is no way Jesus would ever worship Satan. We quoted part of what Jesus said in JOHN 4 above. Here is the rest of what Jesus said in JOHN 4:23 & 24 -- *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 whole point of Satan's discourse here with Jesus was to see if he could get Jesus to give in to the concept that Satan could give Christ the immediate authority over all the kingdoms of the world without first having to go to the cross. The concept Satan was trying to sell Jesus here was that He could rule and reign without suffering a thing. Such things sound good to the natural man, and even the carnal Christian, but not to the Son of God. Again there is no way Jesus Christ would ever worship Satan, which was the key Satan was offering Jesus, *...worship me, all shall be thine.* Round two ended quickly, recorded like this in LUKE 4:8 *And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* EXODUS 34:14; DEUTERONOMY 6:13; and DEUTERONOMY 10:20 are all quoted in part here. EXODUS 34:14 reads: *For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:...* DEUTERONOMY 6:13 states: *Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name.* DEUTERONOMY 10:20 expounds this thought further by exclaiming: *Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name.* Thus ended round two.

Satan didn't give up, yet in his tempting Jesus, and now tries another subtle tactic, that being quoting scripture, but rather than quoting scripture correctly, Satan misquotes scripture, trying to catch Jesus off guard. Here is what is said in LUKE 4:9 *And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: 10 For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: 11 And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

In these three verses Satan first once again subtly tries to get Jesus to doubt He is the Son of God by saying *...If thou be the Son of God,...* MATTHEW 3:16 & 17 records the events that occurred before Jesus was tempted here of Satan, and tells us: *And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: 17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* The point we need to realize here is that Jesus indeed knew He was the Son of God, the Holy Spirit of God descended upon Him like a dove, and the voice of God from heaven verified to all who heard that *...This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* Jesus too heard these words of God, and believed them, for He also knew that He is the Son of God. So there was no way that Jesus, now being Himself full of the Holy Ghost, would ever even begin to doubt that He is the Son of God as Satan was allowing when he said: *...If thou be the Son of God,...*

Then notice Satan's next words, which give great insight to his wicked mind set; *...cast thyself down from hence:...* Ask yourself the following questions: does the Lord cast people down, or does the Lord lift people up? One shouldn't have to consider these questions very long before concluding that the business of the Lord an uplifting one; to lift our feet out of the miry clay and set us upon the solid Rock. David the Psalmist wrote it like this in PSALMS 40:2 *He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.* Even in our study here of

the Apostle Paul, among the very first words Jesus spoke to him out of the brighter than noon day sun Light was *...But rise, and stand upon thy feet:...* . Quiet a contrast with *...cast thyself down from hence:...* isn't it? So even in these few words we see that the sole purpose of Satan is to bring people down. And the reason Jesus came to earth was first to save sinners, and then to get the saved to set their affection on things above! COLOSSIANS 3:1 Since (original Greek) *ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.* 2 *Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.* HEBREWS 12:2 *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who... ..is set down at the right hand of the throne of God...* also gives the believer an upward, heavenly look, and an eternal bright forever! Brother Hill often loved to quote a phrase David wrote in one of his songs found in 2 SAMUEL 22:34 and PSALMS 18:33, where he wrote: *He maketh my feet like hinds' feet: and setteth me upon my high places.* All full overcomers focus upon things above as we just also noted in COLOSSIANS 3:2.

Again notice Satan's words to Jesus here in LUKE 4:9 *And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: 10 For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: 11 And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.* Do you think for a moment that Satan, the father of lies (JOHN 8:44) would for one second take the word of truth, and quote it in truth? Again JOHN 8:44 (speaking of Satan) tells us that *...there is no truth in him...* . So we find that Satan really misquotes PSALMS 91:11 & 12 here. PSALMS 91:11 & 12 reads: *For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. 12 They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.* Satan left out the phrase *"in all thy ways,"* which is a reference to the ways of God, and certainly Jesus, full of the Holy Ghost, knew that jumping from the pinnacle of the temple was not one of the ways of God. Furthermore PROVERBS 3:6 emphasizes where our upward focus should be, stating: *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

Two additional things we should note here. One, Satan knows scripture. And two, he constantly tries to see to it that scripture is misquoted, misstated, and misused. And how much error then has been introduced by misquoted scripture over the centuries? And how much of this error has been added to the doctrine of devils? That is why it is so important for each of us to know scripture, and to be like the Berean Saints who searched the scriptures daily to see whether or not those things preached by Paul were really stated in scripture; whether his statements were really true or not, and whether or not he was rightly dividing the word of God. {Study ACTS 17:11} Knowing this, the Apostle Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost wrote in his last letter to Timothy, who himself was an Apostle by this time: *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth....* 2 TIMOTHY 2:15. Scripture tells us that Judas *...went and hanged himself.* {Study MATTHEW 27:3-5} Scripture also says: *...Go, and do thou likewise.* {See LUKE 10:37} Rightly divided scripture doesn't say: Judas *...went and hanged himself... ..Go, and do thou likewise.* See the trouble one can get into by not rightly dividing the word of truth, and by taking scripture out of context?

Round three of Jesus being tempted by Satan ends like this. LUKE 4:12 *And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* Here Jesus quotes from DEUTERONOMY 6:16 *Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God,...* . There is no error found in this statement, nor was there any further argument by Satan at this time. So we next read: LUKE 4:13 *And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.*

What brought us down this road of discussing Satan's tactics was this statement made by resurrected Jesus unto Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus of how he was being sent unto the Gentiles...*to turn them... ..from the power of Satan unto God...* . And we are seeing some things concerning the "power of Satan," and realizing that he is full of subtle tactics, and lies, and deception, and he even wasn't afraid to tempt Jesus as a man. Jesus suffered these temptations to become the captain of our salvation. HEBREWS 2 records it like this: *...9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God*

should taste death for every man. 10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ...17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. Again in HEBREWS 4:15 Paul writes: *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*

Consider this question: What did Saul of Tarsus know on the road to Damascus about turning the Gentiles *...from the power of Satan unto God...*? At this point in time Saul of Tarsus knew nothing about turning the Gentiles *...from the power of Satan unto God...*. Saul of Tarsus had witnessed some things of the power of the Holy Ghost in the lives of the many Christians he had persecuted, such as Stephen, but little did he realize for himself the "power of Satan" that he himself had been yielding unto, up until this point in time in his life. Do we read of Saul of Tarsus having any trouble with Satan before he was saved? No. Up until this day on the road to Damascus Saul of Tarsus was being used by Satan as his tool. In fact ACTS 9:1 & 14 tells that Saul of Tarsus had authority from the chief priests against the disciples of the Lord! But the chief priests were the religious leaders, and surely they wouldn't participate in Satan's schemes, would they? Scripture tells us otherwise. Recall as we introduced this portion of our lesson that we referenced Jesus being arrested in LUKE 22:52 & 53, where we read: *Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves? 53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.* We showed in studying this that the power of darkness equates to the power of Satan, or *...the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience...* that is noted in EPHESIANS 2:2, whose power these chief priests, and captains of the temple, and elders had yielded unto. Saul of Tarsus fell under their umbrella of power, accomplishing the work of Satan's bidding, that is before being saved on the road to Damascus. We are also told in 2 CORINTHIANS 4:4 that *...the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* The god of this world is another description of Satan, like *...the prince of the power of the air...*. Then Jesus makes this statement in REVELATION 2:12 & 13 -- *And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; 13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is:* Let's examine exactly where Satan's seat is.

Actually we have just shown that Satan's seat is in the world, Satan being called *...the prince of the power of the air...* and *...the god of this world...*. When we studied the church of Pergamos in our Sunday School lessons on Hearing we learned that the church of Pergamos was a worldly church, following after the ways of the world; following after the guidance of *...the god of this world...*. We further noted that Pergamos means much married, or much marriage. Such is the condition of the world today, given in much marriage, and in all kinds of marriages. We hear of those that are married to their jobs. We hear of divorce and marriage. We all know those who have been much married, that is married several times. Such is the way of the world. In ROMANS 7:4 we read this most important statement, which points us to the Bride of Christ: *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.* Those in majority of Pergamos are not interested in being married to Jesus Christ, for their interests, their loves, are for other things, specifically worldly things, and not on things above.

