

**Are
you
cast
down?**



**You can
find
joy!**

Isaiah 61:3

Index

1. Man's condition on the earth
2. Fear God and gain wisdom
3. Low self-worth, one result of violating the conscience
4. God classifies all people in one of three categories
 - A. The Jews
 - B. The Gentiles
 - C. The church of God
5. Conscience, God's instrument to protect man against his adamic nature
6. The devil gives power to the deaf
7. Man's adamic nature, the pathway to darkness

8. Being downcast, the result of man's natural ways
9. Blood atonement to cover man's sin
10. God's answer to man's unfixable condition
11. The Christian, a target of the powers of darkness
12. How is this power of God brought forth in a Christian's life?

1. Man's condition on the earth

From the time Adam and Eve brought sin on the earth, all creation has suffered. All people suffer injustices and on occasion wanton crimes, and all are affected by the violence and wars that prevail in this world. All these are the result of Adam and Eve breaking the commandment of the Creator. Hence, all suffer the result. This is man's plight on the earth.

All people have a judgment of themselves and of other people they know or converse with. It is natural for a person to make every-day judgments or decisions. These decisions can bring him to the highest good that he is capable of, or to a place of misery in this life. This can be seen when looking at the history of mankind.

Because of this sin in mankind, the Creator said that He was sorry He made man (Genesis 6:5-6). There is no one on the planet that has lived through all of God's righteous judgments (Psalms 14:3). Therefore, all creation suffers to this day, and man in particular.

2. Fear God and gain wisdom

If a person has made wrong decisions and is honest with himself, he will see himself, in comparison with the Creator's righteousness, as totally incomplete or evil.

When King David's sin had given him no peace and he was finally exposed by the prophet Nathan, he repented. When he compared his unrighteous acts and thoughts in comparison to the Creator's holiness, David said, "*Behold I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me*" (Psalms 51:5).

In the day that Job listened, as the Creator spoke to him, reality came into his comprehension and he said "*I had heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes*" (Job 42:5-6 JND).

When Isaiah the prophet came into the presence of the Lord, he said: "*...Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts*" (Isaiah 6:5).

The Holy Spirit, through the Apostle Paul, gives a clear picture of man's plight as recorded in the letter to the Romans, "*For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good (in himself) I do not find*" (Romans 7:18).

"The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do (His precepts)...." (Psalms 111:10 JND).

"Surely His (God's) salvation is near to those who fear Him..." (Psalms 85:9).

"Let not let your heart envy sinners, but be zealous for the fear of the Lord all the day long" (Proverbs 23:17).

3. Low self-worth, one result of violating the conscience

If a person listens to his conscience, there will be a certain reverence for the Creator. God has given man a conscience to protect him from his own adamic nature (Mark 14:66-72). When a person lives a lifestyle of not listening to his conscience, he will find that his sin, wrong decisions and actions bring consequences. Sooner or later it will likely produce a spirit of heaviness (being downcast) (Isaiah 61:3), which is the fruit of this lifestyle. This will be the result for a Christian, but not necessarily for the person who has hardened his conscience and has no use for the Creator, because his conscience is seared.

A person who acts against or violates his conscience is inviting darkness and low self-esteem into his soul. Scripture instructs us to not “*give place (in our life) to the devil*” (Ephesians 4:27). When a person decides to follow darkness, this fellowship with darkness only increases as he finds darkness an acceptable path to

follow in his life. The eye gate (eye) of a person is the opening for evil to enter (Matthew 6:23). If his eye fully receives the light of God, who is Jesus Christ, his whole person will reflect God's light. If his eye receives and follows the darkness of the lust of the flesh (his adamic nature), the lust of the eye (the world), or the pride of life (the devil) (1 John 2:16), his soul will find this darkness to be an acceptable pathway of life.

4. God classifies all people in one of three categories

“Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles nor to the church of God”
(1 Corinthians 10:32).

A. The Jews: *“The curses of God are upon the house of the wicked”* (Proverbs 3:33). This is shown in Israel, God's chosen earthly people. God spoke to Israel through the prophet Moses. They were told if they obeyed what God said, He would bring blessings upon them (Deuteronomy 28:1-14).

They could live in His gifts throughout their existence on the earth, and all nations would be subject to them (verse 1).

