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THE HAND
OF
GOD

BY

DAVID HOLDEN

From this paper, discover the remarkable hand of God in many of the events of Scripture.

Introduction

This booklet links together five papers, The Hindu the Muslim and the Christian. Jonah, God's Covenant with King David, God's Covenant with King David Regarding His Son. All of the above lead to and culminate in the final paper titled, The Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Great men such as Julius Caesar leave their mark and then to a large extent fade away as other influences leave their mark. Readers of this paper will see how God has left his mark in events which are hundreds of years apart for his glory. An achievement which is beyond any mortal being.

This booklet begins with the subject of the salvation of sinners, because to fully appreciate why God has acted in the way He did with regard to the subject of the baptism of the Holy Spirit (and several other theological subjects for that matter), more than a superficial understanding of God's method of saving sinners is required.

This booklet and other teaching material by David Holden such as "The Objectivity of the Faith: A faith with a firm foundation" and "The Mathematical Impossibility of the Theory of Evolution" are freely available in PDF format (read with Acrobat Reader software) from:
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THE HINDU THE MUSLIM AND THE CHRISTIAN

Three men set out on a journey to find acceptance before God. Each boasted that his particular method of religious devotion would find acceptance before God, and that the other two would fail.

The Hindu was careful where he put his feet when he stepped outside so he would not crush any of God's creatures. He was kind to any rat he came across, as a rat was believed to have been a travelling companion to one of the Hindu gods. He even travelled to, and bathed himself in the river Ganges for spiritual cleansing.

The Muslim was careful to pray five times each day facing toward Mecca. He gave money to the poor, fasted on the month of Ramadan, went on a pilgrimage to Mecca and finally gave his life in a jihad (holy war) against infidels (those who do not follow the faith of Islam). This last act was in the belief that it would bring him instant access into his heaven where many carnal sensual pleasures awaited him.

The man who was proud to call himself a Christian went to Church twice every Sunday, confessed his sins every week, gave his money to the poor, prayed every day, and never missed Holy Communion.

The Hindu, the Muslim and the Christian finally died and stood before almighty God to face judgment. The Hindu was informed that his life was not acceptable in God's sight. He was cast into Hell where he longed for just a sip of water to cool his tongue in the flames, and he had no rest from his sins which were now a burden on his conscience. The Muslim and the Christian received the same fate.

The error of the three

The error of the three men was the same in each case. They all thought they could find acceptance before a holy and perfect God through their religious devotion. But God requires far more than religious devotion.

Jesus warned people of the high standard of righteousness which is required before a person can enter the kingdom of God, he said, "For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:20).

In another passage we learn that no person is able to attain the standard of righteousness required. The Bible says, "for all have sinned and fall short of

the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23), i.e. no person is able to keep the law perfectly in thought and action. You might very well ask, "If the standard of God is so high, how can a sinner be saved!?". This article will endeavour to answer that question and related questions.

A Substitute Used in Old Testament Times

In the days before Christ, God provided a way by which the believer could have his sins symbolically covered through a sacrifice, "the sacrifice was the divinely instituted provision whereby the sin might be covered and the liability to divine wrath and curse removed." ¹ The animal became symbolically the substitute for the believer. Because an animal is not under God's law, it cannot break the law, so it is without sin, a fit symbolical substitute. The hand of the sinner was placed upon the head of the sacrificial animal, symbolically transferring the sins of the person to the animal.

The animal was then killed, symbolically bearing the death penalty for sins in place of the believer. "If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall offer a male without blemish; he shall offer it at the door of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before the Lord; he shall lay his hand upon the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him". (Leviticus 1:3-4). See also Lev. 16:20-22. The sacrifice symbolically bears the sins.

Christ is the Substitute for Believing Sinners

These sacrifices pointed to the one who would not only bear fully the sins of believers, but would also live a life of perfect righteousness in their place, thus entitling them to all of the rewards due to a person meeting God's perfect standard of righteousness. The basic reward being eternal life with God. In time, God sent his Son Jesus Christ, to live a life of perfect righteousness in place of the believer, then to die in his place. When a sinner places his faith in Jesus Christ, the righteousness of Christ is imputed to him, i.e. reckoned or accounted to be his. It was prophesied in the Old Testament that one would come (Jesus), to be righteous on behalf of the sinner. "...and this is the name by which he will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'" (Jer. 23:6. R.S.V.). Today, the Christian is able to say, "Jesus is my righteousness".

The prophet Isaiah looked forward to the day when sinners could stand before God with a

righteousness which is whiter than snow. "...Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool." (Isaiah 1:18). This is possible because the righteousness of Christ is put to the account of the believer, that is why we read in the same chapter, "Zion will be redeemed with justice, her penitent ones with righteousness." (1:27).

The importance of the righteousness of Christ is further made clear in another passage in Isaiah. He prophesied that the righteousness of Christ would be imputed to the sinner. "He shall see the fruit of the travail of his soul and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous; and he shall bear their iniquities." (Isaiah 53:11).

To be "accounted righteous" is to have the righteousness of Christ put to your account. Righteousness is pictured as covering the believer like a robe. "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall exalt in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has clothed me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with garland, and a bride adorns herself with her jewels." (Isaiah 61:10). It is far better to wear a robe of righteousness (the righteousness of Christ) than to wear a \$1,000 suit.

Jesus Christ, The Sinner's Righteousness

Paul in explaining the gospel to the Romans makes the point that in the gospel, the righteousness of God has been revealed, and that "he who through faith is righteous shall live." (Romans 1:17. R.S.V.). Paul uses two examples to show that perfect righteousness is accounted (imputed) to the believer when he has faith in Jesus Christ. The first example is Abraham. In Romans 4:1-11, Paul shows that Abraham was accounted as righteous through faith before he was circumcised. "The purpose was to make him the father of all those who believe without being circumcised and who thus have righteousness reckoned to them." (Romans 4:11). "But the words 'it was reckoned to him', were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe on him that raised from the dead Jesus our Lord." (Romans 4:23-24).

In the second example, Paul shows that death (both spiritual and physical), is passed on to all through the sin of Adam, but life is passed on to all who receive the free gift of righteousness (which is reckoned or imputed to those who have faith in

Christ). "For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:17). As for the lasting benefit of this righteousness, the bible says, "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, look at the earth beneath; the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment and its inhabitants die like flies. But my salvation will last forever, my righteousness will never fail." (Isaiah 51:6). See also 51:8.

Self-righteousness Fails

Paul explains that the Jews try to establish their own righteousness, and so lose the righteousness that is freely available through believing in Jesus Christ. He says, "I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened. For being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law, that everyone who has faith may be justified." (Rom. 10:2-4). Paul is well qualified to speak of the failure of man to gain acceptance before a holy and righteous God. He was a Pharisee for many years and had sought to gain acceptance before God through zealous law-keeping. However, after coming to know Jesus Christ as his own personal saviour, Paul says of his past "...I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ - the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith." (Philippians 3:8-9).

A point to remember in evangelism; Christianity is the only religion in which faith is placed in another person for righteousness, all other religions require some form of law-keeping, or performance of religious duty for self-justification or self-righteousness, but on judgment day, only Christ will be found to be righteous enough and those who have his righteousness through faith.

The man who proudly called himself a Christian in our story, was in fact, not a Christian at all. He simply gave his life to well meaning religious acts in the name of Christianity. He had rejected the true source of righteous - Jesus Christ - and had sought to gain his own righteousness.

Jesus Takes the Believer's Punishment

Jesus Christ not only gives the believer His righteousness, but he also takes the sins of the believer upon himself at the cross. The sins of the believer are imputed to Christ; this does not turn Christ into a sinner, but it does make him legally punishable for the sins of believers. These sins were legally paid for in his death on the cross. "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Cor. 5:21).

The Objection to God's Method of Saving Sinners

Some in the time of Paul, as in our time, objected to God's method of justification, and made statements along the lines of, "If it is true that we are saved by grace and do not have to work toward our salvation, then why not sin that grace may abound?" The apostle Paul in reply said, "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?" (Rom. 6:1). Here was a golden opportunity for Paul to say "you have misunderstood me; good works must accompany your faith for salvation". But he cannot say that; he merely says "By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?" (6:2). Works are a sign of faith, they do not produce the faith that saves. Good works justify the believer before others as being saved. The book of James shows that faith which cannot express itself in action is not truly faith. See James 2:17-22.

The Example of Marriage

Some people claim that acceptance with God which has a legal basis does not display the love of God; it is too cold and formal. Suppose for a moment that there was no legal basis to marriage, a young couple just live together on the basis that they feel a love for each other. Both partners may come and go as often as they like, as there are no legal ties whatsoever. It may seem good on the surface to base a relationship on feelings, but both partners would soon feel very insecure in such a situation. Neither person could be sure that his or her partner would not suddenly feel unhappy about the relationship, go away for a long time, or perhaps even live with someone else.

Love needs to be able to express itself through law, to be able to say, "I will commit myself to you through the bad times as well as the good!". In like manner, God through his law commits himself to the forgiven sinner. God sent his Son to live under the law and be found righteous, and then to die in the

place of transgressors of the law, and finally to bind himself to the forgiven sinner with the promise that he will not leave us nor forsake us. This is the way in which true love will commit itself. So the law of God expresses the love of God, just as marriage based on law expresses the love that the couple have for each other.

Only Through Faith in Christ

To those who have not put their faith in Christ, I would like to give a warning against the temptation to put part of your faith in works or religious observance. God demands a perfect life for that perfect heavenly reward, putting even a part trust in yourself for acceptance before a perfect God would be like the scientist who knows that he needs pure water for an experiment, but instead picks up a glass of dirty water and begins to pour clean water into it. No matter how much water he pours into the glass, the water in the glass will never become pure, he needs to go straight to the source of pure water. Likewise, all sinners need to go to the source of pure righteousness; Jesus Christ, and not put a part trust in themselves or any other source.