One of the more popular doctrines taught today by many is the doctrine of *...prosper and be in health...* which is taken from 3 JOHN 1:2. This doctrine appeals to man's carnal well being, and really focuses on worldly things, such as prosperity, and physical health. Neither of these two things by itself are wrong, but if either of these things become our focus, they then can become first place in our lives, and the full



overcomer has Jesus as his first love. Thus we find such worldly focused doctrines defeating to the full overcomer. Too bad 3 JOHN 1:2 isn't quoted and taught in it's entirety: *Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.* A soul that prospereth is full of the exceeding riches of His grace; is full of the Holy Ghost; is full of the love of God; and is full of the Word of God. The church of Pergamos has nothing to do with the doctrines Paul taught on suffering with Christ. Doctrines like those found in the following scriptures of Paul's writing: PHILIPPIANS 1:29 *For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;...* 2 TIMOTHY 2:12 *If we suffer, we shall also reign with him:...* 2 TIMOTHY 3:12 *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.* ROMANS 8:16 *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. 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.* So do you know why such doctrines are not found in the church of Pergamos? Because such teaching doesn't appeal unto the worldly, and such doctrines don't bring in the masses, or sell huge number of books, or keep you on television very long. Neither does PROVERBS 23:23 *Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.*

The world thinks of prosper as getting money and more and more money, and its by products, power and wealth, which in fact are a couple of the idols of today's world. Wealth (number 2142 in the Strongs Greek Concordance) is a word used in connection with the idol makers of ACTS 19, who were in great opposition to the gospel message of the Apostle Paul. ACTS 19:25 records these words of Demetrius, a silversmith idol maker: *Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth.* The Greek word for "wealth" numerically adds up to 666! The message of wealth and money are so much the focus of many churches today. Label such churches Pergamos, for their idol grove is money and wealth. How many have had their focus turned to money by the pulpits of the church of Pergamos today? God only knows. The Apostle Paul wrote Timothy in 1 TIMOTHY 6:10 *For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.* The Apostle Paul warned us of Pergamos type churches when he made statements like that found in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:3, which reads: *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.* To the Ephesian elders Paul made warning statements, which cautioned them, and us, of Pergamos type churches. Note what the Apostle Paul warned of in ACTS 20:28-30: *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.*

Those in majority of the Pergamos church allow Satan to have a prominent seat in their assembly. REVELATION 2:13 translates into our English this way: *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's throne is....* Where is Satan's throne? A throne is a symbol of the seat of authority and power and strength, greatness, glory and honour, and majesty. We read the heart attitude of Satan in ISAIAH 14:12-14: *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! 13 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.* Thus we should note that Satan himself wants power and greatness and glory and honour for himself, and in fact has a throne himself, for now he is *...the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience..* {see EPHESIANS 2:2}. During the tribulation the antichrist, called the son of perdition in 2 THESSALONIANS 2:3, yields to the prince of the power of the air, Satan, opposing God, and exalts himself above God, attempting to be like the Most High God that we just read of in ISAIAH 14:12-14. The Apostle Paul wrote about this in the following passage from 2 THESSALONIANS 2. 2 THESSALONIANS 2:1 *Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together*

unto him, 2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Study REVELATION 13 in connection with 2 THESSALONIANS 2 to see how Satan influenced the world during the tribulation, and was able to exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped. For now keep in mind that Satan is very subtle, and as the deceiver he is very capable of having his throne subtly disguised where the spiritually unenlightened will not notice. Today the place where Satan's throne is in Pergamos type churches is right behind the pulpit!

As noted above Satan inspires many of the messages preached from the pulpits of Pergamos today! Keep in mind that Satan is well acquainted with the word of God, and even tempted Jesus by misquoting scripture, as we noted above when we studied Satan's temptation of Jesus. There we found Satan partially quoting from PSALMS 91:11 & 12, saying to Jesus in MATTHEW 4:6 and LUKE 4:10 & 11; *If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.* Turning to PSALMS 91:11 & 12 we found that it actually reads: *For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. 12 They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.* Satan left out the phrase "in all thy ways," which is a reference to the ways of God, and certainly Jesus, full of the Holy Ghost, knew that jumping from the pinnacle of the temple was not one of the ways of God. Satan, of course, doesn't rightfully divide the word of truth on purpose, but rather sees to it that the word of truth is wrongfully divided, for, after all, that is his job, and he is really good at his job, which is ...to steal, and to kill, and to destroy... . This is why the Apostle Paul wrote the Apostle Timothy these words found in 2 TIMOTHY, which states: Timothy I know you are an Apostle, a pastor and a teacher ...watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry....{2 TIMOTHY 4:5} ...Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth... {2 TIMOTHY 2:15}. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. {2 TIMOTHY 2:4}. The Apostle Paul was always encouraging the Saints to ...press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus... {PHILIPPIANS 3:14}., to ... Fight the good fight of faith... {1 TIMOTHY 6:12}. Satan does his best to see that the Saints miss the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and he does this through sermons preached from the pulpits of Pergamos today! What is the purpose of this church age? Ask most pastors and the sons of God this question and see if they know the answer. The fact is that most Saints don't have a clue what God's purpose is for this church age. The purpose of this church age is simply spelled out by James in ACTS 15:14 where he notes: *Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.*

Some of these people will go on to have God's best, and they will take the place that was previously occupied by Satan before iniquity was found in him. EZEKIEL 28:11-19 is a lamentation of the king of Tyre, but the language of this text goes beyond the king of Tyre to Satan, the inspirer of all the wicked that Tyre did especially unto the children of Israel, God's chosen people. One of the more famous daughters of one of the kings of Tyre was Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, {1 KINGS 16:31}, whose name means "with Baal." (In your mind note these references and connections to Satan, and see how this applies unto the churches of Pergamos and Thyatira especially). EZEKIEL 28:11 *Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 12 Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. 13 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. 16 By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God; and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. 17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. 18 Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. 19 All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.

Note in the above portion some of the qualities that were formerly attributed unto Satan, that are now found given unto the Bride of Christ. Satan once had a lofty position in the heavens, and now that high position is reserved for the Bride of Christ as she will rule and reign with Him. The precious stones given unto Satan are now mentioned in REVELATION 21 in connection with the bride, the Lamb's wife. These precious stones found in nature picture the unutterable value and preciousness of Christ in the Saints unto God Himself. The cherub also pictures the full overcomers. And who could express the beauty of the Bride of Christ? The "workmanship" of the Bride of Christ is spoken of in EPHESIANS 2:10 *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.* The music that Satan should of had towards God in his tabrets and pipes, is now expressed by the Bride of Christ in her endless singing of psalms and hymns and praise of worship, and spiritual songs of grace unto our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. {See EPHESIANS 5:19 & 20}. No wonder then that Satan does his best at this time during the church age to defeat God's people, and prevent them from having God's best, and keep them from having a heavenly God inspired focus. And Satan does this in part from his throne right behind the pulpits of the church of Pergamos today! Jesus Christ the Righteous Judge knows where Satan's seat is. Jesus Christ the Righteous Judge is He who has the sharp sword with two edges, known also as The Word of God. The Word of God is what those of Pergamos are only vaguely familiar with.

One more thing about Pergamos. Pergamos also means "height or elevation." This goes right along with our thinking concerning Satan, for Satan wishes to be elevated in height upon his throne, thus distracting attention away from the throne of God, as we also noted in 2 THESSALONIANS 2 above. Satan's message from his throne right behind the pulpits of the church of Pergamos today is a simple message whose focus is on something other than having God's best. The Apostle Paul warns of such teaching calling it the "doctrines of devils" in 1 TIMOTHY 4:1. 1 TIMOTHY 4:1 *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;...* The churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia had their focus fixed upon Jesus and winning His best. The love of Jesus was first place in their lives; everything else paled by comparison. In REVELATION 2:12-17 we find the church of Pergamos has it's focus clouded by the prince and power of the air, known also as Satan, who subtly presents other things as being important. So much so that their focus, their interests, their love turns to loving other things more than Jesus, specifically worldly things, over which Satan's throne currently presides. Jesus states in MATTHEW 24:12 *And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.* The Apostle John wrote in 1 JOHN 2:15-17 these words: *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

Let's conclude our thoughts on "the power of Satan" and his influence over this present evil world by recalling Jesus statement of JOHN 16:33 *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.* Do you realize that the full overcomer will be able to say the very same thing? *I have overcome the world.* There is only one way this can ever be accomplished in our lives, and that is by having our complete focus upon

Him, allowing the Holy Ghost to guide and direct our fore ordained footsteps, to 100% yield our lives over to Him, and to love His appearing! Consider these words found in JOHN 16:33 above also: *...be of good cheer...* . This phrase is only found in seven scriptures, once again pointing us to SPIRITUAL COMPLETION, or SPIRITUAL PERFECTION. The full overcomer will too *...be of good cheer...* .

We started down the path of examining “the power of Satan” and his influence over this present evil world by probing the depths of Jesus statement to Saul of Tarsus in ACTS 26:18, where He told him that he was being sent unto the Gentiles *...to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God...* . We noted in ACTS 26:18 that there are two turning points mentioned; the turning the Gentiles *...from darkness to light;*... and turning them *...from the power of Satan unto God...* . We looked a little into the power of darkness that Jesus dealt with on the cross, noting that the power of darkness equated unto the power of Satan. Of course Jesus is Light, and Light always overpowers darkness. We also examined the fact that the power Satan has is also ordained of God! Recall that ROMANS 13:1 in part tells us: *...For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.* Furthermore we Christians should also be very mindful of the fact of the truth of 1 JOHN 4:4 *...greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.* Additionally we should be very aware that none of us by ourselves are any match against “the power of Satan,” and if he tempted Jesus, he won’t be afraid to tempt any of us either. This is one of the reasons Jesus sent the Apostle Paul to us, especially to us Gentiles *...to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God...* . This is also why the Holy Ghost inspired Paul to write of the warfare of the believer in EPHESIANS 6. EPHESIANS 6:10 *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 phrase “power of God” is used in thirteen New Testament scriptures, however it is not found in our text of ACTS 26:18. Our text reads of turning the Gentiles *...from the power of Satan unto God...* . The “power of God” is infinite, limitless, and perhaps to a quick reader is even implied here, but let’s stop and think about this for a moment. We have just noted that “the power of Satan” is a God given liberty, which power God gave him as a tool to aid in the accomplishing God’s will and purpose. So then it goes without saying that the far greater, exceeding infinite power is Almighty God, but God is so much more than just the greatest power. God is just, God is pure, God is mighty, God is almighty, God is love, God is merciful, God is higher than we can imagine, God is deeper than we can probe, God is wider than east is from west, and north is from south, God is greater than our heart, and God knoweth all things, created all things, and without Him nothing exists. Simply put, God can not be measured in any way, shape, or form that we are familiar with, but He can be worshipped. *God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth...* JOHN 4:24 tells us. This then is the essence of what Jesus was telling Saul of Tarsus here on the road to Damascus, that he was going to be used to turn the Gentiles *...from the power of Satan unto God...* so that they (we) too could worship and serve the true and living God; the same God who raised Christ from the dead; the same God who sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved; the same God who gave us His Holy Spirit; the same God who called us to His kingdom and glory; the same God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that we could worship the same God who gives us an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, among all them which are

sanctified. Magnified thanks be to God for sending the Apostle Paul to us, to turn the Gentiles *...from the power of Satan unto God...*

