

**A CALL TO THE ARMS
OF THE SPIRIT**

***By my
Spirit***



AS TOUCHING THE ARK

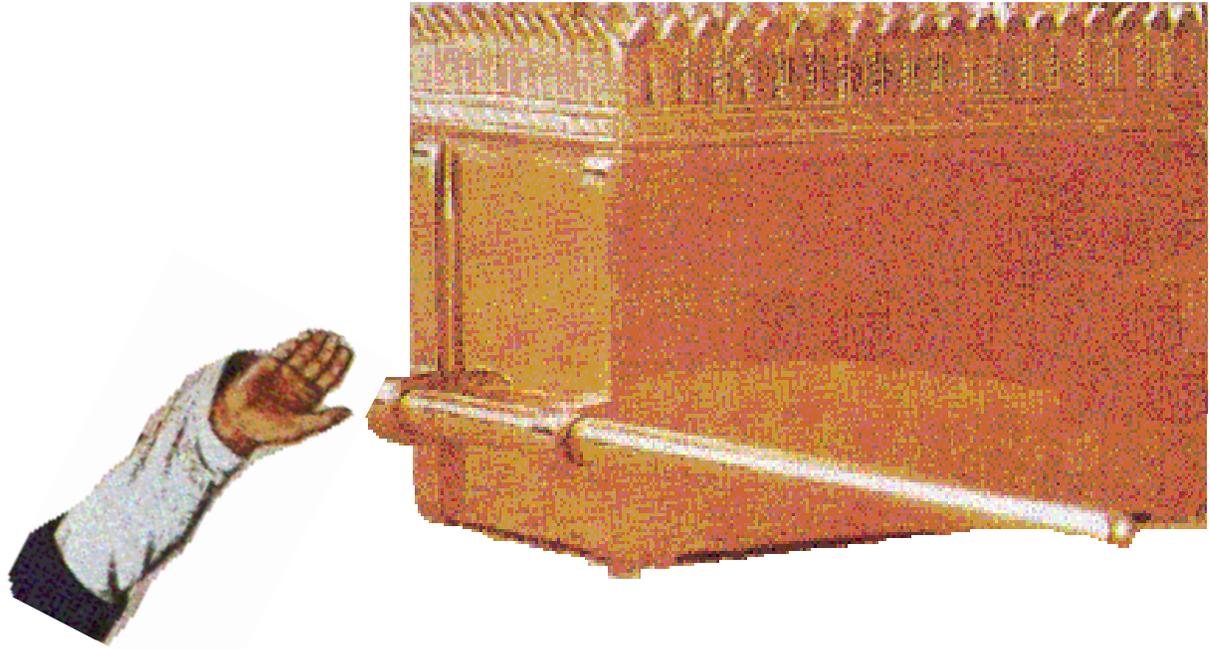
DaySpring from on High
P. O. Box 820
Alvin, Texas 77512 - 0820

January, 2002

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35607 Asslar
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As Touching the Ark



1CH 13:7 And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart.

8 And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.

9 And when they came unto the threshingfloor of Chidon, **Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled.**

10 **And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.**

What a strange story. The oxen had stumbled - upsetting the equilibrium of the cart and the ark. The ark seemed to be on the verge of falling to the ground. Uzza did what would be the natural reaction of most people - he put out his hand to steady the ark. And then God smote him for touching the ark. What had happened here? Even David was puzzled.

And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called Perezuzza to this day. And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me? 1CH 13:11, 12

What is going on here? Was God unfair to Uzza? After all, all he was doing was to try to move the plan of God forward by assisting David in returning the ark to Jerusalem. Certainly, one would not want to see the ark of God fall on the ground. Uzza was simply giving assistance to God so that things could get done and progress could be made. Well, maybe - but we need to look a little deeper into the symbolism of what happened.

First, Uzza's name is very similar to that of another Israeli who also was quite set on moving the plan of God forward - King Uzziah.

2CH 26:14 And Uzziah prepared for them throughout all the host shields, and spears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows, and slings to cast stones.

15 And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal. **And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong.**

16 **But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction:** for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense.

17 And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, that were valiant men:

18 And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, **It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD**, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honour from the LORD God.

19 Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, **the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, from beside the incense altar.**

21 **And Uzziah [5818] the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD ...**

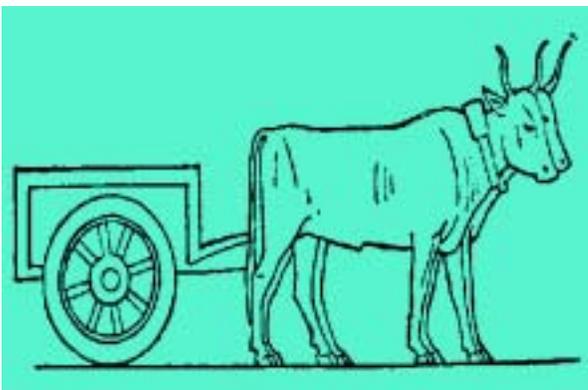
Strong's 5818 Uzziah - *Uzziyah strength of Jah; Uzzijah, the name of five Isr.*

Strong's 5798 Uzza' - *strength; Uzza or Uzzah, the name of five Isr.*

1CH 13:9 And when they came unto the threshingfloor of Chidon, **Uzza put forth his hand** to hold the ark; **for the oxen stumbled.**

10 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against **Uzza** [5798], and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.

So now we have a clue as to the nature of the problem. Uzziah and Uzza both have the same root meaning - strength. If that strength is tempered with a humility before God, those having it can do great works and "their fame can spread far abroad." But once that humility is lost and they begin to take the works of God into their own hands - problems begin to arise. Now, let us further examine symbolism - what is meant by "the oxen stumbled."?



1TI 5:17 Let **the elders** that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

18 For the scripture saith, **Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.** And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.

1CO 9:9 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. **Doth God take care for oxen?**

13 Do ye not know that **they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple?** and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?

OXEN ARE SYMBOLIC OF MINISTERS AND ELDERS

What does it mean when "the oxen stumbled." In spiritual terms, when the senior ministers and/or elders stumble, it means that the work of God is not getting done. It means that the faithful are not being edified, that converts are not being made, and more than likely sin is rampant within the camp. So those of the Uzza mentality see this happening and they determine that extraordinary measures are necessary or otherwise the plan of God will fall to the ground. Yes, God is a God of Love, but a little strength of force goes a long way as a hidden persuader for letting people know that they should follow God. And a good dose of fear thrown in certainly helps make sinners toe the line! No matter that a few people get killed along the way because it is all in the good cause of winning people to God and riding the camp of sin. Uzza must put out his hand to steady the Ark of God because God needs help!

In the tragedies of September 11th, many have been looking deep within their faiths and creeds to evaluate what is going on. We, too, have pondered this and have concluded that recent events have much to do with the children of Abraham being abruptly awakened to behold their spiritual image in the mirror of God.

GEN 17:3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,

4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and **thou shalt be a father of many nations.**

5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, **and I will make nations of thee**, and kings shall come out of thee.

7 **And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.**

1PE 4:17 **For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God:** and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

However, before one jumps to conclusions about what this awakening is and to whom it is being given, it is necessary to understand what the legacy is that Abraham gave to his seed. What was different about Abraham that God called him out and gave him and his seed a special blessing?

GEN 11:31 And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.

32 And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran.

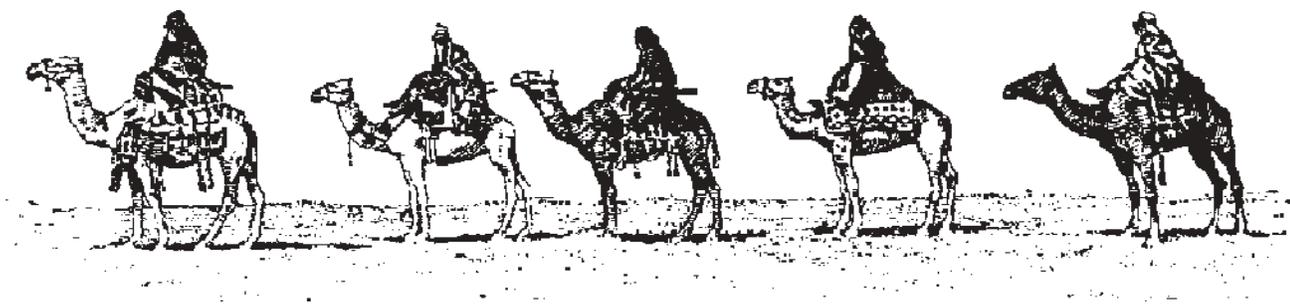
12:1 **Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:**

2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

The Old Testament does not really outline why Abraham was chosen. Yes, it is true that the scriptures verify that Abraham was a great man of faith and he believed God. Further, his faith was drastically tested and he passed the test. However, what were the circumstances that led to God picking Abraham in the first place? The account of Abram's being called out is given in the Book of Jasher. Some of you may remember the phrase, "*written in the Book of Jasher*" which is a direct quote from Joshua 10:13 and II Samuel 1:18. **When we understand why Abram was called out, we can then understand his legacy as a blessing to the earth and his seed.**

ABRAM IS CALLED OUT OF UR OF CHALDEES TO GO TO CANAAN



The Book of Jasher gives us some general background about Abram. Abram was born in the days of King Nimrod in the times before the tower of Babel fell. His Father Terah was a chief military officer in Nimrod's army. *All of the earth was of one tongue and words of union, but Nimrod did not go in the ways of the Lord, and he was more wicked than all the men that were before him, from the days of the flood until those days. And he made gods of wood and stone, and he bowed down to them, and he rebelled against the Lord, and taught all his subjects and the people of the earth his wicked ways; and Mardon his son was more wicked than his father.*

Jasher 7:46, 47. Abram was also a contemporary of Noah and Shem and secretly visited them at times to receive instruction in the ways of the Lord. So this sets the stage for the advent of the birth of Abram who the Lord called to turn away the earth from worship of many idolatrous gods.

The birth of Abram has many similarities to the birth of Jesus. On the night that he was born, the wise men and conjurers saw a large star swallow up four other stars. They were alarmed for King Nimrod and made this report to him. *And thy servants were astonished at the sight which we saw, and were greatly terrified, and we made our judgment upon the sight, and knew by our wisdom the proper interpretation thereof, that this thing applies to the child that is born to Terah, who will grow up and multiply greatly, become powerful, and kill all kings of the earth, and inherit all their lands, he and his seed forever. ... If it seemeth good to the king to give his father value for this child, we will slay him before he shall grow up and increase in the land ...* Jasher 8:11,

¹³ Much like the story of Herod and the child Jesus, it was thought that Abram was killed, but he was secretly taken to a cave for 10 years and then later to Noah and Shem.

