

## **Bible Study #3**

### ***The Foundation Upon which the Church Is Built***

The Apostle Paul said that as a skilled master builder, he laid a foundation and no other foundation can be laid other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ (1 Co 3:10-11), a stumbling stone, rejected by those builders who looked to a physical temple, who looked for a physical king, who searched for the kingdom of God in the dust of this world. Jesus said His kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36). And if His kingdom is not of this world, then the foundation of His House is also not of this world, meaning simply that the foundation Paul laid isn't a "thing" that can be directly observed or measured, but concepts that must be seen with the eyes of the heart.

The temple of God will be measured when the seven endtime years of tribulation begin, but it is measured where Christ is (Rev 11:1-2), not where the Apostle John was before being in vision on the Lord's day (Rev 1:10). It will be measured when and where John's vision occurs, with the setting for John's vision placing the Apostle before the throne of the Most High when the seals are removed from the Scroll by the Lamb, thereby loosening the four horsemen of the Apocalypse and the endtime years of tribulation that immediately preceded the coming of the Messiah. The temple cannot be measured here on earth, for it is not here.

Jesus' kingdom is still, two millennia after Calvary, not of this world so His kingdom cannot be found in the ashes used to fire clay vessels that break when dropped. It cannot be found on stone tablets or on stone thrones or in royal bloodlines or in commonwealths of nations or in personal liberty and human rights. It cannot be found in pure water or in unpolluted rivers or in heirloom seeds or in organically-grown fruits and vegetables. Certainly many disciples search for God in these places, mistaking the shadow for the substance (Rom 1:20). But the kingdom of God cannot be found where it has been most sought by the mass of mankind. It cannot even be found where it hasn't been sought on this earth. Again, it is not here. Thus, those physical things that human beings do, and have done to please God, deeds that stretch from sacrificing bulls and goats to sacrificing their own children, are spiritually meaningless; they are deeds that, to God, are worth less than a used Kotex. Strapping on a suicide belt and blowing oneself into a pink vapor avails not a wit: the person is merely a dead murderer who has saved his or her parents the cost of a burial plot. The person gone by an act of his or her own hand lost whatever chance he or she might have had to be in the first resurrection of the dead, if such a thing is possible—and it is possible, for the kingdom of God is not of this world, where the cessation of breath ends life based on the cellular oxidation of sugars. The kingdom of God will not reign over the geography of this world; will not reign over sticks and stones, plains and mountains, cities of concrete and glass, roads of gravel and tar. Rather, the kingdom of God will reign over the mental topography of humankind, over thoughts and desires that originate in the subconscious depths of the mind where no person can go with a tape measure and plumb-bob. And the foundation that the Apostle Paul laid in concepts and precepts is also not in this world, but in the Jerusalem above, an actual city that is not of this world, nevertheless a city with a king, law, territory, and temple. The foundation Paul laid is on the inside of earthenware cups that when purified inside will be clean inside and out.

The measuring rod given in vision to the Apostle John isn't calibrated in meters and centimeters, or in feet and inches. Rather, it measures the concepts and precepts with which the living stones of the temple have been sculpted. It measures righteousness that comes from faith—it is the rule of law that forms the second covenant made with physically uncircumcised Israelites on the plains of Moab, this covenant never enacted by the nation that pursued righteousness through the works of its hands.

Perhaps the most difficult concept that disciples will encounter is that God's kingdom is not of this world, that it will never directly reign over the geography of the earth, that the foundation of the Church is not footers poured from concrete. Human beings want the kingdom to be here now; want the Church to be an organization they can join, somewhere they can place their letter. Humans want perfection from corruption, want this world to become a better place than it presently is—and it will become a better world when its present ruler, that old serpent Satan the devil, is bound in a bottomless pit for a thousand years. But it won't become a better world because the resurrected King David rules as human kings and presidents now do, or because Christ Jesus rules in a capacity analogous to that of the Secretary General of the United Nations. Rather, it will become a better world because with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28), the hearts and minds of every human being will be changed from disobedience and hostility toward God (Rom 11:32, with Rom 8:7) to desiring to be obedient to Christ Jesus and to loving neighbors as themselves. Human nature, itself, will be changed, just as the animal natures of the great predators will be changed (Isa 11:6-9). So the territory over which Christ Jesus will rule as King of kings and Lord of lords is the same territory over which Satan, the spiritual king of Babylon, presently reigns. This territory is the landscape of thoughts and emotions, instincts and what are considered today to be biological responses. Jesus will rule a physically invisible kingdom that, though controlling the thoughts and desires of human beings, will by extension rule over the earth without ever being of the earth. He will cleanse the inside of every human being by taking from the person rebellion and disobedience. Then when the inside is clean, He will fill the cup by giving to each person a pure heart and pure thoughts and a tongue that speaks a pure language. Therefore, the would-be teacher of Christ's disciples who points to this nation or to this event or to this person and proclaims that the kingdom of God is now on earth is a liar. The kingdom was here when the *Logos* was here on earth, born as the man Jesus of Nazareth (John 1:1-2, 14), but the kingdom is not today here even though the indwelling of the glorified Christ as the Bread of Life [the reality of the jar of manna in the ark of the covenant] is with every disciple. The new creature, born of Spirit, that today dwells in the fleshly tent of the old creature, crucified with Christ, is not of this world: this new creature is to the flesh what a physically circumcised Israelite, a Levite, was to Solomon's temple, in that this spiritual son of God dwells in today's temple of God (1 Co 3:16-17).

