

THE GREAT MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH

By Joseph Edwards II

Updated 10/07/24

INTRODUCTION

Eph 5:32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

1Tim 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

Why does Paul refer to Christ and the Church as a Great Mystery?

Frequently in scripture, the term Mystery is used to show that something is hidden and has not been previously revealed. But when speaking of Christ and His Church, scripture refers to them as a Great Mystery. No other mystery in scripture is referred to as “great”, so why the special emphasis here?

In this paper, I’m going to explore the answer to that question.

But before I get started, it is necessary to spend some time on how to study scripture. However, as you are probably aware, understanding & belief can only come from the Spirit of God. If you believe that you are one of the many who lack understanding, Christ says that gift is available if you ask.

Luke 11:9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. 10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. 11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? 12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

As you read this paper, try to determine if you really have all that the Lord wants to give you. Has Christ given you a Love of the Truth that is causing you to always be searching for Truth? Are you willing to give up (sell) all your worldly beliefs so that you can have treasure in heaven?

2Thes 2:10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

Luke 18:22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, yet lackest one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

It is my hope (as the Lord wills) that the Lord will create a hunger for His Truth within you if He has not already done so. For without a Love of the Truth, the truth will remain hidden. Please keep this in mind as you read this paper and remember, the Lord is ready to give to those who ask.

CARNAL UNDERSTANDING VS. SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING

John 6:63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

Mat 13:34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them:

1Cor 2:7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

As you are probably aware, Christ is the spiritual fulfillment of the physical Word of God which was written on tablets of stone and scrolls of paper. Since Christ is the spiritual fulfillment of the Word of God, He is the Word of God. As such, Christ not only teaches us through what He said but also by the events which are recorded in scripture.

For most people, it is easy to understand that the parables contain hidden spiritual messages. But since Christ is the Word of God, all of His teachings, either by word or deed, are also spiritual messages to those who have been blessed and have had their spiritual blindness healed (**Mat 20:34**).

Because Christ's words are spirit, we must learn the spiritual language of Christ in order to understand God's Word. I can't stress this point enough.

I'll demonstrate how to understand Christ's spiritual language with this simple example:

Mat 26:52 Then said Jesus unto him, put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

Does Christ really mean that if you use a sword to kill others, then you must likewise be killed with a sword? Literally, that is what He is saying. However, if we understand this verse literally, that statement can easily be proven to be false. There are countless examples of people who have used violence to kill others but then do not die from that same type of violence - it almost goes without saying.

Is Christ mistaken or is His message something else?

The spiritual language of the Word of God utilizes the Hebrew and Greek languages. However, Christ assigns meanings to the Hebrew and Greek words which are different from how they are commonly defined:

1Cor 2:13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

In **Matt 26:52**, Christ is using the word SWORD to teach us a spiritual message. To understand what this spiritual symbol represents, we must look at how it is used elsewhere in scripture. In other words, we must compare spiritual things with spiritual.

Eph 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Heb 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edge sword...

Rev 1:16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword...

From the verses presented above, it is easy to understand that the spiritual word SWORD represents the Word of God who is Christ.

Christ's hidden spiritual point He is making in **Matt 26:52** is that all who take up the Sword (those who are "called out"), must perish (death of the carnal nature) by the Sword. This death is a necessary part of the conversion process which happens when the Word of God (Christ, the Sword) comes to a person and gives them the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and the Baptism of Fire (judgment of the carnal nature):

Mat 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with Fire.

This conversion event is what the Apostles experienced on the Day of Pentecost:

Acts 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. **2** And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. **3** And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of FIRE, and it sat upon each of them. **4** And they were all filled with the HOLY SPIRIT, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

In the spiritual language of Christ, the Apostles took up the Sword and then died by the SWORD.

In light of what I presented above, do you understand what this verse below is teaching?

Isa 66:16 For by fire and by his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many.

Like the other verses I've presented, this verse above is teaching about the conversion event. And like the other verses, its message is hidden in the spiritual language of Christ. The "many" who are "slain of the Lord" is referring to the people who have just been converted & saved.

Spiritual understanding of scripture is further explained and expanded by **Isa 28:10-12:**

Isa 28:9 Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. 10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: 11 For with stammering lips and another language will he speak to this people. 12 But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

Psa 119:160 The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever.

Before a believer has their spiritual blindness healed, they will not be able to understand the spiritual teachings of the Word of God. This lack of understanding will cause them to "fall backward and be broken".

Paul discusses this same subject below:

Heb 6:1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and age-enduring judgment. 3 And this will we do, if God permit. 4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come 6 if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance: seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

In short, to "fall away" means to leave Grace through Faith and attempt to be acceptable to Christ by "works". When a believer makes this attempt, they cannot be renewed by repentance. It is at that point that they have committed the sin that leads to death and have lost their salvation (**1John 5:16**). Losing one's salvation is the same as to "fall backward and be broken".

The truth of Christ is also presented to us "here a little, and there a little". Because of such, we must assemble the pieces of truth before the whole truth of a matter can be understood. Once assembled, each piece of truth must then be added to the other pieces "line upon line and precept

upon precept” so that the knowledge of God can be found. When found, it is like finding hidden treasure:

Prov 2:1 My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, 2 making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; 3 yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, 4 if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, 5 then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

Mat 13:44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

Have you ever wondered why there are so many different denominational churches in the world? The answer lies in what I have presented above.

Summary: To understand God’s Word, Christ must first give us a love for the truth, so much so that we are willing to give up all our carnal beliefs so that we can obtain the truth of Christ. We also need to realize that scripture is written in Christ’s spiritual language. His language utilizes the Hebrew and Greek languages, however, many of those words carry meanings which are different from what “man’s wisdom teaches”. Christ’s words are spirit and we are told to understand their spiritual meaning by comparing them with the same spiritual words used elsewhere in scripture. We are NOT to look out into the world for their meanings as so many people do. We are to also keep in mind that the truth of Christ in scripture is given “here a little and there a little”. Each piece must be assembled and stacked “line upon line” and “precept upon precept”. Then, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the hidden treasure of Christ will be revealed.

For those who have been given eyes that can see and ears that can hear, Christ is appearing to them and revealing Himself. They are finding great treasure!

OVERVIEW OF CHRIST’S PLAN OF SALVATION

You may be asking yourself why Christ made His Word so difficult to understand. I can assure you that He did not do it by mistake. Christ is purposely concealing Himself from this world so that He can reveal Himself to each individual at a time of His choosing.

Matt 13:10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, why speakest thou unto them in parables? 11 He answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

For most people, Christ has not chosen to reveal Himself to them in this age. The truth of Christ will remain hidden from their understanding during their entire lifetimes. However, this does not

mean that Christ does not love them. Christ loves all mankind equally and because He does, Christ will not stop working until the last person is saved.

Here is what scripture says:

1John 4:14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

1Tim 2:3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; 6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

1Cor 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. 24 Then cometh the end (final harvest, Feast of Tabernacles), when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

Phi 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

During this present age, Christ is ONLY gathering in the First-fruits of His Harvest. These First-Fruits are also called the Chosen, the Elect and the Saints. They are saved at “His coming”. His coming is the second coming of Christ when He brings salvation to His Elect (**Heb 9:28**). At that time, Christ will baptize His Elect with the Holy Spirit and with Fire (**Mat 3:11**).

With the Baptism of the Holy Spirit (also called the Latter Rain of the Spirit), the believer will be made “ready” for Christ’s judgment (Day of the Lord, Baptism of Fire). When the Day of the Lord begins, the Elect believer will have already been “born again” as a child of God. Judgment will then immediately commence upon the Elect believer’s carnality. This judgment is “like a thousand years” (**2Pet 3:8**) and is a reference to the Thousand Years Reign of Christ mentioned in **Rev 20:1-6**.

During Christ’s thousand year reign, the new child of God will reign with Christ and will not experience the wrath which is poured out on their carnal nature and carnal mind. The Elect believer will only experience “chastisement”.

When Christ’s judgment is complete, the believer will be fully converted.

Upon the start of the final age, the Day of the Lord will come to the rest of mankind. Since they will not be saved prior to their judgment, Christ will not find them acceptable (**Mat 7:21-23**) and they will be cast into the Lake of Fire.

