

“Gospel” Passages ⁽¹⁾ (In Context)

[[Postscript 3 December 2021, Reviewed against first draft in “Appendices” in 3-D Bible Study Series. Note All scriptures now listed. Addenda need revision and re-organisation.]]

In English, “Gospel” could be read “God-Spell” ⁽²⁾ or “God’s Spell” which apparently goes back to Anglo-Saxon English. Thus, “The Gospel” really should be about what God spells-out to us in His History (***His Story***), i.e., the narrative in The Bible. In that sense, the whole Bible is “The Gospel” not just sections of it like I Corinthians 15 or John 3:16 even though those sections of Scripture are full of deep significance ⁽³⁾. Easton’s Bible Dictionary suggests the preaching of the ‘Gospel’ includes “the declaring of all the truths, precepts, promises, and *threatenings* (*sic*) of Christianity”. But that suggestion, many good points though it does make, unfortunately tends to relegate, ignore, downplay or sideline the important role of the pre-Christian scripture, i.e., the ‘Old Testament’. Such statements also tend to ignore the necessity of integrating and harmonising ‘New’ and ‘Old’ Testament Scriptures. To be sure, Mr Easton’s commentary did not imply a negation of the Old Testament in any intentional way. Furthermore, Easton and his team did not have new information now available to us especially in connection with the new History based on the revised chronology of ancient Egyptian history.

It is often preached from Matthew 9:37-8, Luke 10:2, "The harvest is great (or plenteous) but the labourers are few". While numbers of labourers is important, their productivity also or even primarily depends on the usefulness or effectiveness of their witnessing or evangelical and teaching or preaching techniques. Is the harvest in danger of being minimal or well short of its optimum or maximum output because the labourers are using the wrong techniques. The 3-D *Aleph-Tav* Bible Study is aimed at improving those techniques by getting the Theology correct and correctly performing Romans 12:2b or by " ... renewing *one’s* mind and .. proving what is that Good, and Acceptable, and Perfect Will (Testament or Plan) of God". For the most part these days, a purely soteriological approach is used to get people to believe God’s Good News about Himself and about His Plan that obviously includes the Gospel as per I Corinthians 15:1ff. But that is like offering an entry ticket to someone; free as long as they believe a certain point or fact; to go into a place or time but without any explanation what will be there and then. At best, they get vague assurances about life in heaven after one dies. Thus there are very few takers no matter how many labourers are working. Instead, what we can do is to explain just what a disaster the last six millennia have been under fallen man’s governance and show how the Bible’s History is confirmed by evidence from the past via archaeology and other things and show how Prophecy or future history has been fulfilled or is being fulfilled.

Regarding the “Gospels” and Old Testament, the Bible is an outworking, development, manifestation etc., of The Kingdom of God as Alfred Edersheim ⁽⁴⁾ pointed out. However, as pages in the 3-D *Aleph-Tav* Bible Study system emphasise, it also very much is a record of History proper, current or ‘present’ History, and future History or “Prophecy” as **we** define ‘**Prophecy**’. Since the Bible had been compiled over many generations then completed about 1900 years ago, it could not mean the same to everyone of every generation. Concerning some generations, from Prophecy the Bible

may not have revealed or cast any light upon that particular generation's *current* history occurring in that particular generation's unique era. However, the opening chapters of *Revelation* are thought to contain a History or Prophecy of the seven stages of the Church Age (*circa* AD 50 to the current *Laodicean* ⁽⁵⁾ Church). Furthermore, the 2006 War; involving the Gaza Area ("*Strip*") and cities in Lebanon ("Tyre and Sidon"), Amalek and others, against Israel, probably was, or at least 'may well have been', foreseen in Psalm 83. The scribe at the time (1000 BC, 500 BC?) may not have been aware he was laying down Prophecy. That just shows even more how Glorious God is for He has managed the development of the Scriptures for the purposes we describe. No human could have organised these things. In this case, a complete Psalm covers a period of just two weeks or so! ⁽⁶⁾ Anyway, a significant body of prophecy remains unfulfilled because the *Israel of Jesus' generation* (7 BC to 30 AD) rejected Him ⁽⁷⁾. That takes us to the Exodus 4:8 scenarios described elsewhere in these papers.