All throughout history there were Gentiles who truly worshipped God, who turned *...from the power of Satan unto God...* Was Able a Jew? No, yet he had a tremendous testimony of faith, which is expressed like this in HEBREWS 11:4 *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.* Enoch wasn't a Jew either, but he walked with God, and God translated him first of all men as a testimony to us what God can do with men who diligently seek Him. Noah too was a man of faith, and a Gentile, who found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and prepared an ark before the days of rain, and was saved with his house while all flesh was destroyed upon the earth. These Gentile men of faith all worshipped and served the living and true God, much like the Gentile Thessalonians Paul wrote about in his first epistle. 1 THESSALONIANS 1:9 *For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; 10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*

Another Gentile who in Old Testament times turned from the power of Satan unto God was Rahab of JOSHUA 2 and 6 fame. In thinking of her life we get another "enlargement" (one of the meanings of her name) of the grace of God, and His infinite, and limitless love to those who worship Him in spirit, and in truth. Rahab had witnessed the power of God manifest through the children of Israel all her life. When the spies from Joshua came to her house in Jericho we read her testimony unto them starting in JOSHUA 2:9 *And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. 10 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. 11 And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.* Obviously she believed God; knew that *...he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath;*... that He had mightily delivered the children of Israel from the land of Egypt where they had been in bondage of the most powerful nation then on earth for more than four hundred years; and how God had kept the Israelites alive in the wilderness for the last forty years. For herself, and her family, Rahab *...turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God...* just like the Thessalonian Saints we read about in 1 THESSALONIANS 1:9 above. Rahab is even found mentioned as one of the hero's of faith in HEBREWS 11. Beyond that she married a prominent Jew named Salmon, and became the Mother of Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David, and through Rahab's lineage came our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! Thus we have proven to us once again what can take place in just one Gentile life when they are turned *...from the power of Satan unto God...*

Now imagine the number of Gentiles from this church age who have turned *...from the power of Satan unto God...* and have been born again by accepting Jesus as their own personal Saviour, having become members of Christ's church, known also as the body of Christ. Then think of that small rib portion of church age Saints redeemed to God by Christ's blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, who will be forever known as the Bride of Christ, and realize the importance of what Jesus was telling Saul of Tarsus here in ACTS 26:18 about being sent 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.* Such words went way beyond Saul of Tarsus understanding at this time, but were made real to him as he yielded his life over to God, and began his Christian walk of faith in the fore ordained footsteps laid out for him before the foundation of this world. These words spoken by Jesus unto Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus led him down the path where he could later teach, and write about pressing...toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus... PHILIPPIANS 3:14. And essentially *...the high calling of God in Christ Jesus...* was

introduced to Saul of Tarsus here in ACTS 26:18, a thought that we will see as we continue to examine these important words of Jesus spoken to Saul of Tarsus here in ACTS 26:18.

We have just examined at length two things that the Gentiles were to be taught by the Saul of Tarsus to turn from, and unto: (1) from darkness to light, and (2) from the power of Satan unto God. Next we are going to consider two things that Saul of Tarsus was to teach the Gentiles that they were to receive by faith in Jesus Christ: (1) the forgiveness of sins, and (2) an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in Jesus Christ.

Notice first how Jesus states *...that they may receive...* Webster defines "receive" as to take, get, acquire, or accept something given, offered or sent. "Receive" as used in our text means for someone to take, to claim, to procure, for one's self, lay hold upon, take possession of, to appropriate to one's self, to apprehend for one's self that which has been freely offered! Just how hard is it to accept something eternally good for you, a bought and paid for gift freely given, freely offered, and freely sent to you? Stated another way, how hard is it to receive a gift from God? Consider the importance of the following words found in ROMANS 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* How hard is it to receive the free gift of redemption that is in Jesus Christ? ROMANS 3:23-26 explains it like this: *23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* ACTS 10:43 in part tells us *...that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.* Salvation is an easy gift to receive, and a gift that must be received with the heart. ROMANS 10:10 states it like this: *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

Note again the words of ROMANS 3:24 how the believer is *...justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...* The word "freely," which is noted in ROMANS 3:24, and was used above to show a hint about the grace of God, and the importance of receiving what He has given us, is found seventeen times in scripture. Seventeen is the number having to do with VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS. Thus the word "freely" points to the victory Christians have over the power of Satan through their faith and belief in Christ Jesus. The word "freely" pointing us to VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS reaches way beyond what we could even ask or think about, as noted in ROMANS 8:32 *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* Again ROMANS 8:32 asks the believer *...how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* Have you ever asked yourself this question? Have you ever asked yourself the following questions: Who am I that He loved me so? How can I please Him? How far can I go with God? How can I have God's best? The answer to such questions takes us back to the very same points Jesus was beginning to reveal unto Saul of Tarsus in ACTS 26:18 where Jesus stated that Saul of Tarsus was being sent unto the Gentiles *...that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.* ACTS 10:43 (speaking of Jesus) states it this way: *To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.* The simple answer to all these questions is to only believe. JOHN 1:12 & 13 states it this way: *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.*

Jesus, the epitome of SPIRITUAL PERFECTION, uses the words "may receive" here in ACTS 26:18, a phrase found exactly seven times in scripture: seven being the number that points to SPIRITUAL PERFECTION and SPIRITUAL COMPLETION. "May receive" is only used this one time in the Bible in reference to "forgiveness of sins." Christ's SPIRITUAL PERFECTION further is manifest in the word "forgiveness," which is used here in ACTS 26:18 one of the seven times the word "forgiveness" is found in scripture. PSALMS 130:4 speaks of "forgiveness" this way: *But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.* Seven times in our King James scripture we also find the



phrase "remission of sins," a phrase that also means to us "forgiveness of sins." ACTS 10:43 records Peter's words spoken unto the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius concerning Jesus Christ: *To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.* Here in ACTS 26:18 Jesus was telling Saul of Tarsus that he was being sent unto the Gentiles for the very same purpose, *...that they may receive forgiveness of sins.*

(Interestingly the words "whosoever believeth" that we just read in ACTS 10:43, is a phrase also found exactly seven times in scripture, pointing out once again the SPIRITUAL PERFECTION and SPIRITUAL COMPLETION found in "whosoever believeth" in Christ Jesus. JOHN 3:15 *That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.* 16 *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.* JOHN 12:46 *I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.* ACTS 10:43 *To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.* ROMANS 9:33 & 10:11 *...Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.* 1 JOHN 5:1 *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.)*

The SPIRITUAL COMPLETION found in the words "may receive" of our text in ACTS 26:18 also points to the grace that is in Christ Jesus, manifest on the cross of Calvary, that being the "forgiveness of sins." The phrase "forgiveness of sins" is found in five (GRACE) scriptures. Here they are: (1) ACTS 5:30 *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.* 31 *Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.* (2) ACTS 13:38 *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: 39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.* (3) 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.* (4) EPHESIANS 1:7 *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.* (5) COLOSSIANS 1:14 *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.*

Since according to ROMANS 3:23 *...all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God...* then all sinners, no matter their status in life, need "forgiveness of sins." As we notice in our text of ACTS 26:18 the "forgiveness of sins" is something we can receive; "forgiveness of sins" is something we need to receive; "forgiveness of sins" is something we must receive in order to be saved; and "forgiveness of sins" is something we may receive for free. To receive "forgiveness of sins" is the best free deal ever offered throughout the history of mankind. Millions of whosoever's that believeth through out the centuries have appropriated their opportunity to freely receive "forgiveness of sins." Have you?

This brings us to the second part of what Jesus was telling Saul of Tarsus that the Gentiles were to receive here in ACTS 26:18, that being an *...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.* "The forgiveness of sins" is not an inheritance of a believer. "Forgiveness of sins" is a "free gift given of God to undeserving, guilty men, when they repent, and believe the Gospel," is how Brother Copley stated it. None of us inherit "forgiveness of sins." "Forgiveness of sins" comes by putting our faith and trust in Jesus Christ, and believing that He alone died on the cross to save sinners, and rose again three days later to prove the resurrection power of God, to live forever more our eternal Lord and Saviour. After one receives the "forgiveness of sins" that Jesus came to earth and died for, then and only then can this believer receive an *...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.*

We have spent much time so far reviewing the importance of these words of Jesus, spoken to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus, found in ACTS 26:16-18, and have noted how these words are recorded in one sentence in our King James version of Scripture. Obviously this is a very high water mark portion of scripture, and one of the high lights of the whole book of ACTS. This last part of ACTS 26:18 (*...they may receive...*

*...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me...*) ranks right up there as one of the more important statements found in scripture. This statement goes way over the heads of most preaching today. This statement took Paul to depths that were not shown to Peter. Recall in ACTS 10 Peter for the first time preached unto the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius, where he told them of Jesus and the forgiveness of sins, stating unto them in verse 43 *...that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins*. Suddenly then the Gentile believers at the house of Cornelius received the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with tongues, which was indeed an astonishment to Peter, and those Jews who were with him. {Study ACTS 10.} Peter never told those in the house of Cornelius of receiving *...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in...* Jesus Christ, nor was this a doctrine given to Peter to teach. This statement of ACTS 26:18 gave Paul the doctrines he was to teach, and reveal unto the Gentiles, which included *...the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints...* found mentioned in EPHESIANS 1:18. Hopefully by the time we get through examining these final word of ACTS 26:18 we all will have a deeper, and clearer understanding of what it means to have *...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me*. And no wonder it took close to twenty-five years of walking with Jesus before Paul could again repeat Jesus words that were spoken unto him on the road to Damascus.

