

Chapter Eleven (11:1-54)

THE SON OF MAN DEALING WITH HOSTILITY

IDEAS TO INVESTIGATE:

1. Is there something people need to be taught before they can pray (11:1)?
2. Will God answer our prayers if we keep on knocking like the friend at midnight (11:5-13)?
3. Who is the "strong man" whom Jesus overcame (11:21-23)?
4. How did Jonah become a "sign" to the men of Nineveh (11:30)?
5. Wasn't it impolite as well as unhygienic for Jesus to eat without washing His hands (11:38)?
6. Wasn't it impolite for Jesus to call Pharisees, "fools," as He sat and ate at the table of a Pharisee (11:40ff.)?
7. How could that one generation be guilty of all the bloodshed from Abel to Zechariah (11:50)?

SECTION 1

Puerility (11:1-13)

11 He was praying in a certain place, and when he ceased, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." ²And he said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. ³Give us each day our daily bread; ⁴and forgive every one who is indebted to us; and lead us not into temptation.'"

⁵ And he said to them, "Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; ⁶for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; ⁷and he will answer from within, 'Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything?' ⁸I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him whatever he needs. ⁹And I tell you, Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ¹¹What

father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; ¹²or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?

¹³If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

11:1-4 Request for Form: On the surface, the request of these disciples does not appear puerile and childish. However, they apparently asked out of some sense of jealousy or feeling of having been cheated. It was a usual practice among the more famous rabbis to give prayer-formulas to their pupils. We have no record of John the Baptist's teaching on prayer. This statement indicates John's teaching was distinctive enough that these disciples of Jesus wanted their Master to teach them some form of prayer so they might be recognized as His disciples.

Saying prayer was a very significant part of Jewish life. It was highly formalized among the rabbis of the first century A.D. Jesus dealt with this tendency to formalize and ritualize prayer (Mt. 6:5-14) "heaping up vain words and repetitious phrases." It seems that in general there were three times daily when the Jews of the first century made formal prayers (cf. Acts 10:9). It was customary then that the Jew must wear his *tallith* (prayer-shawl) and his *tephillin* (phylactery). The Jew always turned toward Jerusalem to pray; if he were in Jerusalem and in the Temple, he turned toward the Holy of Holies to pray. Generally speaking he did not kneel but bowed his head as low as possible while lifting up his hands toward heaven, (cf. Lk. 18:9-14). There were a number of other formalities observed during certain prayers such as beating one's breast, tearing one's clothes or casting dust or ashes into the air or upon one's head. The gospel records indicate Jesus' prayers to be uniquely non-traditional and unritualistic. This is probably what seemed so shocking to these disciples. They were not really hostile toward Jesus, just spiritually immature. They still thought of the essence of prayer as something that had to be formally taught by a rabbi, rather than something originating from faith and best expressed without public ritual.

Prayer is essentially an attitude. Jesus deals with attitudes, not form, in His answer.

- a. *Father, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come.* The attitude sought here is adoration, worship, surrender to His Lordship and placing His kingdom as first priority in one's life.
- b. *Give us each day our daily bread;* What Jesus wants is an attitude of complete, daily trust for physical sustenance and an attitude of thankfulness which recognizes one's blessings as gifts from God.

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- c. *and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us;* We must live in God's presence every day with an attitude of repentance, acknowledging that we sin and seeking God's forgiveness on the basis of our faith in the blood of Jesus. Our faith in His blood leads us to let His life be lived out in us so that we forgive like He forgave.
- d. *and lead us not into temptation.* This is the expression of one's desire to have God's help in resisting sin. With that attitude, we will daily long for His guidance, (which may be found in His word) through life's temptations and trials.

God is interested in what we pray about, because the content of our prayers manifests the attitude of our hearts. But there may be times when we do not even know how to pray or what to pray for as we should (cf. Rom. 8:26-27). It may be there will be times when all we can do is "groan" in our hearts. If our attitude is right, our motives pure and our faith strong, God's Spirit will make intercession on our behalf with words which we are unable to find. What a loving Father—able to anticipate and even articulate prayers for us which we cannot, with our limitations, make.

11:5-13 Reply Concerning Faith: This is *not* a lesson that persistence will change God's mind. It is a lesson that faith in the goodness of God will drive us to "knock on His door" at any time we need His help to do His will. This is a story about a man who had unexpected company very late at night. His cupboard was bare. In those days and in that culture any act of inhospitableness was a serious social offense. A host was expected to always offer something to eat just before bedtime. This nervous host ran next door to a neighbor's house and banged on his door to borrow bread. The irritated, sleepy-eyed neighbor at first yelled, "Go away and quit bothering me." But the unprepared host, continuing to call out to his sleepy neighbor, finally received what he needed. It might have seemed to the importuning host that his grouchy, sleepy-headed neighbor was never going to answer his knock—but he finally did. It may seem to us that God is never going to answer prayer—but He will. How eagerly a good God awaits our slightest knock so He may supply our greatest needs out of His vast storehouse! If fallible and weak human fathers are concerned enough to give the best they are able to their sons, have faith that your heavenly Father will give "good and perfect" gifts to His children. Before you give up on God and lose your faith in Him, remind yourself of what mothers and fathers go through to give the best they have for their boys and girls.

Persistence in prayer is not to change God's mind. He has always wanted to give man everything good and withhold from man everything bad. Faith, expressed through persistence, puts man in the right

attitude to receive what God has to give with thanksgiving and to put what God gives to its intended use. Faith causes man to use God's answers according to God's will. Persistence, or faith, in prayer is imperative for:

- a. It shows who God is. If our answer does not come immediately, this does not prove God's indifference or His impotence. It proves His power! He is our Father—not a slave or genie to be manipulated at our convenience. God's delays are our education in humility and dependence. The lesson that God always knows best and we do not takes us a long time to learn.
- b. God desires that we really know what we are praying about. God may want persistence in prayer to give us time to see that some things we are praying for are wrong. Hindsight may reveal to us that we should be grateful God did not give us some things we prayed for.
- c. Praying with endurance is God's way of crystallizing our commitments. God wants us to "ask, seek and knock" with dedication. He wants us to be single-minded and passionate-hearted to seek His will and His blessings. A flippant, half-hearted relationship is unacceptable to God. God does not wish to hear that which we do not care whether He hears or not.

The true focus of prayer is not our will, but God and His will. The true aim of prayer is not to make God change His will, but to lead us to change our will. In this position we let God work in us, for us and through us. He cannot do that until we are fully yielded to Him. Consider the following analysis of prayer:

1. God wants to bless all men. This is what we should pray for!
2. God answering prayer involves at least three agencies:
 - a. His propositionally revealed (written) word.
 - b. His providential actions upon things and creatures.
 - c. Through the free actions of free men, created with free wills and freedom to act as they choose. God often blesses mankind through this agency (even though the actions of men are sometimes evil—God can use that evil to bless others).
3. HOW God blesses in His Word, we know, or can know if we read it and appropriate it through faith and obedience.
4. HOW God blesses through the actions of free men depends upon the actions of free men and how we interpret the record of God's use of such actions in the past.
5. HOW God blesses through His own actions, providentially, upon things and creatures—WE DO NOT KNOW. How He does this is according to His sovereign will.

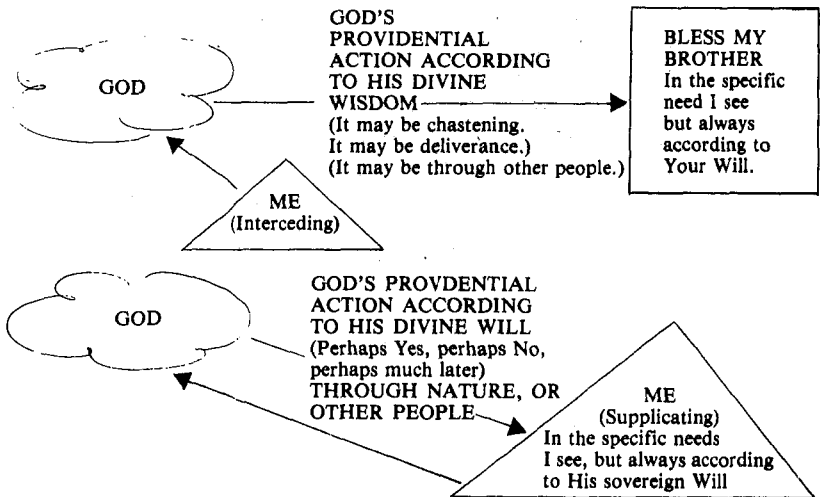
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If, in His divine wisdom, blessing comes through death or healing we cannot know. Our only recourse is to pray that He *will* bless and then leave it with Him—not doubting that He will bless. But He certainly acts when we pray. After all, He is a Father who knows, loves, wills, and does. We must always be surrendered to His sovereignty.

His ways are sometimes difficult for us to understand, or to accept. Often, His ways hurt, temporarily. One thing we must trust in—He will act when we call. We do not know how He will always act, but we do know He will act in our best interests, for our salvation and growth.

This is what Jesus is teaching His disciples. R.C. Trench said, “Prayer is not overcoming God’s reluctance, but laying hold of His highest willingness.” Prayer is no cure-all. It is not an escape. Sickness will still visit the members of a praying family. Hardship (even untimely death) will not pass their door. Temptation and trial will still beat a path to their house. Paul prayed three times for his “thorn” to be removed; each time God answered, “No!” (II Cor. 12:1-10)

Prayer and praying must be for strength (even if that strength and endurance must be acquired through more trial) so we may be adequate in overcoming temptation. Christ prayed—and was tempted—and suffered. Pray not that we be exempted from trial. God is able to do for us and through us more than we can imagine or think (Eph. 3:20). Our faith is in God, not in prayer.