Thus, in the wake of the following:

- the emancipation of the Jews in the early 19th Century Europe;
- the Basle Declaration by representatives to the Jewish Congress there in 1897;
- the *Balfour Declaration* (1917), Israel's (*UN sponsored*) Independence in 1948; and
- the stupendous war of 1967 *The Six Day War* reflecting the re-formatting of the Earth in the first chapter of Genesis, then six years later, to a lesser extent, the 1973 *Yom Kippur War*;

many of us have been witnessing most of the modern "19th and 20th Century" events that surely seem to have been cases of prophetic fulfilment. That has been within a space of barely a century or 130 years (say 1840 to 1970).

However, despite the now almost certainly proven Historicity of the Bible is virtually *assured* ⁽⁸⁾, the Bible is in danger of being ignored. This may well be the very era when the last remaining unfulfilled prophecies up to the Millennium are being or are about to be fulfilled. The world and the now mostly-*Laodicean* churches have, by and large, rejected the Bible's Historicity either deliberately or unintentionally by circumstances that we describe elsewhere. Jesus says to the Laodiceans, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will com into him and will sup with him, and he with Me" ⁽⁹⁾. Thus within these Churches, wherein there presumably **are** some serious Bible students; even though they are emasculated and suppressed by *The System* in place; they are the only ones left to challenge the view in the outside world that the Bible is all "made up" ⁽¹⁰⁾. Presumably too, it is through such people that The Lord can '*knock on doors*' inside most churches. That is partly why Apostle Paul exhorted believers not to give up fellowship.

To the chagrin of serious Bible students, inside those churches the Bible is read and studied as allegory or typology most of the time ⁽¹¹⁾. Members pick and choose where allegory begins (or ends) and actuality ends (or begins). They declare to the world that verses like John 3:16 are not allegory, expect the world to accept that and then swallow their allegorical interpretations of other rather more enigmatic texts. Of course it would

be reasonable to say that unless one does simply accept John 3:16 unquestionably and unequivocally, *like a little child*, then Jesus and the Holy Spirit cannot begin the sanctification process. Sanctification brings the believer to understand other texts. Indeed the *Aleph-Tav* Code we suggest may be embodied therein is part of a personal sanctification process.

So here is the Dilemma. If the Bible is Allegory, why is “The Gospel” not likewise? Outsiders could be forgiven for being unable to make the distinction. But then what **is** “The Gospel”? Even if one can discern the line between allegory and fact or historical event people referring to “The Gospel” need to spell-out what they mean a lot more precisely or effectively. In this document, we observe all (hopefully) the passages in *The Acts* and *The Epistles* to make a better job of defining “The Gospel”.

So what we are going to do now is to execute a *Deconstruction* of the term, “The Gospel”, in order to redefine what the Bible actually says; whether there actually is a “Gospel”; or what can a term like “The Gospel” exactly mean. From the verses below we may be able to come up with a more rigorous term, such as “The Gospel”, and be exact and clear about what it really is. We might even come up with a new term such as “*The God-spell-Out*”.

The Verses

Note: Some examples listed are by way of background and are unmarked by either a hash or an asterisk. A hash (#) indicates a place where the word(s) “Gospel” or “The Gospel” is explicitly used. An asterisk (*) indicates a statement, phrase or clause (underlined) other than the specific word or phrase ‘Gospel’ but which contains specific elements normally referenced by the word ‘Gospel’.

“ ... (Luke explaining ⁽¹²⁾ that he intends to cover:) all that Jesus began both to do and teach”. Acts 1:1;

“ * ... speaking of things pertaining to the Kingdom of God ..”. Acts 1:3;

“ * ... Will You at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel?....”. Acts 1:6 ⁽¹³⁾ ;

“ * ... You shall be witnesses unto Me ...”. Acts 1:8;

“ * ... We do hear them speak ... the Wonderful Works of God....”. Acts 2:11;

“ * ... Hear these Words of Jesus of Nazareth....”. Acts 2:22;

“ ... Repent and be baptized ... in the name of Jesus *the* Christ for the remission of sins ...”. Acts 2:38 ⁽¹⁴⁾;

“ ... Repent (= *re-think* ¹⁵) .. be converted that your sins may be blotted out....”. Acts 3:19;

“ * ... He shall send Jesus *the* Christ which before was preached unto you..”. Acts 3:20;

“ * ... times of restitution of all things (*Messianic Kingdom and Eternal Order*) which God

hath spoken by the mouth of all His Holy Prophets since the World began...". Acts 3:21;

" ... every soul which will not hear that Prophet ⁽¹⁶⁾ shall be destroyed from among the people....". Acts 3:23;

" * ... They taught the people, and preached through Jesus the Resurrection of the dead". Acts 4:2 ⁽¹⁷⁾;