Later Abram returned to Terah's house. *And Terah had twelve gods of large size, made of wood and stone, after the twelve months of the year, and he served each one monthly, and every month Terah would bring his meat offering and drink offer to his gods; thus did Terah all the days.* Jash 9:8 When Abram saw all this he pondered within his heart the meaning. *And Abram saw the sun shining upon the earth, and Abram said unto himself Surely now this sun that shines upon the earth is God, and him will I serve. And Abram served the sun in that day and he prayed to him, and when even came the sun set as usual, and Abram said within himself, Surely this cannot be God. ... And Abram saw the stars and moon before him, and he said, Surely this is the God who created the whole earth as well as man, and behold these his servants are gods around him, and Abram served the moon and prayed to it that night. And in the morning when it was light and sun shone upon the earth as usual, Abram saw all the things that the Lord God had made upon earth. And Abram said unto himself Surely these are not gods that made the earth and all mankind, but these are the servants of God; and Abram remained in the house of Noah and there knew the Lord and his ways, and he served the Lord all the days of his life, and all that generation [Nimrod's] forgot the Lord, and served other gods of wood and stone, and rebelled all their days.* Jash 9:13-15, 17-19.

ABRAHAM'S LEGACY AND BLESSING

Hear, O Israel:

The LORD our God is one LORD:

Deuteronomy 6:4

There are many blessings given to mankind through the faithfulness of Abraham, but the key blessing is to recognize the sovereignty of the One who is the source of all blessings. Abraham gave that legacy not only to Israel, but to all of his children. And as Paul wrote some years after Moses penned the above verse, *For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.* ROM 11:29 Abraham had different seed by Hagar, Sarah and Keturah and different blessings were given to these seeds. The blessing that Christians are most interested in is the blessing through Isaac. But, this does not nullify the blessings given to the other offspring. For example, the angel blessed Ishmael and Isaac blessed Esau with their individual and unique blessings. It goes without saying that some of the blessings were greater than others. However, all of Abraham's children had the blessing of the knowledge of the true God and that "*The LORD our God is one LORD.*"

Once Abram had firmly established his own belief in one God, then there began an outworking of that belief to his family members - starting with his father, Terah. Abram came to his father's house and played along with the ritual of setting food and drink offerings before the twelve idols. *And Abram viewed them, and behold they had neither voice nor hearing, nor did one of them stretch forth his hand to the meat to eat. And in the evening of that day in that house Abram was clothed with the spirit of God. And called out and said, Woe unto my father and this wicked generation, whose hearts are all inclined to vanity, who serve these idols of wood and stone which can neither eat, smell, hear nor speak ... And when Abram saw all these things his anger was kindled against his father, and he hastened and took a hatchet in his hand, and came unto the chamber of the gods, and he broke all his father's gods. And when he done breaking the images, he placed the hatchet in the hand of the great god which was there before them and he went out;* ... Jash 11:30-34

Naturally, when Terah came in and saw all the destruction, he called Abram on the carpet to explain how all this happened. Abram told him that he had offered meat before the gods and the small gods all reached forth their hands to eat before the great god could eat. Then the great god saw this and took a hatchet and chopped up the small gods - and the hatchet was still in the hand of the great god. *And Terah's anger was kindled against his son Abram, when he spoke this; and Terah said to Abram his son in anger, What is this tale that thou hast told? Thou speakest lies to me. Is there in these gods spirit, soul or power to do all thou hast told me. Are they not wood and stone, and have I not myself made them, and canst thou speak such lies, saying that the large god that was with them smote them? It is thou that didst place the hatchet in his hands, and then sayest he smote them all. And Abram answered his father and said to him, And how canst thou then serve these idols in whom there is no power to do any thing? Can those idols in whom thou trustest deliver thee? Can they hear thy prayers when thou callest upon them. can they deliver thee from the hands of thy enemies, that thou shouldst serve wood and stone which can neither speak nor hear?* Jash 11:41-43

After Abram's destruction of the idols, one event led to another so that it became known to King Nimrod that he had been deceived about Abram being killed as a child - and here he was stirring up trouble in Nimrod's kingdom. Nimrod confronted him and Abram replied: *O foolish, simple and ignorant king, woe unto thee forever. I thought thou wouldst teach thy servants the upright way, but thou has not done this, but hast filled the whole earth with thy sins and the sins of thy people who have followed thy ways. Dost thou not know, or has thou not heard, that this evil which thou doest, our ancestors sinned therein days of old, and the eternal God brought the waters of the flood upon them and destroyed them all, and also destroyed the whole earth on their account? ...* Jash 11:56-58

Predictably, Nimrod was not pleased with this assault on his dignity and threw him in jail and sentenced him to be burned to death in a furnace - and so Abram was bound with linen cords and cast into the furnace. *And the Lord loved Abram and he had compassion over him, and the Lord came down and delivered Abram from the fire and he was not burned. But all the cords which they bound him were burned, while Abram remained and walked about in the fire. ... And Abram walked in the midst of the fire three days and three nights, and all the servants of king saw him walking in the fire, and they came and told the king. ... And when the king heard their words, his heart fainted ...* Jash 11:24-28 Eventually, we reach the point discussed in Genesis when Terah and Abram left Ur of Chaldees and departed for Canaan. And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, the wife of his son Abram, and all the souls of his household and went with them from Ur Casdim to go to the land of Canaan. ... Jash 13:1

[The Book of Jasher is available from Hoffman Printing, P. O. 1529, Muskogee, OK 74402; 918-682-1263]

GEN 11:31 And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.

Thus Abram came forth into a new land and he truly became a father of nations. His first son was Ishmael by his servant wife Hagar.

GEN 25:13 And **these are the names of the sons of Ishmael**, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and **Kedar**, and Adbeel, and Mibsam,
14 And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa,
15 Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah:
16 These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations.

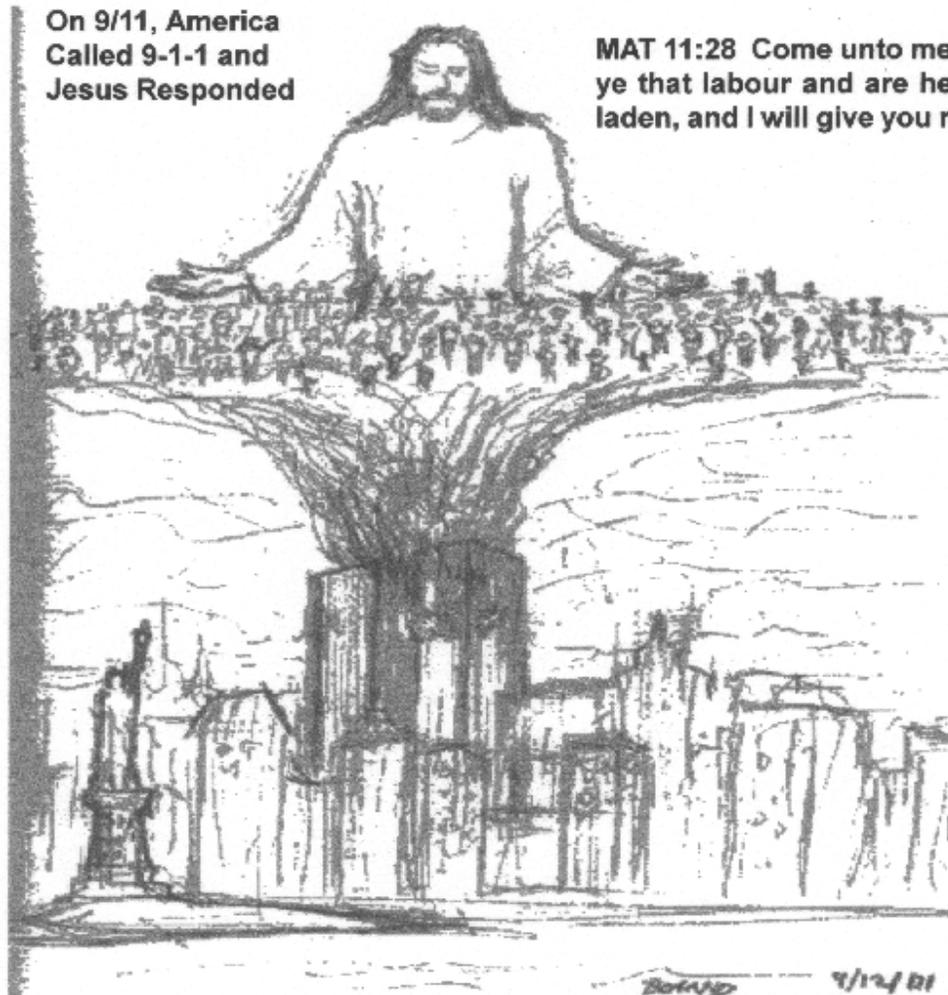
Kedar - Second son of Ishmael. Settled his tribe in the NW of Medina, In Arabia, bordering Palestine. The glory of the sons of Kedar is mentioned by Isaiah, their villages, and their princes by Ezekiel, who supplied Tyre with sheep and goats. **Mohammed traces his lineage to Abraham through the celebrated Koreish tribe which sprang from Kedar.** The Arabs in the Hejaz are called Beni Harb (men of war) and are Ishmaelites as of old, from their beginning. Palgrave says their language is as pure now as when the Koran was written (A.D. 610), having remained unchanged more than 1200 years; a fine proof of the permanency of Eastern institutions. (Bible Research Software).

Now, we also know that Abraham was the father of Isaac who begat Jacob who begat the twelve princes of Israel. And we know that Christianity claims Abraham as a spiritual father through the adoption by faith. *Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.* GAL 3:7 In fact, three faiths, Islam, Israelite, and Christian claim Abraham as their father and these three faiths practice Abraham's belief in one God rather than believing in a plurality of Gods. **Is it not strange that the destruction of September 11, 2001 primarily involved those nations which have the legacy of beliefs which trace back through Abraham?**

We received the drawing below on the internet. It was drawn by a young girl from Pennsylvania. We were led to add certain scriptures to it and the result is shown below. For where the enemy would bring his greatest darkness, the Light of God shines forth most brilliantly. We believe in God's love and goodness, and place our hope in Him. Romans 8:28

WHEN THE TOWERS FALL

**Romans 5:20 ... But where sin abounded,
grace did much more abound:**



On 9/11, America
Called 9-1-1 and
Jesus Responded

MAT 11:28 Come unto me, all
ye that labour and are heavy
laden, and I will give you rest.