Salvation is solely through Jesus Christ who said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6). Because of the certainty of the salvation of those who put their trust in Christ, he is able to say, "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life." (John 5:24). See also John 3:36, 11:25-26, 12:46, 20:30-31, Acts 4:12, Rom. 8:1, 1 John 5:11-12.

Imputation - its meaning

A few comments on the meaning of imputing are warranted at this point because we are saved through the imputed righteousness of Christ, not through our own righteousness or religious observance. That was the mistake of the three pilgrims.

To impute something to a person means to set it to his account or to number it among the things belonging to him; to reckon it to him. If something is imputed to a person, it is made his legally; it is counted or imputed as his possession. To impute means to account, charge, credit, reckon, attribute. For example, put the righteousness of Jesus Christ to my account! "It makes no difference, so far as the meaning of imputation is concerned, who it is that imputes, whether man (Sam. 22:15) or God (Psalm 32:2); it makes no difference what is imputed, whether a good deed for reward (Psalm 106:30 ff) or a bad deed for punishment (Lev.17:4); and it makes

no difference whether that which is imputed is something which is personally one's own prior to the imputation, as in the case above cited, where his own good deed was imputed to Phinehas (Psalm 106:30-31), or something which is not one's own prior to the imputation, as where Paul asks that a debt not personally his own be charged to him (Philemon 18). In all these cases the act of imputation is simply the charging of one with something... when God is said to 'impute righteousness' to a person, the meaning is that He judicially accounts such a one to be righteous and entitled to all the rewards of a righteous person (Rom. 4:6,11)".²

Because it is the righteousness of Jesus Christ which is imputed to the believing sinner, he or she stands before God with a righteousness which is greater than that of any angel in God's sight.

Justification - its Meaning

"The Biblical meaning of 'justify' (Greek, *dikaioo*) is to pronounce, accept and treat as just, i.e. as, on the one hand, not penally liable, and, on the other, entitled to all the privileges due to those who have kept the law. It is thus a forensic term, denoting a judicial act of administering the law, in this case, by declaring a verdict of acquittal, and so excluding all possibility of condemnation. Justification thus settles the legal status of the person justified."³

The fact that justification means to declare and treat a person as just, and not to make him just, as some have claimed, can be seen quite clearly from a few examples in the Bible, e.g. "If there is a dispute between men and they go to court, and the judges decide their case, and they justify the righteous and condemn the wicked," (Deut. 25:1, KJV), i.e. they were to declare the righteous to be righteous; it was not the function of judges to make people righteous. "He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous, both of them alike are an abomination to the Lord." (Proverbs 17:15, KJV).

If justification were to mean "make just", then those who justify the wicked would be deserving of praise, but because it means to declare just, those who justify the wicked are an abomination. In the next example we see that a man wanted to show himself to be in the right, he was not wanting to make himself right. "'But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?'" (Luke 10:29). See also Luke 16:15, Gal. 3:8. The same word is used in man's reference to God. "And when all the people heard Him, even the tax collectors justified God..." (Luke 7:29, NKJV), i.e. they declared or acknowledged God to be just; they obviously could not make God just.

Finally, "Baker's Dictionary of Theology" says, "There is no lexical ground for the view of Chrysostom, Augustine, the Medievals and Roman [Catholic] theologians that 'justify' means, or connotes as part of its meaning, 'make righteous'".⁴ On the contrary, God declares the believer (at the moment of faith) to be righteous with the righteousness of Christ.

End Notes

1. John Murray, "Redemption Accomplished and Applied", Banner of Truth, 1961, p. 25.
2. C.W. Hodge, "International Standard Bible Encyclopedia", Eerdmans, 1979, Vol. 2, p. 812.
3. James I. Packer, "Baker's Dictionary of Theology", ed. E.F. Harrison, G.W. Bromley, C.F. Henry, Baker Book House, 1960, p. 304.
4. "Baker's Dictionary of Theology", p. 304.

Questions

1. Are we saved by a keeping of the law?
2. Is it necessary to be righteous in order to be saved?
3. Are we saved by a righteousness from God infused into our lives?
4. Do we receive our salvation solely through faith?

Answers

1. Yes, not our law keeping, but by the law keeping of Christ. If Christ had not kept the law perfectly, we could not be saved. See Matt. 5:17-30. Note verse 20.
2. Yes, the perfect character of God demands a perfect people to dwell with Him. Anything less falls short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). Jesus said, "For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:20). God's demand for righteousness can only be found in Jesus Christ (Romans 5:17).
3. No, we are not saved by a righteousness within ourselves. We are saved by a righteousness outside of ourselves in the person of Jesus Christ. A righteousness which is imputed to us (put to our account).
4. Yes, faith alone unites us to Christ and his saving work.

If you have answered any of the above questions wrongly, then please read through this chapter again.

Recommended Reading

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Dr. Ernest Kevan | "Salvation", (Evangelical Press). |
| Gary Long | "Substitutionary Atonement" |
| Dr. Leon Morris | "The Cross in the New Testament" |
| B.A. Ramsbottom | "Bible Doctrines Simply Explained" |
| H.A. Ironside | "Full Assurance How to Know You're Saved" |
| F.F. Bruce | "The Defence of the Gospel in the New Testament" |
| Dr. M. Lloyd-Jones | "The Cross the Vindication of God", (Booklet). |

The Consequences of Salvation by Faith

False religions demand that people work for their salvation. They must follow religious ritual. The problem for the devotees is that no matter how well they follow the ritual, there is no assurance that they have reached the point where they are certain they are saved from judgment and have earned eternal life with God.

God is holy and righteous, that is why he looks upon mankind and declares. "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," (Romans 3:23). Clearly, any method man employs to save himself is bound to fail.

Christianity is unique. It is the only belief system where people put their complete trust in someone else for their salvation. Jesus saves completely, as a consequence:

Not by works

Christians do not work for their salvation:

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9).

"All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.' Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, 'The righteous will live by faith.'" (Galatians 3:10-11).

Assurance

"They replied, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved...'" (Acts 16:31).

"Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him." (John 3:26).

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16).

"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, 'Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.'" (Romans 10:9-11). See also Psalm 103:12, Isaiah 1:18, Jeremiah 31:34.

Adopted as sons of God

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God - children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God." (John 1:12-13).

"because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. (Romans 8:14-16).

"In other words, it is not the natural children who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring." (Romans 9:8).

Father and son relationship

"And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: 'My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.' Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons.'" (Hebrews 12:5-8).

New Kingdom

When a person is saved through Jesus Christ, be or she is immediately transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light.

"giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." (Colossians 1:12-14).

Those who come to God through Jesus Christ have been transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of God, but this kingdom has not yet come in its full power and glory, that is why we pray, "your kingdom come..." (Mark 6:10).

A new name

God calls all those he has saved through his son Jesus Christ, 'saints'.

"Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus:" (Ephesians 1:1. See also 1:15, 18, 3:18, 6:18).

"Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:" (Philippians 1:1. See also 4:21-22).

"Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the saints with them." (Rom. 16:15).

"Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God in Corinth, together with all the saints throughout Achaia:" (2 Corinthians 1:1).

The saints are keen to serve each other. "For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints." (2 Corinthians 8:3-4).

See also Colossians 1:4, 12, 26. 1 Timothy 5:10, Philippians 1:5, 7. Jude 1:3.

Jonah

The history of Jonah is very interesting. The Bible tells us that he tried to run away from the will of God, and that he was later swallowed by “a great fish”. The great fish was most certainly a whale. For those who feel that this part of the story is too incredible to be true, I might add that it is not the only time that a man has been swallowed by a whale. In 1891, the whaling ship “*The Star of the East*” was off the Falkland Islands when it sighted a large sperm whale. Whale boats were launched and the whale was harpooned. Before the whale was killed, one of the boats was smashed and Seaman John Bartley disappeared. The whale was dismembered the following day and John Bartley was found alive in the stomach. He had lost consciousness until he was revived in the captain’s cabin. He reported that he had air, but complained that it was hot and dark. In addition to the mental anguish and terror of the ordeal, he suffered physically. The digestive juices started to bleach his skin. ¹

The ordeal that Jonah, and later John Bartley went through is very interesting, however; it is not for the sake of interest that we have in the Bible the story of Jonah. It has a much deeper purpose. Jesus alluded to the purpose when he said, “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” (Matt. 12:40). It is clear from this statement that the ordeal Jonah went through was pointing to the experience of Christ. If we look at what happened to Jonah very closely, we will see that in many other ways also, he pointed to the experiences of Christ. The parallel experiences are listed below.

JONAH

1. The lot fell on Jonah, he is the one chosen to rescue the sailors from tragedy (Jonah 1:7).
2. The sacrifice of Jonah is needed to turn aside the wrath of God (1:12).
3. Jonah is delivered into the hands of Gentiles (1:15).
4. By the delivery of Jonah up to death, the wrath of God is turned aside (1:15).
5. At the deliverance of Jonah up to death, men believe and offer a sacrifice (1:16).
6. Jonah was delivered up to death for three days and three nights (1:17).
7. Seaweed was wrapped around his head (2:5).
8. Jonah was resurrected after three days (2:10).
9. After the resurrection of Jonah, the gospel goes to the Gentiles (3:2).

JESUS

1. Jesus chosen: John the Baptist said of Jesus, “... ‘Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’” (John 1:29). See also 14:6.
2. The sacrifice of Jesus was necessary (Ephesians 5:2).
3. “and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!” (Matt. 20:19).
4. “... Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.” (1 Thess. 1:10).
5. A centurion and those with him, observing the death of Jesus and what took place, declare Jesus to be the son of God (Matt. 27:54).
6. “... For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” (Matt. 12:40).
7. “and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head...” (Matt. 27:29).
8. Jesus rose from the dead after three days (Matt. 28:1-6, Mark 8:31).
9. Regarding Saul/Paul: “This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings ...” (Acts 9:15).

10. Jonah went to Nineveh (3:3). Most likely with a changed body, his skin bleached by the digestive juices of the whale.
11. The Gentiles repent and believe (3:5-10).