What must be remembered is that:

1. Satan is the present ruler of the whole world (John 12:31; 14:30). He reigns over humankind wherever people dwell.
2. Satan doesn't rule through physical force exercised by human governments, but by controlling the territory from which thoughts and emotions originate (Eph 2:2-3).
3. When Satan is cast from heaven (Rev 12:9-10), he will no longer reign over the territory from which thoughts originate, a single kingdom of the world.

4. This single kingdom of the earth (Rev 11:15) will become the kingdom of the Father and of the Son, and will be given to one like the Son of Man to rule (Dan 7:9-14).
5. Jesus will begin reigning over the territory from which thoughts originate when the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28). As Satan is the prince of darkness, a euphemistic expression for death, Christ is the prince of light, a synonym for life. And from darkness comes light.
6. But between when Satan is cast from heaven and when Jesus returns as the glorified Messiah, 42 months or 1260 days pass (Rev 13:5; 12:14).
7. As Satan reigned over the territory of thought [the kingdom of the world] while the two witnesses testified during the first half of the seven endtime years, Jesus will reign over the territory of thought while Satan as the reality of all antichrists “testifies” during the second half of these endtime years, thereby causing the two halves to become mirror images of one another.

The above seven principles of prophecy have not been understood by the Church because the circumcision faction (with whom the Apostle Paul battled throughout his ministry) interjected into the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century Church the expectation of Jesus soon returning as king of a physical kingdom. Even the Apostles thought that Jesus would soon return to end Roman rule over Judea. But when decades passed without His return, these decades becoming one century, then centuries—when Jesus didn’t *soon* return—His return was de-emphasized and treated as allegory, with emphasis now placed upon Jesus’ kingdom already being on earth in the form of the Church. Thus, the stage was set for the State Church that proved to be a useful political tool for the Roman Emperor Constantine as he consolidated control of a divided empire. And the merchants of *invisibility* found in Rome a permanent stall from which they could market their product in highways measured in stadia and paved with cobblestones.

The kingdom of God will, in the not-too-distant future, reign over the territory where all human thoughts and desires originate, but today, it reigns only over the hearts and minds of disciples who have been born of Spirit, these disciples identifiable by them having love for one another. Not everyone who professes to be a disciple is a disciple, just as not all of Israel belongs to Israel (Rom 9:6). Many will be “disciples” who have done great works in the name of Jesus, yet were never known to Jesus (Matt 7:21-23) because they taught students to be lawless. Many will be—and many are—the *Christians* who profess that Jesus is Lord with their mouth, but refuse to believe the words of Moses, who wrote of Jesus (John 5:46-47). And if they will not believe Moses, they will not believe Jesus, or the One who sent Him (*v.* 24). Therefore, unless a person by faith keeps the precepts of the law, thereby causing either the person’s circumcision or uncircumcision to be counted as spiritual circumcision (Rom 2:26-29), while professing that Jesus is Lord and believing that God raised Him from the dead (Rom 10:9), the person is not a *Christian* but is an impostor who has usurped the name of Christ.

The student should here pause and consider his or her relationship with Christ Jesus. The *Christian* who is a usurper does not, by faith, keep the precepts of the law (Rom 2:26), but shies away from the law, apparently believing that salvation is solely of identifying oneself with Christ before men while rejecting both Moses and the words of Jesus. But if merely identifying oneself with Jesus in this world were counted as righteousness, then salvation would be of this world and obtainable by *making a decision for Christ*—and that is simply not the case!

