

2. What would "stagger" Zion the most?
3. What is Zion to learn from this?
4. What does the word "therefore" in verse 21 indicate?
5. Give the two possible interpretations of "thou shalt no more drink it again."
6. Were the people of Jerusalem literally "walked" on?

4. EVANGELIZE, CHAPTER 52

a. REDEMPTION

TEXT: 52:1-6

- 1 Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.
- 2 Shake thyself from the dust; arise, sit on thy throne, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bonds of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.
- 3 For thus saith Jehovah, Ye were sold for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money.
- 4 For thus saith the Lord Jehovah, My people went down at the first into Egypt to sojourn there: and the Assyrian hath oppressed them without cause.
- 5 Now therefore, what do I here, saith Jehovah, seeing that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them do howl, saith Jehovah, and my name continually all the day is blasphemed.
- 6 Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak; behold, it is I.

QUERIES

- a. Who are the “uncircumcised” and “unclean”?
- b. Why does Jehovah say, “What do I here . . .?”
- c. Doesn't Israel know God's name? (verse six)

PARAPHRASE

Attention! Alert yourself! You will be strong and beautiful, My True Zion! You will be My holy dwelling place and those who have not made covenant with Me will not, from the day of your establishment, be given entrance. But you must do your part, O True Zion, and shake yourself free from the filth and enslavement of Babylonian paganism. When I deliver you from your captivity, you must return to your royal messianic destiny. I am your Sovereign. When I send you into exile it will be because I exercise My absolute sovereignty and not because someone pays Me to do it. When I redeem you from your exile it will be because I exercise My absolute sovereignty and not because I pay someone to release you. When you went down to Egypt, you went of your own choice and Egypt enslaved you without the right to do so; the Assyrians had no right to take some of you into exile. And now, what do I have in the Babylonian exile—the same thing! Babylon's intent is without moral justification and motivated by wicked rebellion against My sovereignty. The rulers of Babylon are already screaming out their hateful threats and blasphemies. But I am going to save you, O Zion, from Babylon. And when I do reveal My sovereignty in this unequivocal manifestation, true Zion will acknowledge Me as her Savior in a way she has never done before; she will recognize that it is I, Jehovah, who is calling her back to her messianic destiny.

COMMENTS

v. 1-2 DISSOCIATION FROM PAGANISM: As before, the prophet is speaking of the future Babylonian exile in the present tense. He is directing the exhortation to his small band of disciples (the "remnant" which shall form the nucleus of "Zion"). This remnant must prepare itself for imminent exile into pagan Babylon. It must strengthen itself by believing what Isaiah is predicting about its Messiah and its messianic role. Zion must commit itself to an adornment of holiness so that when it is taken captive it will be able to keep itself separated from the filth and enslavement of heathenism with which it will be so alluringly surrounded. Zion must not allow the fleeting pleasures of Babylonian ungodliness lure her from her "throne" (her royal messianic queenship).

The aim of this passage is spiritual Jerusalem. That is evident from the prediction that the uncircumcised and the unclean would no more come into her. It cannot be literally or physically intended. Jerusalem has suffered literal invasion and occupation by one uncircumcised culture after another. First the Babylonians, then the Persians, Greeks, Romans, Turks, Mohammedans, Crusaders, Arabs, and even today there are Gentile citizens of Jerusalem. What this passage refers to ultimately is the Israel of God over which the Messiah rules, the church of Christ. Those not in covenant relationship to God through obedience to Christ's gospel (the uncircumcised) and those not purified from sin by the atoning blood of the Suffering Servant (the unclean) will not come into the ultimate Zion, no matter what their genetic ancestry may be—Jew or Gentile. It is interesting to note that Joel predicts, in his messianic conclusion, that "strangers shall never again pass through" Jerusalem (Joel 3:17); and on the other hand Ezekiel, in his portrayal of the glorious messianic era to come, predicts that "aliens" will be given an "inheritance" and be as "native born sons" (Ezek. 47:21-23). It is apparent, therefore, that when the messianic kingdom was to come, people were to become citizens of that kingdom, not as a result of being born a Jew

and circumcised in the flesh, but by being reconciled to the Messiah of God through faith. All who are not thus reconciled are "strangers" and "uncircumcised and unclean" and cannot enter spiritual Jerusalem. That is precisely what the New Testament teaches (cf. Rom. 2:28-29; 4:9-25; I Cor. 6:9-11; Gal. 3:1—5:25; Gal. 6:12-16; Eph. 2:11-22; Phil. 3:2-11; Heb. 12:18-29).

God promises to physically deliver Zion from her captors. But Zion herself must make the choices and do the deeds of holiness that separates her from Babylonian wickedness. Verses one and two are saturated with imperatives (commands): "Awake; put on; Shake; arise; sit; loose" are all commands for Zion to act. This is what distinguishes spiritual Zion from genetic Israel—holiness by choice.

v. 3-6 DELIVERANCE FROM PERSECUTION: Jehovah will act to deliver Zion from captivity in a display of divine sovereignty. He will give her up to captivity according to His sovereign plan and rescue her through the same sovereignty. No one will pay Jehovah to exile her—no one will force Him to—and no one will pay Him to rescue her. She will remain in captivity for exactly the time Jehovah assigns (70 years) and she will be delivered.