There have been many attempts to circumvent the very plain statement of Jesus in verse 13. Some had said Luke is using the figure of speech known as metonymy in reporting what Jesus said there. A metonymy is when the name of someone or something is used for the action of the person or thing. In Matthew 7:11 Jesus said the Father gives "good things" to those who ask Him. Since it is the Holy Spirit through whom God gives "good things" what Luke is doing here, so the argument goes, is using the name, Holy Spirit, as a metonymy for "good things." Others insist Jesus is using "predictive present" in this promise that the Holy Spirit will be given to those who ask from God. Their argument is that John wrote, ". . . for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified," (Jn. 7:39), therefore, Jesus' promise in Luke 11:13 had to wait for its fulfillment until after the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:1ff. However, there seems to be good reason to believe God's Holy Spirit dwelt in obedient saints in the Old Testament (cf. Isa. 63:11, our comments there, *Isaiah, Vol. III*, College Press, pg. 450-453). David did pray that God not take His Holy Spirit from him (Psa. 51:11; 143:10). It is necessary that the Spirit of God be in anyone who is to be resurrected from the dead (Rom. 8:9-17). Surely God will raise Abraham, Isaac and Jacob from the dead.

We prefer to take the words of Jesus here recorded in Luke 11:13 at face value, in context. To everyone who has the attitude of believing prayer, as described by Jesus, God will give His Holy Spirit. Christ or God dwells in us through faith and obedience (Jn. 14:21-23; 15:1-11; Acts 5:32; Eph. 3:17; I Jn. 2:24; 3:24, etc.). We believe it is proper to conclude that God's Spirit dwelt in any saint who, by faith and obedience to God's covenant terms, asked God's Spirit to dwell in him, in whatever dispensation of God's grace one lived. God's promise has always been appropriated by faith and obedience to the covenant terms of one's particular dispensation.

SECTION 2

Perverseness (11:14-28)

14 Now he was casting out a demon that was dumb; when the demon had gone out, the dumb man spoke, and the people marveled. ¹⁵But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons"; ¹⁶while others, to test him, sought from him a sign from heaven. ¹⁷But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. ¹⁸And if Satan also is divided against himself, how

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will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebub. ¹⁹And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. ²⁰But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²¹When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace; ²²but when one stronger than he assails him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoil. ²³He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.

24 "When the unclean spirit has gone out of a man, he passes through waterless places seeking rest; and finding none he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' ²⁵And when he comes he finds it swept and put in order. ²⁶Then he goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first."

27 As he said this, a woman in the crowd, raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that you sucked!" ²⁸But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

11:14-23 Wisdom: The last specific place we may locate Jesus is in the home of Martha and Mary at Bethany, near Jerusalem. Then He is said to be praying "in a certain place" which may have been Gethsemane on the Mt. of Olives (Judas knew to look for Him there at a place where He would be praying). Now we are told that "he was casting out a demon that was dumb." Perhaps this took place in Jerusalem, but more likely in one of the small villages of Judea. He would not wish to stir up the animosity of the rulers as He had at the Feast of Tabernacles earlier (see Jn. 7:1—10:21), so He probably stayed clear of the city of Jerusalem. So far as we know He visited Jerusalem only once between Tabernacles and His Triumphal Entry and that visit was at the Feast of Dedication (Jn. 10:22ff.) around December 25th, also known as Hanukkah.

About a year earlier than this Jesus faced the very same accusation of casting out demons by the power of Satan. That was in Galilee and it is recorded in Matthew 12:22-45 and Mark 3:22-30. There, Jesus was at His "home" (Capernaum) when He healed a different "blind and dumb demoniac." There it was specifically stated that the Pharisees attacked Him. There, in Galilee, He warned them about the sin against the Holy Spirit; here, in Judea, He does not give that warning. They are separate events. It is not unusual for Jesus to be accused twice of being in league with Satan. Actually, His enemies accused Him of this many times (cf. Jn. 7:20; 8:48; 9:24; 10:19). It is a demonstration of His divine wisdom that He dealt with each such accusation logically, reasonably and lovingly.

The demon possessing this man was “dumb” (Gr. *kophos*, from a root word which means, “to cut”). Neither the demon or the man was ignorant. *Dumb* in this sense means unable to speak. It was a common practice in those days to take prisoners of war or slaves and “cut” one of the muscles or the flesh of the mouth which kept the tongue from functioning. When that was done the victim could not talk—thus he was “dumb.” The Greek word *kophos* is sometimes translated “blunted, dulled.” Whatever the man’s physical condition, it was the demon who was blunting the man’s ability to speak; his power to talk had been cut off by the demon. When Jesus threw (Gr. *ekbalron*) the demon out of the man, most of the people marvelled. Honest-minded people who witnessed Jesus’ miracles never failed to be impressed that His power was from God. But some, in spite of the very evident manifestation of deity, motivated by evil, perverted the good deeds of Jesus by attributing His supernatural power to the devil. It is significant that Jesus’ enemies did not deny the fact that a miracle had occurred (see also Acts 8:15-17). They could not deny what had happened before their very eyes. But they could slanderously concoct an explanation out of prejudiced hatred for Him to try to undermine the goodness and the importance of His deed.

We will not comment on the origin or nature of demons here. The student should refer to comments on Luke 4:31-44 and 8:26-39 for notes on demons. Their hypothesis that Christ’s miracles might be lying signs and wonders was not altogether impossible (see Mt. 24:24; II Thess. 2:9; Rev. 13:13). The devil and his helpers would be able to do *false* miracles. But there would be evidence of their unmistakable falseness—not the least of which would be the false teaching accompanying the false miracles. This could not be said of Jesus’ teaching—it always conformed exactly to the Old Testament.

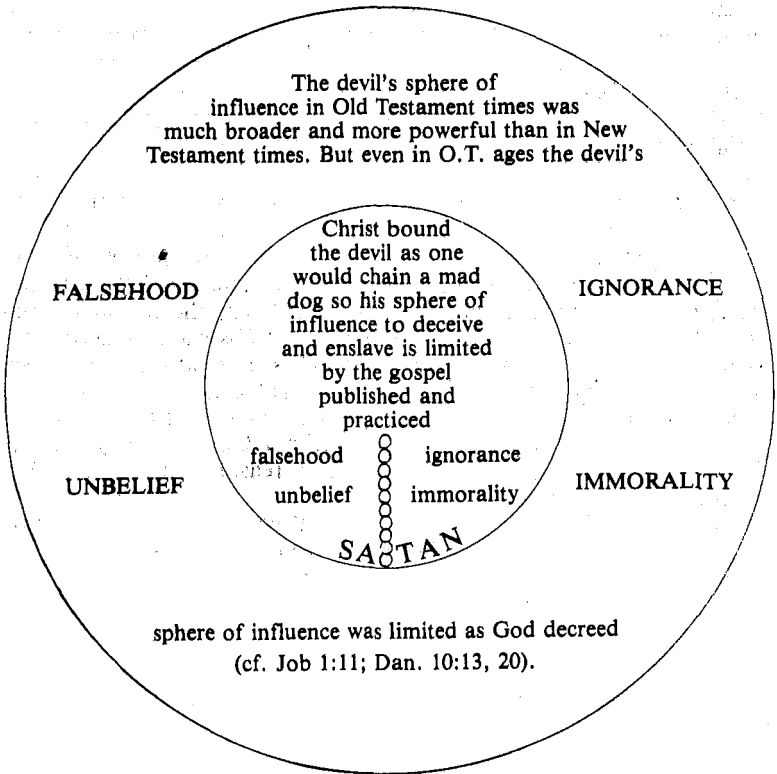
Jesus was the Master Logician. His rebuttal is a classic demonstration of the power of logic to defeat falsehood. Most people would have responded to the allegations of these enemies with emotion and perhaps physical assault. Some might have walked away in silence. But Jesus could not let such a deliberate and damaging falsehood go unexposed. His first rebuttal is devastating. With one simple, logical statement, He destroys their evil accusation. He simply says, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste . . .” In other words, it is illogical and irrational to think that Satan would try to defeat himself. Satan would not join Jesus in trying to do good for men by casting demons out of men and sending them back to the abyss where they came from. That would be like “cutting off one’s nose to spite one’s face.” It doesn’t make sense! It is contrary to all accepted structures of right thinking. Satan would not work against himself.

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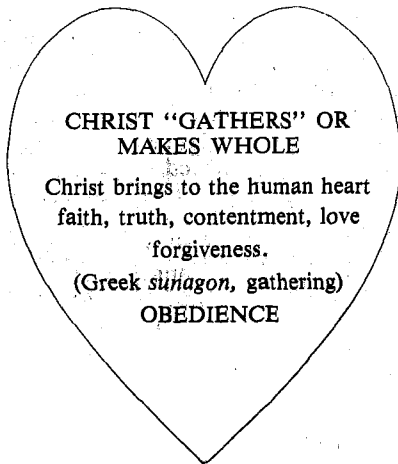
Jesus' second rebuttal was what is called in logic, *ad hominem*, that is, His argument focused on their personal claims and practices in exorcism as an exposé of their faulty logic. He said, "If I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out?" "Sons" in this phrase probably means the Jews who were exorcists. *Beelzebul* seems to be a Greek transliteration of the Hebrew word *Baalzevuv* which means, "lord of the flies," or "lord of filth." *Baalzevuv* was the name under which Baal was worshiped by the Philistines (II Kings 1:2-16). Apparently this was the name given in the first century to the "prince of demons," (cf. also Mt. 10:25; 12:25, 26; Mk. 3:22). Of course, Jewish exorcists claimed their powers were from God. Jesus' challenge is, if the Jewish exorcists claim to cast out demons at all they are judging themselves as also being in league with Satan. Since they cannot demonstrate that their powers of exorcism are from God any more surely than Jesus can demonstrate His, then their powers must also be from Satan! They judge themselves by judging Jesus. Since their claims (Jesus' and theirs) were demonstrably the same, then the source of power should be the same. It is pretty apparent that the Jewish exorcists were only "claiming" to cast out demons but really had no success at it. Only Jesus, so far as any credible record is available, had the power to really command demons and exercise divine authority over them (plus those select few disciples to whom He gave His power). Since the Jewish exorcists claimed casting out demons was by the power of God and since Jesus was the only One who really demonstrated the power to do it, they should have quickly acknowledged that the messianic kingdom of God had come upon them. Jesus has cast His enemies upon the horns of a dilemma. Either He casts out demons by God's power or Satan's; Jesus has shown that it is logically impossible for Satan to be fighting against himself; His enemies are left with only the first possibility—He is God's Messiah! He is doing the work of God and they are standing in rebellion against it by going against all reason and calling it the work of the devil.