In Deuteronomy 28:15-68, it states that the curses of God would be Israel's if they refused to believe Him in all that He told them. There were short times in Israel's history when they believed and followed the words of God's instructions. In these times, God blessed them, put away their enemies and prospered them. However, in the overall history of Israel, unbelief was their normal response to God's Word. Because of this response, God said to them, through the prophet Hosea, "*My God will cast them away, because they did not obey Him; and they shall be wanderers among the nations*" (Hosea 9:17).

This was prophesied in the 8th century B.C., and fulfilled when 10 of the 12 tribes of Israel were taken in battle by the nation of Assyria and carried out of their land. In approximately the 6th century B.C., the last two tribes lost the battle with the Babylonians and they were taken captive into Babylon. Seventy

years later (approx. 536 B.C.), as prophesied by the prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 25:11), a remnant of Jews returned to Israel from Babylon and Persia. They began to build up the nation again until 70 A.D. and 135 A.D. At these two times they rebelled against Roman rule over them, resulting in the Romans dispersing them into many nations. Today the Jews are scattered throughout the known world. This shows the accuracy of Hosea's prophecy, which has been completely fulfilled. From that time until the present day, Jews are scattered among all the nations of the earth.

B. The Gentiles: This is what Scripture calls the people who were not chosen by God to be His earthly people. (1 Corinthians 10:32). In Scripture, Jews and Gentiles who have not believed in Jesus Christ and followed Him are called "earth dwellers" (Revelation 6:10; 11:10; 13:8; 14:6; and 17:8).

Earth dwellers do not believe God, who proclaimed He made the heavens, the earth, and man upon it (Isaiah 45:12). Earth dwellers look at this life as though this is

all there is, or ever will be. They believe that when a person dies, he goes into nothingness. There is no eternity, no after life; this life is all there is. However, Scripture teaches that all people whose names are not written in the “Lamb’s Book of Life” will enter into the final judgment of God. In Scripture, this is called “The Great White Throne Judgment” (Revelation 20:11). All people who have not followed God’s Word, whose sins are not paid for by the blood of Jesus Christ, will be judged by God and cast into the “Lake of Fire” (Revelation 20:15) forever and ever (Matthew 18:7-9). Scripture calls these people “children of wrath” (Ephesians 2:2-3), and they are found in the first and second of the three groups of people who dwell on the earth today.

C. The Church of God: In this booklet we will concern ourselves with the third group, the Church of God. This group has professed faith in Jesus Christ, and desires to hear the Creator and follow His Son into eternal life.

As we have seen earlier, from the testimony of godly men in ages past like Job, Isaiah, King David, and the Apostle Paul, man is evil in comparison to, or in the presence of God.

Man has a nature inherited from the first created man, who sinned against the commandment of the Lord. Adam was created perfect and without sin; but when the woman received Satan's deception, Adam followed. They received into their nature, and passed on into all future generations, a propensity to receive evil and practice it. Throughout time, Scripture shows the sinful nature that was passed down from Adam to all men. All men, following their adamic nature, receive the reward of sin which is eternal death (separation from God). "*The wages of sin is death...*" (Romans 6:23).

"For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners...." (Romans 5:19) and again *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned..."* (Romans 5:12).

5. Conscience, God's instrument to protect man against his adamic nature

When God created Adam and put him in the Garden of Eden, He gave him only one commandment; that was to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17). Adam and his wife, Eve, had the word of God to live by and follow.

There is no reason to believe that Adam, at this time, had a conscience, because he did not have a corrupted nature. He did not know what evil was, or death. He was a pure and perfect natural man, who lived by the word of God.

When Adam disobeyed what God commanded him by yielding to Satan's temptations, he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and received knowledge of the difference between good and evil (Genesis 3:22). Before that time, he did not know good, or evil. And through this knowledge of good and evil, Adam received a conscience (the ability to discern right from wrong). Because the tree of eternal life was in the Garden of

Eden, God put Adam and Eve out of the garden and placed a flaming sword and Cherubim to keep them out of the garden (verses 22-24). Adam would now live in the world by his own corrupted nature. If he followed his nature and disregarded his conscience, it would destroy him. If Adam listened to his conscience, it would protect him against the devil and his own nature while he lived in a corrupted world (Romans 2:14-15; 2 Corinthians 4:2; 1 Timothy 1:5). All of mankind inherited this corrupted nature from Adam, and all men would live by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, from Adam's day, on.