In verses four and five Jehovah pronounces the guilt of Zion's oppressors—past, present and future. God's sovereign decision to chasten Zion does not relieve her oppressors of guilt. The people of God went down to Egypt of their own choice with Jacob during the famine. And the Egyptians, by their own choice, enslaved and persecuted God's people. Israel's persecutors during Isaiah's lifetime, the Assyrians, were acting by free moral choice—not because they were forced to. "Now therefore, what do I here . . ." may be paraphrased, "Now, what do I have here . . ." in the imminent exile into Babylon? It is the same situation! God will use the exile to chasten the sinful nation of Judah, but at the same time the Babylonians will be held responsible and found guilty. Their captivity of Judah was clearly an unjustified act of aggression. The sovereign God of all mankind declares any nation or people guilty

who perpetrate the same acts of unprovoked aggression against other peoples (cf. our comments, *Minor Prophets*, on Obadiah and Amos ch. 1-3). Babylon, like all the other oppressors of Israel, attacked without due cause. Although the sovereign Jehovah may use the wicked assaults of the heathen empires as tools of chastening (cf. Isa. 10:5ff; Jer. 27:1-22, etc.), that does not mean the heathen empires are guiltless for making their own moral choices to "Touch the apple of His eye" (cf. Zech. 2:8) without justifiable provocation. These Babylonians "howl" out harsh orders to their captives (cf. Daniel 1-6) and blaspheme the name of Jehovah continually. What they are doing with God's people is certainly not in agreement with the will of God.

When Jehovah decides, in His own sovereign time-schedule, to deliver Zion from Babylonian captivity (cf. Jer. 27:22; 25:11), then Zion will "know His name." His name is Jehovah (YHWH, "He who causes to be . . .") (cf. Special Study, Vol. II, *O.T. Names for God*, pg. 126f.). Jehovah is the name for "Covenant-God," and here the faithfulness and sovereignty of God to keep His covenant promises is emphasized.

QUIZ

1. What are the "beautiful garments" Zion is to put on?
2. Are we to understand the banishment of the "uncircumcised" literally?
3. Why say the daughter of Zion is to be redeemed "without money"?
4. Why point out that Assyria oppressed Zion "without cause"?
5. What is the name of God that Israel shall know?

b. REVELATION

TEXT: 52:7-12

7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth

- good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!
- 8 The voice of thy watchmen! they lift up the voice, together do they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when Jehovah returneth to Zion.
- 9 Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for Jehovah hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.
- 10 Jehovah hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.
- 11 Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; cleanse yourselves, ye that bear the vessels of Jehovah.
- 12 For ye shall not go out in haste, neither shall ye go by flight: for Jehovah will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rearward.

QUERIES

- a. Who is the "messenger" bringing "good tidings"?
- b. What is meant by "seeing eye to eye"?
- c. Why emphasize that the people would "not go out in haste"?

PARAPHRASE

How lovely will be the Messenger coming across the mountains of this land bringing good news, the good news of peace, goodness and salvation, announcing to faithful Zion, Jehovah has established His sovereign rule among men; the kingdom of God has come! Listen to the voices of your prophets who have been watching and announcing its coming! They are shouting and singing for joy! They see the eventual rule of Jehovah over Zion as surely as if it were right before their eyes! Babylon may ruin you, O Jerusalem, but Jehovah is going to restore you

and make you strong, so burst forth into joyous singing. Jehovah is going to unleash His holy power so that the whole world will witness it; His salvation will be revealed to the whole world. So, Zion, when you are delivered from Babylonian captivity in anticipation of the coming kingdom of God, separate yourself completely from all the unholy paganism which has surrounded you there. Do not let your heart be defiled by desiring to cling to the worldliness of Babylon. You are a kingdom of priests to Jehovah and you must be holy unto Him. You will have plenty of time to arrive at the right attitude toward separating yourself from the ungodliness around you. Your exodus this time will not be in haste or in fear, as it was in the days of your forefathers and the Egyptian captivity. The Lord, Your God, will surround you, guiding you and protecting you on every side.

COMMENTS

v. 7-10 PEACE: Apparently we have in this prediction of Isaiah an instance of "shortened perspective." That is, the prophet is predicting the deliverance of Judah from Babylonian captivity and the deliverance of all mankind from sin through the Messiah without mentioning all the history of the scheme of redemption that transpires between the two historical events (cf. our comments on Joel 2:27-28). There is no doubt that the ultimate fulfillment of Isaiah's prediction was to find itself in the Messiah and His gospel (cf. Rom. 10:15). Isaiah's context indicates he is predicting what is going to eventuate with the coming of The Servant. Of course, messengers of the good news that Judah is to be released from her captivity and restored her physical commonwealth in Palestine by the decree of Cyrus will be lovely to behold. The lesson from this miraculous deliverance will be that God rules in the affairs of all men to fulfill His sovereign will. There will be "peace" for a while for Judah. But surely there is more good news involved in this prophecy than a physical deliverance and a physical peace.