The Lord's third rebuttal is the logical conclusion to a series of brilliantly logical arguments. "When a strong man (Satan), fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace; but when one stronger than he (Jesus) assails him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoil (casts out demons)." To overcome Satan one must be stronger than he is. By conquering temptation, casting out demons, winning sinners to the will of God, Jesus proved He was *Master* of Satan—not Satan's servant. In the Galilean confrontation, Jesus indicated that He had, in some sense, at His first coming, "bound" Satan (cf. Mt. 12:29). We believe the rest of the N.T. indicates that to some degree and in some manner, Jesus "bound" the devil by His earthly death and resurrection.

At His first coming into the world, the Son of God "entered the strong man's house (the devil's pretended kingdom), plundered his goods and bound him" (Mt. 12:29). Notice how Jesus' "binding" of Satan is described in the following: (a) destroyed the devil's works (I Jn. 3:8); (b) triumphed over the devil's evil (Col. 2:15); (c) destroyed the devil's power (Heb. 2:14-15); (d) cast the pretended ruler of this world out and judged him (Jn. 12:31; 16:11); (e) makes the devil flee (Jas. 4:7); (f) saw the devil fallen from heaven (Lk. 10:18); (g) and He binds the devil for 1000 years (Rev. 20:6). We believe these are all one and the same. The thousand-years binding of Satan in Revelation 20:6 is the *limitation of the devil's sphere of influence* accomplished by Christ's atonement and continues until Christ's second coming. See chart below:



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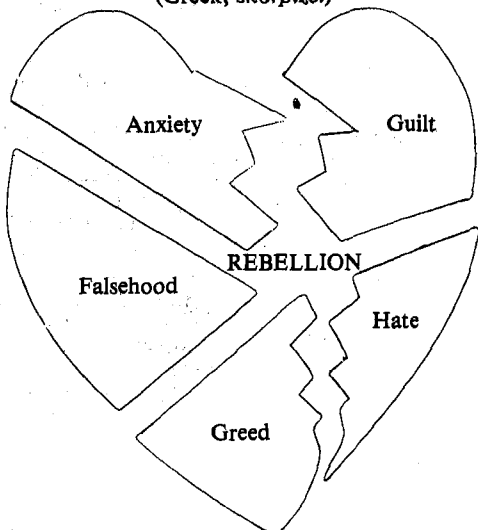


Christ's logic was unassailable. The truth He spoke was irrefutable. His enemies might deny His deity as a matter of prejudice and deliberate wilfulness, but they could not disprove it. Jesus turned the tables on them. He showed that it was really His enemies who were on the side of Satan.

Jesus precludes any possibility of neutrality between Him and Satan. All men are on one side or the other. All humanity may be classed as either being gathered or made whole by Christ, or being scattered and fractured by the devil.

SATAN "SCATTERS" OR FRACTURES (Greek, *skorpizein*)

In God's word human beings are either saved or lost; wise or foolish; sheep or goats; marked by God or marked by the beast; sons of light or sons of darkness; on the side of God or on the side of the devil—**THERE IS NO NEUTRALITY!**



11:24-26 Warnings: To warn those who had just exhibited a twisted and perverse mentality by accusing Him of being in league with Satan, Jesus told a short parable about unclean spirits. Practice of exorcism and superstition were deeply rooted in the Judaism of Jesus' day. They believed demons were ordinarily invisible, but if one put sifted ashes on

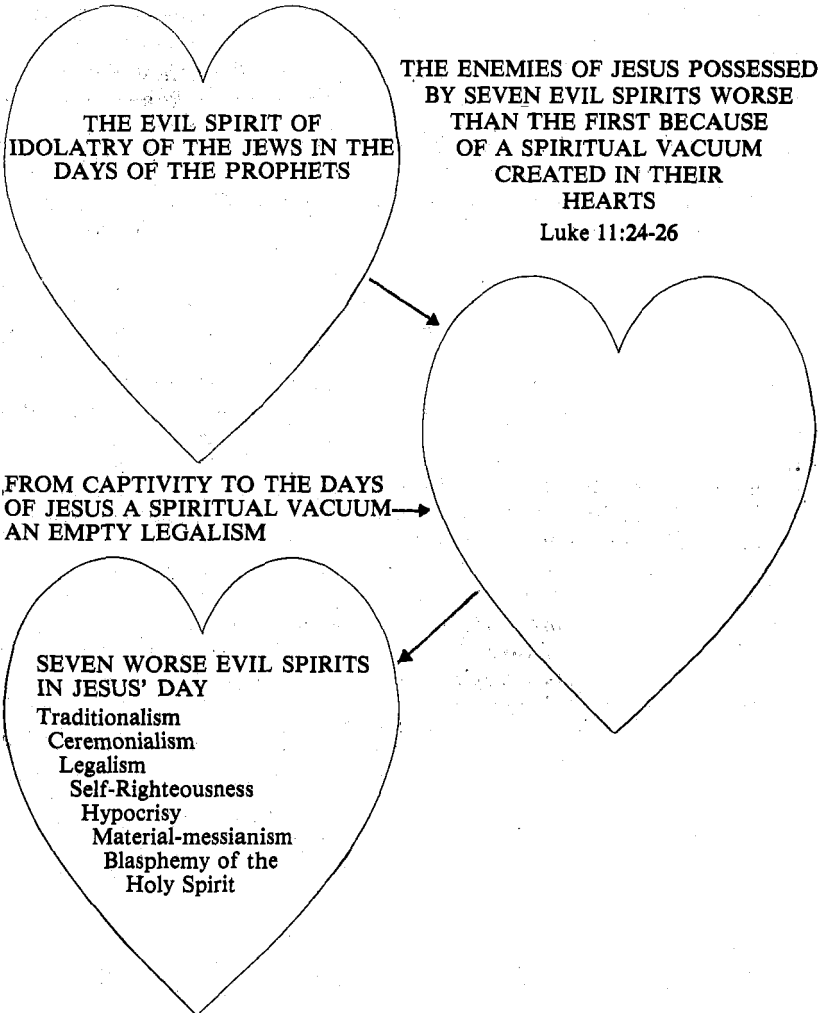
the threshold of the house, their footprints might be seen in the morning, prints like those of a chicken. Demons were to be found everywhere, but especially in deserted and empty houses, marshes, the shade of certain trees, and in toilets. One rabbi, in order to protect himself against them, always took a lamb with him everytime he went to the bathroom. Jews believed evil spirits attacked animals as well as human beings; and among the humans those whom they most frequently attacked were chronic invalids, engaged girls and the best man, or groomsman at a wedding. It was exceedingly unwise for a man to sleep all alone in a house: he would be the victim of Lilith, the she-devil, and anything at all might happen to him. Jews believed that God had provided guardian angels to protect all who were careful to keep the traditions of the rabbis. But they also believed that men had to help protect themselves from evil spirits. This they did by prayers: "The person who recites the *Shema Israel* in getting into bed has as it were a double-edged sword against the demons of the night." The careful Jew would also put on his phylactery as soon as he thought there was danger of an evil spirit's presence.

Jesus did not believe human superstitions. But what He said about evil spirits returning seven times worse than the first was a distinct historical possibility. Mary Magdalene had seven demons at once in her (Mk. 16:9; Lk. 8:2) and Jesus cast them out; the man who lived in the tombs was possessed of "legions" of demons (Lk. 8:30). But there is an even more important focus for Jesus' parable in this context. These enemies of His had just manifested an attitude or spirit of especial maliciousness in attributing the godly work of Jesus to the devil. In calling what was undeniably from God a work of the devil, these people were exhibiting a spirit seven times more Satanic than the spirit of idolatry which had characterized their ancestors of the days of the O.T. prophets. God took their ancestors and drove them into captivity to "clean" their house of idolatry. The drastic measure produced the desired result; the Jewish "house" was never again possessed with idolatry—it was thoroughly cleansed. But upon the return of the Jews to their land in 536 B.C. it did not take long for a spiritual vacuum to be created in their "house." Many of the returned Jews became enamored of the sensual and indulgent life of the Greek culture of that era. A small party of extremely religious and patriotic Jews formed a party called *Hasidim* as a resistance movement against the Hellenization of their ancestral culture. Instead of turning to the Old Testament scriptures, this party gradually built for itself a multitude of traditions, customs, ceremonies and rituals, hoping thereby to protect the Law itself against the encroachments of unbelief. God's word does not need man's protection. What the *hasidim* did with their traditions was build around themselves a false facade of self-righteousness through their legalism and hypocrisy.