" * ... By the name of Jesus *the* Christ of Nazareth, whom **ye crucified**, ⁽¹⁸⁾ whom **God raised from the Dead**, by Him doth this man [lame man Peter and John met at the gate of the Temple called "Beautiful", Acts 3:1] stand whole....". Acts 4:10 ⁽¹⁹⁾;

" ... The Stone which was set at nought by the builders....". Acts 4:11 (originally in Psalm 118:22, also Isaiah 28:16, Matthew 21:42, Mark 12:10);

" ... No salvation in any other....". Acts 4:12;

" ... Peter and John unlearned ⁽²⁰⁾ and ignorant men....". Acts 4:13;

" * ... (*command*) them to speak henceforth to no man **in this name** ...". Acts 4:17;

" * ... not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus....." (Sanhedrin trying to stop the Apostles and new disciples witnessing). Acts 4:18;

" ... Disciples cite Psalm 2:1-3 in their prayer; 'Why do they rage against the Lord's Anointed (*Messiah*)' ...". Acts 4:25-6;

" * ... With great power gave the Apostles witness of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus ..". Acts 4:33;

" * ... Speak ... all the words of this Life..." . (Command of the "Angel of the Lord" after he released persecuted witnesses from the Jerusalem 'common prison'). Acts 5:20;

" * ... You should not teach in this name ...". [Sanhedrin again (c.f. Acts 4:18) trying to stop the Apostles and new disciples witnessing]. Acts 5:28;

" * ... You have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine ...". Acts 5:28;

" * ... Him (Jesus) hath God exalted with His Right Hand to be a Prince and a Saviour for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins...". Acts 5:31;

" * ... Also the Holy Ghost Whom God hath given to them that obey Him ..". Acts 5:32;

" * ... They commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus....". Acts 5:40;

" ... worthy to suffer for His Name...". Acts 5:41;

" * ... And daily they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus *the* Christ....". Acts 5:42;

" * ... We should not leave the Word of God and serve tables...". (This is the first time

in many verses using the term “Word of God” or near equivalent. The others are: Acts 6:7, 8:14, 11:1, 12:24; 13:5, 7, 44 and 46; Acts 17:13, 18:11, II Corinthians 2:17, 4:2, Colossians 1:25 (also “Dispensation” of God) and 3:16 (Word of Christ), I Thessalonians 1:8 (Word of the Lord), 2:13 (x2), 4:15 (Word of the Lord also II Thessalonians 3:1), I Timothy 4:5, II Timothy 2:9, Titus 2:5, Hebrews 4:12, 6:5, 11:3, 13:7, I Peter 1:23 and 25 (Word of the Lord), II Peter 3:5, I John 3:14, Revelation 1:2, 9, 6:9, 19:13 and 20:4]. Acts 6:2;

“ * ... We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word...”. (Referring to the Apostles’ primary role). Acts 6:4;

“ * ... And the Word of God increased and a great company of the priests were obedient to the Faith”. Acts 6:7;

“ ... We have heard him (Stephen) speak blasphemous words against Moses.....” (Exemplifying the differences between what Jesus taught about Moses versus what the Sanhedrin taught). Acts 6:11;

“ ... this man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this Holy Place and The Law.....” [As quoted in 6:14, Jesus prophesied that the Temple would be destroyed, as it was 40 years later by the Romans, albeit unintentionally. And, of course, as the Sermon on the Mount showed, Jesus’ teaching about the Law of Moses (6:14 *passim*) itself differed in many ways from the Sanhedrin’s. Although on matters like Resurrection Jesus did find common agreement with the Pharisees on the Sanhedrin and above we saw the priests were coming over to Jesus’ side in significant numbers]. Acts 6:11;

“ ... The God of Glory appeared unto our father Abraham ... when he was in Mesopotamia before he dwelt in Haran (or “Charan” in KJV)(Note the Doxological nature of Stephen’s title for God.)”. Acts 7:2;

“ ... A prophet which the Lord your God shall raise unto you of your brethren like unto me, Him ye shall hear” (Stephen quotes Deuteronomy 18:15 at the Sanhedrin and claims that Jesus is that “Prophet”). Acts 7:37;

“ * ... (Moses) ... who received the lively oracles (c.f., Romans 3:2) to give unto us....”. Acts 7:38;

“ ... The Just One (Stephen’s description of Jesus)....”. Acts 7:52;

“ * ... They went everywhere preaching The Word....”. Acts 8:4;