The physical deliverance of Judah was the first step in a long series of historical events which were to lead to the coming of the Messiah and the true deliverance, the spiritual salvation, and peace between God and man, (cf. comments on Daniel 9:24-27 for the time-table of historical events between). Ultimately then, "him that bringeth good tidings" is the Messiah. Christ, The Servant, is also The Messenger (cf. Isa. 61:1-2; Lk. 4:16-30; Malachi 3:1-4). The messenger who "prepares the way before" in Malachi 3:1 is unquestionably, John the Baptist. But the "Lord whom you seek . . . the messenger of the covenant . . ." of Malachi 3:1 is the Messiah. Notice what the messenger of Isaiah's prophecy announces: peace—good—salvation—the rule of God—comfort for His people—redemption of Jerusalem. Furthermore, this is to be "seen" by all "the ends of the earth." Surely there is more to God's "salvation" and "comfort" (see Isa. 40:1ff) than a mere temporary deliverance of the Jews from Babylonian captivity. Surely there is more to God's reign than a Jewish nation only superficially submitted to Him in the restored commonwealth under Ezra and Zerubbabel. The post-exilic prophets make it very plain (Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi) that the returned exiles *soon* fell back into their old rebellions against the law of Moses and the rule of God. The salvation, peace and rule of God announced by Isaiah's "beautiful" bearer of "good tidings" is made accessible to all men through Him who came and "preached peace" to those "far off" and those "near" (cf. Eph. 2:11-22). Notice in Romans 10:14-21 how Paul emphasizes the prophecies of Isaiah about the Lord's salvation were *not* fulfilled in a rebellious, physical Israel!

The "watchmen" are probably the prophets and those faithful believers down through the centuries who kept on believing in the coming of the Christ (cf. I Pet. 1:10-12; Heb. 11:13-16; 11:32-40, etc.). These "watchers" put their predictions and hopes into poetic form, song, symbol and type. They did it with great style and emotional expressiveness. For they saw the eventual rule of Jehovah as surely as if it were right before their eyes (cf. John 8:56-58; 12:41), which is what "they shall

see eye to eye" means. Even the "return" of Jehovah to Zion is messianic. The crowning glory of Ezekiel's new temple and new city (Ezek. 40-48) is ". . . the name of the city henceforth shall be, The Lord is there." The church is the temple of God's habitation (Eph. 2:21-22).

On account of the absolute certainty that Jehovah is going to eventually send His Messenger with the good tidings of salvation, and on account of the certainty that Jehovah is going to take the first step toward that end delivering the Jews from captivity, the Jerusalem (or Zion) that in Isaiah's day is being "wasted" and "ruined" by pagan oppressors should lift up its spirit and sing of its salvation. This would, of course, take faith because it was not as yet "seen." But that is man's whole relationship to God—faith! That was the problem when the Messiah came to "comfort" His people and "redeem" Jerusalem. Most of the people could not believe it because they could not "see, touch, taste" His deliverance. It is still a problem with so many millions today who want only to be saved physically from trouble and depravation, but not from their sinful rebellion against the revealed will of God!

The salvation of God was "proven"! God's ability to save man and His faithfulness to keep His word was demonstrated visibly, historically and supernaturally. God "bared" His holy "arm" of supernatural power time and again in saving the Jewish people from their enemies. He showed in no uncertain terms to believer and unbeliever alike (read the book of Daniel) that He would deliver those who trusted and obeyed Him. The "arm" of the Lord will consummately be "bared" in the Messiah's death and resurrection (cf. Isa. 53:1ff). God's greatest "power" is the *gospel* which is, fundamentally, the atoning death and justifying resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jehovah showed His power in many and various ways in former ages, but the greatest demonstration of it was in the resurrection of Christ. It was here that God bared His "holy arm" to all the ends of the earth so that all men might see His salvation. God has fixed a day in which he will judge the world, by an appointed man, and He has given assurance to *all men*

by raising this man from the dead, and so His message to *all men* everywhere is, repent (cf. Acts 17:30-31). But, you see, the problem is that the "arm" or power of the Lord was revealed in a Suffering Servant (Isa. 53:1) and this, so unacceptable to Jewish presuppositions about the power of Jehovah, is still unacceptable to human presuppositions (cf. I Cor. 1:18-31).

v. 11-12 PURIFICATION: Now we come to the practical application of the prophecy of the coming Messenger and His message. How are these people of Isaiah's day or the people of the Babylonian captivity to relate to a prophecy of something that is so far off in the future? They are to keep themselves from the ungodliness that surrounds them. The temptations to become Babylonianized, to devote their energies to pagan pursuits, will be strong. The temptation to stay in the relative security of the land to which they were exiled and forget they have a messianic destiny to serve will not be easily overcome. Thousands of Jews *did* stay in Babylon! The task of returning to a ravaged land, occupied by hostile people, to struggle through long hard years of rebuilding, was almost overwhelming! Even the temptation to take with them back to Palestine some of the heathen customs and practices that seemed so security-enforcing would seem innocent enough. Yet the command of the Lord is, "depart . . . touch no unclean thing . . . cleanse yourselves." The rule of God cannot be established if the people are unwilling to depart from ungodliness. "Those that bear the vessels of Jehovah" is probably a figurative way of indicating the uniqueness of the Jewish people as a messianic people.

They will have ample opportunity to consider and apply the command of the Lord for separating themselves from their heathen environment. They will not have to make a hasty exodus as their ancestors did in Egypt and so they will not have to take any of the Babylonian baubles to support them as those under Moses did. These Babylonian exiles will have plenty of time and they will know, by prophecy, exactly how many years they will be spending there. Cyrus will supply them

with money to rebuild their commonwealth. And finally, they will not have to tramp the wilderness, constantly fleeing from one enemy after another as their ancestors did. Jehovah promises to surround them with guidance and protection—both front and rear. And so they were protected from those who wanted to thwart their rebuilding (cf. Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther), as they prepared to be the people through whom the great Messenger would come with a revelation of salvation to all the ends of the earth.