Fire is a symbol for Christ's judgment. In the Lake of Fire, the "lost" will be judged in wrath. At that time, many people will experience torment and weeping & gnashing of teeth. However, after a person's judgment is complete (**paid the last penny, Mat 5:26**), Christ will pour out the Latter Rain of the Spirit upon them. They will then enter the Kingdom of Heaven and join the Elect who were saved earlier in this present age.

Contrary to popular belief, Christ is NOT working to save all mankind during this present age.

Mankind is totally dependent upon Christ for salvation, even the timing of it. We cannot choose ourselves to be one of His Elect. Christ is the one who does the choosing and His choice was made before the foundation of the world. Also, our salvation is 100% the work of Christ. To claim otherwise, only proves that we have fallen away and are attempting to be acceptable to Christ by our own works.

Below, I will explain in detail the Pathway to Salvation which Christ will cause His Elect to travel in this present age. This pathway is the core of the Great Mystery of Christ and His church.

THE PATHWAY TO SALVATION

In this present age, Christ is only saving the Elect, the First-Fruits of His harvest of mankind. They are His called and chosen:

Mat 22:14 For many are CALLED, but few are CHOSEN.

Understanding the implications of this verse is one of the keys to understanding how Christ will bring in His harvest of First Fruits in this present age.

In this age, most of mankind will NOT be called out from the world, but MANY will be. Then from this group of MANY, a FEW have been chosen. They make up the small group of blessed individuals who will be saved in this age. They are the Elect, the First Fruits of the harvest.

The Pathway to Salvation for the Elect includes both the Early and Latter Rains of the Spirit.

The Early Rain of the Spirit is when an unbeliever (both Elect and non-Elect) receives a measure of the Holy Spirit and is called out from the world. This is when they will enter the church. However, this is not the day they are spiritually redeemed. Their spiritual redemption will come later when they receive the Latter Rain of the Spirit.

Psa 68:9 Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain (Latter Rain**), whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance (salvation), when it was weary.**

I will now present the Pathway to Salvation by explaining the Early and Latter Rain concept.

1). EARLY RAIN OF THE SPIRIT

The first step along the Pathway to Salvation is when Christ comes to an unbeliever and calls them out from the world. This is a spiritual event and “does not come with observation” (**Luke 17:20**). At that time, a new believer will be given the Early Rain of the Spirit, along with the Spirit’s accompanying gifts (**1Cor 12:11, Eph 4:7**).

However, the Early Rain of the Spirit is only given in measure:

Joel 2:23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in Jehovah your God; for he giveth you the former rain (Early Rain) in just measure, and he causeth to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain, in the first month.

Deu 32:2 My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain (Early Rain) upon the tender herb, and as the showers (Latter Rain**) upon the grass:**

Job 37:6 For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain (Early Rain), and to the great rain (Latter Rain**) of his strength.**

Because the Early Rain is only a “small rain”, the faith a new believer receives is given in “measure” (**Rom 12:3**) and their spiritual blindness is only partially healed (**Mark 8:21-25**).

Shortly after a person receives the Early Rain of the Spirit, Satan will come to the new believer masquerading as an angel of light (**2Cor 11:14-15**). Because the believer is spiritually near-sighted (same as being blind), Satan will easily deceive them into accepting his masquerade. At that point, Satan will plant his seed (spirit of anti-Christ, Parable of the Wheat and the Tares) within them and they will consume his leavened bread (**Mat 13:33**). Once digested, this leavened bread will cause them to fall away. Falling away is the event which happens after a believer tries to be acceptable to Christ by their own works.

Christ explained Satan’s deception and our subsequent falling away in the scripture below:

Mat 12:43 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. 44 Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. 45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself SEVEN other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

The spiritual symbol of an unclean spirit represents a spirit which teaches Satan's false truth through lies and deceptions.

Since a new believer remains spiritually blind (**Mark 8:21-25**) after receiving the Early Rain of the Spirit, they cannot replace their worldly false beliefs with the truth of Christ. ONE unclean spirit leaves but comes back with SEVEN more. The number "seven" represents perfection. In this case, the number seven represents the perfection of Satan's lies/deceptions which come to a

believer by the indwelling of the spirit of anti-Christ. Now, instead of ONE unclean spirit within the believer, they now have EIGHT. The number eight is a spiritual symbol which represents a new spiritual condition. In this case, the new spiritual condition is worse than the first.

This "worse than the first" spiritual condition causes the believer to become a False Prophet, a Man of Sin, a Minister of Satan and a Seven Headed Beast with Ten Horns & Crowns.

Christ also taught about the spirit of anti-Christ in these verses below:

Mar 5:2 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, 3 Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: 4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. 5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. 6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, 7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, what have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. 8 For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. 9 And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, my name is LEGION; for we are many. 10 And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. 11 Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. 12 And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. 13 And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand and were choked in the sea.

The "man" who is possessed by the many unclean spirits represents an Elect believer who has been fully made into a Man of Sin. In this "worse than the first" spiritual condition, he is ready for the "end" to come.

This verse applies to the possessed man:

Mat 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

In this verse above, the "gospel of the kingdom" is the "another gospel" mentioned in 2Cor 11:4 and the "kingdom" is Satan's kingdom.

2Cor 11:4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus (Satan), whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit (spirit of anti-Christ), which ye have not received, or another gospel (works mixed with faith), which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

The phrase “preached in all the world” represents that Satan’s lies and deceptions have been fully taught to the believer by the spirit of anti-Christ . The “nations” represent the ruling thoughts and beliefs of the believer. The “end” comes to the believer when Christ “comes again” and pours out the Latter Rain; followed by the judgment of the Day of the Lord. This is the conversion event when the Man of Sin is destroyed.

Back to the story of the possessed man: the stones the man uses to cut himself represent the Law of Moses (man’s work). The unclean spirit (Legion, who are many) represents the spirit of anti-Christ who has spiritually killed the man (he dwells among the tombs). Through the deceptions from Satan’s spirit is how Satan kills the saints (**Mat 24:9, Rev 11:7**).

When Christ comes to the possessed man with the Latter Rain of the Spirit, Christ drives out the spirit of anti-Christ by the brightness of His appearing (**2Thes 2:8**). Before this judgment happens though, Legion asks to go into the great herd of Swine feeding upon the hill.

The spiritual symbol “swine” represents all called out believers (Early Rain only). In the story, their number is said to be about “2000”. This number is also a spiritual symbol and is understood as 2x10x10x10.

The number two represents the witness of God who are the Elect. The number ten represents “completeness”. When it is repeated three times, the meaning of the number three is added to the equation. The number three represents a spiritual process.

With these meanings, we can now discern what the herd of 2,000 swine represents. It represents Elect believers who have only received the Early Rain and who are now going through a spiritual process. When it is complete, they will be made “worse than the first” and will become a Man of Sin. When Legion (spirit of anti-Christ) enters the Swine, they run into the sea and are spiritually killed just as the possessed man was killed earlier.

The spirit of anti-Christ invaded the church in the 1st century A.D. and devoured it.

John tells the church that the spirit of anti-Christ is coming and has in fact, already come:

1John 2:18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

John also presents the spirit of anti-Christ as the False Prophet:

Rev 13:11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. 12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

Rev 19:20 And the Beast was taken, and with him the False Prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Paul calls the believer who has the indwelling spirit of anti-Christ a Man of Sin:

2Thes 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the appearing 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 comes 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.

For a more complete teaching on the spirit of anti-Christ/False Prophet and the Man of Sin/Seven Headed Beast, please read my paper entitled “The Beast and the Great Harlot.”

The spiritual process of becoming a Man of Sin happens to EVERYONE after they receive the Early Rain of the Spirit and enter the church.

Matt 4:4 But he answered and said, it is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Mankind is saved not just by bread but by every word that God speaks. Some of those words are evil:

Lam 3:38 Out of the mouth of the Most High doth not there proceed evil and good?

We all must eat Satan’s leavened bread and become a Man of Sin:

Matt 13:33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

The woman in the verse represents the Great Harlot. She represents mankind’s marred spirit which has a carnal nature and is the one who is deceived by Satan via the spirit of anti-Christ. She will feed her leavened bread to the believer and cause them to fall away from faith. And since the believer naturally prefers the Old Covenant of Law (works), they quickly and easily accept Satan’s deceptions as the truth of Christ.