Certainly on the road to Damascus Saul of Tarsus couldn't grasp, or appreciate the full message that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was introducing in this one sentence. Nor on that day would Saul of Tarsus comprehend how he, with a Pharisee upbringing, was going to deal with Gentiles in the first place. And with his legal law abiding upbringing, the concept of being saved by grace, and living a life by faith instead of by works just wasn't yet in his repertoire. Thus Saul of Tarsus when on the road to Damascus couldn't yet digest the message he was to bring to the Gentiles of receiving *...forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Jesus* until after he received the Holy Ghost, as was taught by revelation of Jesus Christ the doctrines which were being introduced to him on the road to Damascus. We can only imagine the excitement in Jesus' voice as he spoke these words to Saul of Tarsus, that the Gentiles *...may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me*. To my way of thinking, this is the highlight statement of verses 16-18.

As we begin to examine the thought of receiving *...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in...* Jesus Christ, let me once again quote something about inheritance from Brother Copley's study book of ACTS, which we have twice visited before in this study. {Review pages 369 & 370, and 657 & 658 of this study.} "There is an inheritance for believers. Salvation from sin is not the inheritance. Salvation is God's free gift to undeserving, guilty men, when they repent, and believe the Gospel. A rich young ruler came to Jesus, thinking to inherit eternal life by doing something -- LUKE 18. The Lord showed him at once what he would have to do, if he would gain it by his own works. He was very sorrowful; for he was very rich. He would not trade his wealth for the lasting riches of eternal life. No, he would not if he could -- *"the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God"* -- 1 CORINTHIANS 2:14. He could not if he would -- *"for by grace are ye saved thru faith; not of works, lest any man should boast"* -- EPHESIANS 2:8 & 9. Jesus proceeded to show him and the disciples that salvation is not obtained by inheritance, but by faith in Himself, the world's Sin-bearer. By faith in Jesus we become children of God (JOHN 1:12 & 13); *"and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together"* -- ROMANS 8:17. Children justly inherit, or fall heir to, their parents' riches. Likewise God's children are His rightful inheritors. But parents divide their possessions to their children usually upon certain deserving conditions, as good behavior etc. Likewise God's children will come into the divine inheritance upon certain prescribed scriptural conditions. Sinners are saved by faith upon the merit of Christ, because of His death in their behalf; but believers will obtain an inheritance because of their own merit, by divine enabling, of course. If this is not the truth, why Paul's exhortation to give heed to the Word of grace? (ACTS 20:32). If eternal life is the inheritance; if believers shall all obtain an inheritance by the fact only of their being saved, there is no meaning to the Apostles words here. Observe

closely that the joint heirship with Christ hereafter, depends upon joint heirship with Him here. Being glorified together with Jesus, depends upon our suffering and groaning in fellowship with Him on earth. ROMANS 8:17-39 teaches that, or nothing at all. Study also 2 TIMOTHY 2:9-14."

"Let no Christian worker imagine that he will inherit alike with others, and be rewarded on a par with others, no matter how he lives, or labors, or what he teaches. Let no believer think that he can live after the flesh, and expect an inheritance and a reward after the Spirit. Impossible! Unreasonable! Unjust! Unscriptural! Children cannot remain dwarfs and receive an inheritance. They would not appreciate and enjoy it, if they did receive it. Just so it is in the spiritual. Neither can dwarfs be of much use in service; therefore, for them there is little reward. "Be not deceived. God is not mocked. Whatsoever any man soweth, that shall he also reap." (GALATIANS 6:7.)

"So what is the inheritance someone may ask. REVELATION 21:7 answers the question in a comprehensive way, giving also the chief condition upon which the inheritance is obtained. REVELATION 21:7 *He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.* There is a present inheritance for those who are born again. All that the death of Christ has purchased, as for example, divine healing for the body and the anointing with the Spirit. The latter is the earnest of our inheritance in its fulness --EPHESIANS 1:14. Through faith and patience, saints inherit the promises -- HEBREWS 6:12. Now if you wish to know what is the full inheritance of the Church, study Paul's epistles. If you would know the rewards of the saints, study also the seven letters to the seven churches in Asia --REVELATION 2 and 3. In those various writings, we learn also upon what conditions both will be obtained." (End of quote from Brother Copley.)

That is a lot of truth, and information to digest all at once, and if you notice most of Brother Copley's above references comes from Paul's gospel. So let's go through some history that Paul knew, and see how it was that the Holy Ghost revealed these truths unto the Apostle Paul.

Recall that as a Pharisee Paul knew Old Testament scripture, and he probably knew it better than most all of his peers. During the course of a year in the Jewish Sabbath day services, all of the Old Testament scripture would be read out loud in the synagogue one time. Thus in the course of any 52 week period all of the Old Testament scripture would have been read aloud in Sabbath Day services, this in part was due to the fact that so few copies of the Old Testament scripture existed. Furthermore Paul had been taught the law at the feet of Gamaliel, an expert of the law, so obviously Paul knew in his head Old Testament scripture in detail like very few of his peers. Obviously too Paul knew Hebrew history, having been taught the scripture from his youth. His whole problem was that he didn't know Jesus until he met His Grace and Truth face to face on the road to Damascus. The very second Paul got saved his scriptural upbringing took on a whole new Light. And after receiving the Holy Ghost some three days later, Old Testament scripture became even clearer to him. Thus the Lord used Paul's knowledge of the Old Testament scriptures to further reveal Himself unto him. And if you study all of Paul's writing you will see how often he quotes Old Testament scripture in making a New Testament doctrinal point. Such is the case in his learning about how to teach the Gentiles *...that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me...* ACTS 26:18.

We get a good picture in the Old Testament of how the Lord was able to use the life of Abraham to illustrate to Paul doctrinal facts about justification by faith, inheritance, living by faith, and looking for a heavenly city, all facts that Paul was later able to write about. To see how this is, let's go back to GENESIS 12. By the time of GENESIS 12 Abraham had come out of Ur of the Chaldees to a land that the Lord promised he would show him. GENESIS 12:1 *Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.* (This was yet while Abraham was still known as Abram, whose name meant "father is exalted," or "high father." Abram's name was changed to Abraham by God later in GENESIS 17:5, and Abraham means "father of a great multitude," or "father of many nations.") We read in GENESIS

12:7 And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him. This is the first mention of the concept of inheritance in scripture. Note that these words were spoken by the Lord unto Abram before he was a father, before he was called Abraham, before he was known as the "father of a great multitude," or the "father of many nations."

But Abraham didn't continue to dwell in the land of Canaan because of a famine, and in the rest of GENESIS 12 we find Abraham going down into Egypt, and being sent away from there by Pharaoh. In GENESIS 13:12 we again find Abraham dwelling in the land of Canaan as was previously noted above in GENESIS 12:1-7. GENESIS 13:12 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, ...14 And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: 15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. 16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. 17 Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee. What we have just read is summarized by Paul in HEBREWS 11:8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

Some time passes, and even though God had promised Abraham in GENESIS 12:7 and 13:15 above to give this ...land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever,... Abraham realized that he had no heirs of his own seed. Thus we read in GENESIS 15:2 And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? 3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. 4 And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. 5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. 6 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

Some things we should note here that are foundational doctrinal principles revealed unto the Apostle Paul. Abraham was promised an inheritance, which was to be passed on to his heirs, and he was promised this before he even had an heir. Never the less Abraham, though childless, ...believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness. Three times in his letters to Gentile believers Paul referenced the facts of GENESIS 15:6. In ROMANS 4:3 Paul writes: For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Again in ROMANS 4:22 writes concerning Abraham's faith in believing God for an heir: And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Then in GALATIANS chapters 3 & 4 Paul has another long broad discussion about the faith of Abraham, and quotes again from the facts of GENESIS 15:6, stating in GALATIANS 3:6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Of course this also brings to mind the importance of what is said in HEBREWS 11:6 about faith and believing God: But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Abraham had such faith.

Back to the story of Abraham in GENESIS. GENESIS 17:1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. 2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. 3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, 4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. 5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. 6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. 7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. This in a nut shell is the promise God made to Israel, Abraham being the grandfather of Jacob, also known as Israel. GENESIS 17:19 confirms that this covenant

will continue through his seed in Isaac: And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. ...21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.

Isaac was born unto Abraham and Sarah as promised by God, and in GENESIS 21:12 we read these words spoken by God unto Abraham: ...for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. Years later the Lord appears unto Isaac in GENESIS 26:1, where we read: And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar. 2 And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: 3 Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father; 4 And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; 5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws. Later in GENESIS 26:24 we again read of the Lord speaking unto Isaac: And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.