By the time Jesus the Messiah had come, the heart of Judaism swept clean of idolatry had allowed the spiritual vacuum there to be inhabited

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by "seven evil spirits worse than the first" plus the old evil spirit that had been "wandering through waterless places." Judaism of Jesus' day had become a rotten carcass over which the vultures (Roman empire) were poised (Mt. 24:28). It was a "house" left forsaken and desolate; a despicable abomination unto the Lord, (Mt. 23:38). Upon them was laid all the righteous blood shed on earth from Abel to Zechariah (Mt. 23:34-36). See the chart below:



11:27-28 Witnessing: There is a rather perverse attitude throughout the history of man that puts more emphasis on physical proximity to holy people and places than on spiritual kinship. We find this attitude cropping up constantly in regard to the physical presence of Jesus (cf. Lk. 4:22-23; Mt. 12:46-50; Mk. 3:31-35; Lk. 8:19-21; Lk. 9:33, etc.). The Jews of the days of the Prophets tended to associate their relationship to God according to the enshrinement of "holy" places, things and persons (cf. Jer. 15:1; Ezek. 14:20; Jer. 7:4; Mt. 23:29-30, etc.). Apparently that same attitude had captivated some woman in the crowds here in Judea. This woman was, sincerely perhaps, impressed with greatness that must accrue to the physical mother of this wise, compassionate and miracle-working Galilean, Jesus. The woman reasoned that since Jesus was unquestionably in right relationship to Jehovah, then His mother must be also.

Now in the realm of sinful mankind that might be a valid line of reasoning (although not always). When there is a godly son, there is usually a godly mother whose righteousness has been instrumental in producing it in her son. The mother, however, was only the instrument; the godliness is produced from the seed-word of God. In fact, some sons are godly in spite of ungodly parents. The godliness of a son does not necessarily guarantee the blessedness of the parents. Righteousness before God ultimately depends on personal choices and attitudes.

Mary, mother of Jesus, was honored by God to give human birth to the Savior of the world (Lk. 1:28-35; 1:42-55). Mary was an excellent example of obedience to the will of God (Lk. 1:38; Jn. 2:4-5). But it was really her spiritual relationship to God that made her special—not her physical relationship to Jesus. That is the point of Jesus in His reply to this woman: "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" The Greek word for "keep it" here is *phulassontes*. It is a present participle meaning continuing to keep it. It is not the usual word for "keep it" in the sense of obey; it is a word associated with "imprison, guard, hold onto." Jesus is saying what David said in Psa. 119:11, the word of God must be laid up in, or imprisoned in, man's heart.

Spiritual ties to Jesus are the ultimate and only lasting ties. Genetic descent is irrelevant to the kingdom of God. God has no special blessings to bestow on anyone because of their physical lineage. Water (baptism into spiritual covenant relationship with Christ) is thicker than blood (physical family relationship). Jesus is not denying the necessity or usefulness of family relationships but He is saying that even the most fundamental of all human relationships become secondary to spiritual brotherhood. No human nation or race of people has any claims on Jesus unless they come to Him individually by way of God's will revealed in the Bible (cf. Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:11-18; Gal. 3:23—4:7; 6:10; 6:15-16;

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Jas. 1:22ff.; Eph. 2:19, etc.). We do not please God because of any proximity to holy shrines, national origins, or traditional family religions, but whether we have the unadulterated word of God locked into our hearts and lives.

SECTION 3

Phenomenalism (11:29-36)

29 When the crowds were increasing, he began to say, "This generation is an evil generation; it seeks a sign, but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of Jonah. ³⁰For as Jonah became a sign to the men of Nineveh, so will the Son of man be to this generation. ³¹The queen of the South will arise at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. ³²The men of Nineveh will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

33 "No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a bushel, but on a stand, that those who enter may see the light. ³⁴Your eye is the lamp of your body; when your eye is sound, your whole body is full of light; but when it is not sound, your body is full of darkness. ³⁵Therefore be careful lest the light in you be darkness. ³⁶If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, it will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light."

11:29-32 Disbelief: We have to go back to 11:16 for the reason behind the request for a "sign from heaven." Their motive as stated there was to "test" Jesus. They were unsatisfied with His messianic claims because He was not backing them with the "signs" they had already decided were messianic. They may have been attempting to trap Jesus into some further display of compassion or teaching which would be in opposition to the traditions of the rabbis. Rabbinical tradition characterized the advent of the Jewish Messiah as a time of great warfare upon the Gentiles and great material prosperity for the Jews. The Apocalypse of Baruch says that the time of the Messiah would usher in an inexhaustible supply of manna to feed the Jews until the end of time. The Psalms of Solomon say the Messiah will "purge Jerusalem of the heathen . . . break the pride of sinners like so many pots . . . and gather the holy nation and lead it with justice, in peace and equality." Jesus was not showing signs of being a Messiah-Avenger or Messiah-Provider (except for the feeding

of the 5000), so the request for "a sign from heaven" was born out of hostility for Jesus' failure to meet their materialistic expectations. Jesus had given numerous signs of His deity already, but they were not concerned with deity. Jesus tried to persuade them that He was the exact fulfillment of their own Prophets as to the Messiah, but they were not interested in God's word. Their demand for "a sign from heaven" in the face of all the other signs which Jesus had already given was graphic proof that they were attempting to dictate to God the basis upon which they would accept Jesus as their Messiah. This is why Jesus called them "an evil and adulterous generation." God gives plenty of evidence to substantiate His word. When man demands more than God has decreed is necessary, it is a sin that "provokes" the wrath of God (cf. Ex. 17:7; Num. 14:11; Deut. 18:18-22; Mt. 16:3; I Cor 10:9; Heb. 3:10). It is rebellion against God to ask for more signs than God has declared sufficient. Jesus did many more signs than those recorded in the gospel records (Jn. 20:30-31), but enough are recorded that any man who wants to believe may have sufficient evidence to substantiate Christ's claims. The clamor for miraculous gifts was what Paul tried to correct in the Corinthian church. Christ had given the Corinthian church sufficient miraculous gifts and the people were sinning in clamoring for more.

The "sign of Jonah" was Jonah's miraculous preservation from death in the belly of the great fish. This was the *evidence* by which Jonah's message was authenticated and the basis upon which Nineveh believed and repented. Jonah became a "sign" to the men of Nineveh that (a) the God of Israel is the God of all men; (b) Jehovah's will must be obeyed; (c) Jehovah wants all men to be saved; (d) Jehovah will deliver all who will repent. The one great "sign" Jesus will give to that generation (and to the whole world) is His miraculous resurrection from death itself. Jesus will not be merely preserved from death; He will be brought back to life again after dying.

Some, by dogmatically wresting the scriptures, have divided believers over the question whether Jesus was literally three days and three nights in the tomb before His resurrection or not (cf. Mt. 12:40). We do not believe it is necessary to insist that Jesus was literally three days and three nights in the tomb for the following reasons: (a) if Jesus was to be in the tomb 72 full hours He should have predicted His resurrection on the fourth day, but He never did; (b) it is good Hebrew idiom to say "day" when only a *part* of a day is meant (cf. Gen. 42:17-18; Esther 4:15-17; 5:1; I Kings 12:5, 12, etc.); (c) *prophetic signs* are to be interpreted in the light of their actual fulfillment when at all possible; (d) His enemies understood Him to mean less than 72 hours (cf. Mt. 27:62-64); (e) Luke names the days involved in His interment—"Preparation" (Friday), "Sabbath" (Saturday), "First day" (Sunday) (cf. Lk. 23:54-24:1). Jesus' prophecy

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that He would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth was fulfilled since He was there part of Friday, all day Saturday, and part of Sunday. That was the way His disciples would understand it then and that is the way we are to understand it now.

The "queen of the South" was undoubtedly the Queen of Sheba from the southern-most tip of the Arabian peninsula. She visited Palestine in the days of Solomon (cf. I Kings 10:1ff.; II Chron. 9:1ff.) because she had heard of the wisdom of Solomon but did not believe it. When she put him to the test she became convinced and paid homage to his wisdom. Whether she became a believer in Jehovah or not we do not know, but her homage to Solomon was tacit admission that the king's wisdom came from his God. Jesus points out that One greater than Solomon is in the midst of these people—namely, the Messiah, and they do not acknowledge His wisdom. Therefore, the queen of the South will arise in the judgment and condemn the evil generation of Jesus.

The men of Ninevah will also arise at the judgment with that generation and condemn it. They repented at the preaching of Jonah while One greater than Jonah preached to that generation. The moral axiom Jesus posits is this: According to the light against which you have sinned, you will be judged! What is even more significant, that generation will soon have the ultimate, final and most powerful "sign" God is ever going to give the world to produce repentance—Jesus' resurrection from the dead. That "sign" will be God's perfect call to repent, (Acts 17:30-31) and if they do not heed that there is only perfect wrath to be received. What Jesus said to that generation applies even more emphatically to each succeeding generation. We have, in addition to His teachings, His deeds and His resurrection, all the centuries of history in which millions of people have validated Christ's claims by the power of His Spirit living in them. This is why unbelief is evil!

11:33-36 Darkness: There are two different "lamps" in this text. The first "lamp" is Jesus' deity (confirmed by His miracles and later by His resurrection). Jesus who casts out demons is the Light of the World. Yet that generation wanted to accuse Him of doing works of darkness (being in league with Satan). Jesus had just proved logically that He was fighting and defeating darkness. When His resurrection occurred it would prove empirically that He was light. He brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Jesus pleads with them to search their own souls, recognized their own immoral thinking, because no one lights a lamp in order to put it under a bushel. They keep asking for a "sign" (light) from Him; He is giving the most brilliant light (signs) possible—He is certainly not spreading darkness. The darkness is in them.

The second "lamp" is man's moral perceptiveness—men's capacity to know and distinguish truth from falsehood, light from darkness. The

writer of Proverbs said, "The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord, searching all his innermost parts" (Prov. 20:27). Just like the physical eye lets in light to guide the body, so the spirit and mind of man lets in truth to guide the inner man, (cf. also I Cor. 2:11). The Greek word *haplous* is translated "sound" in 11:34. In some versions it is translated "single" or "clear" in the NASV. The fundamental meaning of *haplous* seems to be "sincerity, simplicity, clarity." The "sound" eye is one that focuses totally and sharply on a single object—it does not give double vision nor does it divide its focus. This is true of the spirit of man—the mind of man. The inner man will be what he focuses his mind on. And if his focus is double or divided, he will be a divided man. If the "eye" of the soul focuses on falsehood and darkness then the whole inner man will be dark. Those clamoring for signs from Jesus had their hearts and minds focused on a materialistic kingdom. When Jesus declared that was not the essence of God's kingdom, they would not let the light of His truth illuminate their inner being because their "eye" had let in the darkness.