Today, identifying oneself with Christ is an act of faith that can barely be equated with, say, Caleb, an Edomite, identifying himself with Israel while Israel was in physical bondage to Pharaoh. Such an initial act of faith is essential, and is somewhat comparable with Abraham leaving his home and kin to enter Canaan. But a second act is also required, an act that equates with Caleb urging Israel to immediately enter the Promised Land and take possession of it—and act that equates with Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac, his son of promise through which his descendants would be named. And for uncircumcised disciples, this second act of faith is keeping the precepts of the law, thereby causing the disciple's uncircumcision to be counted as circumcision (Rom 2:26-29). If a disciple will relax even the least of the commandments and teach others to do likewise [teaching or doing missionary work is an act of faith], the disciple will be called least in the kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:19), whereas the disciple who keeps the commandments and teaches others to do likewise will be called great. Therefore, the disciple who has no act of faith other than to publicly identify himself or herself as a *Christian* is truly an unprofitable servant without the faith that can be credited to the person for righteousness.

A disciple is outwardly the fleshly temple of God; the disciple is a living stone (1 Pet 2:4-5) that is being hewn off site so that no sound of an iron tool striking the stone will be heard on the temple mount. Disciples are individually the temple, and collectively the temple, in that no disciple will precede another in the resurrection of firstfruits. And it is disciples that are measured in the Jerusalem above when the endtime years of tribulation begin.

The seven principles for understanding endtime prophecy contain within themselves two assumptions: first, the visible world reveals the invisible heavenly realm as a horizontal two-dimensional shadow on the ground reveals a three-dimensional standing person (Rom 1:20). Second, what is physical precedes what is spiritual (1 Co 15:46), for it is the shadow that is physical, with the source of the light causing the shadow being the Father and the Son on the day of the Lord. Therefore, the temple Solomon built formed the lifeless shadow of the spiritual temple of God, just as Solomon's reign over Israel formed the lifeless shadow of Christ's reign over humanity during the Millennium. David was not allowed to build the temple although he assembled materials and moneys—the temple of God will not be built [i.e., assembled] until saints are glorified upon Christ Jesus' return even though these lively stones were and are being shaped off-site prior to the Advent. Thus, the foundation that Paul laid as a skilled master builder was physically torn apart while Paul still lived (Phil 2:20-21; 3:2, 18-19 & 2Tim 1:15; 4:10-11). This foundation, though, laid in Asia through disciples believing the gospel he preached, the same gospel as endtime disciples receive in his epistles, was truly laid in the Jerusalem above where further work on the temple waited until the pillars were carved, their sculpting only now beginning with the standing of these pillars to come when the temple is assembled upon Christ Jesus' return.

The *Christian* who believes that Scripture alone [*sola scriptura*] is sufficient for salvation stands as part of the foundation Paul laid, not as part of the superstructure to be built on this foundation. This person, holding that nothing more needs revealed, is a spiritual infant, not capable of understanding the meat of the Word, able only to suckle the milk of the foundation. But this person is correct in as far as the person's able to journey into God's rest: the foundation is enough for salvation. And this foundation holds that with God there is neither Jew nor Greek, free nor bond, male nor female; that

circumcision is of the heart by the Spirit, not by the letter with hands; that the person who by faith keeps the precepts of the law will have that faith counted as righteousness. Therefore, all disciples who as lively stones form the temple of God will have the above as their foundational belief, building then on this foundation as seems good to them, or as given by God through the Holy Spirit. The pillars, now, will rest on this foundation while rising above this foundation not through unwritten traditions but through holding the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy (Rev 19:10 with Rev 12:17). And through possessing the spirit of prophecy, the pillars will keep Jesus' words about patient endurance (Rev 3:10, 12).

Before the temple of God is erected, what is corruptible, what is flesh, must put on incorruptibility, must put on immortality to enter the kingdom of God, where, again, some disciples will become pillars in this spiritual temple made from the glorified firstfruits. So the temple of God in the Jerusalem above isn't made in the manner that stone temples are made on earth—and the comparison of a structure of glorified saints in heaven to a lifeless stone building here on earth is the comparison of the kingdom of God to a human kingdom.