Unto Isaac and Rebekah the twins Esau and Jacob were born. You can study for yourself how Jacob came to get the birthright that belonged to Esau. After Jacob got the birthright we read the following account in GENESIS 28:1 And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. 2 Arise, go to Padanaram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother. 3 And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; 4 And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham. 5 And Isaac sent away Jacob: and he went to Padanaram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother. Then during Jacob's journey to Padanaram, one night Jacob had a dream, which is recorded for us in GENESIS 28:12 And he dreamed, and beheld a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. 13 And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; 14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

In GENESIS 32:28 Jacob's name was changed to Israel. We again read this in GENESIS 35:9 And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him. 10 And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. 11 And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; 12 And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.

Once again what we have just read is summarized by Paul in two verses of HEBREWS 11. HEBREWS 11:8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:...

By the time of GENESIS 48 Jacob is old, and dying in the land of Egypt under the care of Joseph. The following discourse is found in GENESIS 48:3 And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, 4 And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an

everlasting possession. 5 And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine. 6 And thy issue, which thou begettest after them, shall be thine, and shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance.

Now again Paul knew these stories, having been taught them from his youth in his Pharisee upbringing. On the road to Damascus Jesus had told Paul that he was to teach the Gentiles about receiving...forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Yet Paul only really knew at that time about the earthly inheritance that was Abraham's. As time went on the Holy Ghost showed Paul spiritual things that were also revealed unto Abraham, that also pertain to the Gentiles who have faith like Abraham had. For example we again turn to GALATIANS 3, where we read: 6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. 7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. 8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. 9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

Shortly after writing the GALATIANS, Paul penned his letter to the ROMANS. Both of these epistles contain significant information concerning Abraham. We just read in GALATIANS 3:7 ...that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. Paul expounds upon this thought in ROMANS 4. We quoted this from ROMANS 4 in the discussion above referencing GENESIS 15:6: ...Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Paul continues his discussion of the faith of Abraham in ROMANS 4, and in verse 9 we read: ...for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. Paul then goes on to note that Abraham had faith to believe God over four hundred years before the law was even given, and before the covenant of circumcision was given him. ROMANS 4:11-13 tells us: And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: 12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised. Note, and pay careful attention to Paul's teaching here, for in comparing GALATIANS 3:7 and ROMANS 4:12 we find that Gentiles who believe God, and are known as those which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham, who is found in these texts to forever be known as father of the faithful, and in ROMANS 4:16 Paul writes...of Abraham; who is the father of us all. ROMANS 4:13 continues: For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. GALATIANS 3:16 expounds upon this thought, stating: Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. Then GALATIANS 3:29 concludes: And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

We have just look at several scriptures pertaining to inheritance, and we need to connect some dots here (so to speak) before we move on. All Greek words that translate into our English "inheritance" or "heir(s)" are not created equal, and we need to place the correct value on each one. Our text of ACTS 26:18 speaks of an ...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in... Jesus Christ. Here the word "inheritance" applies in the broadest sense to all believers, and the Greek word here translated "inheritance" comes from the Greek noun kleros {klay'-ros} (number 2819 in the Strong's Greek Concordance), breaks down to mean an object used in casting or drawing lots, which was either a pebble, or a potsherd, or a bit of wood, and is usually translated "lot" in scripture. In ACTS 26:18 kleros references that allotted portion of eternal possessions that is parceled out as in an inheritance to all the believers in Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour. Next we find a Greek word nomos {nom'-os}, (number 3551 in the Strong's Greek Concordance), which means to parcel out. The Greek word nomos {nom'-os} is combined with kleros to form kleronomos {klay-ron-om'-os}, (number 2818 in the Strong's Greek Concordance), and speaks to an inheritance that we as a son of God



will have in eternal salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. Essentially kleros (2819), and kleronomos (2818) carry the same meaning to us, though kleronomos builds upon kleros. Kleronomos is the Greek word "heir" found in ROMANS 4:13, and translated "heirs" in GALATIANS 3:29 above is found in fourteen New Testament scriptures, and the number fourteen points to DELIVERANCE or SALVATION. With this thought in mind let's pay attention to what HEBREWS 11:7 says: *By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.* We see here that Noah too believed God, and his faith was counted to him for righteousness, and that he and his family were delivered from the flood that destroyed all flesh and men who moved upon the earth, and that they obtained about an eternal ...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in... Christ Jesus. {Study GENESIS 7:21}.

Now let's take what we have just learned one step further. We have just read in our discussion above that the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have an inheritance, but Abraham, through faith, looked far beyond this earthly inheritance. Thus Paul wrote about an ...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in... Christ Jesus in a little more detail in the following account found in HEBREWS 11. HEBREWS 11:8 *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. 11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. 12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. 15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. 16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.*

The inheritors, the heirs with Abraham spoken of in HEBREWS 11:9 above, take us to another higher level of meaning of kleros (2819), and kleronomos (2818), which we discussed above. The phrase ...the heirs with him... spoken of in HEBREWS 11:9 adds the Greek word sun {soon} (4862 in the Strong's Greek Concordance) to kleronomos. Sun {soon} is a primary preposition denoting close union, and in simplest terms means: with or together. When sun {soon} is found used with another word, such as kleronomos, it brings completeness to that word. The end result gives us the Greek word sunkleronomos, sometimes written as sugkleronomos {soong-klay-ron-om'-os}, whose meaning elevates the word inheritance to it's highest levels. Sugkleronomos {soong-klay-ron-om'-os} is number 4789 in the Strong's Greek Concordance, and is only used four times in scripture. Sugkleronomos translates to "heirs with him" in HEBREWS 11:9; "heirs together" in 1 PETER 3:7; "fellowheirs" in EPHESIANS 3:6, and "joint-heirs with Christ" in ROMANS 8:17. We will look at ROMANS 8:17 in a moment and see how all believers won't be "joint-heirs with Christ" even though this provision is made for them during this church age. Before we get to ROMANS 8:17 let me give you the most profound, and complete meaning of the Greek word sugkleronomos, which is joint-heir, or co-inheritor as of a wife with her husband! Our thinking here is in the light of eternity. There will be a Bride of Christ, who will have made herself ready by yielding unto Him while running her race course here on earth. This ultimately is the high calling of God in Christ Jesus that was given Paul to teach unto the Gentiles about their ...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me... (ACTS 26:18), which subject was initially unfolded unto him while on the road to Damascus. Yet now we see that there is no way Paul, then known as Saul of Tarsus, could have grasped the

full meaning of what Jesus was telling him while on the road to Damascus. Most Christians today still don't the depths of what we are showing here.

Perhaps Paul's understanding of the depths to the meaning of an *...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me...* (ACTS 26:18), is best found explained in ROMANS 8:17 where Paul addresses the sons of God. ROMANS 8:17 then explains degrees of heir-ship. ROMANS 8:17 *And if children, then heirs* {kleronomos (2818)}; *heirs* {kleronomos (2818)} of God, and *joint-heirs* {sugkleronomos 4789} with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. We see here that there are heirs, and that there are joint-heirs with Christ. A joint-heir is a fellow heir, a heir together, a heir with, or a joint participant with some other heir or heirs. In this case we are discussing joint-heirship with Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. HEBREWS 1:1 & 2 tells us that Jesus Christ has been appointed heir of all things by God. 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* {kleronomos (2818)} of all things, by whom also he made the worlds. As spoken of here "heir of all things" doesn't leave out anything that is God's. In other words a *...joint-heir with Christ...* will be someone who shares with Christ Jesus His heirship of all things appointed to Him by God, which doesn't leave out anything that is God's. This someone who shares with Christ Jesus His heirship of all things appointed to Him by God, called here in ROMANS 8:17 a *...joint-heir with Christ...* will actually be an elite group of sugkleronomos Saints collectively known as the Bride of Christ, the full overcomers. This makes sense once you realize that husbands and wives in normal healthy marriages share equally ownership of all their things. Since Jesus Christ has been *...appointed heir of all things...* His Bride will be joint-heir of all things.