The reality of the Christian experience does not consist in outward, spectacular fleshly things which the worldly-minded evaluate as real. Signs and things which excite the emotions and satisfy the carnal cravings of pride and ambition have nothing to do with the kingdom of God. His kingdom is not of this world; it consists of things that have to do with inner being—faith, love, truth, righteousness. But alas, even our own generation still seeks after "signs."

SECTION 4

Pharisaism (11:37-54)

37 While he was speaking, a Pharisee asked him to dine with him; so he went in and sat at table. 38 The Pharisee was astonished to see that he did not first wash before dinner. 39 And the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of extortion and wickedness. 40 You fools! Did not he who made the outside make the inside also? 41 But give for alms those things which are within; and behold, everything is clean for you.

42 "But woe to you Pharisees! for you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect justice and the love of God; these you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. 43 Woe to you Pharisees! for you love the best seat in the synagogues and salutations in the market places. 44 Woe to you; for you are not seen, and men walk over them without knowing it."

45 One of the lawyers answered him, "Teacher, in saying this

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you reproach us also.”⁴⁶ And he said, “Woe to you lawyers also! for you load men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers.”⁴⁷ Woe to you! for you build the tombs of the prophets whom your fathers killed.⁴⁸ So you are witnesses and consent to the deeds of your fathers; for they killed them, and you build their tombs.⁴⁹ Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,’⁵⁰ that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation,⁵¹ from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it shall be required of this generation.⁵² Woe to you lawyers! for you have taken away the key of knowledge; you did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering.”

53 As he went away from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press him hard, and to provoke him to speak of many things,⁵⁴ lying in wait for him, to catch at something he might say.

11:37-44 Hypocrisy: Jesus was invited to “dine” with a Pharisee while He was confronting His enemies. The extraordinary wisdom Jesus displayed in completely defeating the accusations against Him intrigued this Pharisee, so he wanted to see and listen to the Sage of Galilee firsthand. This Pharisee was totally unprepared for what he heard from the lips of Jesus. The Greek word *aristese* means “break your fast” or “breakfast” (see Jn. 21:12, 15) and originally referred to the first meal of the day. But it came to mean in the days of Jesus a sort of “brunch” or the meal eaten after morning prayers in the synagogue, at mid-morning. Jesus entered the Pharisee’s house and went immediately to the couch and *reclined* (Gr. *anepesen*), without performing the traditional “washing” of the hands before the meal. The Hebrew language has three words most often used in the O.T. for ceremonial washing: *kavas*, *rachatz*, and *taval*. *Taval* means, “to dip or immerse.” The Greek word used in Luke 11:38 is *ebaptisthe* which means, “to dip or immerse.” Modern Hebrew has focused on the word *taval* to categorize all ceremonial ablutions (see *Judaica Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2, 82-86).

There were all kinds of purifications practiced in the Gospels: There were washings for lepers (Lk. 17:12; Lev. 13:45ff.); washings after birth (Lk. 2:22) and before wedding feasts (Jn. 2:6). A Jew argued with John the Baptist’s disciples about purification (Jn. 3:25-30); Peter was always careful to observe laws of purification (Acts 10:14); Pharisees were meticulous about purification (Mt. 23:25; Lk. 7:39; Jn. 18:28); regulations about ablutions were a characteristic part of Judaism (Heb. 9:9-10).

God made scores of laws demanding ceremonial washing in the O.T. (cf. Lev. 5:2ff.; 7:19-21; 11:23-25; 15:11; 17:15ff.; 18:1ff.; 19:31; 21:4ff.; 22:1-9; Num. 5:3; 6:9; 9:6ff.; 19:13-22; Deut. 21:22ff.; 14:3-21; 23:10-14). All these had to do with ritual uncleanness. In many instances there was nothing physically or hygienically unclean involved. Everything created by God is good when properly used. God gave the commands to teach man that perfect spiritual cleanness by works of the Law was impossible, because man was unable to even keep the ceremonial aspect of the Law perfectly.

But Jesus did not violate Mosaic Law when He failed to "baptize" His hands before eating. Nowhere in the Law of Moses are Jews commanded to wash their hands before eating. The washing of hands is mentioned only once in the Torah (Lev. 15:11) and that has nothing to do with meals. Washing of hands is rabbinical tradition pure and simple. According to the rabbis, washing of hands to be cleansed of impurity before meals was instituted by King Solomon; some think the tradition was instituted by the disciples of Hillel and Shammai. The washing of hands is either by immersion up to the wrist or by pouring about one-half a pint of water over both hands from a receptacle with a wide mouth, the lip of which must be undamaged. The water should be poured over the whole hand up to the wrist, but is acceptable as long as the fingers are washed up to the second joint. The hands must be clean and without anything adhering to them; rings must be removed so that the water can reach the entire surface area. The water should not be hot or discolored and it is customary to perform the act by pouring water over each hand three times. Superstition and racial prejudices were both in the background of this tradition. The Talmud refers at length to the tradition supposing that demons sat on unwashed hands just waiting to get into the person's body through the mouth. The Talmud also mentions that Rabbi Akibba, although personally opposed to the tradition, nevertheless used the limited water allowed him in prison for this ablution rather than for drinking and so died of thirst.

The word *Pharisee* comes from the Hebrew word *pharashim* which means "separated ones." It was a Jewish sect which was originally known as the *Chasidim*, a Hebrew word meaning, "pious ones." The *Chasidim* was formed from a group of "old fashioned" Jews who dedicated themselves to resist the paganization of their culture during the Seleucid (Greco-Syrian) domination of Palestine (350-175 B.C.). They denounced everything of Gentile practice, insisted on the absolute supremacy of the Torah, and often resisted to the death any attempt to Greekize their land and people. The tendency of the Hasmoneans (Jewish royal and priestly family descending from the Maccabeans) to compromise with certain aspects of paganism brought about an intense sectarian division

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in Judaism that lasted down into the days of Jesus in the sects of the Pharisees and Sadducees (see chart on Religious-Political Frame of First Century Judaism, pg. 88).

The Pharisees were the most prominent and influential sect of Jesus' day. Josephus says there were about 6000 Pharisees in the first century A.D. They were contemptuous of all who did not follow their traditions and violently opposed to anyone who would threaten their religious traditions whether Gentile or Jew. The fundamental feature of the sect was extreme legalism. They believed in Divine providence, the free will of man, resurrection of the dead and judgment. They lived moderately (although many of them were rich), placed great store in history and ethnic culture of the Jewish race. They eagerly anticipated the Golden Age of the Messiah (as they interpreted it). Rabbinical tradition was something about which the Pharisees were deadly serious. Rabbinical interpretations of the Torah were designed to "protect the Law." To keep the unlearned and common people from ignorantly disobeying the Law, the rabbis (with all their expertise) deemed it necessary to write out in minute detail every possible human action that might violate a commandment of the Torah. Soon after Malachi, the last prophet of God (400 B.C.), there arose in rabbinic Judaism the concept called, *Bath Kol*. These two Hebrew words mean, literally, "Daughter of the Voice." The rabbinical meaning of the words is, "The Divine Voice." According to this concept God "whispered" all the rabbinic traditions (interpretations) to Moses at the same time He gave Moses the Torah. Moses wrote the Torah down, but passed on the interpretations orally. These oral traditions were passed on from generation to generation through the rabbis until around 132-200 A.D. when they were produced in written form in the Mishnah, the Haggadah, the Halakah, and the Talmud (300-400 A.D.).

It is not difficult to understand now why the Pharisee was "astonished" (Gr. *Ethaumazen*, shocked) to see that Jesus did not first "wash" before He ate. The Pharisee considered Jesus' action a violation of "The Divine Voice." It is interesting that this Pharisee, living in Judea the hotbed of Pharisaic legalism, would invite Jesus to dine with him considering the attitudes of the Pharisees toward Jesus:

- a. They considered Jesus' claim to forgive sins blasphemy (Mt. 9:3ff.; Mk. 6:2ff.; Lk. 5:21)
- b. They rankled at His social associations with publicans and sinners (Mt. 9:11; Mk. 2:16; Lk. 5:30; 15:1)
- c. They accused His disciples of non-observance of required feasts (Lk. 5:33).
- d. They tried to prove Jesus was in league with Satan (Mt. 9:34; 11:19; 12:24ff.; Mk. 3:22; Lk. 11:14).

- e. They attacked Him for violating Sabbath traditions (Mt. 12:2, 10; Mk. 2:23; 3:2; Lk. 6:5-7; 13:14ff.; Jn. 5:10-18; 9:13).
- f. They compromised their convictions to join with the Herodians to kill Jesus (Mk. 3:6).
- g. They also joined with the hated Sadducees to trap Him (Mt. 15:1; 22:1ff.), and kill Him (Mt. 27:62; Jn. 18:3).
- h. They accused Him of planning to destroy the Temple (Jn. 2:19; Mt. 26:59-61; 27:39-40).
- i. They accused Him of being a deceiver (Jn. 7:12; Mt. 27:62ff.).
- j. They ridiculed Him (Jn. 7:48) and tried to slander Him by calling Him a Samaritan (Jn. 8:48) and demon possessed.
- k. They charged Him with sedition against the Roman empire (Lk. 23:1-2).
- l. They mocked Him in His death on the cross (Mt. 27:41ff.).