From all of the information above there are a few points which we should focus our attention upon.

Jonah Chosen

God was angry with Jonah when he tried to run away from the task which was given to him, however; it is quite evident that the wrath of God was not only about to fall upon Jonah, it was going to fall upon all of the inhabitants in the boat as well. The only way by which the inhabitants could be saved is through a sacrifice. A life has to be delivered up to death in order for others to be saved. The men in the boat at first try to save themselves, this is typical of many, perhaps most people, however, after a time it becomes quite evident that it is impossible for them to save themselves. They then abandon all human effort and put their trust in God's way for their salvation.

That is typical of many who are truly saved from the wrath of God to come. They initially put their trust in their own human striving to please God, but finally they put their trust in God's method of saving sinners. That is, in Christ's perfect life, death and resurrection on their behalf.

It is interesting to note that Jonah was chosen by God to be the sacrifice by which the wrath of God would be turned aside from falling upon all the inhabitants in the boat. God used the lot to make his choice known. Likewise, Jesus was chosen by God to be the means by which the wrath of God is turned aside from sinners by his death on the cross. Salvation could not be brought into effect by the sacrifice of just any person. It had to be a person of God's choosing, and he could not choose any other person; it had to be his own precious Son.

Delivered Up to Gentiles

It is interesting to note that although Jonah was a Jew, he was not delivered into the hands of the Jews in order to be sacrificed, but rather into the hands of Gentiles. Jonah was chosen by God to be the sacrifice, but at the same time it was a voluntary sacrifice. The men in the boat did not have to chase after Jonah and capture him. He went willingly; he delivered himself into their hands, in fact he told them that they must sacrifice him. He did not give them any alternative.

Jonah went willingly without complaint. Jesus also went willingly and without complaint, "...as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth." (Isaiah 53:7).

Just as Jonah was delivered into the hands of Gentiles, likewise, Jesus was delivered up into the hands of Gentiles as

10. Jesus rose from the grave with a different, more powerful body (Luke 24:43, 1 Cor. 15:40-44).
11. "... salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious." (Rom. 11:11).

he said he would be. "...They will condemn him to death and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified..." (Matt. 20:18-19).

Regarding the burial of both men, it is significant that Jonah was in the belly of the whale for three days. Jesus said of his own burial, "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matt. 12:40).

Salvation for Gentiles

The Jews knew they were God's people, a chosen nation especially favoured by God. Most Jews, including Jonah it would appear, did not think God's blessings could or should extend to the Gentiles. Jonah was certainly hostile to the idea that Nineveh should escape the judgment of God. Nineveh was the capital city of the Assyrian empire, an empire which was dominant over surrounding nations for many years, especially under Tiglath-pilaser III (745-727 B.C.).

According to 2 Kings 14:25, Jonah lived in Gath-hepher just north of Nazareth during the reign of Jeroboam II in the eighth century BC. At this time, Hosea and Amos were also prophesying.

Nineveh eventually forgot God's grace toward it in the time of Jonah, and it became cruel and oppressive. Consequently, God raised up the prophet Nahum to foretell its destruction. (See Nahum 1:7-8). Nineveh eventually fell to the Babylonians in 612 B.C.

God's extraordinary action in forcing Jonah to go to Nineveh demonstrates that his love extends far beyond the borders of Israel.

The people of Nineveh repented of their sins and they were saved from the wrath of God. Likewise, after the resurrection of Jesus, salvation has primarily gone to the Gentiles as prophesied it would. "My name will be great among the nations..." (Malachi 1:11). In the New Testament we read, "...salvation has come to the Gentiles..." (Rom. 11:11).

End Notes

1. F.C. Payne, "Seal of God", Evangelistic Literature Enterprise, 1987, p. 53.

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God's Covenant With King David

God's Promise to King David

God gave this promise to King David, "Your house and your kingdom shall endure for ever before me, your throne shall be established for ever." (2 Samuel 7:16).

We could very well ask at this point, "Why should God be interested in establishing the throne of David for ever?" The answer becomes clear when we discover that God has determined that just one person should reign for ever. One psalmist wrote, "The Lord swore an oath to David, a sure oath that he will not revoke: 'One of your own descendants I will place on your throne.'" (Psalm 132:11).

There is a very clear link between King David and Jesus Christ. Jesus is seen as the fulfilment of God's covenant promise to David that he would put one of his descendants upon the throne. Speaking of David, we read from the book of Acts, "But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne." (Acts 2:30). As we look closely at Scripture, we discover that the life of the descendant (Jesus), is very similar to the life of King David himself. The divine purpose in this is to show for a certainty that Jesus is the fulfilment of the covenant promise to David.

Gaining an overall picture of David is not difficult because the Bible gives more information on King David than any other biblical person. We know for instance that he was a tall man because he tried on the armour of his predecessor, King Saul (1 Sam. 17:38). Saul was a tall man, "...a head taller than any of the others." (1 Sam. 9:2). We even know that David was handsome (1 Sam. 16:12).

The reason for the detailed record of King David's life, is that by his life, he was pointing to a far greater King; the King of kings and the Lord of lords, and for that reason, his life was very important. David was a shepherd; he became king; he saved Israel from her enemies, and gave her peace and security. Likewise, Jesus is the great Shepherd-King, who has won a spiritual nation to himself, and he has given that nation (spiritual Israel - the Church), peace and security.

Spiritual Empowerment

God was determined that King David be successful in his mission, so he was anointed with the Holy Spirit in order to ensure his success (2 Sam. 8:6, 14). Likewise, when Jesus was baptised at the river Jordan, the Spirit of God came upon him in a powerful way to ensure the success of the task God gave him to fulfil (See Isaiah 9:7b & Matt.3:16). Some of the many similarities between King David and Jesus Christ are outlined below.

Similarities

DAVID

1. Born in Bethlehem (1 Sam. 16:18).
2. Appointed king by God (1 Sam. 16:1).
3. He was rejected by his own brothers (1 Sam. 16:11).
4. Shepherd, became king (1 Sam. 16:11).
5. Starts overthrow of enemy by defeating the chief of the enemy forces; Goliath (1 Sam. 17:37, 51).
6. King Saul seeks to kill David (1 Sam. 19:1-2).
7. Refuses to be made king before God's time. (1 Sam. 24:4-7, 18, 26:8-9).

JESUS

1. Born in Bethlehem (Luke 2:4-7).
2. Born king was sent by God the Father (Matt. 2:2, Acts 2:34-36).
3. Jesus was rejected by his own people (John 1:11, Isaiah 53:3).
4. King and Shepherd (John 10:11).
5. At the beginning of His public ministry, starts overthrow of the kingdom of darkness by doing spiritual battle with the chief of the enemy forces; Satan (Matthew 4:1).
6. The Scribes and the Pharisees seek to kill Jesus (John 11:53).
7. Refuses to reign as king before God's time (John 6:15).

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| <p>8. He is victorious over all of his enemies (2 Sam. 8:6, 14).</p> <p>9. David and his army lost their families and possessions to the enemy, but David fought and brought everything back. Nothing was lost (1 Samuel 30: 1-19).</p> <p>10. He brought peace and security to physical Israel (2 Sam. 8:6, 14, 1 Chron. 8:6).</p> <p>11. A king with whom God is well pleased (1 Sam. 13:14).</p> <p>12. David gathered the low and despised into his kingdom (1 Sam. 22:1-2).</p> <p>13. David's own son Absalom rebels against David, Absalom flees and is hanged in a tree (2 Sam. 18:9).</p> <p>14. When the enemy pursues David, few of his people follow him (2 Sam. 15:14).</p> <p>15. David had to bear the cursings of Shimei. He forbids his followers to take revenge (2 Sam. 16:5-10).</p> <p>16. David is 30 years old when he became king (2 Sam. 5:4).</p> <p>17. David reigned from Jerusalem over all Israel for 33 years (2 Sam. 5:5).</p> <p>18. David overthrew the impostor to his throne and all rebellion (2 Sam. 18:7, 14-15, 20:1-3, 22).</p> | <p>8. He is victorious over all of his enemies, sin, Satan and death (Eph. 1:19-23).</p> <p>9. Jesus rescues all that the Father gives to him, not one is lost (John 6:37-39).</p> <p>10. He bought peace and security to spiritual Israel (Rom. 5:1, Eph. 2:14-15).</p> <p>11. A king with whom God is well pleased (Matt. 13:17).</p> <p>12. Jesus gathers the low and despised into his kingdom (1 Cor. 1:27-28).</p> <p>13. A familiar friend of Jesus, Judas; betrays Jesus, and later hangs himself (Matt. 26:48-50).</p> <p>14. When Jesus is taken, his friends scatter (Matt. 26:56).</p> <p>15. Jesus forbade his followers to take revenge. (Matt. 26:50-52).</p> <p>16. Jesus began his public ministry at 30 years of age (Luke 2:23).</p> <p>17. Jesus was king from birth (Matt. 2:2), and lived for 33 years.</p> <p>18. Jesus will overthrow the anti-Christ and all who rebel against him (2 Thess. 2:8, Rev. 17:14, 19:11-16).</p> |
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There are three things which stand out in the life of David in foreshadowing the work of Christ. Those three things being:

- The battle he fought with Goliath.
- His work as priest and king.
- The foundation material he prepared for the temple.

The Battle

David is the conquering king, the saviour king, saving the people from all their enemies. The first battle which David fought was against Goliath, the chief of the enemy forces. Goliath said at that time of the person who was to fight him, "If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us." (1 Sam. 17:9).

This is true of the battle between Christ and Satan. Satan in like manner is the chief of the enemy forces. If Christ had lost the battle, God's people would have become the servants of Satan. Christ in fact won the battle on behalf of all of his people, releasing them from slavery to Satan.

It is interesting to note that Goliath challenged the people of Israel for forty days before the battle took place

(1 Sam. 17:16). It was for forty days and nights that Christ fasted before doing spiritual battle with Satan.