“ * ... And Philip went and preached Christ unto them (Samaritans)...”. Acts 8:5;

“ * ... But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus *the* Christ, they were baptised, both men and women....”. Acts 8:12;

“ * ... the Apostles which were in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God.....” (Peter and John then went down to Samaria to open the Keys of the

Kingdom ⁽²¹⁾ to the Samaritans). Acts 8:14;

“ ... (a) gift of God (*that*) may (*not*) be purchased with money ...”. Acts 8:20;

“ * ... when they had testified and preached the Word of the Lord, (*they*) returned to Jerusalem ...”. Acts 8:25;

“ # ... and preached The Gospel in many villages of the Samaritans....”. (This is the first time in this survey we find the use of the word “Gospel”). Acts 8:25;

“ ... (*Do you*) Understand what thou readest? (Acts:8:30): And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me ⁽²²⁾ ?”. Acts 8:30(b)-31;

“ ... of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? (Illustrating the importance of prophecies when discussing ‘*The Gospel*’.....”). Acts 8:34;

“ * ... And Philip preached unto him Jesus ...”. Acts 8:35;

“ ... and (the *Ethiopian ‘Eunuch’*) said, I believe that Jesus *the* Christ is the Son of God” (Implying the Messiah’s nature and title as “Son of God”). Acts 8:37;

“ * ... if he found any of this **Way**,.....” [Note use of the term “Way”. Refer also Acts 9:27 (in a sort of *double entendre*), 16:17, 18:25-26 (twice), 19: 9 & 23, 22:4 and 24:14 & 22)]. Acts 9:2;

“ * ... (Saul-Paul) to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel...”. Acts 9:15;

“ * ... And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God”. Acts 9:20;

“ * ... (Saul) confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is *the very Christ (Messiah)*.....”. (Here the emphasis is on Jesus’ Messiahship and in these early days that would be a key part of Paul’s message since Israel had been called to declare Jesus as Messiah. Later Paul would become the main teacher on the role The Church of Christ would now play until the Rapture). Acts 9:22;

“ * ... how (Paul) had preached boldly at Damascus in the Name of Jesus. ...”. [Earlier in the verse Barnabas reports that Paul had seen “The Lord in The Way” although there may be a *double entendre* here alternatively meaning *en route* as it were. Refer also Acts 9:2, 16:17, 18:25-26 (twice), 19: 9 & 23, 22:4 and 24:14 & 22]. Acts 9:27;

“ * ... And he (Paul) spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians ⁽²³⁾ :”. (In 9:27, Paul preaches in the “Name of Jesus” but here “The Lord Jesus”. Paul’s “dispute” with the Greeks sounds very much like a vigorous debate about Greek Philosophy, History and other weighty matters. While this sort of thing, or debating complex matters, may not to be to everyone’s taste, those who are able to engage in such discussions should be supported by fellow Christians not gainsaid). Acts 9:29;

“ ... (After Saul’s conversion(the churches) ... “were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.” Acts 9:31;

“ ... (Re Cornelius) A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.” (Traits of a typical God-fearing Gentile. Cornelius would be one whom Acts 15:21 would refer to). Acts 10:2;

“ ... to hear words of thee.” (Or would it be better to suggest “To hear The Word from you”). Acts 10:22;

“ * ... We all here present before God, to hear all things (words ?) that are commanded thee of God.” (Ask a modern Israeli what “*Devar*” means; he will say “thing”. In Biblical Hebrew, the primary meaning is “Word”. Hence my little redaction above). Acts 10:33;

“ * ... The Word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus the Christ: (he is Lord of all:) ..”. (With reference to the above “redaction” in verse 10:33, , actually, Peter introduces his comments with “The Word”). Acts 10:36;

“ * ... **That word**, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached”. Acts 10:37;

“ ... How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power...” (Note that Peter names The Lord as “Jesus of Nazareth” ²⁴). Acts 10:38;

“ ... for God was with him.” (Echoing the *Emmanuel* of Isaiah 7:14 ²⁴⁻²⁵). Acts 10:38;

“ * ... And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem”. [Whereas we are Ambassadors ⁽²⁶⁾ for Christ (Ephesians 6:20, II Corinthians 5:20). However, it may well be our generation of the Church (the 50th perhaps) is the one that witnesses the birth and rise of The Antichrist-666. We remain until the Father deems it is time for our Lord and Saviour to Rapture-Rescue us]. Acts 10:39;