The sugkleronomos joint-heirs with Christ then have a far wider in scope *...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in...* Jesus because they have drawn the closest to Him, and apprehended His best by having Abraham like faith, which enabled Abraham to achieve impossible results by believing in God. The sugkleronomos Saints inheritance is a result of being willing to *...suffer with him...* as is also noted in ROMANS 8:17 *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.* The Bride of Christ will be glorified together with Jesus because she was willing to suffer with Him. What does it mean to *...suffer with....* Jesus? This thought is expressed in ROMANS 8:17, so we must know what it means, especially if we ever expect to be a sugkleronomos joint-heir with Christ. Suffering with Christ simply means to acknowledge the fact that God has planned for us a different path than we ourselves would choose. His pathway is a better way, and yet it is not a trial free nor suffering free course. To go down life pathway as a full overcomer must do means to follow in the steps of the Old Testament worthies of faith, all of who walked their lives by faith, Abraham like faith, which enabled Abraham to achieve impossible results by believing in God. Not all Christians have such faith, nor want such faith, perceiving that life is much easier by trusting in the things we can see, rather in putting our faith, and trust, and confidence in believing God to do the seemingly impossible. HEBREWS 11:1 states: *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* Jesus as a man had such faith, and Jesus as a man suffered much too. A capsule of what Jesus suffered while here on earth is found in ISAIAH 53 where we read of Jesus being *...despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief...* (verse 3), *...stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted...* (verse 4), *...he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities...* (verse 5), *...the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all...* (verse 6), *...He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,...* *...he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter,...* (verse 7), *...He was taken from prison and from judgment... he was cut off out of the land of the living...* (verse 8), *...and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors...* (verse 12). And after all of this God offers us the opportunity to be *...joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.* The only way a Son of God can become a joint-heir with Christ, is to be willing to suffer with him. The Apostle

Paul re-emphasizes this point in that often misunderstood scripture of 2 TIMOTHY 2:12; *If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.* Brother Hill has often emphasized the truth of this statement by pointing out the fact that Paul is telling Timothy about the concept of suffering with Christ as a good soldier, so Paul encourages: Timothy if we suffer with Jesus Christ, we shall also reign with Him, however if we in our hearts deny Him the right to suffer with Him, then He has no choice but to deny us the right of joint-heirship with Him. This has nothing to do with the fact of ones salvation, but has everything to do with living lives of faith, and going on to have Gods best in our lives. All Christians are heirs of God, but not all Christians are joint-heirs with Christ, for not all Christians are willing to suffer with Christ Jesus, and this is what ROMANS 8:17 is pointing out. And this thought was first introduced to Paul on the road to Damascus where Jesus told him that he was being sent unto the Gentiles to teach them about an ...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me... (ACTS 26:18).

We just went to great lengths to show the meaning of sugkleronomos joint-heir inheritance that the Apostle Paul explained to us through the life of Abraham. We also referenced many scriptures that the Apostle Paul wrote from ROMANS 4, GALATIANS 3, and HEBREWS 11 concerning heirs, and heirship with Paul using the life of Abraham to expound his thoughts concerning an ...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in... Jesus Christ. Additionally in studying more about sugkleronomos joint-heir inheritance we find the Apostle Paul expounding upon a theme of the promise of eternal inheritance by faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, {study HEBREWS 9:15}, and Paul once again used the life of Abraham to illustrate this point, stating in HEBREWS 6:12 *That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. 13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, 14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.* Paul took this thought one step further when he spoke in HEBREWS 11 of the land of promise that sugkleronomos joint-heir inheritance that Isaac and Jacob had with Abraham, and how it was that Abraham looked for a heavenly city. HEBREWS 11:9 & 10 once again records it like this: *By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the (sugkleronomos) heirs with him of the same promise: 10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

That's a pretty bold and remarkable statement we find here in HEBREWS 11:10 of how Abraham ...looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. How was the Apostle Paul able to write such a fact? Obviously by the inspiration, and revelation of the Holy Ghost! Paul also wrote some other facts that weren't specifically noted in the Old Testament when he wrote in 2 TIMOTHY 3:8 of Jannes and Jambres being the sorcerers of Egypt who withstood Moses in his dealing with Pharaoh, {study also EXODUS 7:11 & 12, 22; 8:7, 18 & 19; and 9:11}. Keep in mind that Paul was taught the history of Israel by the best teachers of his day, which included Gamaliel, who may have spoke of Jannes and Jambres in teaching about Moses' dealing with Pharaoh. Back to HEBREWS 11, Paul here was making note in verse 10 that Abraham ...looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Paul was talking about the lives of faith that the Old Testament full overcomers had as he wrote HEBREWS 11. And one of the deeper points he was making in going through there lives of faith was that their faith in God took them farther, and higher than even they could imagine. Paul was really noting that there were no limits, by faith, in what God could do. God took simple common people, who by their faith in God were able to do impossible things. God took some of these very same people and made them royalty even while they were here on earth. Men like Joseph, and Moses, and David, and Daniel just to mention a few. Through the lineage of Sarah, and Rahab, and Ruth, icons of faith themselves, came the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, that being Jesus Christ Himself. Such then was the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all who believe, according to ROMANS 4:16. So let's read this again in HEBREWS 11:9 & 10 & 16 of the faith of Abraham: *9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the (sugkleronomos) heirs with him of the same promise: 10 For he*

looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. ...16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

Now here is where, and how we fit in. The sugkleronomos joint-heirs with Christ Saints then identify with Abraham also in the fact that they too ...*desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city...* HEBREWS 11:16. It is recorded like this in REVELATION 3:12 written unto the Philadelphian sugkleronomos full overcomers: *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.* New Jerusalem is further explained in REVELATION 21:2, which reads: *2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.* We will study these verse a little closer to see where the sugkleronomos joint-heirs with Christ fit in with their ...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in... Jesus (ACTS 26:18).

To see this it is paramount for us to fully understand what is said here in REVELATION 21:2, and what is not said in this verse. Once we get a clear picture of what is stated here, this city that Abraham looked for, and saw by his eyes of faith becomes evident. REVELATION 21:2 doesn't say that new Jerusalem is the bride of Christ, though many people read it that way. What is said here in REVELATION 21:2 is that the new Jerusalem came down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. There really are two key words that unlock our understanding of this verse, the first being "adorned." In a formal wedding the bride has all sorts of adornments, most of which are other people, such as brides maids, attendants for the groom, flower girls, a ring bearer, ushers, all of whom are never really used to take attention away from the bride, but rather are there to compliment her. They are her adornments (if you will). Such is the new Jerusalem composed of many people, all Saints of God, but the center of attention of this city is the Bride of Christ. PSALMS 45:9-14 also describes the same scene, and the brides' adornment being people. PSALMS 45:9 *Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir. 10 Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; 11 So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. 12 And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour. 13 The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. 14 She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.*

The second key word that further opens our understanding of this city Abraham looked for, that John calls new Jerusalem in REVELATION 21:2, is the word "prepared." This word "prepared" is key to fully understanding the deeper meaning conveyed here. "Prepared" means: to make ready, as is also noted in REVELATION 19:7 *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.* How does the bride of Christ make herself ready? Several steps are involved in bridal preparation, in becoming Philadelphian Saints, and all Christians are not willing to be Philadelphian Saints. After being saved how many Christians are willing to yield unto Gods plan for their lives? Not all, for most have their own plans as to what is best in their life. How many Christians believe in being filled with the Holy Ghost, and speaking in other tongues as the Spirit give utterance, as is plainly taught in scripture? Not all Saints believe this doctrine. The Bride of Christ will be full of the Holy Ghost, and will have yielded unto His guidance in preparing her to be the Bride of Christ. That is the essence of what it means to be "prepared," that the Apostle John references in REVELATION 21:2 when he states: *And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.* A readied wife adorned and prepared for her husband, as will be the Bride of Christ, defines a sugkleronomos joint heir with Christ that we found alluded to in ROMANS 8:17 *And if children, then heirs {kleronomos (2818)}; heirs {kleronomos (2818)}*

of God, and joint-heirs {sugkleronomos 4789} with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. Jesus told His disciples in JOHN 14:2 & 3 that He was going to go to heaven and prepare a place for them. We have just seen a glimpse of the place he "prepared" for the Bride of Christ. What an ...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in... Jesus (ACTS 26:18)!!!

Now this is some pretty deep stuff, for sugkleronomos joint-heirship with Christ is the pinnacle of what this church age is all about. Later in REVELATION 21:23 we read of the light of the city new Jerusalem: *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.* The Bride of Christ is right there with Him, front and center on the throne joint-heir with Christ, first in line to magnify Him, and having learned to do so while suffering with Him while here on earth.

One final thought concerning Abraham and the promises he embraced by faith, which we read of in HEBREWS 11. Again HEBREWS 11:9 *By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. ...13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ...16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city. ...39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.* The "us" spoken of here references includes all of the saved throughout this church age, but really narrows down to the New Testament worthies of faith that we have spoken of here in this portion of our study, which is the sugkleronomos joint-heirs with Christ, known best as the Bride of Christ, who fully trusted in Him, and in His Holy Spirit sent guidance to help them run the race that was set before them, and obtain the best of that eternal ...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in... Christ Jesus (ACTS 26:18).

Let's return in our thinking to our text of study, and read once again Jesus words spoken unto Saul of Tarsus 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.*

In our King James version of the Bible this is one sentence. So far we have spent some fifty plus pages of notes examining this one, most important life changing sentence that Jesus spoke to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. Realize that this one sentence changed Saul of Tarsus from the religious terrorist he was to Christians, unto the beloved Apostle Paul, whose doctrines we are to follow! Note also that it took nearly twenty-five years before Paul could fully reveal the words of this sentence spoken to him by Jesus! In this one sentence we find the genesis of many of Paul's doctrines that he was to teach! Verse 18 narrows down Jesus instructions to Saul of Tarsus as to four broad subjects he was instructed to teach the Gentiles. Jesus here in verse 18 instructs Saul of Tarsus to teach the Gentiles to turn from two things of bondage, one being darkness, and the other being the power of Satan. From darkness Paul was to introduce the Gentiles to Light, that Light being Jesus Christ Himself. From the power of Satan Paul was instructed to turn the Gentiles unto God, this by salvation in Jesus Christ. Then Jesus here in verse 18 introduces Saul of Tarsus to two superior things that he was going to teach the Gentiles that they could receive for free by putting their faith, and trust in Jesus Christ. The first was the forgiveness of sins, and the second was an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in Jesus Christ. We have just spent a lot of time showing different levels of heirship that is a part of the inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in Jesus Christ, and have noted that the highest inheritance awaits the sugkleronomos joint-heir Saints, who fully yield unto the

guidance of the Holy Ghost, allowing His superior working to be accomplished, and complete in their lives. This *...inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me...* was the pinnacle of Jesus words spoken unto Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. Jesus ultimate joy will be His Bride, {study HEBREWS 12:1 & 2}, His sugkleronomos joint-heir. This brings us to His concluding words, which point back to our “inheritance” that we have spent so much time studying: *...among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.*