Evidently the Pharisee said something to Jesus about violation of rabbinic tradition for Jesus replied with a lengthy and scathing rebuke of Pharisaic hypocrisy. What He said here, Jesus repeated about a year later in greater detail in the midst of His last week on earth (Mt. 23:1ff.).

The Lord's first admonition to the Pharisees is that they clean up the inner man. They were very orthodox on the outside. They kept all the ceremonies and rituals. They attended all the feasts and fasts without fail. They appeared to be very pious. But inwardly they were full of extortion and wickedness. They even made religious traditions by which they could circumvent moral and financial responsibility to their aged parents (Mt. 15:3-6) and all the while appear to be very pious by declaring their money "Corban" (devoted to God). But God looks on the heart and not on the outward appearance. No man can fool God—He looks at motives. Alms-giving is an abomination before God if it is done with a resentful or unwilling heart. The Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 6:1-18) plainly teaches that *why* we do any religious deed is more important than the deed itself! Doing one's piety before men, to be seen of them, indicates an unclean heart, no matter how right the deed may be. If the Pharisees would clean up their hearts and give those to the world, they would be giving the kind of "alms" God wants the world to have. More than coins given out of self-righteous, and resentful hypocrisy, the world needs love, purity, truth and kindness. While love can only be expressed by giving, and giving material things to the poor can come from a pure heart (Jas. 1:27; 2:14-17; I Jn. 3:16-18), giving alms does not necessarily equal piety. It is only when the heart is right with God that everything then becomes "clean" (cf. Mt. 15:10-11; Mk. 7:14-23; I Tim. 4:1-5).

Jesus next points out the Pharisaic tendency to major in minors. The Pharisees meticulously counted every dill seed, setting aside every tenth

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one, to insure legal correctness. The Talmud even suggests that the pious Jew ought to cut up every dill-plant stalk into ten parts and give one-tenth to the Temple. While they were unimpeachably precise in these outward regulations and spent most of their time trying to make others so, they were unconcerned about fairness, the rights of others and love of God. Jesus called these latter things "the weightier matters of the law" in Matthew 23:23. Jesus does not say they should quit tithing to the Lord as the Law of Moses required, but He insists that scrupulosity in setting aside every tenth dill seed is not the essence of God's law. The real purpose behind every Law, even of the tithe, is grace, mercifulness and redemption for the soul of man. A man may be very accurate in religious ritual and doctrine but if he has no sensitivity to justice for his fellow man nor love for God he has a perverted sense of values and his orthodoxy is probably motivated by a hope in self-righteousness. Financial support for the work of God's kingdom must have the right motives (cf. II Cor. 9:5-8).

Ego-tripping was another favorite endeavor of the Pharisees. They "loved" the best seat in the synagogues and salutations in the market places. The Greek word *protokathedrian* is a compound of *proto* ("first" or "chief") and *kathedra* ("throne" or "seat"); *kathedra* is the word from which the English word "cathedral" comes. *Kathedra* is sometimes used in classical Greek to mean "a teacher's seat," or "a judge's seat." Jesus denounced them later for loving to be called "rabbi" ("teacher" or "master") (cf. Mt. 23:7-8). This mania still persists in religious circles today where men not only love but insist on being called, "Doctor," "Pastor," "Reverend," "Father" or some other title. "Bigshotism" corrupts! The inordinate self-seeking egotism that feeds on competitiveness is Pharisaic! The urge to constantly class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves and measure ourselves by one another (II Cor. 10:12) leads to a complacent and destructive superiority. Beware of the intoxication of erudition—never think you have learned all there is to know. Beware of flattering compliments (II Pet. 2:18; Jude 16)—never seriously believe you are as great as others say you are! "Bigshots" are like graves; full of corruption themselves and dangerous to others who associate with them because people are fooled by their outward appearances. Hanging around self-proclaimed "bigshots" will corrupt you like the uncleanness the Jews incurred by walking over a grave.

11:45-54 Hate: There is an old adage which says, if you throw a stone at a pack of dogs the one that is hit will yelp. One of the *lawyers* (Gr. *nomikois*; also called *grammateis* or "scribes") yelped! What Jesus had been saying about the hypocrisy of the Pharisees reproached the scribes or lawyers also. Lawyers and scribes were the "data processors" of the Jewish religion. They were closely associated with the Pharisees. Their

origins go even farther back in the history of Judaism than that of the Pharisees—back to pre-exilic days. They were the public recorders, governmental secretaries, legal experts, charged with passing on the rabbinical teachings in writing. They also taught and interpreted the traditions. All public education of the Jewish populace was in their control. They were charged with making civil judgments; they were members of the Sanhedrin, loved the title of “rabbi,” wore long robes, and sought public adoration. They were the most watchful and determined opponents of Jesus (cf. Mk. 2:16; Lk. 5:30; 15:2).

Jesus’ first denouncement of the lawyers was that they were totally insensitive to other men’s burdens. In fact, Jesus accused them of “loading men with burdens hard to bear” and then refusing to help at all in relieving the burdens. These burdens they placed on men were their unbiblical (and in some cases, antibiblical) traditions. Here are some of them:

- a. A Jew was forbidden by scribal tradition from eating eggs on the Sabbath because the hen had to work to lay the egg and that breaks the Sabbath tradition.
- b. It was forbidden to slaughter animals on the Sabbath *unless* it was a louse. (Conservative rabbis forbade even that while liberal ones allowed people to pull the legs off a louse on the Sabbath).
- c. If a wheat-offering portion had been stored in a granary, no other wheat could be stored there unless the Jew swept the granary with a certain number of broom strokes.
- d. It was questionable whether a Nazarite, with a vow to abstain from mashed food was permitted to eat an onion crushed accidentally.

Volume after volume of scribal traditions were forced upon the common people, until life was almost unbearably regimented and stifled. But Pharisees and scribes made sure they freed themselves of such burdens by adding traditions that only they were privy to:

- a. The tradition of Corban (already mentioned, 11:37-44).
- b. The tradition of “Fictitious Domicile” where a scribe, if he had “an important rabbinical journey” to make could pretend he had a domicile every 7/8ths of a mile and travel that far, pretend to take up lodging for a few moments and then travel on another 7/8ths of a mile.
- c. The tradition called “Prosbol” which was a document designed (much like Corban) to circumvent cancellation of debts.
- d. The tradition about swearing by the altar vs. swearing by the gift on the altar (cf. Mt. 23:16-22).

This is the way the lawyers of Jesus’ day kept themselves aloof from the

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burdensome traditions they demanded of everyone else. Most societies, including our own, have an elite group of law-makers who burden the masses with an unbearable multitude of statutes while they find ways to keep themselves above the laws. Lawyers, judges, legislators and religious teachers should practice what they preach!

Next Jesus took occasion to expose the murderous hatefulness in the hearts of some of these lawyers. Outwardly the lawyers and scribes built fancy and ornate tombs for the old prophets (cf. Mt. 23:29-36), but inwardly they hated and wanted to murder The Prophet, Jesus. Outwardly they gave the impression they revered God's prophets, but in their open hatred of Jesus they showed a wicked heart that would have, like their forefathers, killed the prophets had they lived in that ancient generation. Outwardly they pretended to hold life sacred; inwardly they were the worst killers of all time for they killed the Son of God! The "Wisdom of God" (11:49) is apparently a Messianic title Jesus applies to Himself since in the passage in Matthew 23:34, the later, similar denouncement of the Pharisees, Jesus says, "Therefore I send you prophets . . ." "Wisdom" is personified in the book of Proverbs (8:1ff.) which may be a Messianic prophecy in itself.

Because these lawyers wanted to (and did) succeed in murdering the innocent Son of God, they will be held responsible for all the murdering of God's prophets and messengers in the Old Testament. The blood of Abel was the first to be shed because of the truth of God (Gen. 4:10); the blood of Zechariah (II Chron. 24:22) was the last. But the death of The Prophet, The Messiah, will be the ultimate murder, the crowning act of all such hatred against God's sovereignty. Daniel, the prophet, predicted that near the end of the 490 years ("70 weeks of years"), which would begin with the restoration of the Jewish commonwealth, the Jewish people would fill the cup of their rebellion to the brim and "cut off the Prince," (cf. Daniel 9:24-27; see comments in *Daniel*, by Butler, College Press, pgs. 344-353 and 363-366), (See also Matt. 23:32-36; I Thess. 2:15-16; Matt. 21:33-43; Jn. 15:22-27; Acts 2:22-23; 3:13-15; 7:51-53; 4:25-28). The killing of God's Son was the ultimate sin; it was what Daniel called, "finish the transgression" (Dan. 9:24). The murder of God's Son resulted in God's destruction of the Jewish commonwealth in 70 A.D. (cf. Lk. 19:41-44; Mt. 22:1-10; I Thess. 2:16; Dan. 9:26b-27).

Finally, Jesus accused the scribes and lawyers of taking away from men the key of knowledge. These lawyers pretended to be guardians and proclaimers of the knowledge of God, but in reality they were destroyers. Instead of teaching the people the will of God as God revealed it in the Old Testament, they cluttered and obscured and hid under a blanket of human traditions the real revelation of God. They opposed Christ and poisoned the minds of the people against Him in the very

face of His miracles and goodness and purity. They threatened harm to anyone who made any effort to follow Jesus and learn of God from Him. Christ was the Word of God incarnate. He is the key to all wisdom (cf. Col. 2:3, 17; Jn. 14:6). He attempted to cut through the veneer of scribal tradition and teach the people the true revelation of God. That is why the lawyers opposed Him so vehemently. *Deinos* is a Greek adverb meaning "terribly, fearfully, hatefully"; *enechein* means, "to hold in, to entangle, to entrap." These lawyers and Pharisees were consumed with their hatred and desire to entangle Jesus. They were going to try to *apostomatizein* ("provoke" or, literally, "draw out of Jesus' mouth") many things from Jesus and trap Him in some error. The phrase "that they might accuse him" in the KJV is not found in the best manuscripts (such as Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Codex Regius Parisiensis, the Syriac Curetonian, the Boharic), but that is what is certainly inferred. They certainly were not lying in wait to learn some truth from Jesus they could put to practice in their lives. They kept badgering Him like vicious dogs barking at their prey hoping to catch Him off-guard so they could rush in for the kill.