Luke 5:39 No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, the old is better.

The Old Wine represents the blood of the animal sacrifices of the Old Covenant of Law. The Old Covenant is man's approach to Christ of using their own works. With this approach, the remission of sins is not possible.

Heb 10:3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

The New Wine represents the blood of Christ which He shed for the New Covenant of Grace through Faith.

Mat 26:27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 For this is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. 29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

The New Covenant of Grace through Faith is the only acceptable approach to Christ and it is based solely on the works of Christ “lest any man should boast” (**Eph 2:9**). Under this covenant, Christ will change mankind from “within”. However, this approach to Christ is rejected by mankind’s carnal spirit because it inherently believes that mankind has at least some ability to make themselves acceptable to God. This inherent belief is responsible for the many religions of the world and is why called out believers will mix their own “works” with faith. When believers commit this sin, they are trying to serve two masters (**Mat 6:24**).

When a believer uses “works” (religion) to approach Christ, those “works” will only make them appear to be righteous from the outside. But within, they will still be unclean.

Mat 23:27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness.

When a new believer receives the Early Rain of the Spirit, Christ will strike a blow to the carnality of the believer. This blow by the Sword (God’s Word) will give the believer a deadly head wound. But since the believer is spiritually blind and cannot receive the truth of God’s Word, the death of the believer’s carnality will not occur. And to make matters “worse”, Satan will come to the aid of the believer’s carnality and strengthen it via the deceptions of the spirit of anti-Christ.

The spirit of anti-Christ masquerades as Christ to the believer and deceives him through his carnal spirit. And since the carnal spirit controls the believer’s mind, the deadly head wound is healed. As a result, Satan will remain the head of the believer instead of Christ becoming his new head.

Note: Christ is the head of the converted Elect, the true church.

Rev 13:3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

Because the deadly head wound is healed, the new believer remains unconverted.

With the believer being under Satan's total deception and control, the resulting spiritual condition becomes worse than the first. The believer becomes a Man of Sin, the son of Perdition and the Great Harlot (marred spirit with a carnal nature) becomes a dwelling place of devils:

Rev 18:2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

In case you are unaware, the Seven Headed Beast described in Revelation chapter 13 is a symbol for mankind in our worsened carnal spiritual condition while we are under Satan's control. The Seven Headed Beast is an equivalent term for the "Man of Sin" – both of which are under the control of the spirit of anti-Christ/False Prophet.

The Seven Headed Beast/Man of Sin's number is 666.

Rev 13:18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

The number 666 is understood as 6+6+6. The number 6 represents mankind who falls short of perfection (7). Since the number is repeated three times, the meaning of the number 3 is added to the meaning of the number 6. Number 3 represents a spiritual process. This spiritual process makes mankind (6) "worse than the first" when the spirit of anti-Christ indwells a new believer.

The prophet Daniel also explains this spiritual process of devolution into a Man of Sin. Please read my papers entitled "Daniel's Seventy Weeks Prophecy" and "Numerical Symbols of Daniel's 70th Week" for more information on this subject.

The Doctrine of Free Will is the most common lie from Satan which causes a new believer to fall away and turn to religion for their salvation. A fallen away believer (Man of Sin) uses this "works" based belief system which is taught by the Doctrine of Free Will to justify why unbelievers are worthy of hell and why they are not. The fallen away believer will falsely believe that they are wiser, smarter or simply less evil than those who reject Christ. And because of this belief, they will take credit for making the right choice to accept Christ. But in truth, the credit for the decision they made is not theirs. It was the spiritual work of Christ within them which caused them to accept Jesus as Lord.

Since mankind was created spiritually marred (**Jer 18:4**) and subject to vanity (**Rom 8:20**), no person is any better than anyone else - we all come up short of being worthy of Christ's gift of salvation. And because of these spiritual flaws, mankind will not even seek to know God (**Rom**

3:10-11, Rom 8:7), much less accept Jesus as Lord. If it wasn't for the Grace of God (manifested in Christ) coming to us and giving us the gift of the Holy Spirit, no one would be saved. We have nothing to boast about concerning our salvation – 100% of the credit belongs to Christ.

Scripture clearly teaches that unless Christ gives us the Holy Spirit, we cannot call Him Lord.

1 Cor 12:3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit.

Only AFTER Christ comes to us and gives us the Early Rain of the Spirit can anyone call Jesus Lord.

Paul's conversion experience is the pattern (**1Tim 1:16**) all believers must follow in order to be saved in this present age. Paul's calling on the Damascus Road presents (in type) the Early Rain of the Spirit. Christ came to Paul on the Damascus Road, uninvited by Paul, and gave Paul the Early Rain of the Spirit. Paul had no choice in the matter as to whether to accept the Spirit or to reject the Spirit. The Spirit was given to Him and after it was, Paul fell to his knees and called Jesus Lord.

I will explain the pattern (type) of Paul's conversion in more detail later in the paper.

After a called out believer has fallen away and is no longer saved, Christ must come to them a second time with the Latter Rain of the Spirit if they are going to be saved in this age. If Christ doesn't come a second time to them, they will die in their sins and they will receive their "portion with the unbelievers" (**Luke 12:46**).

More on the Early Rain of the Spirit:

Below is a portion of a forum response which I posted that addresses the Early Rain of the Spirit and how it applied to the Nation of Israel and to the early Gentile church. Though it may repeat some of what I have presented above, I believe it will be helpful in gaining a fuller understanding of the Early and Latter Rain concept.

Dear J _____,

I believe there are up to seven baptisms mentioned in scripture but there is only ONE baptism that permanently saves us. This ONE baptism is the Latter Rain/Baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is the baptism that most Christians mistakenly believe they received when they were baptized in water and were called out from the world. However, this baptism that they received was the Early Rain of the Spirit and not the Latter Rain of the Spirit.

The Latter Rain is the baptism that the 120 Jewish Elect received on the Day of Pentecost. It is also the one Paul received in Damascus after being in bed for three days (blind, not eating or drinking).

Question: Since the 120 Jewish Elect received the Latter Rain of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, when did they receive the Early Rain?

I'll answer that question below, but before I do, let's look at the first baptism the Nation of Israel received so that we don't confuse it with the Early Rain baptism.

Here is what Paul says:

1Cor 10:1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the (Red) sea; 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the (Red) sea;

So what does this baptism represent?

Is it the Early Rain? No.

Let's look at it piece by piece (symbol by symbol).

The scripture says that the Israelites were baptized "unto Moses". Moses is a spiritual symbol for the Law.

The scripture also says that the Israelites were "under the cloud" and were baptized "in the cloud". The "cloud" is a spiritual symbol for Jesus Christ when He is veiled from mankind due to their carnality. In other words, the Israelites followed Christ by day but He was veiled from their understanding. And just like Paul on the Damascus Road, the Israelites could hear Christ (via Moses) but they could not see who was actually speaking to them.

The scripture also says that the Israelites "passed through the (Red) sea" and were baptized in it. The Red Sea is also a spiritual symbol. The term "sea" represents carnal mankind. The term "red" represents sinfulness. Since the Israelites passed through the Red sea on dry ground, we must consider the spiritual meaning of "dry ground".

Exo 14:16 But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.

The term "dry" represents that something is void of the Holy Spirit. The term "ground" means the same as the symbol "earth" which represents mankind's carnality.

By assembling all the symbols of the scripture together, we can discern that the Red Sea baptism is the baptism into Law (Moses) which was under the authority of Jesus Christ (cloud). Since the baptism was a "dry" baptism, the Israelites did not receive the Holy Spirit and as a

result, Christ would remain “veiled” and “without”. And since the Israelites were baptized into Law (Moses), the Law (through the animal sacrifices) would not let them be touched by mankind’s sinfulness (Red Sea).

The next baptism the Israelites would receive (at least some of them would) is the Early Rain.

Here is what Christ told Moses:

Deu 11:14 That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the Early Rain and the Latter Rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn (bread, truth), and thy wine (blood of the New Covenant), and thine oil (anointing of the Holy Spirit).