Again pause and consider the above analogy: a structure of saints isn't one saint physically standing on the shoulders of another as if they were part of a cheerleading squad. Rather, a structure of saints is one building on the work of another, or one taking the teachings, principles, concepts, precepts of his or her predecessor and expounding upon them, thereby disclosing or revealing what had up until then been undiscovered and secret. And such a collaborative work of teacher and student, with the student excelling the teacher generation after generation is the structure of saints, when glorified, that is to a lifeless stone building what the kingdom of God is to, say, the Roman Empire—or to the United States of America. Yet, far too many *Christians* look for the kingdom of God as if they were searching a travel atlas for where to relocate the person's business. They consider economic history and population density, climate and taxes. Instead, they should be looking for a spiritual city surrounding the foundation the Apostle Paul laid two millennia ago.

Temples here on earth are made from stone and mortar, or from just cut stone fitted closely together. And in the temple King Solomon constructed in present day Jerusalem, two stone tablets held the inscribed words of God. These stone tablets were placed in a wood ark that was, in comparison to the stone, temporary and subject to decay. Also in this wood ark was a jar of manna, the jar of fired clay—of silicate bearing stone ground to flour and fired at a high enough temperature to vitrify the stone dust, thereby giving to the jar even greater longevity than the stones of the temple that were subject to weathering. Whereas the jar of manna represented, in disciples, the indwelling of Christ Jesus as the reality of the Bread that came down from heaven, Aaron's budded staff represented the promise of resurrection from the dead, this promise as temporal as the wood of the ark, representing the fleshly tents of disciples. Aaron's staff didn't bud many times, but once after it was dead wood. Likewise, the fleshly tents of disciples will be resurrected once from death, not many times. And in this single resurrection, the flesh will either have put in immortality or it will not have. If it has put on immortality, it will walk unharmed through the fire (Isa 43:2) that separates this world from the supra-dimensional heavenly realm as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego walked through the flames of Nebuchadnezzar's furnace which even the king could not enter and live. If the flesh has not put on immortality, it will be as a tare [a weed that appears as grain, but is

not] gathered by the angels and thrown into the fiery furnace (Matt 13:38-43). Lastly, beside the wood ark, outside of this ark of the covenant, lay the Book of Deuteronomy (Deu 31:26) as the accuser of every Israelite, circumcised or uncircumcised (John 5:45). Therefore, stone in this world in relationship to living flesh closely approximates the relationship between born-of-Spirit disciples in this world and glorified saints in heaven.

In trying to make the above approximation simple, the Apostle Paul laid a foundation throughout his epistles that he summarized when he wrote, “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise” (Gal 3:27-29). The flesh profits a little, but only among men. With God, the flesh profits nothing. For “if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law...his uncircumcision will be regarded as circumcision” (Rom 2:26). Paul goes on to write, “For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter” (*vv.* 28-29).

With pedantic repetition, the Apostle Paul laid this foundation again and again in his epistles; yet, the majority of *Christians* refuse to live in a manner that would cause any observant Jew to be jealous; thus, it has been the Church that has maintained the division made with hands that separated the Uncircumcised from the Circumcised. Jesus abolished this barrier at Calvary, but the early Church Fathers reinstated it when they caused converts to continue living as Gentiles rather than as Judeans...there shall be one law for the circumcised and the uncircumcised through all of Judea, the visible representation of God’s rest (Ps 95:10-11), not two laws, nor one law and no law, nor no law for anyone. One law, the precepts of which are physically expressed in the Ten Commandments, or ten living words—and it is only one of these precepts that the majority of *Christians* reject, the Sabbath commandment. This lawless majority of the Church insists upon attempting to enter God’s rest on the following day, the 8<sup>th</sup>-day, a day when no one can enter His rest, for there will be no eighth day when the new heavens and new earth arrive on the seventh day of the spiritual creation week, the abstract of this spiritual creation account in the Genesis chapter one creation story.

Until the Jew or the Gentile has been born-of-Spirit, the person is less aware of spiritual things than a stone is aware of earthly things. The person who has not been born of Spirit is as the elemental elements of the earth are in the magma of the earth’s core. These molten elements are without form even though they contain the wealth of the earth. These elements must be exposed to the chill of the atmosphere before they can be shaped into the building stones that will form the foundation of an earthly temple. Likewise, raw humankind must receive birth by the Breath of God [*Pneuma ’Agion*] before it can be shaped into the living stones of the temple of God. And circumcision of the heart becomes a euphemistic expression for receiving the Holy Spirit [*Pneuma ’Agion*].