QUIZ

1. Why do we call this prophecy of the “messenger” one of “shortened perspective”?
2. Where is the N.T. quotation of this passage and what is the connection?
3. Who are the watchmen and why do they sing?
4. When did Jehovah “bare his holy arm”?
5. Why the command to “depart”?
6. Who are those who “bear the vessels of Jehovah”?

c. REGENCY

TEXT: 52:13-15

- 13 Behold, my servant shall deal wisely, he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high.
- 14 Like as many were astonished at thee, (his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men,)
- 15 so shall he sprinkle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths at him; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they understand.

QUERIES

- a. How shall the servant "deal wisely"?
- b. In what way was his "visage" marred?
- c. How shall he "sprinkle" many nations?

PARAPHRASE

Behold! My Servant shall succeed. He shall be exalted to the highest degree. At first, many will be shocked at the humiliating physical torture and disfigurement he endures—so much more than is possible for others in human form. But his exaltation will be that much more astounding. His success will cause the hearts of many to leap within them. Kings and great men will be awed by His glory. They will see and understand things they could never know before His coming.

COMMENTS

v. 13 **AFFIRMATION:** Chapter and verse numeration (which came many centuries after the original documents were written) obscures the contextual flow of our present passage; 52:13 through 53:12 should be read as a unit. Making 52:15 the end of a chapter and 53:1 the beginning of another is an unfortunate adumbration which the student of Isaiah's message must be careful to trace out. These verses are all one dissertation on the *success of the Suffering Servant*.

The Hebrew word *yasekkiyl* is the infinitive of *sakal* and may be translated "to prosper; to have success," instead of "deal wisely." This translation would fit the context. The affirmation of Jehovah is that His Servant shall succeed in fulfilling all the predictions made (through Isaiah) of ultimate deliverance, redemption and glorification of Zion. The Servant-Messenger-Messiah of Jehovah will be exalted to the highest degree. Zion has suffered and will suffer much from the days

of Isaiah until God comes and establishes His reign among men. Good tidings are beginning to come through the prophets of God. How beautiful will be the feet of the divine Messenger of God who will not only bring the message of salvation and peace but also accomplish it in Himself (cf. 52:7). The mighty Jehovah is going to bare His holy "arm" (power) before all the world (cf. 52:10). Contrary to God's apparent default on His covenant promises to the patriarchs by allowing the Babylonian captivity, the Lord is going to send His Servant and He will succeed in re-establishing Zion in divine power and splendor. This Servant will achieve what He sets out to do. Why is it necessary to affirm the success of the Servant? Because even the Servant's appearance in history will initially be in such a low, humble, unspectacular, humiliating way, most of the world will not believe. He is a manifestation of the *power* of Jehovah! (cf. 53:1ff). But the success of the Lord's Servant will be *extraordinary*. Three Hebrew verbs (*room*—exalted; *nissa*—lifted up; *gavah*—very high) are piled one upon another to emphasize that The Servant will not be defeated in the extreme suffering He will have to undergo (including death).

v. 14-15 AMAZEMENT: Verse 15 is in antithesis to verse 14 and emphasizes the contrast between what the Servant first appeared to be and what He later was acknowledged to be. The "thee" of verse 14 is therefore the Servant-Messiah (not Israel). Men will be shocked at His humble demeanor. He claimed to be the king of the Jews—the Messiah, but He did not in any way fulfill human presuppositions as to messianic royalty. He was slandered, mocked, accused of blasphemy, arrested, unjustly tried and sentenced as a criminal. He was scourged with a Roman whip and physically mutilated more than most human beings ever suffer, placed on a bloody Roman cross and there tortured both physically and psychologically by mocking rabbis, soldiers, and the multitudes. Some were shocked at His extreme disfigurement (cf. Lk. 23:47-49). But the fact of His absolute innocence contrasted with His willing acceptance of the atonement for the sin of the world is what makes his "visage . . . so marred more than any man . . ."

Philippians 2:5-11 expresses it perfectly. The Son of God emptied Himself and took the form of a servant. But God highly exalted Him. As low as His humiliation was, His exaltation was infinitely higher! The Hebrew word *yazzeḥ* is kin to the Arabic *naza* which means the "springing or leaping of people caused by excess of emotion." *Yazzeḥ* is from the Hebrew root *nazah* which is usually translated *sprinkle*, but apparently is better translated here, "startle, amaze, cause to jump, scatter." Leupold translates it "startle"; Today's English Version translates "marvel"; New International Version footnotes, "marvel"; RSV is "startle"; most other translations make it "sprinkle." Young comments ". . . he will sprinkle many nations . . . As one who is disfigured, the servant does something for others, in that he performs a purifying rite . . . men regarded the servant as himself unclean and in need of purification, whereas he himself as a priest will sprinkle water and blood and so purify many nations." We prefer the translation *startle* because it seems more appropriate to the intended contrast of the context.

Man will be shocked at His humiliation. But the *goiym* (nations or Gentiles) will be startled at the totally unexpected development events surrounding His humiliation and exaltation will *ultimately* take! The consequences will be world-wide. A church will be born; His disciples will be found even in the household of Caesar! The like of what shall result from the humiliation and exaltation of Jehovah's Servant was never imagined by the great (kings, philosophers, theologians). Never was anyone brought so low; never was anyone raised so high as God's Servant. Emperors, philosophers, rabbis will be awed by His glory. Through Him will come a revelation from God (justification, redemption, sanctification) of things they could never know before His coming, but now they believe, appropriate and experience.