Scripture teaches that all people in the world are gods (judges) (Psalms 82:6). Therefore all people make judgments as to everything in their lives. These judgments are based on what the outward (elementary) man sees, feels, touches, hears, tastes, and perceives. In general, man's decisions are on the basis of his view of the material world. In Scripture, it is said this way: *“For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh,*

the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father (God) but is of the world” (1 John 2:17).

With man’s adamic nature fully adhering to and receiving these things as a normal way of life, man’s protection against destroying himself and others is his God-given conscience. This conscience is a God awareness of the holiness and the eternal laws of the Creator. Scripture shows this God-given protection to man in the following verse: *“For when Gentiles (non-Jews), who do not have the law (Law of Moses), by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them” (Romans 2:14-15).*

The human race, even with the laws of God in their heart, would surely destroy themselves without the conscience; for man, by not listening to the conscience, has an awareness of retribution when violating it. One could ask, is this true for all people? There are those

who have not received what their conscience has told them time after time, until they live by lies received from the devil, so that they themselves believe the lies.

“Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron” (1 Timothy 4:2). Jesus said, *“The devil is the father of lies”* (John 8:44 NAS).

The person who listens to his conscience keeps himself from much guilt and sorrow. In general, a person who follows his conscience does not experience being downcast.

The person who does not follow his conscience lives with much guilt, shielded by lies. This guilt becomes a tool of the devil to destroy him or her, and keeps such a person from internal peace. Following the devil into his kingdom (darkness) causes man to break God’s laws, with the result that he pays the penalty many times over.

The darkness, brought into the soul by a compromised conscience, weighs on that person and eventually brings that person into a spirit of heaviness (Isaiah 61:3).

If he does not repent of this deed (s) or action, it becomes more and more a way of life and his conscience becomes hardened. This then allows the kingdom of darkness to further invade his spirit and soul. The person who does not judge the evil he has allowed into his soul increases strife in his soul. *“He who loves transgression loves strife, and he who exalts his gate seeks destruction”* (Proverbs 17:19). And, *“the beginning of strife is like the releasing of water...”* (Proverbs 17:14).

The end result will be that a person will live without peace, and trouble will follow him all his life. An excellent example of this is when King David sinned against the Lord, and then tried to hide it. Scripture records his dilemma when this saint of God hangs on to his sin without repentance:

“When I kept silent, my bones grew old through my groaning all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was turned into the drought of summer” (Psalms 32: 3-4).

For the person who has the Spirit of Jesus living within him, it is the same, if he ignores the prompting of his conscience. The person who will not confess any and all sin lives with a bad conscience, and offends the Spirit of Jesus living within him. A Christian, living in this state, is inviting the chastisement of the Lord upon himself, (Hebrews 12: 3-15).

The spiritual condition and the character of a Christian is revealed by how he deals with his sin. If the person tries to hide or justify his sin, it will bring darkness into his soul, resulting in his living in a form of darkness which impairs his judgment. If willfulness and pride overcomes the conscience (by hardening the heart), the soul may harbor bitterness and anger. (It is someone else's fault!) If a person who is a Christian (the Spirit of Jesus is in this person) ignores his conscience, a spirit of heaviness will be within him, and may cause many sicknesses in the mind and body. This condition may go on for many years, and lead to physical sickness or remain until he gives up the darkness. It may eventually result in the “...*sin unto death*...” (1 John 5:16).

The end result for many people is a life of no peace. A conscience not listened to can result in: a prideful life, broken relationships with family members, divorce, a life of drugs or alcohol, a pursuit of religion without truth, prison, sexual immorality, depression, mental illness, or a multitude of other human abnormalities.

Scripture gives wisdom to the way of the disobedient: “*The foolishness of a man twists his way, and his heart frets against the Lord*” (Proverbs 19:3).

6. The devil gives power to the deaf

Sin is the switch that turns on the conscience. Soul power is activated (our will refusing truth) in a person who is attempting to shut out the voice of their conscience (1 Kings 21:1-16; Psalms 32:9). The devil finds ripe ground to help direct those who resist their conscience (John 13:21-30). Truth is the enemy of a

willful and rebellious heart. A path of deception into the kingdom of darkness is the alternative for any person bent on worshiping his own will, (pursuing self) (Matthew 16:21-25). When a person gives himself over to following darkness through lies and self pursuit, the light of God becomes dim. The more an untruth is believed and followed, the greater the darkness within.