Circumcision of the flesh is of the man, not of the woman, who has no penis. It is of the physical descendants of Abraham, not of those individuals who, by faith, cause the natural nation of Israel to be jealous in a manner analogous to how this natural nation provoked God with its adulterous affairs with sticks and stones. Therefore, God has drawn a people to Him (John 6:44) who were not before a nation (1 Pet 2:10), a people

who by faith keep the precepts of the law, a people that the natural nation regards as wholly inferior to itself, a people grafted to the root of righteousness as wild scions grafted to a cultivar, with each scion bearing either its natural wild fruit, or going contrary to nature, by faith bearing righteousness obtained by rejecting this natural world and those things that are important in this world and seeking instead the things of God and rewards in the heavenly realm, where no thief can enter to steal what is not his. Wild scions bearing wild fruit will be pruned away and burned on the great day of the Lord. In their place, broken-off natural branches that by faith profess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised Him from the dead (Rom 10:9) will be grafted to this root of righteousness and raised from the dead. For both the wild scion and the natural branch will be saved by and through faith, with this faith not merely uttered with the mouth that is no more than the doorway into the temple where the new creature, born-of-Spirit, dwells. It is this new creature through believing Him who sent Jesus into this world that passes from death to life.

Just as the kingdom of God is not of this world and never will be of this world, the new creature born-of-Spirit is not of this world and never will be of this world. The vessel made of clay in which this new creature temporarily resides is of this world; the flesh is of this world. And when this new creature, a son of God, rules over his house [whether this house has indoor or outdoor plumbing doesn't matter], both the new creature and the entirety of his household keep the laws of God...this is the mystery of God that, because it wasn't understood, sent the Church into captivity in spiritual Babylon, this captivity formalized at the Council of Nicea (ca 325 CE) when the pagan Roman Emperor Constantine determined what sound doctrine was for the Body of Christ. This mystery saw the unfired clay vessels that God had intended for honored use broken time and again, for *greenware* [vessels left to dry before being initially fired] is fragile and must be handled carefully. But when fired, it becomes *biscuit* ware or *bisque*, ceramic and durable although unadorned. The vessel can now be fired a second time to vitrify its glazes, its rewards, thereby giving to its honored shape the beauty the potter had intended for it. Thus, the born-of-Spirit son of God that has not yet been glorified is as *greenware*, with physical death its drying process. And it would be better for the teacher of Israel who breaks one of the vessels intended for honored use [breaks by persuading the son of God to break the commandments] to be drowned with a millstone around his or her neck than to face Christ in the person's resurrection to condemnation. Unfortunately, there are not enough millstones in existence to drown the number of endtime preachers in Israel who teach disciples to break the commandments of God; so great shall be the wailing by those crying, *Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name* (Matt 7:22). Yes, they did these things in Christ's name, but they were never known of Christ, nor did they know Christ. They were, from the beginning, servants of Satan disguised as ministers of righteousness (2 Co 11:15), teaching not righteousness but lawlessness through some form of saying that Jesus abolished the Law of Moses as if it weren't the voice of *the Logos* that Israel heard at Sinai.

There is one cornerstone, one capstone for the household of God in the Jerusalem above, this corner and cap stone being Christ Jesus. There is one foundation, laid by the Apostle Paul according to the wisdom given him. There is one set of pillars, the saints of Philadelphia who keep Jesus' words of patient endurance, these words being that all who endure to the end shall be saved (Matt 24:13). All concepts and precepts that come

to the third part of humanity from the seven thunders and from the three angels will rest on the pillars of Philadelphia—this third part of humanity will be born of Spirit when the Holy Spirit is poured out upon all flesh halfway through seven endtime years of tribulation. So it will be from this third part of humanity that the mosaic ceiling and tile roof of the household of God come. And between when the Apostle Paul laid the foundation of this house in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century CE and when the pillars of Philadelphia are erected in the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century, little construction able to withstand fire was accomplished. Oh, much work was done with the sword, none of which was of God. Much work was done by radio and television, little of which was by God. Some small work was done by the Internet, a small amount of which was of God. But when the seven endtime years begin, Christ will build the majority of the house He began. He will use the testimony of His two olive trees (Rev 11:4) to deliver the good news that the third part of humanity will be born of Spirit halfway through the seven endtime years, that this third part (the spiritual Seth) will be born empowered by the Holy Spirit, that this third part only has to endure [which means not taking the mark of the beast] to be saved. And what does Christ ask of this third part of Humanity, only that this third part, by faith, believe that God will provide whatever physical needs they have at a time when they cannot buy and sell without taking the tattoo of the Cross [i.e., without becoming an endtime Christian Crusader attempting to bring peace here on earth with the cross, the sword, and the aimed rifle].