"Healing", a drawing by a young girl from Pennsylvania; Scriptures from the Bible

Isaiah 30:25 And there shall be upon every high mountain,
and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters in the
day of the great slaughter, **when the towers fall.**
26 Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the
sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of
seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of
his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.

ROM 8:28 **And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God**, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

ISA 30:26 Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, **in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.**

Certainly the events of September 11th and following have been tragic events, **but out of the evil will come good.** We don't think that the reference in Isaiah about the towers falling was just coincidence. **Neither do we think the following scriptures about God binding up the breach and bringing healing are coincidence either.** We might argue that certain Muslims took matters into their own hands and with misplaced zeal touched the ark by trying to set up God's Kingdom on earth by force. But, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God - including Christians. What about the nice little Christian war in Ireland between Catholics and Protestants? What about the crusades or the inquisition? Or, what about the Jews going after the Palestinians with the philosophy of *Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.* Or was it the Palestinian Muslims that started it first? After enough people are blinded and toothless, it is difficult to see or tell.

Since Islam seems so intertwined with these events, we wanted to take some time here to look at Islamic beliefs from a Biblical perspective and try to put them in context with Christian and Jewish beliefs. We know that Mohammed was a descendent of Abram through Ishmael. Therefore we need to look at the blessings as well as the limitations applying to Ishmael. The story of the birth of Ishmael by Hagar is well known, so we will not bother to repeat it here. However, we want to begin with the pregnant Hagar fleeing into the wilderness from the face of Sarah.

GEN 16:5 And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee.

6 But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thine hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face.

7 **And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness**, by the fountain in the way to Shur.

Hagar fled from Sarah and ended up by a fountain of water in wilderness of Shur. Water is symbolic of the Spirit, so lets take a look at the pronouncements by the angel that set the course for the descendents of Ishmael.

GEN 16:8 And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

9 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.

10 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, **I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.**

11 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael [*whom God hears*]; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction.

12 **And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.**

13 And she called **the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me:** for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?

14 Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi [*well of a living (One) my Seer*]; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered.

15 And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael.

ABRAHAM'S BREAD AND BOTTLE OF WATER

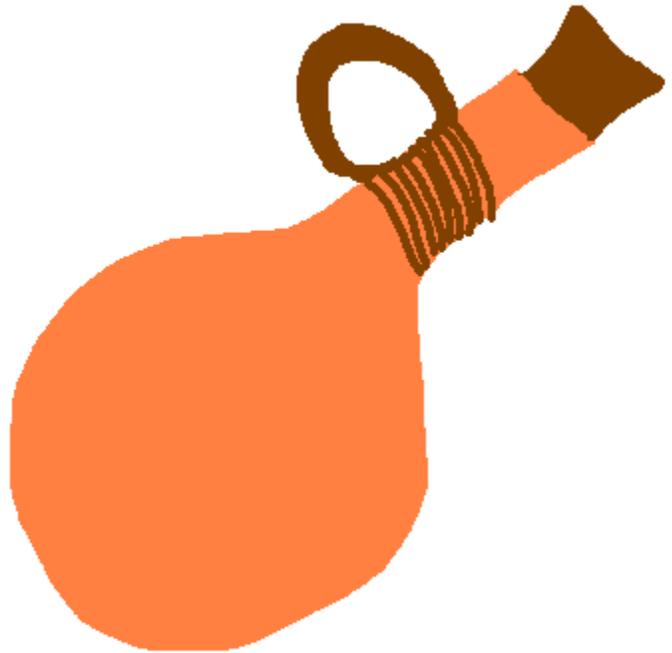
GEN 21:12 And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; **in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.**

13 **And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.**

14 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and **took bread, and a bottle of water**, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

15 **And the water was spent in the bottle**, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.

16 And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, **Let me not see the death of the child.** And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept.



We well know the story of how Abraham had to make a very grievous decision of choosing between his son Ishmael and the wishes of his wife Sarah. However, the Lord confirmed to Him that his seed would be called in Isaac. But, the Lord also confirmed a calling upon the life of Ishmael in that he would be made a nation because he was the seed of Abraham.

And then Abraham, in compassion for Hagar and Ishmael, provided them with bread and water for the journey. If we look beyond the literal here, we can easily determine that the bread provided was a portion of the word to live by. *But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* ^{MAT 4:4} But what was the meaning of the bottle of water? We know that water is symbolically used in the Bible - but what does it represent? We want to put a tag on this question and come back to it later.

In the meantime, we know that Mohammed through the Ishmael's descendent Kedar claimed to be a descendent of Ishmael. So, it would follow that the bread and water given by Abraham to Ishmael would also be passed down to his descendents. We will now take a look at the further fate of Ishmael and how the bread and the bottle of water that became spent played out. We will look at the essence of the Koran.

THE BELIEFS OF ISLAM CONCERNING ONE GOD

[2.132] **Abraham charged his children with this**, and so did Jacob, saying: 'My sons, Allah has chosen for you the religion. Do not die except being submissive (Muslims).'

[2.133] Or, were you witnesses when death came to Jacob! He said to his children: 'What will you worship after me?' **They replied: 'We will worship your God and the God of your forefathers, Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac, the One God. To Him, we are submissive.'**

we are submissive (Muslims).'

[2.134] That was a nation that has passed away. Theirs is what they earned, and yours

what you have earned. You shall not be questioned about what they did.

[2.135] They say: 'Be Jews or Nazarenes and you shall be guided.' **Say: 'No, rather the Creed of Abraham, the upright one. He was not among the idolaters.'**

[2.136] Say: 'We believe in Allah and that which is sent down to us, **and in what was sent down to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the tribes; to Moses and Jesus and the Prophets from their Lord.** We do not differentiate between any of them, and to Him

The above text is very typical of the Koran. It is made quite clear that a Muslim (one who submits) believes in one God - even as their father Abraham did. Mohammed begin his ministry preaching that there is one God to the idolatrous Arabs at Medina. There are many, many references in the Koran to the patriarchs and even to Jesus and Mary. Moses (167 times) is mentioned most often, then Abraham (75), Mary (34), Jesus (34), Jacob (17), Isaac (16), and Ishmael (14). Jesus is given an honored placed among the prophets and surprisingly enough the Koran even acknowledges the Virgin birth.

[21.91] And she (Mary) who guarded her virginity. We breathed into her of Our spirit (Gabriel), and made her and her son a sign for the worlds.

[3.43] Mary, be obedient to your Lord, prostrate and bow with those who bow.'

[3.44] This is from the news of the unseen. We reveal it to you (Prophet Muhammad). You were not present when they cast their quills to see which of them should look after Mary, nor were you present when they were disputing.

[3.45] **When the angels said: 'O Mary, Allah gives you glad tidings of a Word (Be) from Him, whose name is Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary. He shall be honored in this world and in the Everlasting Life and he shall be among those who are close.**

[3.46] He shall speak to people in his cradle and when he is aged, and shall be among the righteous.'

[3.47] **'Lord,' she said, 'how can I bear a child when no human being has touched me?' He replied: 'Such is the Will of Allah. He creates whom He will. When He decrees a thing, He only says: "Be," and it is.**

[3.48] He will teach him the Book, the Wisdom, the Torah and the Gospel,

[3.49] to be a **Messenger to the Children of Israel**, (saying): "I have come to you with a sign from your Lord. From clay, I will create for you the likeness of a bird. I shall breathe into it and by the permission of Allah, it shall be a bird. **I shall heal the blind, and the leper, and raise the dead to life by the permission of Allah.** I shall tell you what you ate and what you store in your houses. Surely, that will be a sign for you, if you are believers.

While many may be surprised to see the Virgin birth taught in the Koran, it does not necessarily logically follow to them that Jesus would be the Son of God. Instead, they say He is the son of Mary, created by Allah's word "Be" and is strengthened by the purity of Gabriel. The line of this reasoning is as follows:

[9.30] The Jews say Ezra is the son of Allah, while the **Christians (who follow Paul) say the Messiah is the son of Allah.** Such are their assertions, by which they imitate those who disbelieved before. Allah fights them! How perverted are they!

[6.101] He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. **How can He have a son when He had no female companion?** He created all things and has knowledge of all things.

[6.102] That is Allah, your Lord. There is no god except He, the Creator of all things. Therefore, worship Him. .

WHAT DOES THE KORAN SAY ABOUT THE CROSS?

Again, this is somewhat of a surprise. The Koran supports that Jesus ascended into the heavens, but has an unusual description of how he got there.

We took from them a solemn covenant.

[4.155] So, for their breaking of the covenant, and disbelieving the verses of Allah, and killing their Prophets without right and for saying, 'Our hearts are covered' no, but Allah has sealed them for their disbelief, so, except for a few, they do not believe.

[4.156] Also for their disbelief and their saying about Mary a great calumny,

[4.157] and for their saying, 'We killed the Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary, the Messenger (and Prophet) of Allah.' **They did not kill him, nor did they crucify him**, but to them, he (the crucified) had been given the look (of Prophet Jesus). **Those who differ concerning him (Prophet Jesus) are surely in doubt regarding him, they have no knowledge of him, except the following of supposition, and (it is) a certainty they did not kill him.**

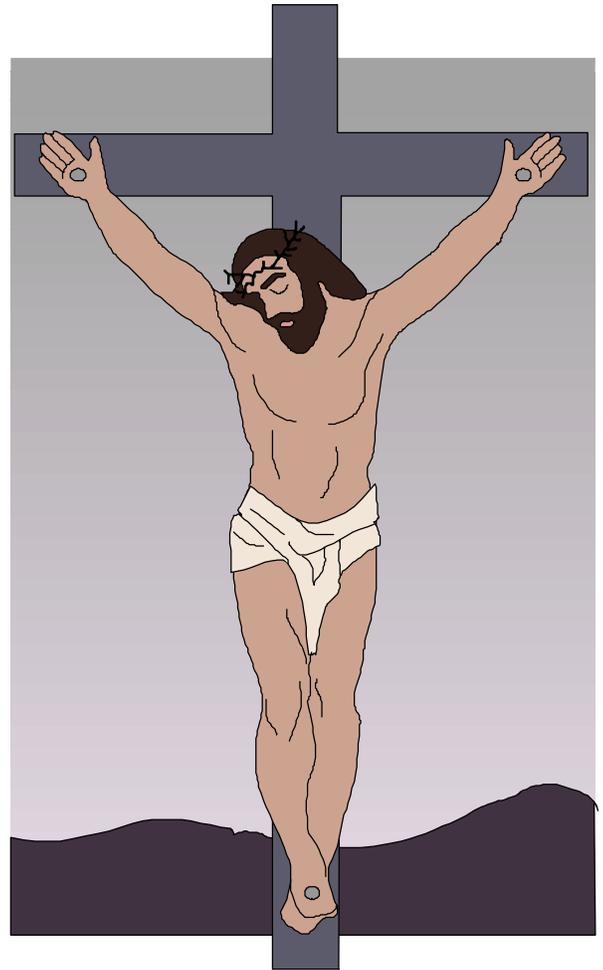
[4.158] **Rather, Allah raised him up to Him. Allah is Almighty, the Wise.**