Let's now spend a little time discussing sanctification. The Apostle Paul spent quite a bit of time on the topic of sanctification, and we already have too in our chapter on the doctrine of separation. The subject of sanctification can be painted with a broad brush, and in general terms sanctified means to be separated unto God, which men can only enter by faith in Christ Jesus. Sanctification in general terms also means set apart for Gods use. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words differs in which Greek word is used here in ACTS 26:18 translated “sanctified” than does The Strong's Greek Concordance. Vine's shows the Greek word *hagiasmos* {hag-ee-as-mos'} (number 38 in the Strong's Greek Concordance) being used here in ACTS 26:18, meaning: “that relationship with God into which men enter by faith in Christ.” Strong's shows the Greek word *hagiazō* {hag-ee-ad'-zo}, (number 37 in the Strong's Greek Concordance) being used here in ACTS 26:18, meaning: “the setting apart of the believer for God.” Both of these Greek words derive their meaning from the Greek word *hagios* {hag'-ee-os}, (number 40 in the Strong's Greek Concordance), which the common New Testament designation equates to “Saints,” or “sanctified,” or “holy ones.” Essentially these words are interchangeable. Such terms can only apply to believers in Jesus Christ who have accepted Him into their hearts as their own personal Saviour, which is why Jesus stated it this way in ACTS 26:18 *...among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.* Thus we realize that all believers are “sanctified” by faith that is in Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. The Apostle Paul wrote it like this in 1 CORINTHIANS 1:2 *...to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:...* In GALATIANS 3:26 Paul penned: *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.* Then again back in 1 CORINTHIANS 1:30 & 31 we read: *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.* By now it should be plain that we *...are sanctified by faith that is in... Christ Jesus, and called Saints!*

Eight times the word “sanctified,” *hagiazō* {hag-ee-ad'-zo}, (number 37 in the Strong's Greek Concordance), is used in the present perfect tense. The present perfect tense in Greek corresponds to the present perfect tense in English, and describes an action which is viewed as having been completed in the past, once and for all, not ever needing to be repeated. Such a “sanctified” action was completed by Jesus Christ on the cross, once and for all, not ever needing to be repeated, as is noted by the Apostle Paul in this statement found in HEBREWS 10:10 *By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.* All believers in Jesus Christ *...are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.* The present perfect tense of sanctification is also found in the following portions of scripture. ACTS 20:32 *And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.* 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.* ROMANS 15:15 *Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, 16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.* And 1 CORINTHIANS 1:2, which we referenced above: *Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:...*

What we have just pointed out here is that all who have confessed with their mouth the Lord Jesus, and have believed in their heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, are Saints, sanctified through the truth. {Study ROMANS 10:9} In the Lord's



prayer of JOHN 17 we find Jesus praying for our sanctification: JOHN 17:14 *I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.* Our text of ACTS 26:18 puts us in notice of the fact that all believers *...are sanctified by faith that is in...* Christ Jesus, and as was pointed out in 1 CORINTHIANS 1:2 these same sanctified believers are called Saints.

There are different levels of growth in Saints, for not all Saints become sugkleronomos joint-heirs with Christ, though all Saints are sanctified by their faith in Jesus Christ. So we see how Jesus' usage of the word "sanctification" here in ACTS 26:18 points back to the word "inheritance" that we spent so much time examining earlier. The Apostle Paul devoted three chapters of his book of ROMANS expounding upon the theme of sanctification showing how we can grow into the sugkleronomos joint-heirs with Christ by fully yielding our lives to enjoy all of His sanctification. In ROMANS 6 Paul explains how our sanctified life in Christ can only grow up in Him by focusing upon three important key words: know, reckon, and yield. Study ROMANS 6 and see that the sanctified life in Christ can develop in Him by knowing that we can now walk in newness of life, no longer continuing to live our lives in sin. Knowing also that our old man is crucified with him. Furthermore we are to reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord... (verse 11). Next in ROMANS 6 we learn that we are to yield our sanctified life in Christ unto God, knowing also that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey... (verse 16). ROMANS 7 continues to expound thoughts of sanctification, and reveals the inward war within each of us, and points out the difference between being fleshly minded, and being spiritually minded. A highlight verse of ROMANS 7 is verse 4, which reads: *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.* Such will be the heart of the Bride of Christ having yielded her life fully over to the inward guidance of the Holy Ghost! ROMANS 8 expounds upon the sanctified victorious life that the Spirit filled sugkleronomos joint-heir Saint grows into, which is a life full of the power of the Holy Ghost! Nineteen times we find the word "Spirit" (capitalized) in ROMANS 8, nineteen being the number of FAITH. Recall that Jesus told Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus in ACTS 26:18 about lives *...which are sanctified by faith that is in me...* and ROMANS 8 highlights the sanctified Spirit filled life. ROMANS 8:1 notes: *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.* ROMANS 8:2 tells that the sanctified life in Christ is *...free from the law of sin and death.* ROMANS 8:4 & 5 explains that the Spirit filled sanctified Saints are empowered to *...walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.* ROMANS 8:11 expounds upon the resurrection power found in the Spirit filled sanctified believer: *But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* ROMANS 8:14-17 develops levels of growth found in sanctified Saints, from the sons of God, to children, to heirs of God, and then to full grown mature Spirit filled sugkleronomos joint-heirs with Christ. ROMANS 8:26 & 27 further states that the sanctified victorious Spirit filled Saint is a prayer warrior: *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.* ROMANS 8:28 give the sanctified Spirit filled saint further assurance to *...know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.* To this fully assured Saint is added in ROMANS 8:31 *...If God be for us, who can be against us?* And as final encouragement to the full grown sugkleronomos joint-heir Spirit filled Saints Paul wrote in ROMANS 8:35-39 that this life

that is sanctified in Christ Jesus, cannot be separated from His infinite love by tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, or death, or life, or by angels, or by principalities, or by powers, or by things present, or by things to come, nor by height, nor by depth, nor by any other thing that we could possibly ever think of.

Again ACTS 26:18 puts us in notice of the fact that all believers *...are sanctified by faith that is in...* Christ Jesus. That is all believers are separated unto God from the world by faith in Jesus Christ. We know that there are degrees of growth among them which are sanctified also as some believers apprehend more, and some much more of the word of God than do others. Thus after a fashion we see how this word "sanctified" here in verse 18 points back to the word "inheritance," and further enhances it, and helps identify those who will become the sugkleronomos joint-heirs with Christ pointed out in ROMANS 8:17.

The Apostle Paul made a very interesting point concerning sanctification in his very first epistle, that being 1 THESSALONIANS, which amplifies the statement we read above in ROMANS 15:16 *...that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.* 1 THESSALONIANS 5:23 in part states: *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly;...* . The Apostle Paul is the only writer to reference the "God of peace" in scripture, which is a reference to the Holy Ghost, found mentioned in five scriptures: ROMANS 15:33; ROMANS 16:20; PHILIPPIANS 4:9; 1 THESSALONIANS 5:23; and HEBREWS 13:20. HEBREWS 13:20 & 21 reads: *Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Thus we see it is through the power, and working of the Holy Ghost that we can be found *...perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Back to what we read in 1 THESSALONIANS 5:23 *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly;...* . The Greek word translated "wholly" here is only found this one time in scripture, and means: perfect, complete in all respects, and literally means "whole-complete," that is "through and through." {Study the Strong's Greek Concordance number 3651.} Vine's Dictionary of New Testament Words goes on to explain that Paul's usage in 1 THESSALONIANS 5:23 of the word "wholly" shows the Apostles desire here is that the sanctification of the believer may extend to every part of his being. Such will be the case with the sugkleronomos joint-heirs with Christ, who yield unto the cunning workmanship of the Holy Ghost in their, (your) lives to *...Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen...* HEBREWS 13:21. Such perfection will complete the whole group of Saints down through the ages who lived lives of faith, which is noted again in HEBREWS 11:39 & 40 -- *And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.*

Let's cover one last point found in the remarkable sentence that Jesus spoke to Saul of Tarsus on the roads 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.*

We have really went into way too much detail in examining this one sentence, but also at the same time have barely scratched the surface in what is contained herein. Saul of Tarsus, the Apostle Paul, as we have noted many times before, must have spent hours pondering the very same things we have discussed in our detailed research of this one sentence. Which part of this sentence struck him first we are not told. Two words that were spoken near the end of this sentence may have pricked this law abiding Pharisee's heart the most. These two words: "by faith." "By faith," what a foreign concept to a legalist, who had just asked Jesus: *"What shall I do, Lord?"* (ACTS 22:10).

The Pharisee life style was a life of "do's" and "don'ts," so such a question was only a natural reaction to him. But when Jesus said the words "*by faith that is in me,*" the words "by faith" put Saul of Tarsus on notice of the change that had just taken place in his heart. How many hours Paul pondered Jesus' words "by faith" we are not told, nor would he have kept track of such a thing, however scripture plainly tells us that Paul, of all the gospel writers, understood, and wrote the most about living "by faith." As Paul reviewed his Old Testament scripture he realized that all the Old Testament worthies also lived their lives "by faith," thus he chronicled them in HEBREWS 11.