Jesus met every hostile attack and subtle deception with truth and devastating logic. He did not do it to wound His attackers and destroy any hope of their salvation—He did it to arrest their self-destroying plunges into vicious falsehood and hatred. Some went wilfully on in their hatred, intensifying their efforts to kill Him; others undoubtedly were rescued. There were a few Pharisees and influential Jewish leaders who did become disciples (e.g. Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and others). The world is still filled with Pharisees and lawyers, pretending to love God but all the while studying His word only to try to destroy it.

STUDY STIMULATORS:

1. What do you think about formal prayers? Should people read prayers from manuscripts? Did Jesus advocate a certain form of prayer? Is it all right to repeat the "Lord's Prayer" in unison?
2. Can we get God to change His mind by praying long enough for the same thing? If not, why did Jesus talk about the friend at midnight who was heard for his persistence?
3. Is the Holy Spirit given when all one does is pray? When was the Holy Spirit given to men?
4. Do you think Christians should try to be logical in their presentation of the Gospel? Didn't the apostle Paul go into Jewish synagogues and "reason" with Jews from the scriptures about the Christ?
5. When was the devil bound?

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6. Is the whole world of mankind actually divided into only two segments—saved and lost? Who are the saved? Who are the lost?
7. How did the Jews let seven demons worse than the first inhabit their “swept-clean” house? Is their plight a possibility for believers today?
8. Why did the woman think the mother of Jesus was so blessed? What do you think of Jesus’ answer?
9. When is it wrong to ask the Lord for signs? Is it ever right? Are religious people today wrong in clamoring for miraculous signs?
10. From the study of Jesus’ exposure of the Pharisees and lawyers, do you see any parallels of hypocrisy in the modern church?

BLESSING OF BEING SEALED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

(Ephesians 1:13-14)

By Paul T. Butler — OBC Chapel, 10-23-73

INTRODUCTION

I. CONTEXTUALLY

- A. These two verses combine to form one of the great "spiritual blessings" God has blessed us with in Christ.
 - 1. Paul lays two huge sentences on the Ephesian church in chapter one.
 - 2. The first sentence 1:3-14 is a catalog of all the ways in which God has blessed Christians in Christ.
 - 3. The second sentence 1:15-23 is Paul's prayer that these Christians may know (understand and experience) those blessings.
- B. Paul did not place all this "breathhtaking" stress upon spiritual blessings without reason.
 - 1. Spiritual blessings are not contingent upon favorable physical circumstances and are available to all believers alike.
 - 2. Spiritual blessings thus have to do with the abiding realities, not the temporary trappings of the flesh.
 - 3. Spiritual blessings supply man's most desperate need—to be remade into the person God intended him to be—this will be the thrust of these two verses.

II. EXEGETICALLY

- A. Reading these two verses in the Greek text is an interesting experience.
 - 1. Literally it would read something like this:
"In Him also, you, the ones having heard the word, that one of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also, you, the ones having believed, were sealed (passive) with Spirit, the promised one, the holy one, who is the down-payment of our inheritance until the redemption which will give complete possession unto the praise of His glory."
 - 2. The Berkeley Version is also interesting here:
"In Him you also, after listening to the message of the truth, the Gospel of our salvation, have as believers in Him been stamp marked with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the pledge-deposit of our legacy for the releasing of our deed of purchase, and all to the praise of His glory."

III. ETYMOLOGICALLY

- A. Seal - literal sense: "A device bearing a design, a name or some other words so made that it can impart an impression in relief upon a soft substance like clay or wax. When the clay or wax hardens, it permanently bears the impression of the seal."

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1. Archaeologists find them being used 4000 B.C.
2. Originally they took the form of a cylinder, gradually superseded by the scarab (beetle-shaped)
3. Some carried on cords around neck like necklace; some cone-shaped in boxes; most in form of finger-rings

B. Seal - uses:

1. As an authentication
2. As a mark of ratification of a covenant
3. As a means of protecting documents to seal against tampering
4. As a deputation of authority
5. As an official mark of ownership

IV. APPLICABILITY - Three areas of blessing for the Christian in having been sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.

- A. He Etches the Image of God and His Son Upon our Being
- B. He Gives Us the Earnest-Payment of Our Inheritance
- C. He Empowers Us As Emissaries of our Great God

DISCUSSION

I. ETCHES THE IMAGE OF GOD UPON OUR BEING

A. Authenticates our genuineness as belonging to Him

1. "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God. . . ." (Rom. 8:16).
2. Does not say that the Holy Spirit bears witness *to* our spirit but *with* our spirit—*summarturei*; the Holy Spirit bears witness—and our own spirit bears witness.
3. If my spirit says I am a child of God, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit shows that I am not a child of God, then I am not a child no matter what my spirit says. The two witnesses must agree. My spirit must agree with the testimony of the Holy Spirit.
4. This co-witness of the Spirit of God with our spirit, whereby we are assured that we are children of God, is a very important and blessed reality. BUT IT HAS BEEN SO OFTEN MISUNDERSTOOD AND MISINTERPRETED.
5. How does the Spirit bear witness with our spirit? A still small voice? A feeling? emotion? impulse? The Bible nowhere affirms such leadings! All people and religious denominations who claim such subjective witness of the Holy Spirit not only contradict one another—they contradict the Bible. The Bible claims to be the witness of the Spirit. The Spirit of God does not contradict Himself.

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6. Since there are no inspired men living today—and those who claim to be such contradict the word of God in what is His witness about who are the children of God—the only witness which we have of the Spirit to us is found in His written Word. *No one knows the Spirit's will on any subject unless he has learned it from the written Word.* Anything that claims to be the Holy Spirit's teaching must not contradict this!
 7. The Spirit of God lays down the terms by which we become a child of God, and when we believe and obey these terms then both the Holy Spirit and our own spirits testify that we are the sons of God.
 8. WHAT A BLESSING TO HAVE SUCH A SEAL PUT UPON OUR MINDS AND HEARTS. . . . WE DON'T HAVE TO DEPEND UPON FICKLE AND VACILLATING EMOTIONS AND FEELINGS . . . NOR UPON THE WHIMS AND OPINIONS OF MEN. OUR SALVATION IS AUTHENTICATED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT HIMSELF IN HIS UNCHANGING, ONCE-FOR-ALL WORD . . . NO GUESSING, NO ANXIETY.
 9. "These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God" (I Jn. 5:13). THIS IS THE EMPHATIC WORD OF JOHN'S WRITINGS. . . . "THAT YE MAY KNOW. . . ."
- B. Glorifies (The Holy Spirit transfers some of the glory of God to our nature.)
1. "But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit" (II Cor. 3:18).
 2. Alexander Campbell said it this way in his *Christian System*, "The word of redemption is a system of works, or deeds, on the part of God, which constitutes the most splendid series of moral facts men or angel ever saw. . . . When these facts are understood or brought into immediate contact with the mind of man, as a moral seal, they delineate the image of God upon the human soul. All the means of grace are, therefore, only the means of impressing this seal upon the heart, of bringing these moral facts to make their full impression on the soul of man. The testimony of the Holy Spirit through the apostles and the faith of those who believe and obey this testimony are the channel through which these facts, or the hand of God, draws the image on the heart and character of man." He went on to say . . . "all the moral facts which can form moral character after the divine model, or which can effect a moral or religious change in man, are found in the testimony of God."

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3. What is this image of God . . . this glory of God which is impressed or sealed upon our being? The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness and self-control.
4. I submit these as characteristics of God which we can enjoy as blessings if we will allow the Holy Spirit to impress them upon our natures: honesty; goodness; creativeness; humor; appreciativeness; enjoyment; giving-ness.
5. Carol King has a phrase in her song, *Way Over Yonder*, "And the sweet-tasting good life is so easily found . . . way over yonder, that's where I'm bound." Let's appropriate that here. THE SWEET-TASTING GOOD LIFE OF GOD IS SO EASILY FOUND. . . . IF WE JUST LET THE SPIRIT ETCH IT UPON OUR BEING BY KNOWING AND DOING WHERE THE SPIRIT LEADS IN THE SPIRIT'S WORD.
6. You see, this is the work of the Spirit. God the Father is the creative source of blessing; the Son is the revealer of the possibility of such blessedness and obtainer of it in the flesh; the Holy Spirit is the agent by which this blessing may be impressed or sealed upon the nature of man!

HOW MIND STAGGERING! GOD CREATES THE BLESSING, THE SON WINS IT FOR US, THE HOLY SPIRIT TRANSFERS AND SEALS IT UPON THOSE WHO WILL ACCEPT IT BY FAITH!

C. Secures and protects us against being defrauded by the thief of souls.

1. When we are sealed by the Holy Spirit we can live confidently that there is no power in this world or the other capable of robbing us of our souls, our life, our being.
2. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand" (Jn. 10:27-28).
3. "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life" (Jn. 5:24).
4. "Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:2-3).
5. "Little children, you are of God, and have overcome them; for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" (I Jn. 4:4).
6. "We know that any one born of God does not sin, but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him" (I Jn. 5:18).

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7. The book of Revelation pictorializes a great host which no man can number sealed by God—protected from the dragon and the beasts not able to be overcome by the great spiritual battle that rages between God and His enemies.
8. WHAT A TREMENDOUS BLESSING TO KNOW THAT WE HAVE HAD THE SEAL OF GOD PUT UPON US. NO MATTER THE WORLD WANTS TO ERADICATE US. . . . NO MATTER THAT IT MAY APPEAR AS IF THE FORCES OF UNGODLINESS WILL WIN THE STRUGGLE . . . GOD KNOWS WHO HIS ARE, HE HAS THEM MARKED AND SEALED, AND THEY ARE SECURE!