This text (52:13—53:12) is written in the *predictive present*. It is prophecy, but it is so certain to come to pass it can be written as if it had already happened or was then happening. It is almost as if we were listening to two disciples of Jesus standing

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on a street-corner in Jerusalem reviewing the things that happened on Good Friday in the light of Easter Sunday and the Day of Pentecost. Isaiah's account is so vivid and was fulfilled so minutely it is little wonder that many of the fathers of the church days of old claim that the account reads as though Isaiah had sat at the foot of the cross.

QUIZ

1. Why emphasize the success of the Servant of Jehovah?
2. Why were men astonished at the marred visage of the Servant?
3. What verses of the N.T. shed light on the humiliation of the Servant?
4. What is the contrast between verses 14 and 15?
5. What is *predictive present*?

SPECIAL STUDY

THE WORD OF GOD, THE ILLUMINATING AGENCY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN CONVERSION

by Paul T. Butler

INTRODUCTION

I. QUALIFICATIONS

- A. We believe the Scriptures plainly teach that the spoken and written Word of God (the Bible) is the only illuminating agency of the Holy Spirit in the conversion of sinners.
- B. This is contrary to the creeds of most major Protestant religious bodies today. They say, in essence:

I S A I A H

1. Man, the sinner, has a mind biased and prejudiced by sin and he cannot, therefore, understand the spiritual truths of the Bible until . . .
 2. The Holy Spirit acts, directly, irresistibly and apart from the written or spoken Word of God, regenerating man's mind in order that man can understand the written truths in the Bible . . . only then will man be able to believe in Christ and become a Christian.
 3. This is individually and subjectively experienced and one cannot be assured of his salvation until he is able to relate such an experience.
 4. Those who have never had such an experience, so far as we are able to tell now, are not "elected" to salvation.
- C. By our statement in A. above we do not intend to exclude the providential actions of the Holy Spirit.
1. The Holy Spirit may act in providence to bring a Christian and non-Christian together for the purpose of allowing the non-Christian to hear the message of Christ (e.g., Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch; Peter and Cornelius, etc.)
 2. But in the final analysis, it is the written or spoken Word of God into the sinner's mind and upon his heart that converts and leads him to become a Christian.

II. WHAT WE ARE NOT DISCUSSING IN THIS STUDY

- A. We do not wish to discuss here, to any length, at least, the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the miraculous way the apostles were immersed in the Holy Spirit.
- B. We do not wish to discuss here the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit by which certain people spoke in tongues, prophesied, healed, etc.
- C. We do not wish to discuss whether or not people have had particular "religious experiences . . ."

 1. That people have had subjective religious experiences is difficult to disprove—at least to the one who

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claims such an experience.

2. But whether or not we are to follow what we think those subjective experiences teach, in order to the assurance of salvation, is quite another thing and is contrary to Biblical teaching.

III. ASSUMPTIONS WE MAKE

- A. That the Bible is the infallible, inerrant, inspired Word of God and the ultimate and final authority in matters of faith and practice.
- B. That we learn all we need to learn on this particular subject from the New Testament.

DISCUSSION

I. JESUS TAUGHT THAT THE WORD OF GOD (WRITTEN AND SPOKEN) ILLUMINATES THE MIND OF MAN UNTO CONVERSION

- A. Matt. 11:25-30 . . . only the Son can reveal the Father . . . we must take the Son's yoke upon us and *learn* of Him.
- B. Matt. 7:24-27 . . . the wise man is the one who *hears* the words of Christ and *does* them.
- C. Matt. 13:1-23; Lk. 8:4-15 . . . the *seed* of the kingdom is *the word* of God sown on the hearts of men. This *word* must be *held fast* in honest and good hearts to bear fruit.
- D. Matt. 4:4 . . . Man does not live by bread alone, but by *every word* that proceeds from the mouth of God.
- E. Matt. 28:18-20 . . . the great commission is to *teach*, baptize and *teach* all that Jesus commanded the 12 disciples.
- F. Lk. 10:21-28 . . . Jesus told a lawyer to do what he *read* in the Law in order to inherit eternal life.
- G. Lk. 10:38-42 . . . Mary chose the good portion for she sat at Jesus' feet and *listened* to His teaching . . .