After David killed Goliath, "David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem..." (1 Sam. 17:54). We read of Jesus, "Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull." (John 19:17). According to Hebrew tradition, it was called "the place of the skull" because the skull of Goliath was buried there. It is significant that Jesus finally and completely dealt with Satan on the very same hill.

The Continuing Fight

When David defeated Goliath, the battle against the Philistines was won (1 Sam. 17:9). David won the battle and the men of Israel continued the fight against the defeated enemy (1 Sam. 17:51-52). This is true of Christ, he has won the battle, the Christian continues the fight against a defeated enemy, "... Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:7).

David As Priest and King

In 2 Samuel chapter twenty-four, we see that King David is commanded by God to take on the role of a priest, in addition to his role as king. A role normally forbidden to

all, except the sons of Aaron (Num. 3:10). The kingship was taken from Saul because he took on the role of a priest (1 Sam. 13:8-14). King Uzziah was struck with leprosy for taking upon himself the role (2 Chron. 26:16-21).

David; in his work as priest and king, is pointing to the far greater priest and king; the Lord Jesus Christ. The parallels which we should note between the type, (David) and the antitype, (Jesus) are as follows.

- (a) David's role as priest is necessary because of the sin of the people of Israel. "Again the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, 'Go and count Israel and Judah.'" (2 Samuel 24:1).

It was because of the sin of all mankind that Jesus had to come as priest and king to offer up himself as an atoning sacrifice in order that spiritual Israel, (the invisible Church) might be saved.

- (b) David is obedient to the command of God to build an altar and offer sacrifices (24:18-19).

It was in obedience to his heavenly Father that Jesus came into the world to die as the sacrificial lamb for sinners (John 3:16).

- (c) Through the sacrifices which David offered as priest and king, the people of Israel are saved. "David built an altar to the Lord there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then the Lord answered prayer in behalf of the land, and the plague on Israel was stopped." (2 Sam. 24:25).

It is through the sacrificial work of Christ as priest and king that sinners are saved from the just judgement of God to come. "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ." (Eph 2:13). See also Heb. 9:11-14.

- (d) The foundation for the temple was established through the sacrifices by King David as both priest and king.

David was commanded by God to build the altar for the sacrifices at a particular location. "'On that day Gad went to David and said to him, 'Go up and build an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.'" (2 Sam. 24:18). The Temple was later built on that very spot. 'Gad' was a prophet.

The Foundation Laid

David gathered the material for the temple, he said, "'...the house that is to be built for the Lord must be exceedingly magnificent, of fame and glory throughout all lands; I will therefore make preparation for it.' So David provided materials in great quantity before his death.'" (1 Chronicles 22:5). See also 29:2-3. David provided Solomon with a written plan of the temple, a plan which was inspired by God (1 Chron. 28:19).

Jesus laid down a foundation for the temple of God (the Church) through the shedding of his blood (his life), "Christ

Jesus himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole structure, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;" (Eph. 2:20-21). See also 1 Cor. 3:11.

The Descendant of David

God told David that he would put one of his descendants upon the throne, and that he would reign forever. He not only told David of this plan, he told the people of Israel also through the prophets. This information is not given for the benefit of satisfying idle curiosity, it is given to reassure the people that God will one day place a king on the throne over his people who will be in the likeness of King David, i.e. He will never know defeat. In regard to the covenant promise, the psalmist says, "'You said, 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant, I will establish your line for ever and make your throne firm through all generations'" (Psalm 89:3-4).

The promise that there would be only one dynasty in Judah - the line of David - is humanly speaking, all the more remarkable when it is remembered that the northern kingdom had nineteen kings and no less than nine dynasties. The royal line of David was under threat on several occasions. On one occasion, all of the royal seed except Joash were killed (2 Kings 11:22).

The Holy Spirit revealed to the prophet Isaiah the fact that "A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse: from his roots a Branch will bear fruit..." (11:1-5). At the time of this prophecy, c.700 B.C., the royal line of David was very much alive and strong; like a large tree. Isaiah tells of a time when the line of kings will be dead. The picture which is given is not that of a tree with the top lopped off; nor is it of a tree with all of the branches cut off. A more hopeless picture is given; that of a stump.

The last of the kings from the line of David was Zedekiah who finished his reign in 586 B.C. With the coming of the Roman empire to Israel in 63 B.C. it was clear to everyone, that humanly speaking, there was no hope of a king from the line of David arising to bring God's people peace and security. However; it was precisely at this time that God sent the King of kings into the world, a shoot arising up out of a hopelessly dead stump.

Speaking of the glorious reign of this king, the prophet Isaiah said, "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders ... Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom..." (Isaiah 9:6-7).

The Covenant Promise Fulfilled

The fulfilment of the covenant promise is found in the person of Jesus Christ. The priest Zechariah speaking of this fulfilment and the saving work which was about to commence said, "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people. He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David." (Luke 1:68-69).

The angel in his message to Mary said of Jesus, "He will

be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.” (Luke 1:32-33).

There are many passages of Scripture which tell us that although Jesus came from heaven, his human ancestry is of the line of David:

Romans 1:3 “regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David.”

The New Testament begins and ends with the declaration that Jesus Christ is the son of David.

Matthew 1:1 “A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David...” Revelation 22:16 “...I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.”

Some of the people at the time of Jesus understood that he was the special son of David and called out to him for healing. “A Canaanite woman ... came to him, crying out, ‘Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me!...’” (Matt. 15:22). See also Matt. 20:30.

Coming as the special son of David implies kingship. In the crucifixion of Jesus a clear testimony was given to his kingship. “Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.” (Matt. 27:37). When the people of Jerusalem witnessed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the apostle Peter explained that the outpouring was evidence of the resurrection and rule of Jesus Christ. A rule which had been promised to the descendant of King David. “God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne.” (Acts 2:30). Peter further explains, “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” (Acts 2:36). See also Acts 13:32-38.

The Greater David

King David was a type of the messiah to come, he foreshadows Jesus Christ so closely that Ezekiel uses the name David when prophesying of Christ coming as the conquering messiah and bringing peace. “My servant David shall be king over them; and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall follow my ordinances and be careful to observe my statutes ... and David my servant shall be their prince forever.” (Ezekiel 37:25). Naturally, only Jesus can be king of the Jews forever (Matt. 27:37).

This is not the only case in Scripture where one person’s name is used in place of another. For instance, the name ‘Elijah’ is used to foretell the coming of an important person at a future date. “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes.” (Malachi 4:5). The fulfilment of that prophecy is given to us in Matthew 11:11-15 “...there has risen no-one greater than John the Baptist; ... For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John; and if you are willing to accept it, he

is Elijah who is to come.” The meaning of this being that John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah. See also Hosea 3:5.

The prophet Amos also pointed to the greater David. He said, “In that day I will restore David’s fallen tent. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins, and build it as it used to be,” (Amos 9:11). This promise of the future restoration of David’s fallen tent is fulfilled with Christ taking up the throne of David and bringing Gentiles as well as Jews into his kingdom. James proved this to be the case by quoting the Amos passage, he says ““After this I will return and rebuild David’s fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, that the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things”” (Acts 15:16-17).

David’s Sin

There are two accounts of the life of David in the Bible. 1 & 2 Samuel and that of 1 Chronicles. It is interesting to note that 1 Chronicles omits any mention of the sins of David - a necessary omission if we are to have a clear picture of David as being a type of the messiah. Jesus came as the messiah and completed his mission without sin.

In 2 Samuel we see that David committed adultery with Bathsheba and murdered Uriah. This sin occupied a small time in his life, however, it is important that the sin be recorded for it shows that David was a sinner, and a vile sinner at that. If the full weight of the law had been carried out, he would have received the death penalty. So we see David in one account as a saviour of Israel, a type of the messiah; in the other account, we see him at one stage as being typical of the worst of sinners, one who plots, schemes, commits adultery and murder. He is a type of the messiah who comes as both God and man. The important difference is that Jesus himself did not sin. Jesus took the sins of his Church upon himself, and paid the penalty. David repented of his sins. Likewise, Jesus repented. He repented; not for his own sins, but for the sins of his people. He repented through the baptism of repentance at the hands of John the Baptist.

Looking for the King of Kings

Ever since the period of King David, the Jews have longed for another king like David. One who will conquer the enemy and give their land peace, but they look in vain because the king they need has already come. Jesus, by his righteous life and death has conquered man’s worst enemies; bondage to sin, Satan and death. He has also given those who put their trust in him inner peace. The exploits of King David were great, he was a legend in his own time, but even the great King David bows the knee to Jesus and calls him Lord (Acts 2:34-35).

God’s Man for the Battle

King Saul, when faced by the threats of his strong enemy knew that he had to choose the correct man for the battle. His natural instinct told him to choose the most

seasoned warrior from amongst his best soldiers. God however, had already chosen a man for the fight. Saul at first despised David, "...you are only a boy..." (1 Sam. 17:33). Saul heard evidence from David that God had been with him in past battles so that he was able to kill both a lion and a bear (1 Sam. 17:34-37). Saul now places his faith in David, saying "... Go, and the Lord be with you." (v.37).

Saul chose correctly, he chose God's choice for the battle. We too must be careful to choose correctly the man to fight for us. We dare not choose a weak man to release us from the power of sin and the judgment to come. We dare not choose ourselves. There is only one person that we can trust for the battle; that person is God's choice, Jesus Christ. "...Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed..." (Rev. 5:5).

The True King is Victorious

Absalom tried to take over the kingdom of his father. Many people turned their allegiance to Absalom because he told them what they wanted to hear instead of what they needed to hear. They were also impressed by his fine appearance (2 Sam. 14:25-26, 15:1-6). They quickly forgot that it was King David who had fought so bravely for them in many battles to establish the kingdom which they now enjoyed, so they put their trust in an impostor. The situation is similar today, there are many who prefer to put their trust in a message which flatters them, even when they are in terrible danger. They feel that they are secure, because those who have joined with them are far larger in number than those who have joined with the true king.