Christ told Moses that He would give them the Early and Latter Rain in “due season”. The “due season” commenced when Christ appeared in the flesh. The Israelites who recognized that Jesus was the Christ were the ones who had been given the Early Rain. We know this to be true because “no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit”:

1Cor 12:3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit.

Since the Early Rain of the Spirit is a spiritual baptism and cannot be seen with human eyes, the only way to know that a person received it is to look for the outward evidence of it.

The scripture below is the evidence that the twelve disciples had received the Early Rain of the Spirit:

Mat 10:1 And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power (Holy Spirit) against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

John 6:66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. 67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? 68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. 70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

Note: Judas was a “type” for what would later happen to the church when the spirit of anti-Christ came into it.

As for the water baptism that Christ and His disciples performed, it represented the Early Rain of the Spirit but it was also a physical shadow for the Latter Rain of the Spirit (Baptism of the Holy Spirit) which would be poured out later when Christ came a “second time” on the Day of Pentecost.

This verse below mentions that water baptism:

John 3:26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizes, and all men come to him.

When a person receives the Early Rain, they are indwelt with a small amount of the Holy Spirit:

Deu 32:2 My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain (Early Rain) upon the tender herb, and as the showers (Latter Rain) upon the grass:

Job 37:6 For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain (Early Rain), and to the great rain (Latter Rain) of his strength.

Joel 2:23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in Jehovah your God; for he giveth you the former rain (Early Rain) in just measure, and he causes to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain, in the first month.

Even with just a small amount of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit will give the believer “spiritual gifts” and a measure of faith (**Rom 12:3**).

Here is where Paul speaks of the Early Rain that the new Gentile believers in Corinth received along with its accompanying spiritual gifts:

1Cor 1:6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you (Early Rain): **7** So that you come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: **8** Who shall also confirm you unto the end (Latter Rain), that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The testimony of Christ was confirmed in the Corinthian believers when they received the Early Rain and its “gifts”. With the Early Rain, the person would receive a measure of “faith” which would make the pathway “straight” for Christ to return later with the Latter Rain.

Paul mentions the “waiting” that all chosen believers must endure until Christ returns with the Latter Rain and salvation:

Heb 9:28 So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

With the Latter Rain, an Elect believer will be “sealed” with the Holy Spirit of Promise which is the down payment of their inheritance until they receive their glorious spiritual body at the time of the bodily resurrection.

Eph 1:13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of

Promise, 14 Which is the down payment (earnest) of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession (immortal spiritual body), unto the praise of his glory.

The “sealing” of the 144,000 servants of God (the number represents all the Elect) in **Rev 7:1-8** represents that all the Elect will be sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise (Latter Rain) prior to the judgment of Christ arriving. In other words, the Latter Rain will make them “blameless in the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (**1Cor 1:8**).

When Paul addressed his letter to the church at Ephesus, he distinguished between the believers who had received the Latter Rain and those who had only received the Early Rain:

Eph 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints (Latter Rain) which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful (Early Rain only) in Christ Jesus:

After Paul’s death, the pathway to salvation would be altered because of the coming of the spirit of anti-Christ. The spirit of anti-Christ would come into the church and not “spare the flock” (**Acts 20:29-31**). Those who fell prey to the wolves would be the believers who had only received the Early Rain. The spirit of anti-Christ would cause these “faithful” believers to mix their own “works” with faith. This mixing of works with faith would cause the believer to fall from grace (also called “to fall away”) and lose their salvation. This is the sin that leads to death (**Gal 5:4 & 1John 5:16**). This is how the church became apostate and it remains so even up to today.

Joe

2). LATTER RAIN OF THE SPIRIT

Prov 16:15 In the light of the king's countenance is life; and his favor is as a cloud of the Latter Rain.

Before receiving the Latter Rain of the Spirit and “life”, all chosen believers are spiritually no different than any other believer who has fallen away. In this worsened spiritual condition, the Elect are spiritually blind, deceived by Satan, fallen away and have become a Man of Sin. They are languishing in this spiritually darkened state alongside the called out believers who have not been chosen.

However, since the Elect are chosen to the First Fruits, Christ will send a person to them in the spirit of Elijah and cause them to repent of their “works”. This act of repentance will make the pathway “straight” for the Lord to come to them.

John the Baptist was the person who was sent to the Apostles in the spirit of Elijah. By responding to John’s call of repentance, the Apostles were made ready for Christ to “come again”. Then, while they were waiting for His coming in the upper room, Christ came and

baptized them with the Latter Rain of the Spirit. Also at that time, Christ healed their spiritual blindness. Christ then revealed Himself and gathered them to dwell with Him in heaven (spiritually speaking).

This event is called the Second Coming of Christ when Christ brings salvation to His Elect.

Heb 9:28 So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

This scripture applies:

Mat 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the HOLY SPIRIT, and with FIRE: 12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Conversion requires two baptisms:

- A). Baptism of the Holy Spirit (Latter Rain of the Spirit) - birth of the child of God.
- B). Baptism of Fire (Day of the Lord) - the judgment of the Man of Sin/Great Harlot/Old Man.

I will discuss each of the two baptisms below.

A). BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Since God has predestinated the Elect to be the First-fruits of Christ's harvest of mankind, Christ will come to them a second time (second coming of Christ) before they die and give them the Latter Rain of the Spirit.

With the Latter Rain of the Spirit, the Elect believer will become the Bride of Christ and be born again as a child of God:

Rev 19:7 "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the Marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."

This scripture also applies:

Joel 2:28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: 29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. 30 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.

Upon receiving the Latter Rain of the Spirit, the chosen believer will be given eyes that can see.

1Sam 12:17 Is it not wheat harvest today? I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and rain (Latter Rain); that ye may perceive (spiritual blindness healed) and see that your wickedness is great (Man of Sin revealed), which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king.

In other words, Christ will heal the Elect believer's spiritual blindness. They will no longer receive the false truth of this world because the natural sun (Satan) will be darkened and its light which reflects off of the natural moon (Bondwoman/carnal spirit of mankind) will turn to blood (blood of the New Covenant). The believer will then only receive their light (truth) from the brightness of Christ (the Sun of Righteousness).

Once the new child of God is born, the Elect believer will no longer dwell upon the earth but will rise and be gathered together with Christ in heaven. This is a spiritual event and it reflects the Elect believer's new spiritual nature in Christ.

Mat 24:31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

The believer is now a newly born child of God.

B). BAPTISM OF FIRE

The conversion process not only includes the birth of a new child of God, it also includes the death of the carnality of the believer.

As I presented earlier, judgment is represented by the spiritual term "Fire".

Christ's judgment comes during the Day of the Lord and has TWO parts:

- 1). The Judgment of the Man of Sin and the Great Harlot
- 2). The Judgment of the Old Man

The judgment of the Man of Sin and the Great Harlot is also called the Supper of the Great God:

Rev 19:17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the Supper of the Great God.

The full judgment of the Day of the Lord for the Elect is called the Thousand Years Reign of Christ:

Rev 20:1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent,

which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, 3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed for a little season. 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 6 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the First Resurrection.

The First Resurrection mentioned above represents the entire process of conversion. It includes the birth of the child of God which occurs during the Marriage of the Lamb (Rev 19:7). It also includes the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:9) when the believer is served bread and meat (truth) by Christ which occurs as a result of their spiritual blindness being healed. And lastly, it includes the destruction of the believer's carnality (Thousand Years Reign of Christ).

The First Resurrection is not the bodily resurrection as is commonly believed. It is a spiritual resurrection when Christ gathers His Elect from the four winds of heaven.

The verse below applies to the judgment of the Old Man (carnal mind) and the Kings of the Earth (ruling thoughts and beliefs).

Rev 19:21 And the rest were slain with the SWORD of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

The "rest" who were slain is representative of the kings of the earth and their armies which did not originate from the spirit of anti-Christ. These remaining ruling thoughts and beliefs come from the Old Man.

I will now explain in more detail the two judgments of the Baptism of Fire.