[4.159] There is not one of the People of the Book but will surely believe in him (Prophet Jesus) before his death, **and on the Day of Resurrection he will be a witness against them.**

[2.87] To Moses We gave the Book and after him We sent other Messengers. **We gave (Prophet) Jesus, the son of Mary, veritable signs, and supported him with the Spirit of Purity (Gabriel).** Will you then become proud whenever any Messenger comes to you with that which does not suit your fancies, **and you belied some (Prophet Jesus) and killed others!**

The Koran supports that Jesus ascended into heaven. However, it denies that He was and is the Son of God and that He ever was crucified or killed. It points to a future role for Him when he will come back in a day of resurrection and bring judgment to the earth. One might ask how the Koran can support the Torah and the Gospel while at the same time not supporting plain statements within the Gospel - such as Jesus being the Son of God and that he was crucified and resurrected. How can this contradiction be made? Very simple - the answer is given in the two verses below. The Gospel that Christians know - the Matthew, Mark, Luke, John Gospel - is not the one referred to in the Koran. **Instead, the Koran says that the true Gospel has been, of all things, lost!** What is the true Gospel? Who knows, because according to the Koran, it has been lost.

[5.46] And We sent, following in their footsteps (Prophet) **Jesus, the son of Mary, confirming that which was before him in the Torah, and gave him the Gospel, in which there is guidance and light**, confirming that which was before him in the Torah, a guide and an admonition to the cautious.



[3.3] He has sent down to you the Book with the truth, confirming what preceded it; and He has sent down the Torah **and the Gospel (of Prophet Jesus which has been lost)**

WHAT DOES THE KORAN SAY ABOUT HEAVEN AND HELL?

[78.17] Indeed, the Day of Decision is an appointed time,
[78.18] the Day that the Horn is blown, and you shall come in crowds
[78.19] and heaven is opened, having gates,
[78.20] and the mountains move, and vaporize.

HELL

[78.21] Indeed, **Gehenna (Hell) has become an ambush,**
[78.22] a return for the insolent,
[78.23] there, they shall live for ages,
[78.24] **tasting neither coolness nor any drink**
[78.25] **except boiling water and pus**
[78.26] **for a suitable recompense.**
[78.27] Indeed, they did not hope for a Reckoning,
[78.28] and they absolutely belied Our verses,
[78.29] and everything We have numbered in a Book.
[78.30] 'Taste! We shall not increase you except in punishment!'

[2.25] Bear glad tidings to those who believe and do good works. **They shall live in Gardens underneath which rivers flow.** Whenever they are given fruit as provision they will say: 'This is what we were given before,' for they shall be given in resemblance. **Therein they shall have pure spouses, and shall live there for ever.**

[40.41] My nation, how is it that **I call you to salvation** and you call me to the Fire?

The Koran, like the Jewish religion, is pretty much a religion based on good works getting one to heaven. The word salvation is mentioned only one time in the Koran and there is very little said about how one may know if they have obtained salvation. As one scans through the Koran, it becomes obvious that many of the practices are based on good works as outlined in the law of Moses. The Koran prohibits eating of swine's flesh and it mentions an eye for an eye, but also says one is not obligated to retribution. Alcohol is also forbidden. A very, very twisted interpretation of the Koran promises that those who achieve martyrdom [via implied suicide] on behalf of Allah will immediately go to paradise and be surrounded by many beautiful virgins in a garden watered by underlying rivers. The early years of Mohammed at Mecca seemed to be more peaceful and the later years at Medina more warlike. In one case below, we see a statement that people should not be forced to accept a religion. But, the later statements seems to contradict that implying a reward for those who smite unbelievers.

[2.256] **There is no compulsion in religion.** Righteousness is now distinct from error. He who disbelieves in the idol and believes in Allah has grasped the firmest tie that will never break. Allah is Hearing, Knowing.

[47.4] **Therefore, when you meet the unbelievers smite their necks, then, when you have killed many of them, tie the bonds.** Then, either free them by grace or ransom until war shall lay down its loads, in this way, it shall be. Had Allah willed, He would have been victorious over them; except that He might test you, the one by the means of others. **As for those who are killed in the Way of Allah, He will not let their works to go astray.**

[47.5] He will guide them and repair their condition;

[47.6] and **He will admit them to the Paradise He has made known to them.**

HEAVEN

[78.31] **But, for the cautious a place of prosperity,**
[78.32] **and gardens and vineyards,**
[78.33] **curvaceous (virgins), of equal age**
[78.34] **and an overflowing cup.**
[78.35] There, they shall neither hear idle talk, nor yet any falsehood,
[78.36] a recompense from your Lord, a gift, a reckoning,
[78.37] the Lord of the heavens and earth, and all that is between them, the Merciful, of whom they are unable to speak.
[78.38] On that Day, **when the Spirit (Gabriel)** and the angels stand in ranks they shall not speak, except he to whom the Merciful has given permission, and says what is right.
[78.39] That is the Day, the truth, so whosoever wills takes a way to his Lord.
[78.40] Indeed, **We have forewarned you of an imminent punishment, the Day when the person will look upon his works and the unbelievers will say: 'Would that I were dust!'**

GEN 21:14 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took **bread**, and a **bottle of water**, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.



Abraham gave Hagar and Ishmael bread and a bottle of water. We know that bread is symbolic of the word by which we are to live by. Abraham's primary legacy was to believe in One God who is the source of all further righteous revelation to live by. And that legacy was truly passed on to Israel, the Muslims, and to Christians. While we do not know exactly what the nature of Abraham's gift of bread was, we can say for sure that it was at least one loaf. Next, we come to the bottle of water. What is the symbolism of the water?

JOH 7:37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

From the above, we can identify water as Spirit. There are many other scriptures that confirm water is Spirit - such as the ones in Joel referring to the former rain and later rain and stating "*I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh*". Jesus refers to the baptism in the Holy Spirit as being "*rivers of living water*". So, here we see that this is a large quantity of running, living water that in effect will flow out of the bellies (spirits) of those who receive the Holy Ghost. Previous to Pentecost, a few prophets here and there were clothed with the Holy Spirit, but this was not given to a large group of people. So, what would a bottle of water be? It is not flowing, but it still is a small portion of the Spirit and if one were out in the desert thirsting, it would certainly be welcomed. The gifts of God are given without repentance, so even a limited portion of God's truth and Spirit is better than none at all. Is there a blindness in the Koran to some of God's deeper truths? Yes, there is. But if any of us had to have the qualification of having to be perfect to teach, there would be no teachers (other than Jesus). **We believe Koran is that loaf of bread and that bottle of non flowing water given to Hagar as a legacy by Abraham.**

We have concluded that recent events have much to do with the children of Abraham being abruptly awakened to behold their spiritual image in the mirror of God.

2CO 3:6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: **for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.**

7 But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; **which glory was to be done away:**

13 And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished:

14 **But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament;** which vail is done away in Christ.

15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart.

16 Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.

17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

18 **But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.**



The attacks of September 11th have caused the Muslims to look in the spiritual mirror to behold their own image - and many have not liked what they have seen in the actions and beliefs of certain elements claiming to be Muslims. But the ripple effect has been much greater than that because **Christians and Jews have also had to behold their own spiritual images in God's mirror.** And like the Muslims, they have beheld some elements of their reflection to be quite unsettling. Therefore, we say that this is an awakening for all of the children of Abraham - natural and spiritual. What did the Muslims see in their mirror? An example of the conclusions from beholding a spiritual reflection is given in the opening page of a Muslim website shown on the following page. Here, the author very clearly distanced himself from the terror attacks and disowned the Terrorist view of the practice of the Muslim faith saying that "*The Twin Towers terrorist attack represents an affront to Muslim values*". While most defending editorials of this type will cite the specific written word that codifies their faith (i. e. the Koran, the Torah, or the Gospel), they are clearly directed toward persuading mankind - using the living word that is deposited within the spirit of each man that comes into the world. **This is the inner conscience of man that clearly knows right from wrong without having to read it in a book. This is where the war is fought in each man and in nations.** The scriptures describe it this way.

ROM 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

19 **Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.**

20 **For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:**



Answers To Attacks Against Islam

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When "attacks" against Islam are examined rationally, it comes out ON EACH ISSUE that Islam should be the accusing party indeed, not the other way around.

The Twin Towers terrorist attack represents an affront to Muslim values.
(Details below)

Introduction | The Answers (Summary)

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"Our Prophet PBUH said (concerning wars): {... do not burn a plant, nor cut a tree, nor kill an older man, a young child, or a woman... nor monastery dwellers...} (Al Kanz, citing Ibn Zanjaway, in addition to multitudes of similar hadeeths)

Islam thus prohibits the killing of civilians during war (even though modern governments allow it to themselves). Needless to say, if armies at war are so prohibited, the killing of innocent civilians by other parties (such as the Twin Towers tragedy) is a **much greater crime**.

When the principles of a religion are violated by any of its members (such as by Hitler or the Twin Towers terrorists, etc...), it is wrong to attack that religion because of the actions that **specifically violate its principles**.

People doing those false accusations must realize that they are part of a circle of blinding hatred, sharing that feature with those violators themselves."