In attacking King David, Absalom and his men confidently followed the advice of Hushai who said, "... Let all Israel, from Dan to Beersheba - as numerous as the sand on the seashore - be gathered to you, with you yourself leading them into battle. Then we will attack him wherever he may be found, and we will fall on him as dew settles on the ground. Neither he nor any of his men will be left alive." (2 Samuel 17:11-12).

Instead of placing their trust in God's anointed, they placed their trust in the one who flattered them, and in a numerically superior force. When the day of battle came, it was David's army which won a convincing victory. "There the army of Israel was defeated by David's men, and the casualties that day were great - twenty thousand men." (2 Sam. 18:7). All additional rebellion was also thoroughly put down (2 Sam. 20:1-2, 21-22).

Jesus Christ will also be victorious, all rebellion will be overthrown even when the number of those who rebel is very large (Revelation 17:14). The Bible says of Jesus, "On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." (Revelation 19:16).

God's Covenant With King David Regarding His Son

The Son of King David

King David and Bathsheba had a son whose name became famous in his time and that fame continues today. His name is Solomon. He was also named Jedidiah ('beloved of the Lord') by Nathan the prophet (2 Samuel 12:24-25).

Regarding Solomon, God made a covenant with King David in which he promised he would have a son who would reign upon his throne forever. God said through the prophet Nathan, "When your days are over and you go to be with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. I will never take my love away from him, as I took it away from your predecessor. I will set him over my house and my kingdom forever; his throne will be established forever." (1 Chron. 17:11-14). Regarding the eternal duration of his rule, see also 1 Chronicles 22:10.

How are we to understand this covenant in view of the fact that we have already seen that Jesus is the fulfilment of another covenant promise to David that his throne would be established forever? (2 Sam. 7:16, Ezekiel 37:25, Acts 2:30, 13:34). The apostle Paul said of Jesus, "The fact that God raised him from the dead, never to decay, is stated in these words: 'I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David.'" (Acts 13:34). If Jesus is to receive the blessings promised to David, how can Solomon be set over God's house and kingdom forever?

The answer to the above question becomes clear when we look closely at the life of King Solomon.

Solomon As Judge

At the beginning of his ministry as king, Solomon had to act as judge in a dispute and determine who was lying. Two women were sleeping in the same room together with their babies when one of the women rolled onto her baby and killed it. One of the women claimed that the other woman had swapped her living baby for her dead baby. Both of the women claimed the living baby to be her own (1 Kings 3:22).

Solomon displayed his wisdom by the way he dealt with the situation. He asked for a sword and "... then gave an order: 'Cut the living child in two and give half to one and half to the other.' The woman whose son was alive was filled with compassion for her son and said to the king, 'Please, my lord, give her the living baby! Don't kill him!' But the other said, 'Neither I nor you shall have him. Cut him in two!' Then the king gave his ruling: 'Give the living baby to the first woman. Do not kill him; she is his mother.' When all Israel heard the verdict the king had given, they held the king in awe, because they saw that he had wisdom from God to administer justice." (1 Kings 3:25-28).

The Holy Spirit; at the beginning of his powerful rule and

ministry over the Church also had to administer justice in a case where someone was lying. In this case two people - Ananias and his wife Sapphira. They had agreed together to lie about the amount of money they received from the sale of their land. No ploy was used this time to determine who was lying, the Holy Spirit knew the facts and their hearts. The judgement was swift - death (Acts 5:1-11).

We begin to see from this that just as the promise to David that he would reign forever finds its fulfilment in Jesus, so also, the promise to Solomon that he would reign forever is found in one far greater than himself; the Holy Spirit. We see from this that God, (Father Son and Holy Spirit) will rule over his Church forever from the throne of David.

The Work of the Holy Spirit

Before we look at how Solomon bears testimony to the work of the Holy Spirit, we need to briefly look at what the special work of the Holy Spirit is. In the work of redemption, his work is different to that of the Father and the Son. We are saved by the Father because he sent the Son. We are saved by the Son because he lived a righteous life, died, and rose again for us. We are saved by the Holy Spirit because he convicts us of sin and draws us to the Son. So we are saved by all three persons of the trinity.

The Father and the Son created the universe out of nothing (Gen. 1:1, John 1:1-3), or more specifically, the universe "... was not made out of what was visible" (Heb. 11:3). We learn from Scripture that it is the special work of the Holy Spirit to take that which has been made, and shape it. We read that after God had created the earth, the Holy Spirit moved over the formless earth to give it shape. "Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." (Gen. 1:2). Likewise, it is the work of the Holy Spirit to change the Christian; to change him or her into a more Christ-like person (2 Cor. 3:18).

The Kingdom Established

King Solomon did not have to fight to establish his kingdom. He was able to take up the kingdom of his father and shape and develop it into a glorious and powerful kingdom. His father had shed blood in order to establish the kingdom. Solomon's rule would be one of peace, in fact, Solomon's name means 'peaceful'.

After Jesus Christ (who was foreshadowed by King David) shed his blood to establish the kingdom of God, the Holy Spirit came in great power as promised to give direction to the kingdom (Acts 1:8). So we see from this that there is a similarity between the work of Solomon and the work of the Holy Spirit. Other similarities are as follows:

KING SOLOMON

1. King Solomon came to the throne immediately after King David who foreshadowed Jesus Christ (1 Kings 2:12).
2. At the beginning of his rule, he showed his wisdom with the judgment he gave at the end of a court case (1 Kings 3:28).
4. He used the great quantity of material prepared by King David to build the temple (1 Chron. 22:5).
5. King David provided the plans for the building of the temple which Solomon had to work from (1 Chron. 28:11-12).
6. The temple which he built was famous for its wealth and splendour (1 Kings 6:21-22).
7. He had far greater wealth than any other person (1 Kings 10:21-23).
8. He had far greater wisdom than any other person, to the extent that people came from great distances to hear his wisdom (1 Kings 10:24).
9. His servants were happy to be in his presence and serve him (1 Kings 10:8).
10. No earthly king has arisen since Solomon to equal his wisdom or wealth (1 Kings 3:12).

We will look at some of the above points in detail.

The Wisdom of Solomon

The great wisdom of Solomon came as a result of the work of God upon his life. “‘At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, ‘Ask for whatever you want me to give you’”. Solomon very wisely said, “‘... give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?’” (1 Kings 3:9).

God was very pleased with the reply from Solomon, it was a humble and selfless request, so he said, “I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for - both riches and honour - so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings” (1 Kings 3:12-13).

We should note from this the willingness of God to

THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. The Holy Spirit came to the Church in great power immediately after the saving work and ascension of Jesus Christ (John 7:38-39, Acts 1:8, 2:4).
2. At the beginning of his rule over the Church, the Holy Spirit displayed his wisdom and power through giving his judgment in a case where two people were lying (Acts 5:1-11).
4. The work of Jesus Christ is the foundation upon which the Holy Spirit builds the Church. (1 Cor. 3:11).
5. Jesus said of the Holy Spirit, “... he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears...” (John 16:13).
6. The Church, the temple of the Holy Spirit has great spiritual splendour (2 Cor. 3:7-8).
7. Spiritual wealth comes to the Church through the work of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 3:9-11).
8. The Holy Spirit is the source of wisdom as he makes clear his word, the Bible. (John 14:26, 16:13-15).
9. Those who submit to the rule of the Holy Spirit find enjoyment under his rule. (Heb. 12:9, Eph. 5:24).
10. No earthly power can equal the wisdom or power of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 1:25, 2:10-13).

favourably answer the selfless request, and not the request of the selfish type. The Christian is urged to seek wisdom, see Prov. 19:2, 8, Eph. 1:17, Col. 3:16, James 1:5, 3:17.

Before a king can foreshadow the work of the Holy Spirit, it is necessary that he be given great wisdom, because it is with great wisdom that the Holy Spirit rules the Church. This is exactly what we find in King Solomon. Solomon was given wisdom to the extent that it astonished many of those who heard him. The queen of Sheba said, “‘... ‘The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true. But I did not believe what they said until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half the greatness of your wisdom was told me; you have far exceeded the report I heard.’” (2 Chron. 9:5-6). “King Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth. The whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart.” (1 Kings 10:23-24).

His knowledge covered a wide range of subjects. In

modern terms, he was a brilliant scientist. The Bible says, "God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore. Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt. He was wiser than any other man, including Ethan the Ezrahite--wiser than Heman, Calcol and Darda, the sons of Mahol. And his fame spread to all the surrounding nations. He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs numbered a thousand and five. He described plant life, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of walls. He also taught about animals and birds, reptiles and fish. Men of all nations came to listen to Solomon's wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom." (1 Kings 4:29-34).

Christians throughout the whole world now seek wisdom and understanding from the Holy Spirit as they read his Word, the Bible. He is the one who explains the truth. Jesus told the disciples, "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come." (John 16:13). A major work of the Holy Spirit is to teach, in another passage Jesus said, "But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." (John 14:26). The Holy Spirit gives wisdom to those who earnestly pray for it (James 1:5). The book of Proverbs says, "He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; he who cherishes understanding prospers." (Prov. 19:8).

Solomon Built the Temple

King David could not build the temple, God said to him, "... 'You are not to build a house for my Name, because you are a warrior and have shed blood.'" (1 Chron. 28:3). The great work of building the temple would go more fittingly to another; to his son.

The divine purpose in this is that David who had shed much blood might point to Jesus who shed his own blood for the Church. Furthermore, David points to the work of Christ by preparing material for the temple. "David said, 'My son Solomon is young and inexperienced, and the house to be built for the Lord should be of great magnificence and fame and splendour in the sight of all the nations. Therefore I will make preparations for it.' So David made extensive preparations before his death." (1 Chron. 22:5). We see from this that David's provision is the foundational work for the temple. Likewise, the person and work of Christ is the foundation of the Church - God's temple. "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 3:11).

Solomon foreshadows the great work of God which flows on from the redemptive work of Christ; the work of the Holy Spirit in building up the Church and giving it great splendour, wisdom and direction.