1). THE JUDGMENT OF THE MAN OF SIN AND THE GREAT HARLOT

The below formulas will help provide a better understanding of the symbols related to the Man of Sin and the Great Harlot :

BEAST + FALSE PROPHET = MAN OF SIN

FALSE PROPHET = SPIRIT OF ANTI-CHRIST

GREAT HARLOT W/DEVILS = WORSENERD CARNAL SPIRIT

The carnality (carnal nature) of the spirit is made worse by the spirit of anti-Christ.

The Great Harlot is also represented by these other symbols:

GREAT HARLOT = OLD JERUSALEM, EGYPT, DAMASCUS, OLD EARTH, BONDWOMAN & NATURAL MOON

Also, Sodom and Gomorrah are symbols for the Great Harlot and Man of Sin:

SODOM = GREAT HARLOT

GOMORRAH = MAN OF SIN

Please keep these symbols and their relationships in mind as you read this paper and as you study God's Word.

The scripture below applies to the Day of the Lord when judgment falls on the Beast & False Prophet and the Great Harlot:

Luke 17:24 For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day...34 I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken (False Prophet/spirit of anti-Christ), and the other shall be left (child of God). 35 Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken (Great Harlot), and the other left (new spiritual nature of the Holy Spirit). 36 Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken (Man of Sin), and the other left (child of God). 37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the vultures be gathered together (Supper of the Great God).

Matthew chapter 24 has a similar teaching:

Mat 24:28 For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together (Supper of the Great God).

Mat 24:39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken (Man of Sin), and the other left (child of God). 41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken (Great Harlot), and the other left (new spiritual nature of the Holy Spirit).

The verse below applies to the judgment of the Beast & False Prophet and shows where they are "taken":

Rev 19:20 And the Beast was taken, and with him the False Prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a Lake of Fire burning with brimstone.

The Beast who is cast into the Lake of Fire in **Rev 19:20** is the Seven Headed Beast with Ten Horns and Ten Crowns (**Rev 13:1-10**). The Beast represents an individual and not just the mind of the individual. With this understanding, the Beast includes its carnal spirit (Great Harlot).

The False Prophet who is cast into the Lake of Fire in **Rev 19:20** is the second Beast who rises out of the earth (**Rev 13:11-17**). The False Prophet is the spirit of anti-Christ which indwells the Beast.

When the Beast and False Prophet are combined into “one flesh”, they become the Man of Sin.

When judgment falls on the Man of Sin, the brightness of Christ’s appearance (God’s Word) will destroy him and his worsened carnal spirit (Great Harlot) quickly.

These verses apply:

2Thes 2:8 And then shall that Wicked (Man of Sin) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

Rev 18:10 Standing afar off for the fear of her (Great Harlot) torment, saying, Alas, alas, that Great City Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.

At this point in the conversion process there will be a paradigm change within the Elect believer and it will turn their world upside down.

Mat 24:29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

After the Beast and the False Prophet have received their judgment (Lake of Fire), the believer will no longer be under the spiritual influence of Satan. Their worsened carnal spirit (Great Harlot) has been destroyed and replaced with the new spiritual nature of the Holy Spirit. After these judgments, all that will remain within the believer will be their old ruling false/carnal thoughts and beliefs (Kings of the Earth) of the Old Man (carnal mind). Because the Old Man still has some influence over the believer, judgment will now commence on the carnal mind.

2). THE JUDGMENT OF THE OLD MAN

This second portion of judgment is unlike the first portion of judgment in that it will be a much slower process:

John the Baptist is a type of the Old Man.

John said this:

John 3:30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

And Paul said this:

Rom 6:6 Knowing this, that our Old Man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Isa 26:9 With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the (New) Earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

The Old Man's judgment will coincide with the maturing process of the new child of God.

As the new child of God matures (increases) from consuming bread and meat (truth of God), the judgment which comes from this new knowledge will decrease the influence of the Old Man. When this process is fully completed, the believer will have the Mind of Christ:

Col 3:9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the Old Man with his deeds; 10 And have put on the New Man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: 11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. 12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; 13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

After the death of the Old Man, the believer is now a fully matured son of God.

TIME OF TESTING

After Christ's Thousand Years Reign (judgment) is completed, Satan will be let loose for a little season to tempt the new son of God. This time of testing was typed by Christ in the wilderness after His 40 days of fasting. At that time, Satan came to Christ and tempted Him THREE times. The number 3 represents a spiritual process. And just as Christ overcame Satan's temptations, so will the new son of God.

Please keep in mind that this time of testing by Satan will be an "outward" attack. It will not be like the "inward" attack (spiritual war) which occurred when the believer had the indwelling of the spirit of anti-Christ.

Rev 20:7-10 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and

devoured them. 10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for the ages of the ages.

Note: When Satan, the Beast & the False Prophet are cast into the Lake of Fire, please remember that the Lake of Fire is not a literal place where there is fire and brimstone. The Lake of Fire is a symbol which represents a judgment from which there is no escape. After Satan, the Beast and False Prophet are cast into the Lake of Fire, they will NEVER be able to tempt or influence the believer ever again.

After this time of testing, the new son of God will be successful in resisting Satan's temptations. In other words, they will have overcome Satan and this world just as Christ overcame them:

Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. 11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Rev 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.

The son of God is now ready for the bodily resurrection when he will receive a spiritual body to match his spiritual nature.

SCRIPTURAL SUPPORT FOR THE EARLY AND LATTER RAIN

I am now going to go through some of the scriptural references which speak of the TWO fillings of the Holy Spirit which are necessary for conversion.

1). JAMES 5:7-8 – THE EARLY AND LATTER RAIN

James 5:7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receives the EARLY and LATTER RAIN. 8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

James says a lot in these two verses and its meaning is hidden in the spiritual language of Christ.

Christ is the Husbandman who is a farmer. The Precious Fruit of the earth is the New Man in Christ who is to be harvested from the earth. The earth represents mankind's carnal spirit and where mankind dwells. The farmer "hath long patience" for the harvest because birthing many new Sons of God is a long process and is now just getting started with the harvest of the First-Fruits in this present age.

Christ even said:

Luke 12:49 I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!

Fire is a spiritual term for the judgment of God. Without Christ's judgment, no one would be saved. In the above verse, Christ longs to start that process of judgment upon mankind (the Elect first, then all others in the final age) but the time was not yet at hand. Since before the creation began, Christ has been waiting patiently for that day to arrive. It is no wonder that patience is one of the fruits of the Spirit.

At the end of verse 7, James says that the growing season for Christ's harvest of mankind starts with the Early Rain of the Spirit. It is at this point in time that a new believer will enter the Church. The Early Rain represents the receiving of the Holy Spirit. However, the gifts accompanying the Early Rain of the Spirit are not sufficient for us to grow to maturity and produce fruit. We also need the Latter Rain of the Spirit which occurs when Christ comes to us a second time and baptizes us with His Spirit. After the Baptism of the Spirit, we finally have the ability to see Christ and to know the Truth.

James' main purpose for writing these two verses is to tell us to have patience because the creation of a Son of God takes time and does not happen until a person receives both the Early and Latter Rains of the Spirit.

2). ECC 11:1-5 CAST TWO PORTIONS OF BREAD UPON THE WATERS

Ecc 11:1 Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days. 2 Give a portion to SEVEN, and also to EIGHT; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth. 3 if the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be. 4 He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. 5 As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.

In verses 1 & 2 above, two portions of bread are shown to be cast upon the waters. Water is representative of the Holy Spirit. Bread is Truth (Christ).

The first portion of bread goes to SEVEN which is a reference to mankind in our marred spiritual state we all have from birth. Casting the first portion of bread to SEVEN represents the time when an unbeliever receives the Early Rain of the Spirit. It is at this point when a person enters the church.

Next, a second portion of bread goes to EIGHT because "thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth". The spiritual term EIGHT is a reference to the worsened carnal state that occurs to a called out believer shortly after they receive the Early Rain. This spiritual change is hidden from the called out believer's knowledge because they remain spiritually blind. Satan makes

their last state of carnality worse than the first (**Mat 12:43-45**). If the called out believer has been chosen, Christ will give them a second portion of bread while they are in this worsened carnal state (EIGHT). This second portion of bread is given to them at the time of the Latter Rain of the Spirit. This gift will bring about the destruction of a Man of Sin and the birth of a child of God. This is conversion and is when the old vessel is destroyed and the new vessel is created (**Jer 18:4**).