All who endure to the end shall be saved (Matt 24:13)—what better news can be proclaimed to the world as a witness to all nations (*v.* 14). There is no better news, but the laborers are few and the harvest is great. Few *Christians*, indeed very few disciples will build on the foundation that Paul laid with any other material but straw, all that remains when they feed the middlings of the harvest to their hogs.

There is one Head, and one Body. Together, they compose the Son of Man; they compose the Lamb of God. They are the firstfruits of God, with the Head presently revealed and the Body cloaked by Christ's righteousness. But both the Head and the Body will be revealed (Luke 17:30) when the seven endtime years begin—and as the Head was sacrificed at Calvary, the revealed Body [except for a remnant] will be sacrificed before the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of the Most High and of His Christ (Rev 11:15 & Dan 7:9-14) halfway through these endtime years.

The foundation for the house of God is the Apostle Paul's revelation that with God, all of humankind is the same despite God having selected one human being, the patriarch Abraham, as a human being worth propagating as a cultivated variety—worth propagating because of Abraham's faith that caused Abraham to believe God when told to leave home and kin and venture to a geographic region where Abraham would remain a sojourner; then believe God a second time when asked to sacrifice the son of promise, Isaac. Without this degree of faith, no one can please God, who has created all that is through the *Logos*. And as with any creation and its creator, the one who creates moves past his [or her] creation whenever the work is complete. A new creation is begun. Thus, it isn't the creation of stones and dust on which the Creator today works, but on a creation made from Spirit. That which foreshadows *a thing* is not *the thing*; rather, that which foreshadows serves as a *maquette* of the finished creation, a small-scale model made without incurring the cost in heavenly lives that producing more anointed cherubs like the one in whom iniquity was found cost (Ezek 28:14-15).



Herein is a mystery of God: human beings are born with no life other than that which comes from the cellular oxidation of sugars. Until born-of-Spirit, human beings are as spiritually lifeless as magma is physically lifeless. They are the *maquettes* of spiritual sons of God foreknown to God (Rom 8:29); they are made of cheap, expendable, ephemeral matter. Literally, they are the dust of the earth, and they serve God in analogy as a pencil sketch serves a painter. They allow God to visualize what a spiritual son made from them would be like before God invests them with life in the heavenly realm; they show the Father how the glorified son would fit into His family. They react physically not as puppets, with strings determining their every movement, but as free-thinking plaster models of what could become gold sculptures if the models are accepted. And the Father, depending upon what He sees, draws this person and that person from the world (John 6:44, 65) as it seems good to Him, giving spiritual life once to every person, this gift coming in this age either before death or when resurrected from death in the great White Throne Judgment. Today, only the firstfruits have been drawn from the world and invested with spiritual life. The remainder of humanity awaits spiritual birth either in the grave, or in the darkness of this long spiritual night that began at Calvary.

Again, the kingdom of the world is to the kingdom of God as stone is to flesh, with individual kingdoms with their temporary boundaries and glory being as volcanic magma in the darkness of the earth's core. Therefore, the teacher of Israel who would have disciples read *The Jerusalem Post* to see the fulfillment of prophecies about the holy cultivar *Israel* has gravel for thoughts and sand in his or her mouth. The person is devoid of spiritual understanding, and does far more harm to the Body of Christ than good. Nevertheless, the kingdom of the world will become that of the Most High and of His Christ halfway through the seven endtime years of tribulation; will become the kingdom of the Father and the Son when the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh, when Satan is cast from heaven, when dominion is taken from the four beasts of Daniel chapter 7, from the four horsemen of Apocalypse (same four kings)—when spiritual Babylon falls. Then, Christ Jesus will reign over the kingdom of the world even though Satan as the Antichrist will, here on earth, compel men to take upon themselves the mark of death to buy and sell. Yes, for three and a half years, Jesus will reign from heaven over the single kingdom of the world despite Satan trying to recover his former mental slaves by physical means. But Satan, given the mind of a man when cast from heaven, will not prevail over the third part of humanity that received the mind of Christ when empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Ancient Babylon's king Nebuchadnezzar is a shadow and copy of the spiritual king of Babylon (Isa 14:4-21), that old serpent Satan the devil, in a manner analogous to molten stone-to-flesh. And as Israel's resistance *melted* before the onslaught of the Chaldeans, so too did the Church's resistance melt before the blandishments of the Roman Emperor Constantine—as God delivered His cultivar *Israel* into Nebuchadnezzar's hand because of the lawlessness of His holy nation, He delivered the Church into the hand of the devil so that through the destruction of the flesh, the Spirit of some might be saved in the day of the Lord (1 Co 5:5). And indeed, the flesh has been destroyed by the lawlessness [i.e., the sin — 1 John 3:4] that continues to dwell in members of the body. Why this lawlessness remained in the flesh was a mystery the Apostle Paul didn't understand (Rom 7:15-25).