Such a person may be very religious in the church, may even be one of the clergy or even a teacher; they may be regarded highly by friends and acquaintances alike. They may look fine to others, but light is shut out by a chosen dark path. Those who disregard truth (God's Word), are "*always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth*" (2 Timothy 3:7). Furthermore, because they do not receive the truth in Christ, the light of God, they become "*evil men and impostors....deceiving and being deceived*" (2 Timothy 3:13).

Jesus warned of this preventable evil that takes hold of anyone that receives darkness (a lie) in place of light. "*Therefore take heed that the light which is in you is*

not darkness” (Luke 11:35). Darkness replaces light in a person who receives and follows darkness (lies and deception).

7. Man’s adamic nature, the pathway to darkness

“For there is revealed wrath of God from heaven upon all impiety, and unrighteousness of men holding the truth in unrighteousness” (Romans 1:18 JND).

Wars are fought, relationships are broken, litigation is pursued; divorces resulting from conflict and friends becoming foes, because people accept unrighteous views of life as righteous. Many times estrangements are the result of people believing lies and building their lives on them. *“Holding the truth in unrighteousness.”* When a person gives up truth as a way of making judgments, he is susceptible to Satan’s deception and makes life-long decisions based on untruths. These untruths are where the kingdom of darkness thrives, and builds and enlarges in the human heart.

For those who do not belong to Jesus Christ, who is truth, and do not accept truth, “... *God will send them a strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness*” (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12).

If truth is not believed, then something else will be. That something else will lead a person’s judgments, and allow dark reasoning to direct his or her pathway of life. Israel rejected the revelation that God gave them of Himself, and chose instead to follow their own reasoning and judgment, not only for themselves but for their country. The prophet Isaiah gave the prophecy, to the end result of their rejection of truth: “*Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil, who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight*” (Isaiah 5:20-21).

Scripture calls man’s ways manifested in the world, “*The mystery of lawlessness*” (2 Thessalonians 2:7).

The greater the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life (Genesis 3:6; 1 John 2:16), the more evil and wickedness will be released into a person and their families. This may ultimately affect the whole nation. Out of this wickedness by many people, come laws that make evil legal but morally corrupt, and become a life style for many. Therefore light and righteousness become illegal. This usually means that speaking out against evil (with God's laws) becomes illegal because men make laws against speaking the Creator's commandments.

We might wonder how a people or nation can fall into such a way of living when they have experienced better. Jesus said, "*And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil*" (John 3:19). From this verse, man's nature is revealed; he loves darkness. He is, by nature, in alignment with evil. Many times he justifies his evil deeds by proclaiming a higher cause.

People look at being right in their own opinions; God looks at truth, His Son, Jesus Christ (John 14:6). He is the standard of Truth and Light. Jesus said, *“I Am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life”* (John 8:12).

Have you ever wondered where living a lie without correcting it leads men and women? God answers, *“Therefore God gave them up to uncleanness — who exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen”* (Romans 1:24-25).

8. Being downcast, the result of man’s natural ways

Scripture declares that disobedience to the God who is over heaven and earth brings death (Romans 5:12).

“For the wages of sin is death...” (Romans 6:23).

However, before death comes, all people suffer from the effects of sin. In this day and age, a spirit of heaviness and being downcast are the main compo-

nents of many people's lives. In this country (USA), anti-depression drugs are in high use. Religion, psychology, counseling (the world is full of advice), drugs, philosophy and multitudes of other ways are used to circumvent this condition. There is no doubt that being downcast is one of the abnormalities being treated today, with no answer in sight. We are told that clinical depression is caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain. It appears there are causes for this; **the first is caused by nature without consent of the individual. Like anything in the body, the various organs can malfunction without a known cause. Clinical depression, without a known cause, cannot be addressed in this booklet. More facts are available at <http://www.healthline.com>.**

The second cause is from a person's decisions that have resulted in a bad outcome, or the decisions of others that have brought totally undesirable circumstances into a person's life and thought processes.

"For as he (man) thinks in his heart, so is he"
(Proverbs 23:7).

What a man does or follows in his life, is in general, what he thinks. This leads to his destruction, or his success. This destruction does not necessarily mean only his physical body. It can mean spiritual deception (he likes what this or that clergyman says, even though what the clergyman is teaching may be heresy, lies and deceptions). Success usually means, to the person who has a vision, that he has accomplished what he was thinking; again this is not necessarily for the good. Both can cause the person to be downcast. Scripture teaches that God has an ideal for man to be totally complete, and this is found only in His Son, Jesus Christ.