While the above website is obviously very directed toward defending Islam, it does make some very good points. In a similar context, should Christianity be judged on the basis of those who say that they are Christians and yet have committed heinous acts and promote beliefs which degrade the living word within the conscience of each man that comes into the world? *That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.* ^{JOH 1:9-11} The scripture makes the point that the true Light lights every man that cometh into the world. It does not say that it only lights Israelites, Caucasians or whatever our favorite race may be. It does not say that those that were born to parents in religions other than what we believe in were not lighted by that Light. *What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.* ^{EZE 18:2} Yes, each man must come to an acceptance of that Light. And what is God's wish concerning the full salvation of each and every man? *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.* ^{JOH 3:16, 17}

BROTHERS, HALF-BROTHERS AND

ABRAM & HAGAR

ADOPTION BROTHERS

ABRAHAM AND SARAH

ABRAHAM & KETURAH

GEN 25:12 Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham:

13 **And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael**, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam,

14 And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, 15 Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah:

16 **These are the sons of Ishmael**, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; **twelve princes according to their nations.**

GEN 25:19 And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: **Abraham begat Isaac:**

21 And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

22 And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the LORD.

23 And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.

27 And the boys grew: and **Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents.**

HEB 11:17 **By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,**

18 Of whom it was said, **That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:**

GAL 3:6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

7 **Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.**

8 And the scripture, foreseeing that **God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.**

9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

ROM 8:15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; **but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.**

GEN 25:1 **Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah.**

2 And she bare him **Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Ishbak, and Shuah.**

3 And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim.

4 And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abidah, and Eldaah. **All these were the children of Keturah.**

Those of you who have grown up in a large family know that it can bring many blessings because of the all the varied relationships between the siblings. However, it becomes even more interesting when there are mothers and step mothers involved and even adopted children. Further, between the siblings, there can develop intense rivalry, jealousy, and sometimes even hatred. Sometimes it takes an event of unusual magnitude to cause these contentious children to put aside their rivalries and to focus on the common good of the family. Such an event was the Terrorist attack of September 11th. In the service in the National Cathedral in Washington soon after the attack, it was unusual to see Protestant Ministers, Catholic Priests, Jewish Rabbis, and Muslim Clerics all joined together in worshipping God and petitioning for His help in the time of crisis. No doubt, some of the "purists" of each of the religions involved squirmed because of this joint service. [After the Oklahoma City bombing, there were also multi-faith services]. To those of Christian faith who were upset by this, we would point to these scriptures. *And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them. But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, **Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?** And Jesus answering said unto them, *They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.* ^{LUK}*

5:29-31 **We should be humble ambassadors of Christ and bring the glad tidings of the gospel.**

ROM 11:18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

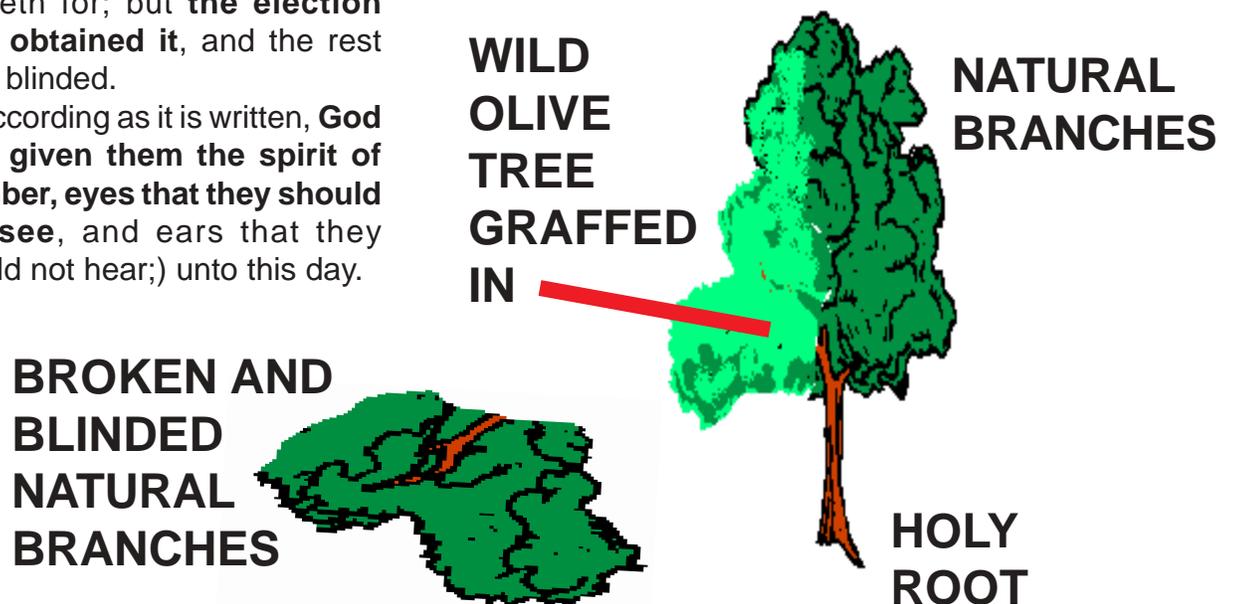
20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

THE STORY OF TWO OLIVE TREES

ROM 11:7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but **the election hath obtained it**, and the rest were blinded.

8 (According as it is written, **God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see**, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.



ROM 11:15 **For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world**, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?

16 For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;

Given above is the picture of what happened to Israel and to the Jewish nation. In the sixth chapter of Isaiah, Isaiah learned that Israel would be given a spirit of slumber and deafness. When Yeshua, our Savior, came unto them, they rejected Him - that is, all but a remnant of Israel which believed. This remnant became the holy root that sustained the Olive tree of Israel. Those that rejected Jesus became the branches of the Olive tree that were broken off and by and large the descendents of these broken branches have rejected Jesus unto this day. In the place of the broken off branches, the Gentiles were grafted in by adoption through the gift of faith as provided by Abraham. We know that by and large the Jewish nation today tolerates the gospel but is actually an enemy of the gospel. **Should we treat them as enemies?**

ROM 11:28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.

29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

And who are the fathers? Are they not Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? **If God says that they are beloved for the fathers' sake, then should we not agree with God and love them?** Further, some of the natural branches were broken off so that the Gentile nations might be grafted in. The Gentile nations include all of the what had hithertofore been called the pagan or heathen nations. How much more should we be receptive to those offspring of Abraham who have been blinded and are enemies of the gospel, but are still beloved of God for the father's sake. Even if we can not agree with many of the tenets of the Muslim faith or the Jewish faith, we can at least build upon the foundations of Abraham that we can agree upon and provide a bridge to the fullness of Christ to both from there.

When Paul visited the Greeks who worshipped multiple pagan gods, he started with where they were and then built upon it. Christians can follow his example in presenting Christ.

ACT 17:22 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.

23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, **I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.**

24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

26 **And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;**

27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:

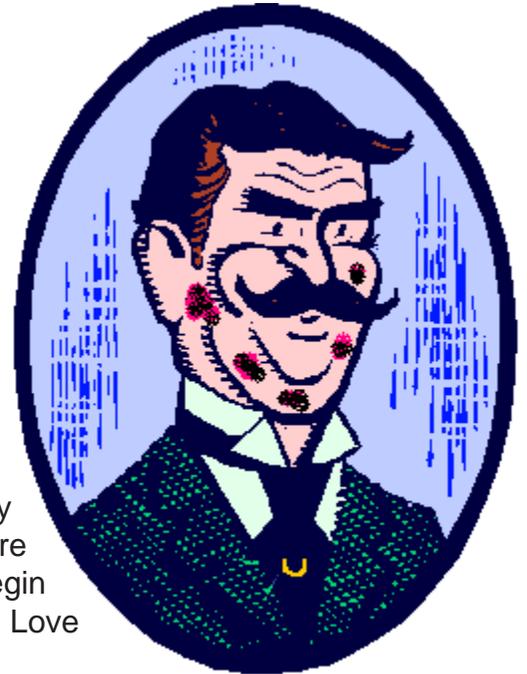
28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain **also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.**

As Paul declared, God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell upon the earth. Therefore, the brotherhood of men goes beyond those that claim Abraham, as father, - to all men and all nations. *When the Most High [El Elyon] divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.* ^{DEU 32:8} The poets have been given to each nation because each nation is the offspring of God and will have priests and kings representing it before the throne of God. *And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.* ^{REV 5:9-10} For it is in the highest nature of God, the Most High God [Hebrew dialect *El Elyon*] that all nations are represented. In the Koran, this "UnKnown God" nature is mentioned as follows: **Koran 17:112. Say ' Call upon ALLAH or call upon Al-Rahman, by whichever name you call on HIM, His are the most beautiful names' And utter not thy Prayer aloud, nor utter it too low, but seek a way between.**

WARTS AND BLEMISHES BEHELD IN THE MIRROR

2CO 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

As one peers into the mirror of the Spirit, the warts and blemishes of the earthly walk became very apparent. But as one gazes beyond these warts and blemishes deeply into the Spirit, something else is seen that begins to come forth as the Love, Mercy and Forgiveness of God is accepted. It is that Light which lighteth every man who comes into the world. And as One gazes more deeply to behold that Light, the warts and blemishes begin to fade away and are replaced with the worthiness of the Love and Light of God in His creation.



The Terrorist attacks have forced all the children of Abraham to look deeply into the mirror of the Spirit and behold the warts and images - but also to search for the deeper, underlying Love of God that is in this human vessel that we call the House of God. No doubt that New York, Washington and Afghanistan have had to ponder deeply the images in the mirror. The struggles between the Palestinian Muslims and the Jewish State have caused each to look deeply in the mirror. Both the Torah and the Koran quote the phrase of repaying "an eye for an eye" and a "tooth for a tooth", but the fruit of retaliation for retaliation is so horrendous, that a slow realization is beginning to take place that something vital is missing. And that something vital missing is the Spirit of God. The paradise of a government set up under the Torah or the Koran has not been realized because both systems are based upon the law. And, unfortunately, some Christian denominations have also returned to the law rather than following the Spirit. The law is based upon external observations while operations of the Spirit of God look at the thoughts of the mind and the motives of the heart. For example under the law, one might give a gift to a person and outwardly this appears very good. But the secret motive of the heart might be to obligate the recipient to set up a return favor. Jesus spoke of law of love as being much more powerful than the external letter of the law.

ROM 2:28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

3:1 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?

2 Much every way: chiefly, **because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.**

2CO 3:6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; **not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.**

7 But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; **which glory was to be done away:**

8 How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?

THE UMBRELLA OF UNBELIEF

So far, we have primarily discussed Jews and Muslims looking into the mirror of the Spirit. What about Christians and what have they seen in this mirror?

In the beginning of the Christian Church, the Holy Spirit was poured out on the day of Pentecost. Those disciples who had sat at His feet during the sermon on the mount were present within in a group of 120 in the upper room and the Christian Church was launched. Jesus told His disciples that it was more important that they learn to follow the leading of the Comforter Holy Spirit than it was for them to behold Him in the flesh.



JOH 16:5 **But now I go my way to him that sent me;** and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?
6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.
7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; **It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.**
13 Howbeit when he, **the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.**

The Holy Spirit came upon the day of Pentecost and the Christian Church turned the religious world upside down because the Apostles relied upon the Spirit of God to reveal the living word that lights the spirit of each man coming into the world. But gradually, over a period of time, mankind desired to have those with flesh and blood to lead them rather than to rely upon the ministry of the Holy Spirit to enlighten their spirit. And slowly over the years, unbelief crept in, the works of the flesh began to supercede the activities of the spirit, and fractures and divisions began to develop in the Christian Church. There are even some denominations today that would say that God no longer pours out His Spirit. And from their spiritual state, one wonders if not only do they no longer have a bottle of water, but perhaps they only are willing to receive a drip of the Spirit every now and then. Much, but not all, of the church went from being led by the Holy Spirit to a code of touch not, taste not rules and regulations much like the Talmud.