Solomon built the temple on the same mountain where Abraham was commanded to sacrifice his son Isaac (Gen. 22:2). "... Abraham called that place The Lord Will Provide.

And to this day it is said, 'On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided.'" (Gen. 22:14).

The temple site was provided by King David through his work as **priest and king**. "Then Solomon began to build the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to his father David. It was on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, the place provided by David." (2 Chron. 3:1).

It is fitting that the temple should be built upon the very site where David had acted in the capacity of priest and king in order to save the people of Israel from the judgement of God (2 Sam. 24:1, 25). The temple of God; the Church; of which Christ is the cornerstone, is built on the foundation of the work of Christ in his capacity as **priest and king** (Matt. 27:37, Heb. 9:11-12).

The Splendour of the Temple

Solomon said of the temple he was about to build, "The temple I am going to build will be great, because our God is greater than all other gods." (2 Chron. 2:5).

Solomon used large quantities of gold and silver in the construction of the temple and he employed a large workforce. "Solomon covered the inside of the temple with pure gold, and he extended gold chains across the front of the inner sanctuary, which was overlaid with gold." (1 Kings 6:21). "He also covered the floors of both the inner and outer rooms of the temple with gold." (1 Kings 6:30).

It was fitting that Solomon pave the floors of the temple with gold, because it points to the heavenly Jerusalem which is paved with gold. "The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass." (Rev. 21:21).

The Temple of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit has a temple, but it is not a man-made structure. The apostle Paul told the Christians at Corinth, "...your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;" (1 Cor. 6:19). Furthermore, Christians corporately are the temple of the Holy Spirit, "In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit." (Eph. 2:21-22).

The primary work which the Holy Spirit does with his temple is to transform it into a more Christ-like, and therefore more glorious temple. "And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit." (2 Cor. 3:18). Solomon's temple had to be glorious in order to adequately point to God's glorious living temple - the Church.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit in God's living temple is far more glorious than the ministry which God worked through Moses. The Bible makes this comment. "Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was,

will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious?" (2 Cor. 3:7-8). Those who have been transformed into more Christ-like people can testify that the ministry of the Holy Spirit certainly is glorious.

The Temple Dedicated Through the Shedding of Blood

After Solomon had built the temple, he dedicated it through a great number of sacrifices and through prayer. "When Solomon finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple." (2 Chron 7:1). The sacrificial cost for the dedication of this temple was great. "And King Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty-two thousand head of cattle and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep and goats. So the king and all the people dedicated the temple of God." (2 Chron. 7:5).

It was fitting that the blood sacrifice for the dedication of this temple be great, because it was pointing to another great sacrifice; the sacrifice of Christ for his living temple - the Church. Jesus said, "... 'Here I am, I have come to do your will' ... And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Heb. 10:9-10). It was because of Christ's love of the Father and the Church - the living temple of God - that Christ went to the cross. "... Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." (Eph. 5:25).

God's Sovereignty is Displayed

There are some who deny the existence of God and his right to rule over the world, and over their lives. Let the Atheist try to explain why there are so many parallels between the work of Solomon and that of the Holy Spirit.

1. Why was king Solomon the wisest of all kings born after king David and not before?
2. Why did he reign **immediately** after king David, and not several kings distant?
3. Why did he have royal splendour, beyond that of any other king?
4. Why did he build the temple, and not some king of less wisdom?
5. Why did King David who reigned immediately before him, provide the foundation for the temple, and not Solomon himself?

Either all of the above are a set of amazing coincidences, or they are the outworking of the plans of an almighty God who has declared with these signs what has now come to pass; the wise rule of the Holy Spirit over his glorious Church. A Church which has spiritual splendour which is greater than that of Solomon.

In addition to the facts mentioned above, it should be noted that the great wealth of the Temple of Solomon did not remain with the Jews; it was distributed amongst the Gentiles. The Bible tells us that it was King Shishak of Egypt who came to Jerusalem and raided the temple. The raid took place during

the 5th year of the reign of King Rehoboam, the son of Solomon (1 Kings 14:25-26). The Temple was also raided by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (2 Kings 24:10-13).

We find a parallel to much of Solomon's wealth being distributed amongst the Gentiles in the distribution of the splendour and wealth of the Church also going out amongst the Gentiles. The apostle Paul said, "... this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ..." (Eph. 3:8). See also Acts 11:18, 13:47-48, Col. 1:27).

On several occasions, Israel (comprising ten tribes) attacked the tribe of Judah (1 Kings 15:7, 2 Kings 13:12, 14:15). However, God, in his sovereign purposes determined that Judah be too strong to be overthrown by their brothers to the north. Future events are more clearly portrayed by the plunder of the temple by the Gentiles instead. In a spiritual sense, the Gentiles have plundered (taken hold of) the riches of the Gospel.

The Rule of the Holy Spirit

God's sovereign rule through the Holy Spirit extends over the whole world, and he rightfully demands our allegiance to his rule. This is his right because he:

1. Rules the world in righteousness.
2. He redeemed us at the cost of his precious Son.
3. He loves us with a greater love than any other ruler; greater than that of any other person. He even loves us with a greater love than that which we have for ourselves.

For the purpose of Bible study, I will list several key points regarding the rule of the Holy Spirit, and the relevant Scripture references.

The empowerment of:
Acts 1:8, 1 Cor. 2:4-5

The judgment of:
Acts 5:1-11, 1 Cor. 11:32, Heb. 12:5

The weapon of:
2 Cor. 10:4, Eph. 6:17

The administration of:
1 Cor. 12:1-11, 27-31, Rom. 12:6-8

The rule of:
Acts 13:2-4, 15:28, 16:6-10, 1 Cor. 3:16-17

The glory of:
2 Cor. 3:7-11

The fruit of:
Gal. 5:22-23, 2 Cor. 3:18.

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The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Before reading this chapter it is recommended that the previous chapters be read first, particularly the first chapter, “God’s Covenant With King David” and “God’s Covenant With King David Regarding His Son”. With the previous two chapters understood, the reader will more fully appreciate the sequence of events which God brought about in the book of Acts. The first chapter provides an understanding of the theological basis for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit Foretold

Jesus said, “Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.’ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.” (John 7:38-39).

We learn several things about the baptism of the Holy Spirit from this one statement:

- It is a new work of God.
- It is linked to the completion of the work of Christ.
- It goes to all believers, ‘whoever believes in me’.
- It is of great abundance, ‘streams of living water’.

Based on the work of Christ

To appreciate the basis on which believers receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, it is necessary to have an understanding as to how mankind lost the Holy Spirit.

Adam and Eve were created with perfect bodies and enjoyed a perfect relationship with God based upon a perfect righteousness before Him. God’s Spirit dwelt richly within both of them. When they disobeyed the command of God to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they died spiritually. Death, both spiritual and physical passed on to all of mankind.

All who remain united to Adam remain spiritually dead, whereas, those who are united to Christ gain new life through him. “For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.” (Romans 5:17-18).

To state the above in a nutshell, the righteous work of Christ reverses the curse brought about by the disobedience of Adam. Those who place their faith and trust in Christ gain spiritual life through him. There is not one thing that any sinner can do to gain just one drop of the ‘living water’, not alone the ‘streams of living water’ spoken about in John 7:38-39. Only the perfect life and sacrifice of Christ can bring about that blessing. The theological basis on which a person is saved and receives the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is

revealed in the chapter, “*The Hindu, The Muslim and The Christian*”.

The Time of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

God guided events so that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit took place at a significant time, that special time being the day of Pentecost. Regarding the term ‘Pentecost’, it is “A term derived from the Greek *pentecostos*, meaning fiftieth, which was applied to the fiftieth day after the Passover. It was the culmination of the ‘feast of weeks’ (Ex. 34:22; Deut. 16:10), which began on the third day after the Passover with the presentation of the first harvest sheaves to God, and which concluded with the offering of two loaves of unleavened bread, representing the first products of the harvest (Lev. 23:17-20; Deut. 16:9-10).”¹ It is significant that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit began on the day of Pentecost because it is the fruit or harvest of the work of Christ (John 1:33-34, 7:38-39, Acts 1:4-5).

The place of the baptism of the Holy Spirit

Regarding the actual outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the Bible says, “Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.” (Acts 2:2).

A lack of understanding of the original Greek has led many to believe that the word ‘house’ can only refer to a private dwelling as we understand it in English. The Greek word used here is ‘*oikos*’. It can refer, and most often does, to an ordinary home, but it can also refer to a large building, or even a temple as in John 2:17, “Zeal for your house will consume me.”. In another passage, Jesus calls the temple “my Father’s house” (Luke 2:49). The temple was called “a house of prayer” (Matt. 21:13). Even the Tabernacle - constructed prior to the Temple - was referred to by Jesus as the ‘House of God’ (Mark 2:25-26, Luke 6:4). Believers probably shortened the term ‘house of prayer’ or ‘house of God’ to just ‘house’.

Regarding the size of the house, the Bible does not say the ‘sound’ (Acts 2:2) filled the whole house, but rather, it “filled the whole house **where they were sitting**”. In other words, it did not fill the house where other people were sitting. This gives us a clue to the size of the house; it was a very large house. By comparing Scripture with Scripture, and looking at the events which followed, I believe it can be demonstrated that the house they were in, was the ‘house of God’ or ‘house of prayer’; the temple.

Helpful to our study is to discover where the disciples spend much of their time praying and praising God after the ascension of Jesus? The last verse of Luke gives us the answer. “And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God” (Luke 24:53). Not only were they in the temple before the baptism of the Holy Spirit, they continued to meet in the temple for some time after the baptism. “Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke

bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts” (Acts 2:46). Their meeting daily in the temple courts probably continued until Stephen was martyred and persecution broke out against the Church (Acts 8:1).

Given the fact that the disciples spent so much time in the temple, it is not likely that they would be in any place other than the temple on the morning of the day of Pentecost.