In verse 3, it continues talking about EIGHT and mentions the clouds being full of rain. This is a reference to the drought that occurs during the time a believer spends between the Early and Latter Rains. It is symbolized by Elijah's 3 ½ years of drought which is also referred to as a time, times and half a time, 1260 days and 42 months. When the clouds "empty themselves upon the earth", it is a direct reference to the Latter Rain event that ends the time of drought for a chosen believer.

Verse 3 continues by mentioning a tree which falls either to the North or to the South. A tree is representative of a called out believer who has received the Early Rain of the Spirit. When a tree falls, that event represents the time when a called out believer falls away and becomes spiritually worse than the first. It is the time of Daniel's Abomination of Desolation when a believer loses their salvation. If the tree falls to the south, it represents believers who have been chosen to receive the Latter Rain of the Spirit. If the tree falls to the north, it represents believers who have not been chosen to receive the Latter Rain of the Spirit. The decision of who is chosen and who is not chosen was made from the foundation of the world and cannot be changed (where the tree falls, there it shall be).

Verse 4 continues talking about the chosen believers vs. the non-chosen believers.

The believers who "observeth the wind shall not sow" is a reference to the chosen believers who, after receiving the Latter Rain, are "born of the Spirit" (wind, **John 3:8**). They will no longer sow because they have stopped approaching Christ by their own works. They have entered into the rest of Christ.

The believers who "regardeth the clouds shall not reap" is a reference to the non-chosen believers who remain spiritually blind. The clouds represent their spiritual blindness which keeps Christ hidden from their understanding. Because they remain blind, they will not reap and produce the spiritual fruit that is required of a child of God. They will remain lost in this present age.

Verse 5 speaks to the concealed nature of the Pathway to Salvation which was presented in verses 1-4. The first part of verse 5 tells us that we do not know "the way of the Spirit" or how the "bones" (Spirit) grow in the womb. Mankind, in our carnally minded spiritual state, cannot understand the ways of God – our carnality blinds us from the truth of God.

Ecc 3:11 He has made everything fitting in its season; However, He has put obscurity (the carnality of the world) in their heart so that the man may NOT find out His work, that which God does, that which God does from the beginning to the end.

Paul said that Christ and His Church are a Great Mystery (**Eph 5:32**). This truth is the most hidden teaching in scripture. At its core is the teaching of the Early and Latter Rains of the Spirit.

Verse 5 continues by mentioning the analogy of the woman who is with child. In this analogy, the woman represents the “freewoman” (**Gal 4:22-31**) and the child in the womb is the child of God waiting to be born. This truth is likewise hidden from mankind.

Verse 5 finishes with another statement that says again that the “works of God who maketh all” is a mystery to mankind.

Summary: Christ’s plan of producing children of God requires TWO portions of bread (truth) to be given to mankind. The first portion is given to a person at the time of the Early Rain when they are in their unbelieving carnal state they have from birth. This is symbolized by the spiritual term SEVEN. The second portion of bread is given to them at the time of the Latter Rain after Satan has intervened and made their original carnal state worse than the first. This is symbolized by the spiritual term EIGHT. If a called out believer has been chosen to receive the second portion of bread before they physically die, they will be a First Fruit of Christ’s harvest of mankind. They will receive salvation (conversion) in this present age. If a called out believer has not been chosen to receive a second portion of bread before they physically die, they will remain in their worsened carnal state and will die in their sins. Their salvation will come at the end of the final age with the unbelievers.

3). MARK 8:15-25 THE BLIND MAN

Mark 8:15 And he charged them, saying, take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod. 16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, it is because we have no bread. 17 And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? 18 Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? 19 When I broke the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. 20 And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven. 21 And he said unto them, how is it that ye do not understand?

In the verses above, Christ is giving His disciples a lesson on the spiritual language of God's Word - His language:

Isa 28:9 Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand

doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. 10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: 11 For with stammering lips and another language will he speak to this people. 12 But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

At this point in time (before they were converted at Pentecost), the disciples had received the Early Rain of the Spirit but had not yet received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit (Latter Rain of the Spirit). And because of such, they were still spiritually blind and could not understand the spiritual language of Christ.

Christ ends His comments above by asking the disciples this question: “**How is it that ye do not understand?**” No response from the disciples is recorded in scripture. However, Christ answers His own question in the very next four verses.

Mark 8:22 And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. 23 And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. 24 And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. 25 After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.

Since Christ is the Word of God, He teaches us not only through His words which are recorded in scripture but also by the things that He did. In answering the question that He proposed to the disciples in verse 21, Christ goes to Bethsaida and gives us His answer in type by the healing of a blind man.

In verse 23, Christ leads a blind man out of the city. Once outside the city, Christ places spit on his eyes and touches him with His hands. These actions occur as the blind man is looking down which symbolizes the carnal aspect of His healing. Christ does not have to tell the blind man to look down, the blind man just does it naturally. The spit (water) symbolizes the blind man receiving the **Early Rain of the Spirit** with its accompanying vision (carnal understanding). This event represents the time when an unbeliever is called out from the world and enters the church.

After Christ asks the man what he could see, the man looks up and says that he could see men "walking as trees". "Walking as trees" is a spiritual symbol for called out believers who walk by sight (the flesh, carnal nature) rather than by faith & the Spirit. The man's blindness was not total any longer but he was still very near-sighted and could only see Christ carnally. Paul stated that this near-sighted type of understanding will only allow a believer to see "Christ and Him crucified" (**1Cor 2:2**). This means that the new believer can see Christ's physical work that He

did under the Old Covenant, but Christ's spiritual work that He is presently doing under the New Covenant will remain blurred.

This first healing of the blind man reflects the true spiritual condition of a new believer when they first enter the church. At this time, the believer is left carnally minded and spiritually near-sighted. They can see a little, but that only opens the door to Satan's carnally based deceptions - deceptions which each new believer will readily accept due to their carnal nature still being in control of them (**Mat 12:43-45, Mat 24:24 & Luke 5:39**).

For a carnally minded and spiritually blind believer (Early Rain only), the Old Wine still tastes better than the New Wine:

Luke 5:39 No man also having drunk old wine straightway desires the new: for he says, The old is better.

The Old Wine represents the Old Covenant which is based on the works of man. The New Wine represents the New Covenant which is solely based on the spiritual works of Christ.

Peter says that this near-sighted condition is the same as being blind:

2Pet 1:9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

Peter makes this statement because the believers to whom he was addressing were mixing their own works with faith. They were still preferring the Old Wine.

In the final verse of the story of the blind man, Christ lays His hands upon the man's eyes again, but as He does, Christ has the man look up instead of down. This second healing represents the **Latter Rain of the Spirit** when true spiritual vision is given to a believer. The man's upward gaze represents the spiritual aspect of the healing in contrast to the carnal aspect when the blind man was looking down at the earth.

From that moment onward, we now know that the blind man is a type for a called AND chosen believer who has received both the Early and Latter Rains of the Spirit (**James 5:7-8**). The man has been given eyes that can see spiritually ("**drawn from the breasts**" **Isa 28:9**). From his new ability to understand God's Word, he will then come out from Satan's deceptions and will begin walking by faith. He will be included in the resurrection of the First Fruits and will receive the reward of life during the ages.

Mat 25:46 And these shall go away to punishment age-during, but the righteous to life age-during.

For those who were not chosen and were not given eyes that can see spiritually, they will go away to judgment with the unbelievers (**Luke 12:46**). They will suffer loss, but by the end of that age, they, too "shall be saved, yet so by fire":

1Cor 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abides which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

4). JOHN 8:3-10 THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY

John 8:3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, 4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. 5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? 6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. 7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. 8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. 9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. 10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

In the story, Christ uses the marriage analogy to teach His truth. The "woman" (a spiritual symbol) who is taken in adultery represents the Elect who will become the Bride of Christ.

This scripture applies:

Isa 54:5 For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. 6 For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. 7 For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.

Adam is the "wife of youth" and is a type for the Elect.