Over the years, marriages of convenience began to be set up between the church and the state. Perhaps these marriages were effective in forcibly advancing Christian control over various land areas, but they were not helpful in advancing the spirituality of the Church. Many resent the Jews because they are money lenders. But, the church did not want to condone usury but was willing to set up banks run by the Jews and reap part of the usury profits. [The Jews could not take usury from their own people, but were not forbidden to collect it from the Gentiles.]

In 1095, the crusades initiated when the Pope called upon the nobility of Western Europe, the Franks, to go to the east to liberate Jerusalem, the most sacred city in Christendom. They were to assist the Christian Byzantines to take the city away from the domination of the Muslims who took the city in A.D.638. (In earlier years, the Muslims had overrun Spain and nearly conquered France.) This began a long and bloody series of confrontations over the centuries known as the crusades.

Another troubling period in religious history is the Inquisition. This began in the 12th century and continued until 1834. While initially directed at lawless elements, it came into full bloom in Spain in the 14th century and both Jews and Muslims felt the heat of it - being forced to accept Christianity or to endure severe punishments - even death in some cases. Then, in the 1500's, the church began to turn the inquisition inward on itself and the Protestant Inquisition was initiated. Those who had hoped to find a purity of doctrine within the Christian Church were severely disappointed to find all the squabbling taking place between the various factions. One can examine the history books of the period of the Crusades and Inquisition and the outlook presented depends very much on whether it is a Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, or Muslim history book. For all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God.

The American Revolution in 1776 brought the development of a separation between Church and State to the extent that it became unlawful to force a religious belief upon a person. The constitution gave each individual the right to choose how they would worship.

During World War II, in a largely Christian nation, the Nazis brought forth a concept of elitism of an Aryan race that descended from a superior race of people from Atlantis. Only after terrible carnage and extremely severe religious persecution against the Jews, did this end.

The September Terrorist attack caused the Catholics and Protestants in Ireland to step back and take a look in the mirror and ask the question, "What is different between what we are doing and what the Terrorists did?" In October, 2001 a move began in Ireland to dismantle arms and to seek implementation of peace accords. Will the Catholic and Protestant brothers use this shocking glimpse in the mirror as motivation to achieve peace? - time will tell.

In America, shortly after the Terrorist attack, sporadic attacks on Mosques began to occur. However, the weight of public opinion successfully differentiated between the activities of a small number of terrorists and the activities of the many who claimed the faith of Abraham as their heritage. So, that which was meant to cause division will probably in the end bring greater understanding and unity because of glimpsing one's spiritual image in the mirror. For racial hatred should not be part of the Christian religion - **it is an ugly wart in the spiritual mirror.**

Possibly, part of America's restraint in jumping to conclusions stems from its Oklahoma City bombing incident in 1995. Initially public opinion waxed hot against a supposed middle eastern source for this attack. Later information revealed a homegrown source with roots in previous incidents involving religious groups. Certainly there is enough blame for all the groups involved in this, including the government. However, when religious groups take up arms and attempt to impose force upon others, they are reaching out and touching the ark, not having confidence that the plan of God can proceed without the help of a little coercion on their part. We have seen very militant groups, armed to the teeth, putting forth their programs in the name of Christianity. However, we have also observed that when they resort to threats, shootings, and bombings, they lose their moral standing, no matter how right their cause may have been when they pursued it peacefully. They become an impediment rather than a help in advancing Christ's cause.

From the days of the early church, there has been a conflict of the concepts of race versus grace. Paul addressed it this way. While he considered himself part of the holy root because he was of the tribe of Benjamin and a believer in Christ, he made it clear that being engrafted into Christ was much more important than whether one was part of the natural root or grafted in spiritually.

ROM 11:1 I say, then, **Did God cast away His people? let it not be! for I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin:**

2 God did not cast away His people whom He knew before; have ye not known - in Elijah - what the Writing saith? how he doth plead with God concerning Israel, saying,

3 'Lord, Thy prophets they did kill, and Thy altars they dug down, and I was left alone, and they seek my life;'

4 but what saith the divine answer to him? 'I left to Myself seven thousand men, who did not bow a knee to Baal.'

5 **So then also in the present time a remnant according to the choice of grace there hath been;**

6 and if by grace, no more of works, otherwise the grace cometh no more grace; and if of works, it is no more grace, otherwise the work is no more work.

There are groups today that put great stock in tracing their natural roots back to the lost tribes of Israel or to the tribes of Benjamin, Levi and Judah that were present in the Holy Land in the time of Christ's advent. And certainly there are blessings associated with this natural heritage. *For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.* ROM 11:29 However, regrettably, from a very few of these groups we have seen great hatred expressed against Blacks, Jews, and Asians even to the point of some saying that they do not even have a spirit. Yes, we would agree that natural heritage is important and valuable, but when put into the context of winning the spirit of Christ, this value pales to insignificance. Paul put it this way.

PHI 3:4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. **If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:**

5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, **an Hebrew of the Hebrews;** as touching the law, a Pharisee;

6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, **and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,**

And Luke adds this: *And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:* ACT 17:26-27 We do hope that as each beholds their spiritual image in the mirror of God, that those who have racial hatreds will at least wash the dung off of their spiritual faces. We look forward to the day of completely being InChristed with all of our brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus regardless of their race, gender or economic station.

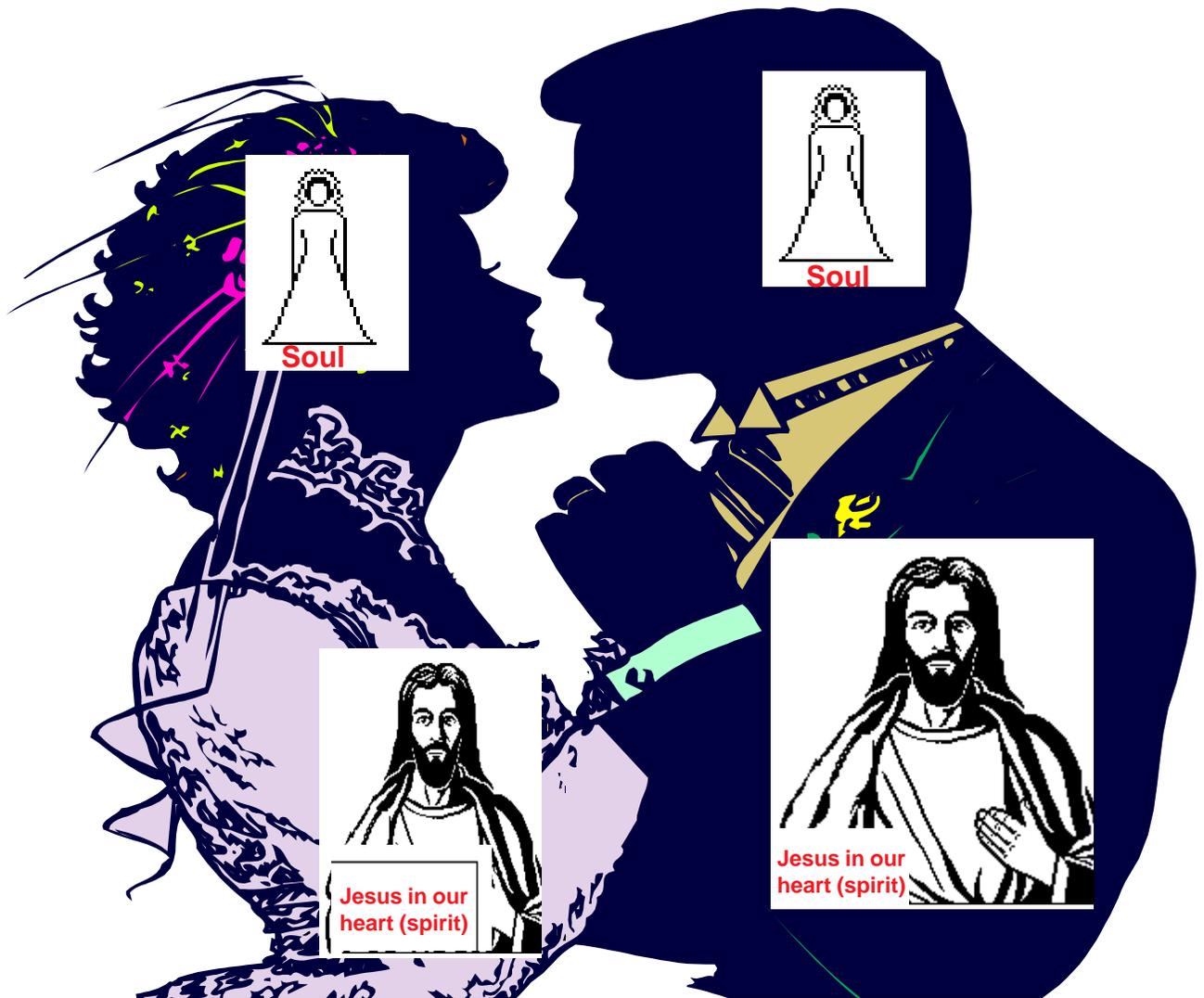
GAL 3:26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28 **There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.**

29 **And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**

The wedding of the spirit and soul



Above is represented a wedding couple - a bride and bridegroom. However, we also know that within each person [whether a natural male or female] is a part that conceives thoughts. Conception is a female attribute, so a man would have a soul which conceives thoughts. So, would a natural woman have a soul which conceives thoughts. In addition, in each person, there is a spirit. This spirit is often referred to as the "inner man" and is the husband of the soul - unless the soul is wooed by a worldly "other spirit". So, the soul can choose between her true husband (the human spirit) or a worldly spirit which would indulge her in fleshly desires.

REV 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him **take the water of life freely**.