Popular belief claims the baptism of the Holy Spirit took place in the ‘upper room’, and that 120 people were present and received this baptism. Some Church groups have even had ‘Upper Room’ as part of the name of their church.²

With regard to the upper room, we should note that the Bible does not refer to it as a special meeting place, but as a place where the eleven disciples were staying. “When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James.” (Acts 1:13). This text specifically refers to eleven people being present in the room upstairs, and therefore excludes the possibility of others being present.

The following verse refers to their prayer life which was conducted in fellowship with others. “They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.” (Acts 1:14). Some take the ‘prayer’ in this verse to refer to just one prayer meeting, but the text actually says, “They all joined together **constantly** in prayer...” The Greek word translated ‘constantly’ (*proskarterontes*) means constantly diligent; earnest towards. It carries the thought of many prayer meetings.

The next verse tells of Peter reminding the believers (about 120 in number) that another disciple must be chosen. “In those days Peter stood up among the believers...” One translation has ‘at this time’ but ‘time’ is not a good translation because the Greek word ‘*hemerais*’ means ‘days’. This means the events on the day of Pentecost were separated from the time the apostles entered the upper room in verse thirteen by several days, not just hours or minutes.

There is a major difficulty in trying to place all of the events on the day of Pentecost in an upper room, particularly when we consider the response of the crowd. The Bible says, “Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language.” (Acts 2:5-6).

If the disciples were in the upper room, where did the crowd ‘come together’? They certainly would not have been in the room with the disciples immediately before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It is not likely that the crowd would rush up the stairs to the upper room to meet the disciples, and we do not read that the disciples rushed down the stairs to meet the crowd below, or that they spoke out of a window to the crowd. The crowd that Peter spoke to was not small, it numbered at least 3,000! (Acts 2:41). Quite clearly, the building the disciples were in was very large.

The Importance of the Location

Jerusalem was important as a location. Jesus told the disciples, “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised...” (1:4). Furthermore, it is evident that the temple was an important place because, as we have already noted, after Jesus ascended to glory, the disciples “... stayed continually at the temple, praising God.” (Luke 24:52).

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the temple fulfils a prophecy in Ezekiel that a river of life would flow from the temple which would be too large to stand up in or cross (Ezekiel 47:1-9). “... where the river flows everything will live.” (1:9). A spiritual river of life flowed out from the temple. Jesus told the woman at the well, “... whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” (John 4:14).

It will be helpful at this point to summarise the main points which indicate that the baptism of the Holy Spirit took place in the temple rather than in the upper room of a house.

- The term “House of prayer” was used.
- Many prayer meetings were held in the temple (house) by the disciples.
- The disciples were to stay in Jerusalem, a significant location.
- The temple is a significant location.
- Pentecost - celebrated in the temple - was a significant event.
- A large number of people received the message - three thousand were saved.

Having understood, “God’s Covenant With King David” and “God’s Covenant With King David Regarding His Son”, it is no surprise that God has brought about the initial Baptism of the Holy Spirit in His time and in His place. God’s sovereign guiding of events does not stop with his guiding the disciples to be in the Temple to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He also brings the baptism on the Church in four stages in a logical order.

The Four Stages

It is important to see that the baptism in the Holy Spirit came upon the Church in four stages. The four stages are:

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 1. THE DISCIPLES | Acts 2:1-4 |
| 2. THE JEWS | Acts 2:5, 14 |
| 3. THE SAMARITANS | Acts 8:14-17 |
| 4. THE GENTILES | Acts 10:44-48 |

1. The Disciples

Some put forward the view that 120 believers were initially baptised in the Holy Spirit because of a mention of the 120 in Acts 1:15. However, the following points show that only the disciples were spiritually baptised on the first

occasion.

1. "...Peter stood up with the **Eleven**, ..." (2:14).
2. Men only received the baptism (2:7, 15).
3. They were observed to be Galileans (2:7).
4. The disciples/apostles are a distinct group worthy of special honour and treatment (Acts 2:42-43, 4:33, 5:12).

2. The Jews

After the disciples were baptised in the Holy Spirit (after which time they are called apostles), the baptism of the Holy Spirit came upon the Jews who believed the gospel message which Peter delivered to them. The Bible says regarding this incident, "Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing **Jews** from every nation under heaven." (Acts 2:5). Pentecost was a significant event for God-fearing Jews. Many would travel from remote areas of the Roman empire to be in Jerusalem for the event. Paul, some years later, was keen to not miss Pentecost (Acts 20:16).³

Peter addressed himself to these 'God-fearing Jews', not to the Gentiles whom he considered at the time to be unclean (Acts 10:9-34). "Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: 'Fellow **Jews** and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say.'" (Acts 2:14). The Jews responded to the message by saying "... Brothers, what shall we do?" They were able to use the term 'brothers' because they were Jews. Those who repented received the baptism of the Holy Spirit (2:38-39). No Gentiles (non-Jews) received the baptism of the Holy Spirit at this stage.

3. The Samaritans

The Samaritans were initially, like their brothers to the south in Judah, a pure race descended from Abraham. That situation began to change from 721 BC when the Assyrians conquered their land and brought Gentiles into their territory with whom they intermarried. By the time of Christ, they were not a pure race of Jews, so they were despised by the Jews to the south. However, because they were at least partly Jews (of the line of Abraham), they were still honoured by God ahead of the Gentiles with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. That point should not surprise us because Jesus honoured the Jews ahead of the Gentiles during his ministry in the flesh on the earth (Matt. 15:24). The Gentiles do not miss out, they are blessed through God honouring his promise to Abraham (Gen. 17:7, Gal. 3:28-29).⁴

The Samaritans believed the gospel as a result of the preaching ministry of the apostle Philip. The apostles in Jerusalem determine that it is necessary to send Peter and John to the new believers in Samaria. When Peter and John placed their hands upon them, they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit (8:16-17).

The Prominence of Peter

An important question needs to be raised here. Why was the giving of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of the hands of Peter and John, and not through the hands of the

apostle Philip? I believe there are two good reasons. Firstly, God wanted to link the Samaritan Church to the mother Church at Jerusalem to ensure that they were committed to the teaching of the apostles as were the Jews (2:42). Also, it was important to establish the unity of believers. The Jews and the Samaritans had a long history of enmity toward each other.

Secondly, God was fulfilling his promise to Peter arising from his confession that Jesus is the messiah. Jesus gave the promise that Peter; the Christ-confessing Peter, is the rock upon which the Church would be built. Jesus said, "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it." (Matt. 16:19).

It is no accident that Jesus appeared to Peter after his resurrection before he appeared to the rest of the disciples. 1 Corinthians 15:5 says, "and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve." (See also Luke 24:34). The prominence given by God to Peter is further made clear when we see that it was Peter who first addressed the Jews after the disciples were baptised in the Holy Spirit. It was Peter who ministers to the Samaritans so that the Holy Spirit comes upon them. And it is Peter who proclaims the gospel to the Gentiles with the result that the Holy Spirit comes upon them also. It is through Peter that the Holy Spirit comes to each major group of people, Jew, Samaritan and Gentile. The bold Christ-confessing Peter, is the rock upon which the Church is built (Matt. 16:16-19).

The leadership given to Peter is not a hierarchal type of leadership where the other apostles have to refer matters of doctrine and Church practice to him for approval. That point is obvious from the fact that Paul had to rebuke him on one occasion for his not eating with Gentile believers (Galatians 2:11-13). Also, James took a leadership position in the Church (Acts 15:13-21). The leadership exercised by Peter is primarily one of *role* or *function* where he initiates the spread of the gospel through his bold confession of Christ. See footnote.¹

4. The Gentiles

The apostle Peter preached to the Gentiles, and "...the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message." (10:44). We should take special note of the fact that the Holy Spirit came upon **all** who heard the message, and not just upon some.

We can be sure that this is the first time that the baptism in the Holy Spirit had come upon Gentiles because of the reaction of the Jews who were with Peter. "The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the

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The Greek word used to describe Peter as a rock is *Petros* which refers to a small rock. It should not be confused with the Greek word *Petra* which refers to a large rock and is never used in connection with Peter, only with Christ. See 1Cor. 10:4. (W.E. Vine, p. 302).

gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles.” (Acts 10:45). This proves my point that no Gentiles received the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Also, just prior to this event, Peter had considered Gentiles to be unclean. God had to give him a special vision - of unclean animals lowered in a sheet - to make him change his mind (Acts 10:9-16).

Some in Jerusalem were initially critical of Peter preaching to the Gentiles (11:1-3). When Peter explained how the Holy Spirit had come upon the Gentiles, their criticism was silenced (11:16-18).

The Transitional Period

The early Church was in a transitional period. To understand the special conditions of this transitional period, I will begin by asking a few questions.

What happened when a person who was a believer in the O.T. sense (i.e. was a God-fearing, saved person, but knew little of Christ) came into the new Church period? Did they lose their salvation? Did they lose the small occasional connection with the Holy Spirit they had? Did they automatically gain an extra measure of the Holy Spirit after the baptism of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost? If the answer is No, under what conditions could they receive the extra measure of the Holy Spirit? The next passage which we shall look at is important because it answers the above questions.

John’s Disciples - Acts 19:1-7

Paul came to Ephesus and found some of John’s disciples. On hearing that they did not receive the Holy Spirit when they believed, he asked them an important question to see where their faith lay - to see if they were Christians. ““So Paul asked, ‘Then what baptism did you receive?’ ‘John’s baptism,’ they replied.’” (Acts 19:3). Paul emphasised the fact that they had to believe in Jesus. “...He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” (19:4). They believed and were baptised after which Paul placed his hands on them and “... the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.” (19:6).

We should observe from this group that:

- They were people of faith, but not in Jesus Christ.
- They did not automatically gain an extra measure of the Holy Spirit when the age of the Spirit came upon the church.
- They could have died as believers (and gone to heaven) without gaining an extra measure of the Holy Spirit.
- The extra measure (the baptism of the Holy Spirit) came through faith in Christ.
- There was a manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit (speaking in tongues and prophesying) after the laying on of apostolic hands.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit can not come without faith in Jesus Christ.. Jesus said, “Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from

within him.” The apostle John, by way of explanation says, “By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not been glorified.” (John 7:38-39).