The reason why the mystery of sin continuing to dwell in the flesh wasn't revealed to the foundation reaches back to the second covenant made with uncircumcised Israelites on the plains of Moab (Deu 29:1). The terms of this second covenant mediated by Moses required an act of faith (Deu 30:1-2): this covenant was the law that if pursued by faith would have led to righteousness (Rom 9:31-32 — compare Rom 10:6-8 with Deu 30:11-14). Thus, when the mediator of this second covenant went from being Moses to being the glorified Jesus, the requirement of an act of faith remained *the constant* in the covenant. And the only acceptable act of faith for a circumcised Israelite was to profess that Jesus is Lord, and believe that God raised Him from the dead (Rom 10:9). The only acceptable act of faith for an uncircumcised convert was to begin living as an Israelite, keeping the precepts of the law, thereby causing the person's uncircumcision to be reckoned as circumcision (Rom 2:26-29). No other act of faith by the uncircumcised would cause a circumcised Israelite to be jealous (Rom 11:11, 13-14), and if the uncircumcised did not cause the circumcised to be jealous, the uncircumcised person was an unprofitable servant.

If the mystery for why sin continues to dwell in the flesh had been revealed to the foundation, then another act of faith would have been required of the pillars than, by faith, *to believe what is true even though the revelation was not given to Paul*, whose eyesight never fully recovered from having the scales blinding him fall away...

There is implied in Scripture the narrative principle of *economy of information*: every word of Scripture is profitable for doctrine. Thus, the issue of the Apostle's eyesight was made known to disciples through the Holy Spirit as an affirmation that the Apostle did not see all that could be seen, or known through the revelation given to Paul.

Again pause to consider the point: revelation was given to the Apostle Paul, but he only writes briefly about this revelation (Eph 3:3). He doesn't disclose everything that he could have said. In fact, he says very little about this revelation although he makes it the most important point in the Aristotelian argument that begins his epistle to the Galatians (1:12). Thus, from the structure of the classical argument that he makes in chapters one and two, no aspect of Paul's gospel is more important than that it came by revelation—so why write so little about it? Is it that the revelation contained things that cannot be told, things that men may not utter (2 Co 12:4)? Probably. These things must come through the Holy Spirit, and then, come only when it is appropriate to disclose them.

Is saying that Paul could not see to teach all that had been revealed to him going too far afield from the foundation the Apostle laid? No, not in the least; for it is the faith of disciples that is counted as righteousness, this faith first causing the disciple to keep the precepts of the law, thereby causing the disciple to live as a Judean. This first act of faith is the equivalent of Abraham leaving his home and kin and journeying to Canaan. Mentally, a disciple by keeping the precepts of the law journeys to Judea, where he or she begins to dwell in God's rest [a euphemistic expression for keeping the Sabbath — from Ps 95-10-11, coupled with Heb 3:16-4:10]. This is, for the convert, the prerequisite to discipleship. Now, a second act of faith, one spiritual rather than physical in outward manifestation, is required. For most endtime disciples, this second act will be giving up their physical lives as Jesus gave up His (Matt 10:24-25 & John 12:25-26). However, for the pillars of Philadelphia, this second act will be keeping Jesus' words of patient endurance. Therefore, the acceptable act of faith for the pillars of the household of God

is to believe and to teach what comes from the foundation but was never uttered to the foundation.

What could not be told before now is that born-of-Spirit disciples created as vessels for dishonorable use will be, in the heavenly realm, sacrificed and burned with fire as physical Israel sacrificed bulls and goats between receiving the law and Calvary. Before the giving of the law from atop Sinai, no sin was reckoned against Israel (Rom 5:13), for Israel, like the rest of humanity, was bondservant to the prince of the world. This old Adversary, as the master of humanity consigned to disobedience, was responsible for Israel's sin as well as for the sin of every other human being. But once the law was given from atop Sinai, Israel knew what sin was. Israel now needed a sin offering for each sin the nation committed—and the only acceptable sin offering was the Son of Man. Thus, between Sinai and Calvary, a substitute offering was needed so that Israelites would not immediately die when one of them committed a sin. This substitute offering was the lives of bulls and goats, which could not take away sin but would serve as stand-ins for Christ Jesus until Calvary.