The Spirit of Christ indwells our spirit and woos our soul to become the bride of Christ. We can hear of words of Christ in the old hymn, "Softly, tenderly, he is calling, come home." Would you agree that this is a tender and loving process? Then, let us propose a slightly different scenario. Suppose that a perhaps well meaning Christian decides that it is so important for someone to be converted to Christianity that they must be forced to accept Christianity. Or suppose that a well meaning Muslim decides that someone must be forced to accept Islam. **Truly, does this not amount to spiritual rape of the mind [or feminine soul] by force?**

OUR MIND IS TO BE ESPOUSED TO CHRIST AS A "CHASTE VIRGIN" AND NOT TO "ANOTHER SPIRIT"

2CO 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: **for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.**

3 But I fear, lest by any means, **as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.**

4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, **or if ye receive another spirit**, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

The above scriptures make clear the battle that has raged in the hearts and minds of men since the garden of Eden. However, God gave Adam a choice and He also gives us a choice. We would agree much more with this verse in the Koran than some of the more militant ones. [2.256] *There is no compulsion in religion. Righteousness is now distinct from error. He who disbelieves in the idol and believes in Allah has grasped the firmest tie that will never break. Allah is Hearing, Knowing.*

We would agree much more with a government that lets individuals choose how they would worship according to their conscience rather than one that dictates religion by force and in effect spiritually rapes the soul. For those who do that - in effect put out their hand and touch the Ark - because they feel that without their use of force the work of God will falter and fail. Instead of force, the scriptures teach love, mercy and forgiveness as outlined in the sermon on the mount.

MAT 5:7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

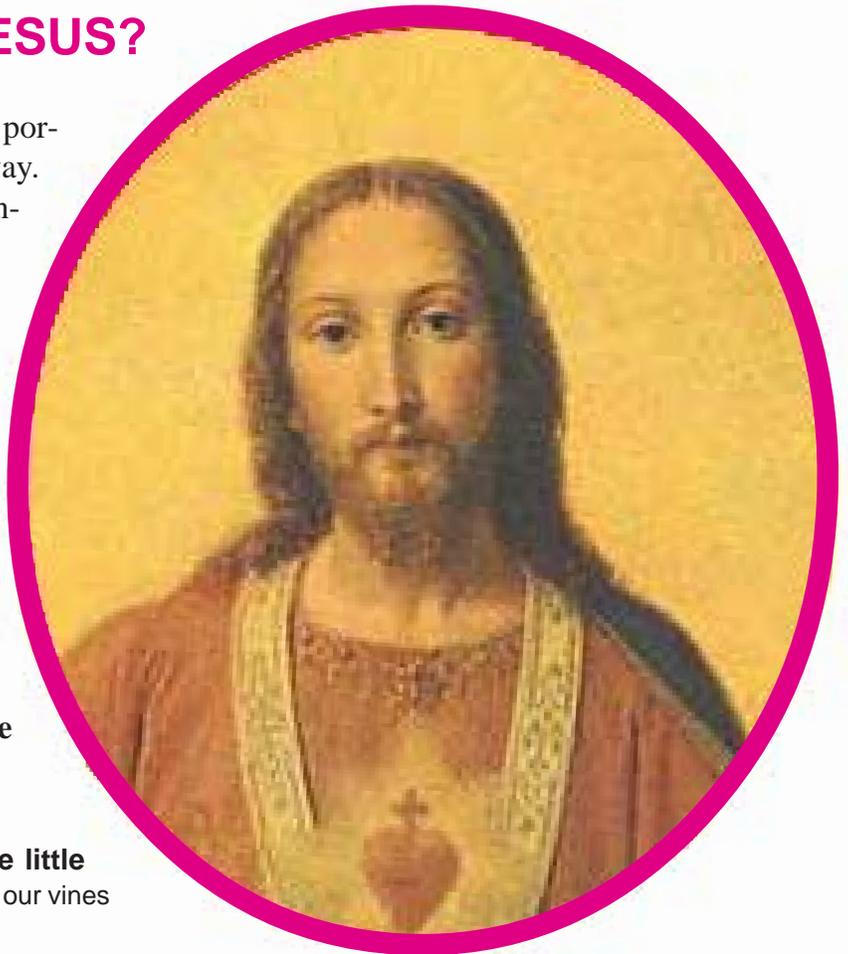
9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

After the Terrorist attacks in September, one might say that the war is being fought in Afghanistan with guns and bombs - and in the natural realm this is true. But where is the war really being fought and what are the stakes of this war? The war is being fought for the hearts and minds of men and not with bullets. God's way is a way of peace, love, honor and integrity. If Christians are able to shed the warts and blemishes of past behavior and provide an example for men to follow, the battle will be won. As Paul said to Timothy, *be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.* ^{1TI 4:12} The process of observing one's spiritual image in God's mirror is a process of refining. It is a process of being immersed in His Spirit and in fire. Did not John the Baptist say, *"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."* ^{MAT 3:11} The fire is necessary for the refining process. When the ore is first put in the refining pot, one looks in the pot and there is just earth mixed with ore and no real reflection because of the dross.

PRO 25:4 Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.

A PORTRAIT OF JESUS?

Perhaps the picture looks like a portrait - but think of it in another way. The Master puts the ore in the refining pot and heats the mixture. Gradually, the gold and silver melt and sink to the bottom because they are very heavy metals. The dross comes to the top as a scum and is ladled off by Jesus. **At first large quantities of scummy thoughts are skimmed off due to the fiery trials of the furnace of affliction.** And then, it seems that in the vessel is mostly precious metals **and very little of the ignoble metals (base thoughts) remain.**



SON 2:15 Take us the foxes, **the little foxes, that spoil the vines:** for our vines have tender grapes.

And then it is time for the Saviour to skim off the little foxes - which take a lot of heat to uncover! As the heat is turned up, the little foxes bubble to the surface and are lovingly ladled off by the Master Refiner. And finally, when all the little foxes are removed, we see the classic portrait of Jesus' reflection in the refining pot as he looks down into the pot to see if that vessel perfectly reflects His nature.

2CO 3:17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Thus, all the children of Abraham have been replaced in the refining fire and the heat has been turned up. The children of Abraham call upon the name of God and what do the scriptures say about where judgment begins? *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?* ^{1PE 4:12, 17} The bad news is that the heat causes a lot of boiling and stirring within us. But the good news is that it causes the scum and dross to come to the top where it can be ladled off. Then, and only then, can we begin to look in the glass of the finer's pot and see the glory of the Lord reflected in us. And note in the above scripture, that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty and this is totally an operation of the Spirit of the Lord. This is an operation by the Spirit and not by natural means.

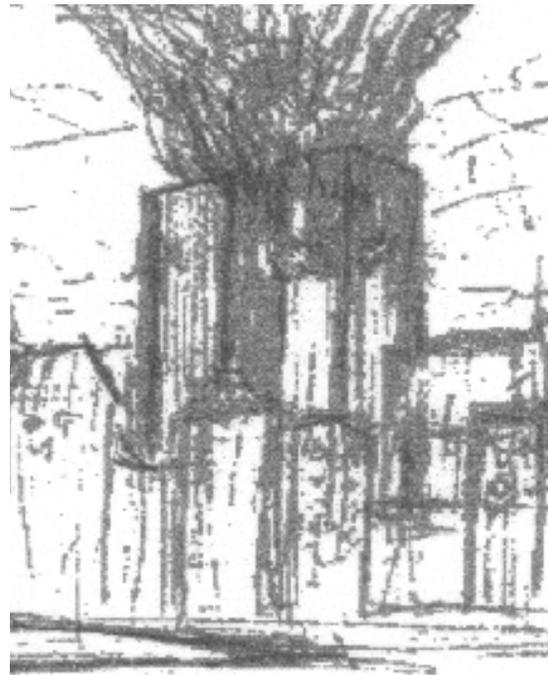
HOW WILL WE OVERCOME THE HATRED, CRUELTLY AND INTOLERANCE OF MAN AGAINST MAN AND NATION AGAINST NATION?

ZEC 4:6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

Those that would touch the ark are quite willing to use carnal methods of force to bring about a desired spiritual end. But the ways of God are different. He says that it will be achieved not by might, or by power, but by His Spirit. How could this be and how could this work? To get a clue, let us go back to scriptures quoted earlier about the towers falling.

ISA 30:25 And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.

26 Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.

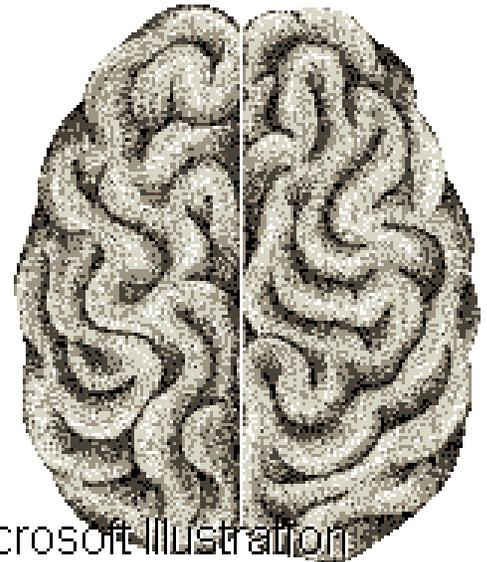


In the day when the towers fall, there shall be rivers and streams of water upon every high hill. **Rivers and streams of water are symbolic of the Spirit, so God is saying that right in the midst of tragedy, His Spirit will be ready and active to heal the wounds of mankind.** Then the scripture tells us that the light of the sun shall be sevenfold. We know that a characteristic of the Spirit of the God is that it is a Sevenfold Spirit of God. *And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.* ^{REV 4:5} Further, the scriptures speak about binding up the breach of His people and healing the stroke of their wound. What is the breach of His people - is it not first the fracturing of the people who believe in one God and in a larger sense - all mankind? And how would He heal the stroke of their wound? What is a stroke? Well, a stroke is a malfunction between the brain and the body.

A stroke is activated by a blood clot in an artery to the brain. As blood is held back and oxygen and nutrient levels fall, vital brain tissue begins to die. The effects of the stroke depend very much on what specifically what brain tissue is affected and what its function is. Generally, the stroke will affect one hemisphere of the two hemispheres of the brain. A massive stroke in the right brain, for example, will affect the left side of the body and vice versa. [The control of most of the left side of the body is regulated by the right brain] A quick test for a major stroke is to ask the victim to smile. If the smile is normal on one side and droops on the other, it is a signal to that a stroke may have taken place.

While we can learn a lot from natural strokes, we feel that the condition being described in Isaiah 30:26 is a spiritual stroke. What could a spiritual stroke be? It is well known that the left hemisphere of the brain in most people is much more oriented toward language, speech and logical reasoning. We might call the left side the "word" section of the brain. Many people, when it comes to religious concepts, have to have it laid out for them line upon line, precept upon precept, scripture upon scripture, otherwise they will not believe. These are the "Word" oriented people and they are to be commended for following the Holy Scriptures.