- H. Lk. 11:27-28 . . . Jesus said, "Blessed rather are those who *hear* the *word* of God and *keep* it . . ."
- I. Lk. 16:19-31 . . . the rich man in Hades was told it would do no good for him to go back from the dead and warn his brothers . . . "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them . . . If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead . . ."
- J. Lk. 24:13-35 . . . Jesus took special time and effort "beginning with Moses and all the prophets . . . interpreting," for some despondent disciples "all the scriptures" said concerning Himself.
- K. John 1:1-18 . . . Jesus, the Incarnate Word of God, "exegeted" God to man; *exegetato* is the Greek word in verse 18, from which we get *exegetis*, but it is translated *declared*.
- L. Jn. 5:24 . . . whoever *hears the word* of Christ and *believes* God, who sent Him, has eternal life.
- M. Jn. 5:25 . . . whoever *hears* the voice of the Son of God, will live.
- N. Jn. 6:63 . . . except men eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood they have no life in them . . . THIS IS TO BE DONE BY HEARING AND DOING THE WORDS JESUS SPOKE, FOR *His words are spirit and life*.
- O. Jn. 6:44-45 . . . No one comes unto Christ . . . unless they *learn* from the Father.
- P. Jn. 6:69 . . . Peter declared that Jesus has the *words* of eternal life . . ."
- Q. Jn. 8:31-32 . . . only those who *continue* in His *word* are His disciples and in doing so they will be made free for it is the *truth* that makes free . . . and only by continuing in *His word* do we *know the truth!*
- R. Jn. 10 . . . the sheep follow the good Shepherd only because they *know* the difference between His *voice* (word) and the voice of the hireling.
- S. Jn. 11 . . . the *spoken word* of Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.
- T. Jn. 12:44-50 . . . the *words* Jesus spoke will judge men

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- at the last day, and the *commandment* which the Father gave Him *to speak is eternal life.*
- U. Jn. 13:12-17 . . . Jesus gave the disciples an example of humble and loving service to one another and then said "If you *know* these things, blessed are you if you do them . . ."
- V. Jn. 14:23 . . . Jesus made the *abiding* presence of the Holy Spirit specifically conditioned upon *keeping His commandments.* It must, therefore, be possible for a sinner to come to believe in, and begin to obey Christ before the Holy Spirit abides in him . . . in other words the sinner is converted by knowing, believing and obeying the Word, which is the agency of the Holy Spirit in the sinner's conversion.
- W. Jn. 15:3 . . . the disciples were cleansed by the *word* which Christ had already spoken unto them.
- X. Jn. 15:1-11 . . . our abiding in Him and His abiding in us is conditioned upon our abiding in His word . . . it is not irresistible.
- Y. Jn. 16:1-15 . . . the Holy Spirit was sent to guide the apostles into all truth, etc., and thus, *through their preaching* to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment.
- Z. Jn. 17:1-26 . . . eternal life is to know the only true God and Jesus Christ . . . this the disciples had because they accepted the *words* which Jesus was commissioned to give them from the Father . . . through His *words spoken* they had joy . . . They were *sanctified* in His *word* which is truth . . . Jesus even prayed for all who should subsequently *believe in Him through the preached word* of the apostles (verse 20).
- AA. Jn. 18:37 . . . Jesus said . . . "I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the *truth hears my voice.*"
- BB. Jn. 20:30-31 . . . the gospels were written that men might believe and have eternal life.

II. THE ACTS TEACH THAT THE WORD OF GOD (WRITTEN AND SPOKEN) ILLUMINATES THE MIND OF MAN UNTO CONVERSION

- A. Acts 2:37-38 . . . when the multitude *heard* the preaching of Jesus they were convinced and obeyed . . . there is no notice that the Holy Spirit illumined their hearts apart from the preaching of the inspired word.
- B. Acts 4:4 . . . many who *heard* the preaching of Peter in Acts 3, believed and became Christians.
- C. Acts 5:32 . . . the Holy Spirit is given only to those who obey Christ . . . how can one obey Christ unless he has *heard* the commandment of Christ and understood the commandment?
- D. Acts 8:34-40 . . . Philip *preached* unto the eunuch Jesus and then the man obeyed.
- E. Acts 10:22 . . . Cornelius was directed by an angel of the Lord to send for Peter so that Peter might *preach* to him the gospel in order that Cornelius might hear and believe . . . cf. Acts 10:33; 11:14.
- F. Acts 17:29-31 . . . Paul said men should understand that God is going to judge the world and that He wants them to repent simply *from knowing the fact* that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead.
- G. Acts 20:18-35 . . . Paul charged the elders of Ephesus to "feed the flock of God" on the word of God as he himself had done . . . and Paul "commended them to God and to the *word of His grace*, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified."
- H. Acts 26:24-29 . . . Paul presented the *facts* concerning Jesus and appealed to the *writings* of the prophets in hope that Agrippa might become a Christian.
- I. Acts 28:23-28 . . . Paul *expounded* the *facts* concerning Jesus all day to a group of Jews, trying to *convince* them about the kingdom of God, etc. some were *convinced*, some were not.

III. THE EPISTLES TEACH THAT THE WORD OF GOD (WRITTEN AND SPOKEN) ILLUMINES THE MIND OF MAN UNTO CONVERSION

- A. Rom. 1:16-17 . . . the *gospel* is the power of God unto salvation.
- B. Rom. 6:17-18 . . . men are set free from sin by *obedience* from the heart to the *standard of teaching* of the apostles.
- C. Rom. 8:6 . . . to set the mind on the Spirit . . . is life . . . the Spirit is revealed in the Word.
- D. Rom. 8:13-14 . . . it is by the Spirit that we put to death the deeds of the body and it is by the Spirit we are led . . . the Spirit only does that by revealing His will to us in the Scriptures.
- E. Rom. 10:8-17 . . . the word of faith which is in their hearts is the word which the apostles preached . . . all who call upon the Lord will be saved, BUT THEY CANNOT CALL UPON HIM IF THEY HAVE NOT HEARD HIS WORD, BECAUSE FAITH COMES BY HEARING THE WORD OF GOD!!!
- F. Rom. 12:1-2 . . . we are to be transformed by the renewing of our mind in order that we may prove what is the acceptable will of God.
- G. Rom. 15:18 . . . Paul would win obedience to Christ from the Gentiles by preaching to them the word of Christ . . .
- H. Rom. 16:25-27 . . . Paul said that the *preaching* of Jesus Christ was . . . to bring about the *obedience of faith* . . .
- I. I Cor. 2:1-14 . . . Paul said that the Spirit of Christ had been given to the apostles . . . and this *Spirit was imparted to the Corinthians in words* . . .
- J. I Cor. 15:1-2 . . . the *preached gospel* was what the Corinthians received, that in which they stood fast, that by which they were saved.
- K. II Cor. 1:20 . . . all the promises of God find their Yea