Satan remains responsible for all lawlessness in both the physical and spiritual realms. His life will ultimately be the only acceptable payment for sin that can be made—and he will give his life when he is cast into the lake of fire following the thousand year long Millennium. But disciples are resurrected at the beginning of the thousand years. Christ Jesus as the reality of the Azazel goat has been bearing their sins in the heavenly realm just as the first Adam bore the sin of the first Eve when he, too, took the forbidden fruit and ate. But Jesus is without sin; He will not continue to bear the sins of disciples when He returns as the Messiah. He will either return these sins to the disciple who will pay with his or her spiritual life for the person's lawlessness, or He will give these sins to Satan, their rightful owner. But Satan will not then pay with his life for these sins that each require a death. Instead, as bulls and goats served as stand-ins for Christ Jesus between Sinai and Calvary, the spiritual lives of vessels created for dishonorable use will serve as the stand-ins for Satan for the thousand years.

What could not be uttered is that many spiritual bulls and goats have been born of Spirit and now rest in their graves to be resurrected to be stand-ins for Satan. Many more are today in 8<sup>th</sup>-day Christian fellowships while well able to keep the Sabbath commandment...the sins of the wild scions grafted to the righteousness are many. Wild scions by their very nature bear wild fruit. Only when one of these scions goes against nature and by faith bears the fruit of righteousness does the scion please God. Therefore, the number of spiritual bulls and goats far exceeds the number of scions in whom righteousness that comes from faith was found. Many have been called, but few will be chosen (Matt 22:14). And what seems, even today, an unutterable revelation is that the 8<sup>th</sup>-day Church constitutes the hated son that has for the past four plus centuries struggled in the womb of the last Eve with his loved brother.

Sin dwells in the flesh of all humankind because all have been consigned to disobedience so that God can have mercy on all, with the liberation of the flesh coming through empowerment by the Holy Spirit of spiritual Israel [i.e., the Church] first at the beginning of the seven endtime years of tribulation, then of all of humanity when the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of the Most High and of His Christ. Two future liberations 1260 days apart; twice more will the lives of men be given as ransom as the lives of Egyptians were given when Moses lead Israel from bondage to Pharaoh, a representation of sin. And only those spiritual Israelites who, by faith, lift their eyes

toward heaven to see what the Apostle Paul never uttered, and was never able to utter will become pillars in the temple of God. All others will be as rubble stones cast between the footers the Apostle laid.

The foundation supporting the house of God that will be fully assembled at the wedding feast upon Christ Jesus' return is the simple message that in Christ, circumcision is of the heart, not the flesh, with the circumcised person living as a Judean, holy to God as God is holy. This circumcised person will not attempt to enter God's rest on the following day, nor will this circumcised person live as a person of *the nations*. Rather, this spiritually circumcised person will keep the commandments of God as Jesus kept the commandments. This spiritually circumcised person will, in fact, keep the commandments with such vigor that all of the natural nation will be jealous so that by their jealousy, some will be saved on the day of the Lord.

The foundation is not the pillars, but the message that supports the pillars. And the Apostle Paul built this foundation in Jerusalem, not in Damascus or in Ammon or in Baghdad or in Babylon. No disciple can build on this foundation without first crossing into the Land Beyond the River, thereby entering into God's rest, the manifestation of which is keeping the Sabbath. Therefore, the disciple who attempts to enter God's rest on the 8<sup>th</sup>-day hasn't yet located the foundation the Apostle laid, and though building a fine structure, builds to Satan's glory, not God's.

The foundation of the Church was cast down without one stone upon another (Matt 24:2) when all in Asia turned away from Paul, and either as dogs [disciples who return to their vomit], or as evildoers [disciples who teach that the law has been abolished], or as those who mutilate the flesh [disciples who would be physical Jews] caused the living stones to be scattered, and caused many to be burned with fire.

What Paul could not utter has now been uttered. It is up to the disciple to hear in what has been uttered Jesus' voice. The disciple who hears only the bleating of goats or the lowing of cattle hears his or her own voice. ©2006 Homer Kizer

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[ [Home](#) ]