9. Blood atonement to cover man's sin

When Adam sinned against the Lord God, sin brought Adam into the kingdom of darkness, which put a barrier between Adam and God. However, God took an animal and killed it, shed the animal's blood and put the skin on Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:21). This covering, which was received by the man and

his wife, became God's only way for man to receive redemption until Jesus' blood was shed as the final covering for sin. In other words, death through shedding of blood (a penalty for sin committed), produced a covering for man's sin. God made this absolutely clear in Scripture: *"For the life of the flesh is in the blood and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul"* (Leviticus 17:11).

"... and without blood-shedding there is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22).

10. God's answer to man's unfixable condition

When Jesus Christ came on the earth, He came to be the complete and final sacrifice for man's sin. All blood sacrifices up to that time were pointing to Jesus Christ, God's Redeemer through the cross, where His blood would be shed.

The following is recorded in the Bible regarding John the Baptist, God's prophet to Israel: "*On the morrow he sees Jesus coming to him, and says Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world*" (John 1:29 JND).

Jesus Christ came into the world to die for the sins of the world. For the Christian, who has received God's offer, Christ's blood was sacrificed for his sins. Scripture teaches this, "*...And if anyone (a follower of Jesus Christ) sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world*" (1 John 2:1-2). "This means that by dying for us, He freed us from the guilt of our sins and restored us to God by providing the needed satisfaction, and by removing every barrier to fellowship. God can show mercy to us because Christ has satisfied the claims of justice" Mac Donald. Christ paid for our sins.

Notice that all people are included in this work of God and all people can receive this free gift of God. It shows in the following Scripture how a person can receive this gift:

“Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel (good news of Jesus Christ) which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you — unless you believed in vain.

For I delivered to you first of all that which I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture and that He was buried and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

As man has no power or ability to reconcile himself to his Creator, God came into this world in the form of man to bring salvation to all people. What man could not do for himself, God has done in and through His Son.

It shows that the person indwelt by the Holy Spirit which gives him the desire and power to follow Jesus Christ is the only complete person in this world. “... *and you are complete in Him who is the head of all principality and power*” (Colossians 2:10). This completeness of Jesus Christ means that the fullness of the Godhead (Deity) dwelt in Him (verse 9). The Christian has been made complete in Jesus Christ, fully acceptable to God. He also has been given the Holy Spirit of God to indwell or live in him so he can live unto God. In other words, he has been given the nature of Jesus Christ to think, move and live unto God. We can easily see that there is no heaviness or being downcast in this Spirit-controlled life. This does not mean that a Christian is not human in all his attributes. He can experience what all people can and do at various times. However, the spirit of heaviness and being downcast many times comes from sorrow, helplessness without hope; and for many people it becomes an unmovable stone in their life. This becomes so because of what they are thinking. It is

common when actions of others bring about sorrow. A Christian has the remedy for this problem. He is told: “*Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils; for what account is to be made of him?*” (Isaiah 2:22 JND).

This is the right course, but how can a Christian do this? Scripture supplies the answer. “*If then you were raised with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Get your mind on the things above, not on those on the earth*” (Colossians 3:1-2).

When our mind and heart are engaged and set upon Christ above (in prayer), Scripture reading, meditation on God’s Word, and praise and worship of the Father and the Son, a Christian will find power to overcome the world, the flesh (our own and others), and to resist the devil. When a Christian directs his life upon these things, he will gain a renewed mind. “*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the compassions of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, {which is} your intelligent*

service. And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of {your} mind, that ye may prove what {is} the good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:1-2). A heart that is taken up with Christ will find His completeness to be a practical way of life. If he will allow the truths found in Scripture to control his pathway in life, he will find the treasures of God in Christ a life-changing event. *“In the multitude of my anxieties within me, Your comforts delight my soul” (Psalms 94:19).* If his heart is divided between Christ: the church, clergy, psychology, worldly desires, philosophies of men, religion and other such things, his help will not be complete. *“Cease ye from man.....” (Isaiah 2:22),* and look unto God’s provision for your help; then claim and experience His knowledge and wisdom, which is found only in Jesus Christ. *“Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name” (Psalms 103:1).*

A person cannot set his mind and heart on praising and worshiping the Father and the Son of God in thankfulness and blessing, and be downcast

at the same time. A spirit of heaviness may overcome a Christian for a time, but spiritual weapons of praise and thankfulness to God, along with blessing the Father and the Son, will destroy the power of man's weakness and the devil's advantage (2 Corinthians 2:11). This is true especially when we thank God for all things. "*...in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). This may seem strange, but it includes our unpleasant present condition. Facing all our problems is a spiritual battle that God can win if we turn them over to Him and give thanks in all things. An example of this is when Jehoshaphat was king; Israel faced a battle that was too strong for them. They diligently sought and looked to God for their help and the Lord answered them. "*...Thus says the Lord to you: Do not be afraid nor be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's*" (2 Chronicles 20:15).