- in Jesus Christ objectively revealed . . . not subjectively.
- L. II Cor. 10:3-5 . . . the *preaching* of the word of God has *divine power* and is able to *destroy arguments* and every proud *obstacle to the knowledge of God* and bring every *thought into captivity unto Christ!!!*
- M. Gal. 2:20; 3:2; 3:26-27 . . . The Spirit of Christ lives in men and is put on by men through the hearing of faith . . . and faith comes by hearing!
- N. Eph. 3:17 . . . Christ dwells in us through faith, and faith comes by hearing.
- O. Eph. 1:9-14 . . . those who have *heard the word of truth*, the gospel, have made known to them the mystery of His will and have been sealed with the Holy Spirit.
- P. Eph. 3:8-19 . . . Paul was made a minister to the Gentiles to preach to them the unsearchable riches of Christ and make all men see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God . . . that through the Church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known . . .
- Q. Eph. 4:11-16 . . . the various offices of ministry (including evangelists) were given to the church to edify the church and bring the church to a mature knowledge of Christ.
- R. Eph. 5:17-18 . . . Paul connects being filled with the Spirit directly to first understanding what the will of the Lord is . . .
- S. Phil. 4:8-9 . . . Paul said that true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, gracious things were revealed to Christians by the preaching and Christian living of the apostles.
- T. Col. 1:27-28 . . . Paul proclaimed and taught Christ to every man in all wisdom so that Christ might dwell in men and they might have the hope of glory.
- U. Col. 3:16 . . . Christians are to let the word of Christ dwell in them richly.
- V. I Thess. 2:13 . . . Paul said the Christians there received their preaching as the word of God and that this *word* was at *work* in them.

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- W. II Thess. 1:8 . . . Paul said God would bring vengeance upon all who *do not obey the gospel* . . . an objective standard!
- X. II Thess. 2:14 . . . Paul said that men were *called* by God through the preaching of the *gospel*.
- Y. I Tim. 4:11-16 . . . Paul told Timothy that by holding to that which he had been *taught* he would *save* both *himself* and his *hearers*.
- Z. II Tim. 2:9 . . . Paul speaks of the word of God as not being able to be fettered.
- AA. II Tim. 3:16 . . . The scripture is able to completely equip the man of God for every good work . . .
- BB. Titus 1:1-3 . . . Paul said the faith of the elect was furthered by the preaching of the word . . .
- CC. Titus 2:11-15 . . . Paul said the "grace of God . . . trains us . . ." and we should thus declare it . . .
- DD. Hebrews 4:12-13 . . . the word of God is living and active . . . pierces even to the division of the soul and spirit . . . and discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart . . .
- EE. James 1:18 . . . "Of his own will he *brought us forth by the word of truth* . . ." Here the word of truth is specifically said to be the agent of the Holy Spirit in the new birth.
- FF. I Pet. 1:22-25 . . . "You have been *born anew* . . . *through the living and abiding word of God* . . . that word is the good news which was preached to you . . ." This they did by obedience to the truth: IT CANNOT BE ANY PLAINER THAN THIS THAT THE SPIRIT WORKS THROUGH THE WORD IN REGENERATION.
- GG. II Pet. 1:3-4 . . . it is *through a knowledge* of Jesus Christ and through His precious and exceeding great promises that we become *partakers of the divine nature*.
- HH. I John 2:3-6 . . . we are sure we are in Him only when we know and keep His commandments.
- II. I John 3:24 . . . we abide in Him and He abides in

us when we keep His commandments.

JJ. I John 4:1-6 . . . whoever knows the Spirit of God listens to apostolic teachings and this is the only way man may know the difference between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

KK. II John 9-10 . . . anyone who does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God . . . he who abides in this doctrine has both the Father and the Son.

IV. LOGIC TEACHES THAT WE MUST DEPEND UPON THE SPIRIT TO BRING US TO CONVERSION THROUGH OUR RESPONSE TO HIS OBJECTIVE REVELATION OF HIMSELF IN HIS WORD!

A. Alexander Campbell, in *The Christian System* "moral facts are those which either exhibit, develop, or form moral character . . . all the works and words of God are moral facts and truths . . ."