In the scripture above, the phrase "called thee as a woman forsaken" is speaking of the time when the woman (who has been forsaken since being cast out of the Garden of Eden) is given the Early Rain of the Spirit and is called out from the world.

The phrase "wife of youth, when thou was refused" is referring to the time when the woman

(Adam) lost her marriage relationship with Christ in the Garden of Eden. The marriage ended when the woman (Adam) committed adultery with Satan (believing Satan over Christ).

Ever since that time, Christ has been preparing for the day when He will restore His marriage relationship with His forsaken wife. As verse 7 says, He will do so with “great mercies”. These “great mercies” are manifested in the New Covenant of Grace through Faith.

At the time of the Early Rain of the Spirit, the woman will be made into a chaste virgin and will become espoused to Christ.

2Cor 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

After the engagement takes place, Christ (the Bridegroom) will leave to “prepare a place” for his chaste virgin.

John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

To be a chaste virgin, the woman must come to Christ by faith alone. However, shortly after receiving the Early Rain of the Spirit, Satan will come to the woman masquerading as Christ and he will feed her his leavened bread (**Mat 13:33**). Since the leaven is hidden in the bread, she will not be aware that the bread contains the lies of Satan. Satan is able to deceive the woman she remains spiritually blind.

Because the woman is now following the ways of Satan instead of the ways of Christ, she will fall away from faith. She is guilty of mixing in Satan’s doctrine of works (religion, Old Covenant of Law) into the New Covenant of Grace through Faith. When the woman commits this sin of adding “works” to faith, she is fornicating with Satan. This is the sin that leads to death and is the same sin that ended the original marriage in the Garden of Eden (typed by the apron of fig leaves). As a result, the woman is no longer a chaste virgin. She will remain under the Law of Sin and Death.

To correct the woman’s fallen away spiritual condition, it is necessary for Christ to come to her a second time and give her the Latter Rain of the Spirit. With the Latter Rain of the Spirit, her spiritual blindness will be healed and she will come out from under Satan’s deceptions. When she does, she will be ready for the marriage ceremony.

After the marriage ceremony takes place, she will be gathered together with Christ in the Kingdom of Heaven; the home of her Husband.

This verse applies:

Mat 24:31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Here is a verse by verse teaching of the story:

John 8:3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, 4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. 5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

In the first three verses of the story, a woman is said to have been caught in the act of adultery. This event “typed” when Adam & Eve were caught in the act of adultery with Satan in the Garden of Eden.

The woman was then delivered to the Pharisees who were responsible for the administration of the Law. The Law says that the penalty for her adultery is death. When Adam & Eve committed adultery in the Garden of Eden, they, too, were judged by the Law and were given the penalty of death (both spiritual and physical).

However, since Christ is now ready to restore His marriage relationship with the woman, He will gather her with “great mercies”:

John 8:6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

Christ’s act of writing in the ground represents Him pouring out the Early Rain of the Spirit on the woman. By doing this, He is writing His Law of the Spirit in her heart.

This verse applies:

Jer 31:33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

The verse above is referring to the New Covenant of Grace through Faith which is Christ’s spiritual covenant. Under the New Covenant, Christ will perform all the necessary “works” to restore the woman to Himself. And since it is a spiritual covenant, He will write his Law of the Spirit in the heart of the woman.

John 8:7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

After Christ first writes in the earth, the Pharisees continue to accuse the woman. They do this because the woman still remains under the Law after having received the Early Rain of the Spirit. She remains under the Law because the Early Rain is not sufficient to stop her from committing adultery with Satan. In other words, she does not have the ability to approach Christ strictly by faith alone yet. She is still compelled by her carnal nature and the deceptions of Satan to mix in her own “works” with faith. She tries to serve two masters, both Satan and Christ (**Mat 6:24**).

By continuing in her adultery, she falls away from faith and remains under the Law. For this reason, the Pharisees do not drop their stones but continue to accuse her.

John 8:8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. 9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. 10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

In verse 8, Christ stoops down a second time and writes His Law of the Spirit in the heart of the woman again. This act represents the Latter Rain of the Spirit.

It is at this point that Christ heals the woman’s spiritual blindness and she comes out from Satan’s deceptions. At this time, she begins to walk by faith alone and as a result, the Law can no longer accuse her. After this change from the Old Covenant of Law to the New Covenant of Grace through Faith, the Pharisees drop their stones and leave.

The woman (the Elect) has now been made into a Chaste Virgin again and is ready for the wedding to take place. After the wedding takes place, the woman’s marriage relationship with Christ is restored.

5). ACTS 9:3-19 PAUL’S CONVERSION EXPERIENCE

Scripture says that Paul’s conversion is the pattern or type by which all the Elect will be saved from this time going forward:

1Tim 1:16 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.

In order to understand this pattern, we must spiritually understand the steps of Paul’s conversion as recorded for us in **Acts 9:3-19**.

The first set of verses below types Paul's time of being called out from the world. This is the Early Rain of the Spirit.

Acts 9:3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly, there shined round about him a light from heaven: 4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. 7 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. 8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. 9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

These first events which happened to Paul "type" (symbolize) the spiritual process that all the Elect go through to be called out from the world so as to enter the church.

When an individual is called out from the world to follow Christ, Christ will come to them suddenly and without invitation (**Mal 3:1**). Under the New Covenant, mankind is God's Temple (**1Cor 6:19**).

The reason Christ must come to a person without their invitation is because no one has an ability to seek out Christ or to understand Him due to their marred spiritual state which has made them carnally minded.

Jer 18:4 And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.

Rom 3:10 As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

If mankind did have that free will ability, the decision to accept Christ or not would be a "work" of man. A person would then have something to boast about concerning why they are saved and why others are not.

But Paul says that no one has anything to boast about concerning their salvation:

Eph 2:8 For ye are saved by grace, through faith; and this not of yourselves; it is God's gift: 9 not on the principle of works, that no one might boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has before prepared that we should walk in them.

If Christ decides to come to a person in the present age to call them out, it is a spiritual event which happens within them (**Luke 17:21**). Christ is now spirit and cannot be seen with human eyes. In fact, Christ will never again be seen with human eyes. He will remain in “heaven” (the spiritual realm) until the last person of mankind is saved in the final age:

Acts 3:20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

When Christ comes to an unbeliever, He will come to them suddenly and spiritually, just as Christ came to Paul on the Damascus Road. When Christ comes, He will give the person the Early Rain of the Spirit which will cause them to fall to the earth (in type) just as Paul did. When Paul fell to the earth, it symbolized a new believer’s submission to Christ in a carnal way. The "earth" is a symbol for mankind's carnality.

Since a new believer is left carnally minded upon receiving the Early Rain of the Spirit, they will remain spiritually blind. They will not have the ability to understand who the voice is that is speaking to them. Christ will remain hidden from their understanding. Because they do not have "ears that can hear", the person must rely on being told who the voice is, just as Paul had to do.

After the voice told Paul that it was Jesus who was speaking to him, Paul answers back to Jesus and calls Him Lord. Since scripture says that no one can call Jesus Lord but by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we know that this event happening to Paul is the Early Rain of the Spirit.

1Cor 12:3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit.

Paul calls Jesus “Lord” but still lacks the ability to know Jesus for himself. Christ remains hidden (veiled) from Paul’s understanding, just as He remains hidden from the understanding of all who experience the Early Rain of the Spirit.

Paul then asks Christ “what wilt thou have me to do”?

Since Paul remains carnally minded, he believes that he must do something to earn the Lord’s favor. The Lord answers him by saying to arise and go into the city. The city represents the Great City which is Mystery Babylon the Great, Sodom, Egypt and earthly Jerusalem. These spiritual terms all represent mankind’s spiritually worsened carnal spirit. It is mankind's carnal nature that causes mankind to approach Christ by "works" (religion) rather than by faith alone.

Christ then tells Paul that once he is in the city, someone there will tell him what he must do. That someone is a minister of Satan who is just as spiritually blind as Paul is.

2Cor 11:14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 15 Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

From verse 7, we see that no one with Paul experienced what Paul did. This visitation by Christ is only for the person who is being called out from the world. It is a spiritual event and happens within Paul. Human eyes cannot see Christ.