Interestingly we only find the word "faith" twice in Old Testament scripture, once in DEUTERONOMY 32:20 where reference is made to *...a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith,* and HABAKKUK 2:4, which the Apostle Paul quotes from in ROMANS 1:17, GALATIANS 3:11, and HEBREWS 10:38, noting that *...the just shall live by faith.* Even though we only find the word "faith" twice in the Old Testament, the fact of living "by faith" is frequently noted in the lives of Old Testament Saints, being highlighted using the words "trust," "trusted," and "believe" in stead of "by faith." PSALMS 2:12 states it like this: *Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* This equates to Jesus statement of ACTS 26:18 "*...by faith that is in me.*"

Those who have a Scofield Bible will find the following notation by C. I. Scofield in his notes concerning the word "trust" in his commentary on PSALMS 2:12. "Trust is the characteristic Old Testament word for the New Testament "faith," "believe." It occurs 152 times in the Old Testament, and is the rendering of Hebrew words signifying *to take refuge* (RUTH 2:12); *to lean on* (PSALMS 56:3); *to stay upon* (JOB 35:14)." {End of quoting from Scofield.} There are seven different Hebrew words used in the Old Testament that translate to our English "trust," thus giving a SPIRITUAL PERFECTION perspective in our examining the word "trust" as it relates to our studying the thought of living our lives "*...by faith that is in me,*" which Jesus spoke unto Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus.

The phrase "by faith" is found thirty-seven times in scripture. When we did our meaning of numbers study several years ago we found that thirty-seven was one of the more difficult numbers to find a meaning of, but when the dust settled we learned that Bible scholars found the number thirty-seven to be the number that has to do with THE WORD OF GOD. REVELATION 19:13 defines THE WORD OF GOD, noting that it is one of the names of Jesus: *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.* Thus we see that THE WORD OF GOD is synonymous with Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, and as such we find Him mentioned on every page in the Bible. If you want to know Jesus better, then study THE WORD OF GOD, study the Bible in other words. In REVELATION 1:8 we find these words of Jesus: *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* Again in REVELATION 22:13 Jesus speaks: *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.* Alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet, and Omega is the last letter of the Greek alphabet. Brother Hill once preached a sermon concerning Jesus being the Alpha and Omega, noting that this meant Jesus was the alphabet! In other words we find Jesus in every word, thus we find Him in every word of scripture. He is the alphabet. THE WORD OF GOD is every letter in THE WORD OF GOD! Try to wrap you mind around that thought for a moment. And it doesn't matter if you are talking about the Greek alphabet, or the Hebrew alphabet or the Chinese alphabet, or the alphabet you are familiar with, Jesus still is every letter of the alphabet. The Philadelphia full overcomer is noted to have "*kept my word,*" and to have "*kept the word of my patience,*" (see REVELATION 3:8 & 10) which means they actively knew their Bible, they learned all they could about Jesus in other words. 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.* Stated another way, to live "*...by faith that is in me...*" means to trust in The Word of God, to believe in Jesus, and His word, for as PSALMS 2:12 notes above: *Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.*

Interestingly the phrase "his word" is also found thirty-seven times in scripture, which again points us to Jesus, The Word of God. JEREMIAH 23:18 notes: *For who hath stood in the counsel of the LORD, and hath perceived and heard his word? who hath*

marked his word, and heard it? Some other texts that contain the phrase "his word," which also reference Jesus are: MATTHEW 8:16 *When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:...* . LUKE 4:32 *And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.* 1 JOHN 2:5 *But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.* All who live their lives "...by faith that is in..." Christ Jesus believe "his word."

Another word found thirty-seven times in "His word" is the word "crucified." Truly they "crucified" The Word of God, but The Word of God lives eternally still! In 1 CORINTHIANS 1:23 Paul writes this concerning his preaching: *But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;...* . Another verse where we find the word "crucified" that closely connects with the thought of living our lives "...by faith that is in..." Jesus is that important high light verse of GALATIANS 2:20, which we often hear quoted in church: *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

We mentioned that the phrase "by faith," found in our text of ACTS 26:18, is also repeated thirty-seven times in scripture. Thirty-four of the thirty-seven "by faith" statements found in scripture are of Paul's own writing. Thus we again note how deep these words of Jesus, "...by faith that is in me,..." spoken unto Paul on the road to Damascus by Jesus stuck his heart, and became part of his vocabulary. Paul finally realized that all of the Old Testament full overcomers lived their lives "by faith." Oh sure they also had many failures in their lives, but the record left of them in HEBREWS 11 shows what they did "by faith." HEBREWS 11:1 defines faith, stating: *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* ROMANS 1:17, GALATIANS 3:11, and HEBREWS 10:38 all state: *The just shall live by faith.* Again Paul here was quoting from HABAKKUK 2:4 *...but the just shall live by his faith.* Paul wrote in ROMANS 3:28 *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith...* . Later in ROMANS 5:1 & 2 Paul writes: *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.* 2 CORINTHIANS 5:7 tells us: *(For we walk by faith, not by sight:).* And HEBREWS 11 records the phrase "by faith" sixteen (LOVE) times, noting in the process what the Old Testament worthies of faith did "by faith." We know that the New Testament worthies of faith too will accomplish full overcomer status "by faith" also, for God is no respecter of persons (ACTS 10:34). May we all, "by faith," achieve the same status as Enoch, of whom HEBREWS 11:5 records: *By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.* Do you want to please God? Live your life "by faith" in The Word of God, who is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In the words of PSALMS 2:12 *...Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.*

We indicated above that as Paul pondered this concept of living lives "...by faith that is in..." Jesus Christ, he realized that this indeed was the way the Old Testament worthies lived their lives too, though it was stated differently in the ancient Hebrew writings. We mentioned above also that the phrase "by faith" is found in the Old Testament by the use of the word "trust." We pointed out too that there are seven Hebrew words that translate into our English as "trust." Interestingly one of these Hebrew words that equates to "by faith" is also found thirty-seven times in scripture, the Hebrew word *chacah* {khaw-saw'}, number 02620 in the Strong's Hebrew Concordance. Of the thirty-seven times we find this Hebrew word for "trust" in the Old Testament, over twenty-five of them can be attributed to David, a man after God's own heart, who too lived his life "...by faith that is in..." Jesus. As we read some of these Old Testament scriptures using the Hebrew word *chacah*, note the thought of living lives "...by faith that is in..." Jesus Christ.

RUTH 2:12 *The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.* PSALMS 2:12 *...Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* PSALMS 5:11 *But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.* PSALMS 7:1 *C LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust:*

save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:... . PSALMS 11:1 In the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain? PSALMS 16:1 Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust. PSALMS 17:7 Shew thy marvellous lovingkindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them. 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. PSALMS 18:30 As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him. PSALMS 25:20 O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee. PSALMS 31:1 In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness. PSALMS 31:19 Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! PSALMS 34:8 O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. PSALMS 34:22 The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate. PSALMS 36:7 How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. PSALMS 37:40 And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him. PSALMS 57:1 Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast. PSALMS 61:4 I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah. PSALMS 64:10 The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory. PSALMS 71:1 In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion. PSALMS 91:4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. PSALMS 118:8 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. 9 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes. PSALMS 141:8 But mine eyes are unto thee, O GOD the Lord: in thee is my trust; leave not my soul destitute. PSALMS 144:2 My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and he in whom I trust; who subdueth my people under me. ISAIAH 57:13 When thou criest, let thy companies deliver thee; but the wind shall carry them all away; vanity shall take them: but he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain;... .

Another thought about the number thirty-seven, and its association with the phrase "by faith." Sometime read the catalog of King David's mighty men, (2 SAMUEL 23 and 1 CHRONICLES 11), and see that they were also men who lived their lives "by faith," for how else could they have accomplished what they did? There were thirty-seven of them noted by name in 2 SAMUEL 23. May we too be part of King Jesus' mighty men who live our lives "...by faith that is in..." Christ Jesus, fully trusting "His word."

In our examination of ACTS 26:16-18 we found that Saul of Tarsus was told by Jesus that he was going to be a minister, and a witness, and an Apostle sent unto the Gentiles to preach the gospel of those things he had already learned, and witnessed, and of those things in the which Jesus would reveal unto him in future days. We noted above that the number thirty-seven points to THE WORD OF GOD, that the phrases "his word," and "by faith" are also found written thirty-seven times in scripture. We have also noted in previous lessons that the Hebrew and Greek letters were assigned numerical values, thus each letter, and each word added up to some value. The numeric value of "Jesus" in Greek adds up to 888.  $888 = 24 \times 37$ . 24 is the number that has to do with the PRIESTHOOD. The PRIESTHOOD times THE WORD OF GOD equals Jesus, in other words. HEBREWS 4:14 reads: *Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.* The first words written in scripture are "In the beginning God." The numerical value of this statement when added up in Hebrew is 999.  $999 = 27 \times 37$ . 27 is the number that has to do with THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL, and 37 is the number that has to do with THE WORD OF GOD. When a preacher or teacher preaches, or teaches the gospel, they are in essence teaching THE WORD OF GOD, teaching and preaching Jesus in other words. Saul of Tarsus may never have witnessed Jesus ministry while Jesus was alive here on the earth, but certainly on the road to Damascus Saul of Tarsus witnessed "His Word," "THE WORD OF GOD," full of grace and truth: JOHN 1:14 *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.*