II. HE GIVES US AN EARNEST OF OUR INHERITANCE

A. Holiness

1. What is the legacy left us by that Son of man who came to earth, born in a stable, who had not where to lay his head?
2. He brought us word from our Father that holiness is our legacy. The most needful, most enjoyable treasure God could will to us is holiness.
3. What is the deepest longing of the human soul? To be clean, to be good, to be pure, to be true, to be a beautiful-person.
4. This is what I want when I get to God. Bags full or banks full of gold and diamonds are not what my soul cries out for. Ivory palaces and mansions are not what I want for my eternal inheritance. I WANT, I NEED, I MUST HAVE HOLINESS!
5. "I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. . . . Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? . . . There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 7:18—8:1).
6. Now God has taken care of my problem. He has provided me a cleansing, a goodness, a purity, a freedom from guilt, a holiness by the death of His Son. And when He comes for us this is what our great inheritance shall be—we shall be like Him.
7. But when we are sealed by the Holy Spirit—when His spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are a child of God, we have a down payment on this holiness already. WE CAN NOW ENJOY GOODNESS, FREEDOM FROM GUILT, PURITY, HOLINESS—A TASTE OF WHAT THE FULL INHERITANCE WILL BE!

B. Rest

1. Another aspect of the legacy left to us is rest. Jesus came and said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest" (Mt. 11:28).

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2. What makes work into labor? The frustration of seeing the fruits of one's work dissipated—the agony of knowing that one has spent himself laboring in something whose fruits are only temporary and ultimately useless. **THIS IS WHAT MAKES WORK INTO TIRING, FRUSTRATING, DEADENING LABOR!**
3. If the results of our work could find completion or perfection—if we could have confirmed to us that our work was eternally useful and abiding, that it wouldn't just disappear with time—we could find perfect rest. **REST IS NOT JUST THE ABSENCE OF WORK!**
4. God has laid up for us an inheritance of rest. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them" (Rev. 14:13).
5. But those sealed by the Holy Spirit may now have a down-payment, a taste of that rest. Paul wrote the Hebrew Christians and said, "For we who are believing, are entering that rest . . ." (Heb. 4:3).
6. Jesus said, "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of man will give to you; for on him has God the Father set his seal" (Jn. 6:27).
7. Paul wrote the Corinthians, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain" (I Cor. 15:58).
8. Friend, if you're sealed by the Holy Spirit, you'll never get weary. Bone-tired and muscle-weak; yes—but soul-tired and spirit-weary, never!

C. Dominion

1. Man was made to have dominion. "Then God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth" (Gen. 1:26).
2. God has promised that one day His saints shall reign with His Christ forever and ever (Rev. 22:5, etc.).
3. But the blessing of being sealed by the Holy Spirit is that we may now enjoy a taste of that dominion.
4. The exciting second chapter of Hebrews asks, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" and answers by showing that while man was created to have dominion, because of sin he does not now have it, but Christ came in flesh and blood and

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won back man's dominion for him. HE DEFEATED THE INVADER, SATAN!

5. Christ, if we believe and trust Him, has set us free from being dominated by circumstances, by earthly things, by ego, by fears, by falsehoods, by others, by even Satan. IN FACT, IN CHRIST, WE HAVE DOMINION OVER CIRCUMSTANCES, OVER THINGS, OVER EVERYTHING AND MAY ENJOY AND USE EVERYTHING TO GLORIFY GOD! Mind you, I did not say we can selfishly take anything we want and use it in a way to bring shame upon God.
6. Whatever circumstances God sees fit to give us here, whatever talents, whatever worldly things, whatever associations, WE ARE RULERS-OVER TO GLORIFY GOD AND REJOICE IN. . . .
7. "For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future, all are yours; and you are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (I Cor. 3:21-22).
8. ". . . in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Rom. 8:37).

ALL THINGS ARE YOURS—MORE THAN CONQUERORS! What blessedness—what happiness—what glory. Friend, if you've been sealed with the imprint of God's Holy Spirit, you have been certified and authorized to be a joint heir with His Son, and to have dominion with Him.

III. EMPOWERS US AS EMISSARIES OF OUR GREAT GOD

A. Certifies us as authentic representatives of Almighty God

1. When the Spirit of the Holy God is etched upon our hearts . . . when we are sealed with the Spirit of Christ . . . it is an announcement to the world that we are on business for the King.
2. "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn. 13:34-35).
3. J. B. Phillips on II Cor. 3:3 "You are an open letter (epistle) about Christ which we ourselves have written, not with pen and ink but with the Spirit of the living God. Our message has been engraved not in stone, but in living men and women."
4. Many false prophets have gone out into the world (I Jn. 4:1-6). The world desperately needs some authenticating mark upon the true prophets. That mark is the seal of the Holy Spirit, one who preaches the true apostolic message and one who lives the true apostolic message.

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5. "If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine" (Jn. 8:31). IF YOU ARE SEALED BY HIS SPIRIT THROUGH HIS WORD, THEN YOU ARE A CERTIFIED DISCIPLE OF HIS, AND THE WHOLE WORLD WILL KNOW. . . . YOU WILL BE HAPPY AND BLESSED AND SO WILL OTHERS!
- B. Certifies the authority of our message**
1. When the image of God is stamped upon us by the Holy Spirit, we will proclaim and live the truth and the power of His truth preached and lived will be vindicated in the world.
 2. The work of the Holy Spirit is to convince the world of sin, righteousness and the judgment. The only agency by which the Spirit works in doing this is the written, preached and lived Word of God.
 3. But in the midst of all the failures and inadequacies of men's philosophical, political and ethical systems, THOSE SEALED BY THE SPIRIT ARE CONDUCTORS OF THE GREATEST POWER IN THE UNIVERSE.
 4. The power to convert men and change their eternal destinies is more awesome than the power to create this universe!
 5. "His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature" (II Pet. 1:3-4).
 6. "For though we live in the world we are not carrying on a worldly war, for the weapons of our warfare are not worldly but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ. . . ." (II Cor. 10:3-5).
WHAT A BLESSING TO KNOW THAT WE ARE SEALED BY HIS SPIRIT TO BECOME CHANNELS THROUGH WHICH THE AWESOME POWER OF HIS WORD WORKS. . . . AND IT SHALL NEVER RETURN UNTO HIM VOID!
- C. Certifies the power of His divine providence on our behalf**
1. When the nature of God is etched upon our minds through the Holy Spirit's agent, the Word of God, we know God as our beneficent, loving, acting, Father who is ready to use all His creation on our behalf.
 2. "We know that God works everything for good for those who love him, and are called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28).
 3. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us . . ." (Eph. 3:20).

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4. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory . . ." (II Cor. 4:17).
5. Even angels "are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1:14).
6. The Old Testament gives us a vivid account of God's providential power being used for those with His mark upon them. Ezekiel chapter 9 pictures God's faithful ones being marked with His seal upon them. Then the book of Daniel shows God using kings, kingdoms, circumstances and creation to provide exactly and abundantly what those marked by Him must have to fulfill His purpose in their lives.
7. He is the same God today to those with His seal upon them. THE BOOK OF REVELATION IS HIS MESSAGE THAT HE IS EVEN NOW USING KINGS AND KINGDOMS, CIRCUMSTANCES AND CREATION TO SERVE HIS SEALED ONES! WHAT POWER AND WHAT POWERS ARE OURS!

CONCLUSION

I. SO THE BLESSING OF BEING SEALED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

- A. Etches the Image of God Upon Our Being
- B. Gives Us the Earnest-Payment of Our Inheritance
- C. Empowers Us as Emissaries of our Great God

II. A WARNING

- A. You are either sealed by the Holy Spirit or marked with the mark of the beast.
 1. The great division of mankind in the book of Revelation is between only two kinds of humanity . . . those with the mark of God upon their foreheads, and those with the mark of the beast.
 2. Satan puts his mark upon all those not sealed by the Holy Spirit.
 3. Jesus told the Jews in John 8 who wanted to kill Him because He told them the truth, "You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires."
 4. The seal or mark of Satan is the "mark of the beast" in Revelation and is given to those who worship the beast, political and military power; those who worship the false prophet, false religion and doctrine; those who worship the harlot, worldliness, carnal-mindedness.

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B. Satan can even counterfeit the seal of the Holy Spirit

1. The beast and the false prophet are able to work signs (false signs) that will deceive men and women if they do not know what the true sealing of the Holy Spirit is.
2. Satan is able to change himself into an angel of light to deceive the ignorant.
3. He will try to deceive us into thinking that the immature, temporary miracles of the Holy Spirit are the seal of God.
4. He will try to deceive us into thinking that Pharisaic attitudes toward works and self-righteousness are the seal of God.

III. BUT WHAT IS THE SEAL?

- A. How do we know we are sealed by the Holy Spirit?
- B. How do we know others are sealed by the Holy Spirit?
- C. As we said at the beginning, When the Holy Spirit bears witness *with* our spirits
- D. But *what* does the Holy Spirit witness?
- E. Very simply, He bears witness in His Word that those Believing, Repenting and Obeying God are sealed by God as His B.R.O.

IV. NOW WILL YOU JOIN ME IN THIS SONG AS A PRAYER TO GOD FOR HIS SEALING

“O to be like Thee! blessed Redeemer:
This is my constant longing and prayer;
Gladly I'll forfeit all of earth's treasures,
Jesus, Thy perfect likeness to wear.
O to be like Thee! O to be like Thee!
Blessed Redeemer, pure as Thou art;
Come in Thy sweetness, come in Thy fullness;
Stamp Thine own image deep on my heart.