After Paul stands up and opens his eyes, he “saw no man”. Paul’s blindness represented his spiritual blindness and was the reason why Paul had to ask who was speaking to him. Paul had no ability to see Christ for himself. Scripture goes on to say that Paul had to be led by the hand. This is symbolic of the blind leading the blind.

After Paul arrives in Damascus, verse 9 says that Paul remained blind and did not eat or drink for three days. Paul’s lack of being able to eat and drink represents Paul’s spiritual blindness when he was not able to consume Christ’s bread of truth or drink the wine of Christ’s blood which He shed for the New Covenant of Grace through Faith. The number 3 is also a spiritual symbol and it represents a spiritual process. The “three days” does not represent a literal length of time as “taught by man’s wisdom” (1Cor 2:13). It represents the spiritual process which will eventually cause Paul to "fall away" and lose his salvation. The end product of the spiritual process results in Paul becoming "worse than the first" (Mat 12:43-45); a "man of sin".

The second set of verses below represents Paul’s repentance and subsequent conversion:

Acts 9:10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. 11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, 12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. 13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: 14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. 15 But the Lord said unto him, go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. 17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. 18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. 19 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened.

It is no coincidence that Paul was staying at the house of a man named “Judas” (a type for the Man of Sin who Paul had become).

Ananias is a “type” for Christ. It is also no coincidence that the street to where Ananias was sent is called "Straight".

The crooked path represents the pathway of “works” under the Old Covenant of Law. The straight path represents the pathway of faith under the New Covenant of Grace through Faith.

Lam 3:9 He hath enclosed my ways with hewn stone (represents the Law), he hath made my paths crooked.

Isa 42:16 And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.

At the time Ananias received the vision, Paul was praying. Although scripture does not give us the details of Paul’s prayer, we can surmise that Paul was repenting and praying for understanding of what had befallen him.

This verse applies:

Luke 11:13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

In verse 17, Christ (Ananias) comes to Paul a second time and heals his spiritual blindness by giving him the Latter Rain of the Spirit. Upon being baptized by the Spirit, Paul “arose” (verse 18) and was born as a child of God. It is at this time that Paul is gathered together with Christ in heaven (spiritually speaking).

The verses below apply to what happened to Paul:

Mat 24:31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Isa 11:11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. 12 And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

Because Paul's spiritual blindness was healed, verse 19 says that Paul received "meat" (truth) and was strengthened. This event is symbolized by the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:9) and is the spiritual fulfillment of the Lord's Supper.

Mat 26:29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day (day of salvation) when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

From the nourishment that Paul received during the Marriage Supper/Lord's Supper, the brightness of Christ's appearance will destroy Paul's worsened carnality of his spirit (Great Harlot/Great City Babylon/Sodom/earthly Jerusalem) and Man of Sin (spirit of anti-Christ).

Rev 18:10 Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.

2Thes 2:8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

After Paul's judgment is complete, Paul will be empowered to walk by faith in Jesus Christ. This is the true and narrow pathway which leads to maturity as a son of God.

SUMMATION

The Old Covenant of Law is based on man's works. It is physical and outward. In contrast, the New Covenant of Grace through Faith is based on the works of Christ. It is spiritual and inward.

Mankind was created spiritually marred and subject to vanity. Because of these flaws, we quickly develop a carnal nature & carnal mind which causes us to sin. But because God wants His children to be like Him, God sent Christ to save (convert) us.

1John 4:14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

To accomplish mankind's salvation, Christ created a plan. This plan is the Pathway to Salvation and it involves traveling both the Wide Path to destruction and the Narrow Path to life in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Below is my understanding of the steps on the pathway to salvation that Christ will cause His Elect to travel:

- Christ gives the Early Rain of the Spirit to call a person to be a saint. This includes the "many" and the "few" (**Mat 22:14**). This is when the person will make a confession of faith and will enter the church (**1Cor 12:3**). However, the new believer will remain spiritually blind, carnally minded and unconverted (**Mat 12:43-45, Mark 8:15-25 & Paul's experience on the Damascus Road**).

- The spirit of anti-Christ will then enter the unconverted believer and cause the Abomination of Desolation to occur within them. This is when the new believer consumes Satan's leavened bread and becomes "worse than the first"; a Man of Sin who mixes their own works with faith under the New Covenant. They have now received the Mark of the Beast.
- The new believer then "falls away" (mixes works with faith/sin that leads to death) and loses their salvation. They unknowingly enter the apostate church. The "many" who are only called to be saints will remain in this lost condition until they die.
- For the Elect (the "few"), Christ will "come again" to them and pour out the Latter Rain of the Spirit (Spirit of Truth/Baptism of the Spirit). This is when an Elect believer is sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise (**Eph 1:10-14**). With the Latter Rain of the Spirit, the fallen away believer will repent of their works and make Christ's pathway straight for Him to "appear".
- Also at this time, the believer's spiritual blindness will be healed.
- Christ then "appears" and gathers the believer (now born again as child of God) to heaven (**spiritually speaking, not literally, Mat 24:29-31**). This is when the Marriage of the Lamb occurs.
- Now with "eyes that can see", the Marriage Supper of the Lamb/Lord's Supper will occur where Christ feeds the believer His Bread and New Wine (truth of the New Covenant). This is when they will "see" the Abomination of Desolation which previously occurred within themselves when the spirit of anti-Christ entered them (**Mat 24:15-16**).
- The truth the believer receives will begin the Day of the Lord/Thousand Years Reign (judgment).
- During the Day of the Lord, the spirit of anti-Christ and the believer's carnal spirit (Great Harlot) will be "taken" from within the believer and cast into the Lake of Fire for destruction (**shown in Rev 19:20 and Mat 24:40-41**).
- The believer is now converted.
- After the conversion process is complete, all that will remain within the believer is the Holy Spirit who will begin maturing the new child of God into a perfect man by feeding them "meat" accompanied by any necessary chastisement. This maturing process will teach them righteousness (**Isa 26:9, Phi 2:13**).
- Next comes the time of testing by Satan when he is loosed from his prison (**Rev 20:7-10**). After the believer passes their time of testing, it will be said that they have overcome this world just as Christ overcame this world (**Rev 3:21**).

- The believer is now ready for the bodily resurrection which will occur at the end of the age (redemption of the body).

Note: Unlike for the Elect, the Day of the Lord will precede the pouring out of the Latter Rain for the “lost” in the final age. Because of this difference, the lost of the final age will experience wrath. See Joel chapter 2.

God established that mankind’s salvation will occur in two groups and at two different times.

The first group of mankind to be saved is the called & chosen group. They are the Elect, the First-Fruits of the harvest. They are saved in this present age.

The second group to be saved is the balance of mankind. They will be saved at the end of the next and final age.

When Christ’s work is finished, 100% of mankind will have the spiritual nature and mind of God. We will all truly be His children.

The salvation of mankind is a certainty. The Word of God proclaims it, God has spoken it and He will bring it to pass.

Isa 45:21 Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? And there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. 22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. 23 I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

Isa 55:8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. 10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: 11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. 12 For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

1Tim 2:3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; 6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

When a person understands Christ with a carnal mind, that mind refuses to believe that Christ can succeed in saving 100% of mankind. To believe that Christ can accomplish all that He said He would do takes FAITH. It takes the same faith that Joshua and Caleb had when they spied out the Promised Land with the 10 other spies from the Nation of Israel. All twelve of the spies saw the “giants in the land” but only Joshua and Caleb had the faith to believe that those giants could be defeated. Those giants represent the strongholds of our carnal mind. Under the New Covenant, Christ will defeat them so that we can forever dwell in the Promised Land (Salvation, child of God). To get there, we must trust in Christ and walk by faith - and that ability comes from the work of Christ which He performs within us. He leaves nothing up to chance or to mankind’s “will”. Christ will give us all the necessary spiritual gifts that we need to be converted and saved. And Christ gives us those gifts solely because of His love & grace and not because of any free will “works” from mankind which we believe would make us worthy of His salvation.

Eph 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Simply put, mankind is not saved because it is our “will” to be saved; we are saved because it is God’s “will” to save us. He truly is a good and loving Father to us all.

It is my sincere hope that Christ will give all who read this paper the ability to understand and receive the GREAT MYSTERY that is Christ and His Church.