1. The work of redemption is a system of works or deeds on the part of God and Christ which constitutes the most splendid series of moral facts which man or angel ever saw . . .
2. When these moral facts are brought into immediate contact with the mind of man, they delineate the image of God upon the human soul.
3. Testimony is but the channel through which these facts draw the image of God on the heart and character of man.
4. The love of God in the death of Jesus never drew a tear of gratitude or joy from any eye, or excited a grateful emotion in any heart among the nations of our race to whom the testimony never came. **NO TESTIMONY, NO FAITH!**
5. The quality or value of faith is found in the quality or value of the testimony. If the testimony be valid, **OBJECTIVE**, and authoritative, our faith is strong and operative. "If we receive the testimony of men, the

testimony of God is *greater . . .*"

6. The power of faith is also found in the power or moral meaning of the testimony, or of the facts which the testimony represents. If by faith I am filled with joy, or sorrow, that joy or sorrow is in the facts contained in the testimony . . . or in the relation of those facts to me. And, if faith purifies the heart . . . this power is in the facts believed.
 7. It is neither the faculty of perception, nor the manner of perception, but the things perceived, that excited us to action. It is not the exercise of reflection, but the thing reflected upon. It is not reason itself, nor the exercise of reason, but the thing reasoned upon which affords pleasure or pain—which excites to action—which cheers, allures, consoles us.
 8. Even in our volition this is true. It is not choosing, nor refusing; hating, loving, fearing, desiring, nor hoping; **IT IS NOT THE NATURE OF ANY POWER, FACULTY, OR CAPACITY OF OUR BEING, NOR THE SIMPLE EXERCISE OF THEM, BUT THE *object or things* UPON WHICH THEY ARE EXERCISED, WHICH INDUCE US TO ACTION, OR INFLUENCE OUR BEHAVIOR!**
 9. **AND SO MY FRIEND WE ARE PURIFIED BY OUR OBEDIENCE TO THE OBJECTIVE TRUTH . . . THE REVEALED, WRITTEN AND SPOKEN TESTIMONY ABOUT THE PERSON AND PROMISES OF JESUS CHRIST BECOME THE OBJECTIVE AGENT WHICH MOVES US . . . WITHOUT AN OBJECT (JESUS) AND AN OBJECTIVE REVELATION OF HIM WE WOULD BE LEFT ONLY TO LISTEN AND FOLLOW THE DECEITFUL WHISPERINGS OF OUR WICKED HEARTS — SEE POINT #V ON PAGE 254.**
- B. In the religious world today we have many groups, teaching about as many contradictory dogmas, most claiming to be led now or having been led in the past by special direct revelations of the Holy Spirit apart from the received Bible. **IF THE HOLY SPIRIT OPERATES ON THE MINDS OF MEN APART FROM AN OBJECTIVE**

STANDARD (THE WORD), HOW DO WE KNOW WHICH IS CORRECT?

1. We appeal to such scriptures as Gal. 1:8-9; I John 4:1-6 and assert that there is only one leading of the Holy Spirit today and that is in the infallible, innerant, objective standard called the Bible, and that only!
2. Don DeWelt says in his book, *The Power of the Holy Spirit*, Vol. I, pg. 31, commenting on Rom. 8:16 . . . "the Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God." ". . . The Bible does *not* say that the Holy Spirit bears witness *to* our spirit, thus making it a subjective experience within the Christian. The text *does* say the Holy Spirit bears witness *with* our spirit, thus making it an objective experience without or apart from the Christian. The witness of the Holy Spirit is the New Testament. This is His testimony as to how to become a Christian or child of God, and also how to remain faithful as God's child. We know within ourselves if we have done what the Spirit has said to do in order to become a child of God . . . We then become a child of God, our spirits have agreed with the testimony of the Holy Spirit . . ." when we have done what we are commanded to do in the New Testament. (cf. Jn. 20:30-31; I Jn. 5:13).

V. THE SCRIPTURES TEACH US THAT WE WILL BE DECEIVED BY LISTENING TO THE SUBJECTIVE WHISPERINGS OF OUR HEART.

- A. Prov. 16:2 . . . "all the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes; but the Lord weighs the spirit . . ." (cf. also 21:2)
- B. Jer. 17:9 . . . "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt; who can understand it? I the Lord search the mind and try the heart . . ."
- C. Heb. 3:13 . . . warns that Christians must continually

- exhort one another (from the written word) lest their hearts be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin . . .
- D. Satan is able to transform himself into an angel of light (II Cor. 11:14); quote scripture (Matt. 4:5-6); perform lying wonders (Rev. 13:11-18); and he is able to enter the mind of man by the power of thought . . . he is a spirit of disobedience, etc.
- E. Some examples of people who thought they were doing God's service when following the subjective feelings of their hearts:
1. The disciples, led by Judas, thought that Mary "wasted" the ointment by pouring it upon Jesus and it could have been sold and given to the poor (Mt. 26:9; Mk. 14:5; Jn. 12:5) . . . THEY HAD TO HAVE AN OBJECTIVE REVEALED TO THEM IN THE WORDS OF JESUS TO STRAIGHTEN OUT THEIR CROOKED SUBJECTIVE THINKING.
 2. Peter thought that defending the life of Jesus against His enemies was the proper thing to do, but it was Satan whispering to Peter (Mt. 16:21-23; Mk. 8:32-33).
 3. Paul said, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth . . ." even to the persecution and killing of Christians (Acts 22:4; 26:9-11; I Cor. 15:9; Gal. 1:13; Phil. 3:6; I Tim. 1:13) . . . he lived in all good conscience in so doing . . . IT TOOK AN OBJECTIVE REVELATION TO PAUL TO STRAIGHTEN OUT HIS THINKING.

5. ATONE, CHAPTER 53

a. SHUNNED

TEXT: 53:1-3

- 1 Who had believed our message? and to whom hath the arm of Jehovah been revealed?
- 2 For he grew up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and