On the other hand, it is well known that the right side of the brain usually is the creative, intuitive side of the brain. It is where music, art, and imagination reside. It is the spiritual side of our brain where we receive the "gut feel" of information from our spirit which is centered in the belly. Do not the scriptures tell us that the waters (from our spirit) bubble up and flow out from the right side of the altar? ... *and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar.* EZE 47:1 Predominantly right brained individuals are the Spirit oriented people and they are to be commended for their intuition and spiritual insight. These are the "seers" and the prophets that hear the words of God through the Spirit. These are the singers and the praisers.



Microsoft Illustration

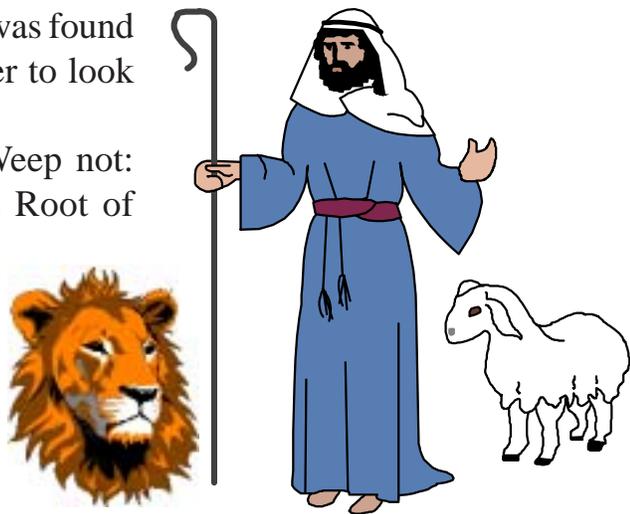
Some times when a boy and girl in their late teens or early twenties is dating, their friends will remark, "What a beautiful couple, we hope they get married." Wouldn't it be wonderful if the right brain and the left brain could work together in a marriage of the word and the spirit? What a wonderful couple they would make together! As we travel, we encounter groups that are very word oriented. And, it is true that they have the fundamentals down pat. But, without the enlightenment of the spirit, they are very rigid and unyielding for **every** jot and tittle must be in place. And it all seems very reasonable and logical to our mind, but "in the gut", our spirit feels like it is tied in a knot. Something is wrong, but it is difficult to put our finger on it - legalistic love of the group's doctrine becomes greater than the greatest commandments of all. *And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?* LUK 10:25-29 **It is as if their right brain has had a stroke.**

As we travel, we meet other groups that are very spirit oriented. And in most cases, they are very loving, very tender, and very tolerant. And this is wonderful when the spirit orientation is guided by the Holy Spirit. But sometimes, this tolerance extends to an "anything goes" climate, and all kinds of philosophies are embraced. Then one begins to fathom that not everything is being done by the leading of the Holy Spirit, but that "another spirit" has crept in. It seems like they are a ship that has lost its anchor and is blown about by every wind of doctrine. *But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.* ^{2CO 11:3-4} Oh, what a predicament! If the word people and the spirit people could just be married together so that a perfect balance between love and discipline would exist. One group is militant like a lion and the other is gentle like a lamb. Will the lamb and the lion ever reside together in peace? (Isaiah 11:6) Humanity weeps to find the answer. Is there anyone who has achieved this balance that we can follow as an example?

REV 5:4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, **the Lion** of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open **the book**, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

6 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood **a Lamb** as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, **which are the seven Spirits of God** sent forth into all the earth.

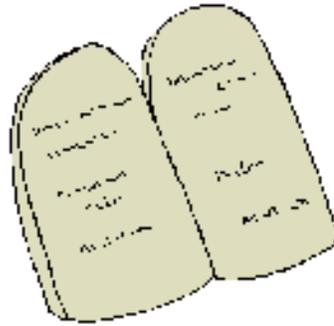
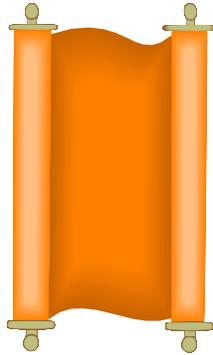
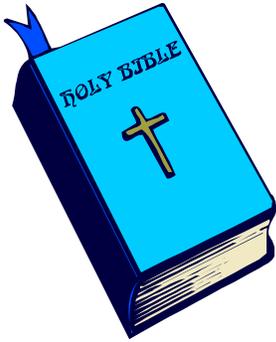


How will the breach between word and spirit be healed? Some groups have become so ritualistic, it is as they have had a stroke in their right brain. There is a breach between the word and the spirit. The river of the spirit no longer bubbles up from the belly to the soul and waters the word. Oh, that there would be a marriage between the spirit and soul so that God's people might walk in perfect balance! Will this process be done through the operation of the Sevenfold Spirit of God?

ISA 30:26 Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and **the light of the sun shall be sevenfold**, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the **breach of his people**, and **healeth the stroke of their wound**.



THE WRITTEN WORD AND THE LIVING WORD



THE BIBLE THE TORAH 10 COMMAND. THE KORAN

Above are four written words which are venerated by some or all of the children of Abraham. And perhaps, there may be some Christians that would object to having the Koran in the above display. But, like Paul, when we meet people where they are, we see the Muslims at least agree on one God, the Virgin birth of Christ, the ascension of Jesus into heaven, and the second coming of Jesus Christ to judge the earth. A pretty impressive score when compared to a few of our "Christian" denominations. However, when we speak of a marriage between the word and spirit, what word are we talking about. Are we going to take a Bible and marry it with our spirit?

2CO 3:2 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:

3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.

4 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:

Is it necessary for the word to be written down with ink and paper or to be engraven in stone in order to be the Living Word of God? Certainly, the paper and stone versions provide an anchor for us to learn about the Living Word of God - but the Living Word is something that resides within us. But, most do not know that it is there, because it has been pushed into the background by the cares of this world.

JOH 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

9 **That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.**

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not..

But at the end of this age, Jesus is opening up a new revelation of the Living Word within and He is doing it by providing the living water of the Spirit.

JOH 4:13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; **but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.**

JOH 7:38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, **out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.**

39 **(But this spake he of the Spirit,** which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

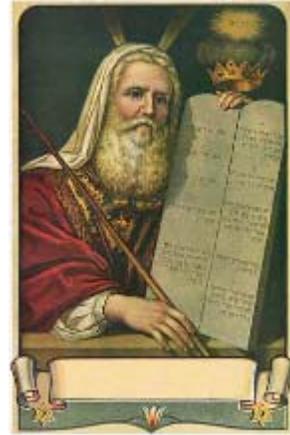
PRO 20:27 **The spirit of man** is the candle of the LORD, **searching all the inward parts of the belly.**

THE GLORY IN STONES SUPERCEDED BY THE GLORY OF THE SPIRIT

2CO 3:6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for **the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.**

7 **But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious,** so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; **which glory was to be done away:**

8 **How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?**



For it is the Living Word within us that is enlightened by the Holy Spirit that brings together a marriage of our soul and spirit. Presently, it is true that we deposit some of the scriptures within our being by reading the scriptures, but we forget - and we must run back and read the word on ink and paper in order to remember what to do. How much better if we could directly access the Living Word already written within us by the enlightenment of the spirit.

JAM 1:23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, **he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:**

24 **For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.**

25 **But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty,** and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

What glass or mirror was James talking about and how can we look into the perfect law of liberty so that we hear, see, and do what God has called us to do. For it is not by power, nor might, but it is by that liberty found in the Spirit of God. How can we overcome the blindness of only following the letter of the law without walking in the Spirit of Love? Is it not time for the children of Abraham to wake up and look into the mirror of the Spirit?

2CO 3:14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ.

15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart.

16 Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.

17 **Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.**

18 But we all, **with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.**

ARE CHRISTIANS, JEWS AND MUSLIMS BLIND?

JOH 9:6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and **he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,**

7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) **He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.**

The above account is given of how Jesus healed a man who was blind from birth. The man was sent to the pool of Siloam and when he washed, he came seeing. Again, the water is symbolic of the Spirit and we need to wash the cataracts off of our eyes which is called the veil. A cataract only allows one to see darkly and when we have a cataract, we can not fully behold the face of God. Has not Adam's race been born spiritually blind ever since the fall in the garden?

But some Christians might protest, "How insulting - are you saying Christians are blind?" Only partially blind - and the scriptures clearly show this is the case. Consider the Apostle Paul. Was he not saved by his belief in Jesus Christ by faith through the promise given to Abraham? Yes. Was not Paul baptized in the Holy Spirit as part of His Damascus Road experience. Yes, Paul had received what is called the earnest of the Holy Spirit. But, the earnest of the Spirit was only the down payment of a greater fullness of the Spirit which was yet to come. Paul characterized the state of Christianity (in as far as he had progressed) as a state of partial blindness - only being able to see through a glass darkly. **Thank God that there is a greater perfection coming to Christianity than what we see now.**



1CO 13:10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

13 And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

THE GREATEST GIFT IS LOVE

1CO 13:1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not **love**, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not **love**, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not **love**, it profiteth me nothing.

4 **Love** suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8 **Love** never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

All of us recognize that we are involved in a warfare against hatred, intolerance, greed, and spiritual pride. And yes, it seems like, at times, the ark of God is about to fall to the ground and we must use whatever means we can to keep that from happening - even if it means using every means necessary to put the fear of God into people to make them toe the line. But, is this God's way? In the long run, does it bear fruit? Is this what He really wants?

ZEC 4:6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

Yes, at this point, we could launch into a discussion of Christian Doctrine and all the practices of Christianity. **But Paul said if we have all knowledge, understand all mysteries, and have all faith, and have not love, we are nothing.** John put it this way. *If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.* ^{1JO 4:20} And who is our brother? Is it not those that we share this earth with - and especially the family of Abraham - the brothers, half brothers, and adoption brothers. The world is waiting to behold a group of people who will manifest the integrity, honor, fairness, faithfulness and love of God. This is the light that will attract and persuade the hearts and minds of men. For the battle truly is not being fought with guns and bullets on some battlefield, it is being fought internally within the minds and spirits of men.

WHAT ARE THE CONCEPTS THAT JESUS TAUGHT TO THE WORLD?

MAT 5:7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

MAT 7:12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

MAT 22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.
38 This is the first and great commandment.
39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.
40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

JOH 13:14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.
15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

JOH 15:12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.
13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Not by might, not by power, but by the Spirit of Love shall the battle be won. How simple and yet how powerful were the concepts He taught. **If one loves God and his neighbor, then all the other many laws would automatically be followed.** On this concept hangs all the law and the prophets! Jesus set the example for all Christians and as Christians manifest that love, the battle against hatred and intolerance among men shall be won. All men, and particularly the seed of Abraham, shall be blessed in Him. Amen.