The result for Israel, when they called on God, was that He undertook for them. King Jehoshaphat spoke these words to them:

“... Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe His Prophets, and you shall prosper. And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the Lord, and who should praise the beauty of His holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: Praise the Lord, for His mercy endures forever. Now when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated” (2 Chronicles 20:20-22).

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in (time of) trouble” (Psalms 46:1).

11. The Christian, a target of the powers of darkness

“For the rest, brethren, be strong in (the) Lord, and in the might of His strength. Put on the panoply

(the complete armor) of God, that ye may be able to stand against the artifices (wiles) of the devil; because our struggle is not against blood and flesh, but against principalities and against authorities, against the universal lords of this darkness, against spiritual (powers) of wickedness in the heavenlies” Ephesians 6:10-12 JND).

Only the Christian in this world possesses the necessary tools of God to fight off these powers and put them in subjection in his life; he can walk in and be directed by the Holy Spirit in this world. These powers of darkness are sent into the world to destroy all people. The Christian who walks after the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to the Scripture, becomes a special enemy of these dark powers because he or she is the reflective light of God in this dark world. Jesus said to those who follow Him, “*Ye are the light of the world...*” (Matthew 5:14).

God told Israel, in Deuteronomy 8:3, how they were to live. Jesus quoted this passage to Satan when he tried to tempt Jesus to follow him, “... *It is written, man*

shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4).

When the Christian walks in this life after the whole counsel of God, he will overcome these powers of darkness arrayed against him. He will be living off of the tree of life, which is the Son of God.

12. How is this power of God brought forth in a Christian’s life?

“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death” (Romans 6:3)?

“Knowing this, that our old man (our adamic nature) was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin” (Romans 6:6).

These Scriptures show the Christian that he was crucified with Jesus Christ some 2,000 years ago, and that the Christian’s death with Him was final. When he believed the gospel of Jesus Christ, he (his adamic

nature) entered into death and the grave. As the adamic nature will not enter into the kingdom of God, it has no part with God. The devil no longer has any power over this dead man. Having been united with Christ in His death, the believer is freed from the power of death coming from sin. *“For the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death”* (Romans 8:2). This is the first time in his life that he has been free from sin. However, God has not left this work of redemption of man there. God acted.

“Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from among the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection” (Romans 6:4-5).

As these verses show, the believer died with Christ, and was then given a new life through being raised with Him in resurrection. The believer is a dead man with a

new resurrected life, a new nature, a new vision, and an eternal hope. The Spirit of God dwells within his spirit. He is a new man, complete in Christ. This is a spiritual reality that is entered into by faith in what the Holy Spirit has written in the Holy Scriptures. As a believer understands the promises of God and takes hold of them by faith, his life is being transformed and conformed into the mind of Christ, hence the image of Christ (Romans 8:29).

“For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2:16).

The believer has a renewed mind to be free to live and walk in oneness with God. He has something higher than his conscience to guide and direct his life. The Scriptures are written by the Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 2:13), and the Holy Spirit brings the believer into the full knowledge of the wisdom of God and His revelation for man. By faith, following the revelation of God, the believer develops into full stature. *“till we all come to the unity of the faith*

and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro carried about by every wind of doctrine by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.....” (Ephesians 4:13-14). Regarding wind of doctrine; gullibility and weakness of faith are at the bottom of this problem.

Believers who follow Christ, by faith as revealed in Scripture, will release the Holy Spirit to work in them and they will be “...*more than conquerors through Him who loved us*” (Roman 8:37-38).

D. Neely

8 - 25 - 15

Note - Reference Page

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The Faith of Abraham and the Christian

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Dead men can't sin

Worship, what God has established

Unless you are converted and become as a little child

Does God hold the Christian accountable to keep the Saturday Sabbath?

Dressing for my glory or for the glory of God
The Commandments
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God's pathway to Himself
Believe not every spirit
The works of man or the work of God through Christ Jesus
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