The apostle John did not mean from his explanation that believers before the time of Christ were completely devoid of the Holy Spirit. Jesus informed the disciples before his death and resurrection that the Holy Spirit was with them, but later on He would be within them (John 14:17).

The Acts 19 passage does not teach us that we should seek out someone who calls himself an apostle (or anyone else for that matter), and get him to lay his hands upon us so that we can gain the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It does tell us that any person who came into the age of the Spirit (which began on the day of Pentecost) with a saving faith, still needed to place their faith in Jesus Christ in order to gain the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Things are different in the age of the Spirit in two key ways:

1. It is not possible for a person now to have a saving faith without a personal trust in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
2. It is not possible now for a person to have a saving faith in Jesus Christ and not have the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Those who deny the above two points have made the work of Christ to be of no effect. The above points should be kept in mind when reading through the book of Acts, particularly the Acts 19 passage.

As the apostle Paul proclaimed Christ, the Holy Spirit was at work on the hearts and minds of the disciples of John, convincing them of the truth of the message. At the moment of their faith, they were baptised in the Holy Spirit. There was however, in this instance, an additional work of the Holy Spirit. “When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.” (Acts 19:6).

We should note from the above passage that there was a powerful work of the Holy Spirit. He came upon the believers as soon as Paul placed his hands upon them. There is no suggestion in this passage that the believers had to put up a spiritual struggle of any shape or form before the Holy Spirit could come upon them.

People who could be loosely described as Old Testament saints - people of faith but not in Jesus Christ - with an Old Testament measure of the Holy Spirit - the Spirit with them, but not within them - had to understand that they needed to place their faith in Christ. Faith in Jesus Christ and the baptism of the Holy Spirit are linked

together. That teaching was confirmed by the apostle when he placed his hands upon the disciples of John and the Holy Spirit manifested himself in a spectacular way - they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

The book of Acts is not telling us that we should look at what the apostles did, then copy what they did. It is telling us that we should note what the apostles taught, and live under their teaching, because their teaching is the teaching of God. The early Church, "... devoted themselves to the apostles teaching ..." (Acts 2:42). Scripture does not tell us that the early Church devoted themselves to seeking various experiences.

The coming of the Holy Spirit on the disciples of John when Paul placed his hands upon them is not the only instance when God worked powerfully through Paul, we also read in the context of this chapter, "And God did extraordinary miracles through Paul. Handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them." (Acts 19:11-12).

The decline in miracle working

In the final months of Jesus' ministry upon the earth, he did not perform any miracles except for the raising of Lazarus from the dead. That was necessary so that the authorities might be emboldened to arrest him and put him to death. Jesus came to die.

It is also the case that at the end of the apostolic period, miracle working declined. Peter ceased to perform miracles. He was taken prisoner and was crucified upside down. Paul was beheaded. During the earlier miracle working period, Peter escaped from prison (Acts 5:17-20, 12:1-11).

Miracles were a sign of apostolic authority

God worked many miracles through the apostle Philip. "When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said." (Acts 8:6). Miracles were the sign of apostolic ministry (2 Cor. 12:12, Acts 2:43). If miracles were quite readily performed by those who were not apostles, then it would not make sense for the apostle Paul to declare to the Corinthians that "The things that **mark an apostle** - signs, wonders and miracles - were done among you with great perseverance." (2 Cor. 12:12). Nor would it make sense to tell people "The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. ..." (Acts 5:12) if miracles were performed in great measure by other people.

It is the plan of God that the special ministry of the apostles stand out as being unique. The main reason for this is that God wants the Church to take note of the teaching of the apostles (Acts 2:42, Eph. 2:20).

The Passing of the Apostolic Age

It was through the apostles that God chose to initially spread the gospel and give teaching to the Church. To an even lesser extent, supernatural signs were passed on to those upon whom the Apostles had laid their hands. When

this group of people died, so too did this spectacular miracle-working apostolic age; and for a good reason, the Church was now established, and the word of God given in written form. The spectacular miracle-working of the apostles (Acts 2:43), showed that God had given them special authority. Any period of sustained spectacular miracle-working throughout history since the apostles would only serve to detract from the apostles, the message they gave, and ultimately, from Christ himself who should take the highest place in the thoughts of all Christians.

The decline in the miracle working by the apostles is a fact of history. As noted earlier, Peter was taken prisoner and could not walk out of jail.

The apostle **Paul** also knew sickness; in his letter to the Galatians he said, "...my sickness was a trial to you..." (Gal. 4:14). God worked through Paul on one occasion to heal a person who had been a cripple from birth (Acts 14:8-10). Toward the end of Paul's ministry on earth, God did not heal through him. He said to Timothy, "...I left **Trophimus** sick in Miletus." (2 Timothy 4:20). He also told the Philippians of the sickness of his good friend **Epaphroditus**, "Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him..." (Philippians 2:27). His advice to **Timothy** on one occasion was, "Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses." (1 Timothy 5:23).⁵

We learn from the early Church Fathers that Peter was not able to use miraculous tongues when he preached in Rome. Mark, who penned the gospel which bears his name, had to translate for Peter. Several of the early Church Fathers quoted below mention this fact. The quotes are from the *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*.

Papias—Asia Minor, circa 125 AD—(quoted by Eus., *HE*, III, 39): "And this also the elder said: Mark, having become the **interpreter** (ἑρμηνεύτης, *hermēneútēs*) of Peter, wrote accurately what he remembered (or recorded) of the things said or done by Christ, ..."

Irenaeus from Asia Minor and Gaul, circa 175 AD says, "After the apostles were clothed with the power of the Holy Spirit and fully furnished for the work of universal evangelization, they went out ... to the ends of the earth preaching the gospel. Matthew went eastward to those of Hebrew descent and preached to them in their own tongue, in which language he also (had?) published a writing of the gospel, while Peter and Paul went westward and preached and founded the church in Rome. But after the departure ... of the, Mark, the disciple and interpreter ... of Peter, even he has delivered to us in writing the things which were preached by Peter.".⁶ The ellipsis (...) refer to statements in Greek deleted from the quote.

Tertullian—North Africa, circa 207 AD and *Jerome*—East and West, circa 350 AD also describe Mark as being an interpreter of Peter. Quite clearly, things had changed to some extent from the time in the Temple when the Holy Spirit came upon Peter and the other disciples and they miraculously spoke in the languages of the people

present (Acts 2:5-6).

The decline in miracle working did not come about because of sin or any other type of failure in the Church. God brought about the decline for the ultimate benefit of the Church.

I will illustrate this important point with a story. A man had a large passenger ship which gave him a good income. He felt safe returning from a long voyage at night, because, although there were some large rocks which he had to navigate past in the dark, he felt safe because a couple of light houses guided him on the correct course to take. Unfortunately, he had a rival who was determined to do damage to the company. The rival, finding it impossible to remove the light houses so that the ship could be wrecked on the rocks, decided to install a large number of light houses which stretched out for a great distance along the coast. When the large passenger ship returned in the middle of the night, it could not determine which course to take because the true light was lost among the other lights. The ship struck the rocks and all on board were drowned.

God very jealously guards the lights which he has established, he will not allow them to be drowned out by other lights. God worked many miracles through Christ (Mark 1:32-34. Jesus Christ is the light to which we should all turn. No person has arisen who has equalled the number of miracles that God performed through him (John 21:25).

There are isolated incidents where God has healed people of some illness, but these occurrences are rare. In the main, Christians must endure all sorts of hardships along with the rest of the community, however, they have an inner strength which comes from the Holy Spirit. This inner strength is often a powerful witness to those who come in contact with them.

Some in the past have made the claim that God will one day establish another group of apostles. But Scripture clearly tells us that the Church is built on the foundation of the apostles. "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone." (Eph. 2:20). There can only be one foundation, therefore there can only be one apostolic ministry. See also Eph. 3:5, Acts 2:43, 4:33, 5:12, 8:18, 1 Cor. 4:9, 2 Cor. 11:13, 2 Peter 3:2, Rev. 2:2, 21:14.

God has established the Church with a firm foundation. It is because of the firm foundation of the Church and the presence of the Holy Spirit within every believer that the Church does not waver from various attacks which come its way. Various false ideas from time to time assault the truth which the Church proclaims, but false ideas fade and the Church marches on. In the 1970s someone put out a book titled, "Chariots of the gods" which put forward the idea that mankind has been visited by beings from outer space. A few passages of scripture were blended with an active imagination to give support to the view that aliens came to earth in Old Testament times.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Church came under attack from a book and then a film titled, "The Da Vinci Code". The fictitious work proclaimed the idea that Jesus did not die and rise from the dead. Furthermore, this work falsely said Jesus married and had children. The film came out in May 2006. The effect of this fiction on the Church was like that of a mist on a large battleship. The Church marches on from strength to strength while those outside flounder about in uncertainty as to their eternal destiny. ⁷

Jesus said:

"...I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:18).

End Notes

1. Pentecost, M. Tenney, "Baker's Dictionary of Theology", E. Harrison (Ed.), Baker, Michigan, 1975, p. 400.
2. Upper Room Mission, "The New International Dictionary Of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements" S. Burgess Ed., Zondervan, Michigan USA, 2002, p. 1166. Established in Los Angeles in 1906 by Elmer Fisher.
3. Pentecost, M. Tenney, "Bakers's Dictionary of Theology", p. 400.
4. See my book "God's Witness to Himself", chapter 16, or see "God's Covenant With Abraham" at www.defenceofthefait.org
5. See "Wealth.pdf" on web site for article refuting false promises regarding 'faith healing'.
6. Mark, *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, Gen. Ed., J. Orr, Vol. III, Eerdmnas, Grand Rapids USA, 1956, p. 1989-1999.
7. For more information on *The Da Vinci Code* see article titled *Conspiracies* on my web site listed below.

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