“ ... whom they slew and hanged on a tree....” [Modern embarrassment in the churches leads to a downplaying of the Creation and Fall Accounts in Scripture. Especially in regard to the ‘Tree’ motif. We believe that untouchable ‘tree’ in Eden was a touch-tronic computer. God had embedded one in a tree. Adam ‘ate’ its fruit (images on the screen), thereby disobediently and somewhat ignorantly *consuming* (Hebrew *acol* or @ or ‘a-all’) its ‘fruit’ with eye and finger coordination (“Do not touch” as Eve suggested). So Jesus had to hang on a ‘tree’ which actually was some lumber manufactured using technology into a ‘Cross’ ⁽²⁷⁾. Jesus hauled up some ‘dressed timber’ onto that hill just as Isaac in *circa* 1950 BC hauled up the lumber onto nearby Mount Moriah for Abraham’s sacrifice of his only begotten son, i.e., Isaac himself]. Acts 10:39;

“ * ... God raised Him up on the third day, and shewed him openly”. [The Resurrection is a necessary (I Corinthians 15:4) part of what is usually referred to as “The Gospel”. If one is going to use this term, it should at least be qualified by a Scriptural reference such as “I Corinthians 15” and this author adds “the whole chapter thereof” not just its opening verses]. Acts 10:40;

“ * ... And He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick (living) and dead”. Acts 10:42;

“ ... To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins”. Acts 10:43;

“ * ... the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard The Word.” [As the next verse shows, Peter had now completed the task of opening the Keys of the Kingdom to all humanity - Jews (especially in the sight of the Circumcision Party), Samaritans (or ‘half-Jews’) and now Gentiles (non-Jews)]. Acts 10:44; And so (in Acts 11:1)

“ * ... the Gentiles had also received the word of God...”. (However, the Gentiles in Cornelius’ home already knew about God and even believed in Him. They did not believe in any other god. They only believed in Jehovah. Although the text does not explicitly tell us, one presumes Cornelius must have been wondering like other righteous Gentiles where they now stood after recent events involving Jesus. Peter certainly had good news (*Gospel*) for them. Yes, they are “in Christ” too if they accept Jesus is the One Whom He said he was and did what was necessary to redeem Man from Sin and the Sin of Adam. These Gentiles had already “received the Word of God”. Now they had received the additional content of information (to add to their faith) about Jesus’ role in all of this (their sinful state and *vis a vis* their relationship with God). This magnifies the importance of recognizing it is the Word of God we preach which includes both good and bad news depending on which side of the fence one wants to stand. The Good News needs qualification by succinctly referencing the particular Biblical reference one is using to explain the entity known as “The Gospel”. Otherwise the words “The Gospel’ is in danger of becoming a *mantra*. Acts 11:1;

“ ... *the* Un-circumcised. [The term used here for Unbelievers but as the following passages show much of ancient Jewry, or their leadership, had overlooked the all-important soteriological or salvation issue of the “Circumcision of the Heart” ⁽²⁸⁾; Deuteronomy 5:28 (implied),10:16, 30:6 and Jeremiah 4:4]”. Refer Addendum on Circumcision]. Acts 11:3;

“ ... What God hath cleansed...”. (In this passage it is about “unclean” meats being cleansed but the obvious implication is Sinners being cleansed and it is God doing the cleansing. This reminds us that whoever believes does so because God Himself does a Wondrous Work). Acts 11:9;

“ ... And this was done three times.....” (The three occasions in a vision The Lord had to convince Peter all meats were clean and that he was no longer obligated to Mosaic Law as was going to be the case, from AD 30 onwards, for all members of the Church of Christ - Jewish or Gentile. This emphasises a rule we often make that one point is just that; two points is a line but three points is the minimum needed to constitute a firm trend. Making sure Peter and, one hopes, readers of *Acts* gets the point God thrice emphasised it ²⁹). Acts 11:10;

“ ... Who shall tell thee words (*The Word ?*), whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.” [This does not imply that every member of the household will necessarily receive “circumcision of the *foreskin* of the heart” (refer Addendum on Circumcision) or that infants therein would suddenly receive circumcised hearts either. We simply do not

know what provision God intends for infants in Eternity. God rescued out of Egypt an entire household of Jews, Egyptians, and, presumably, Edomites and other Gentiles, but mainly Jews descended from Jacob. This crowd was redeemed out of a life described as 'slavery'. They were saved physically from an army and a collapsing wall of *Red Sea* ⁽³⁰⁾. But as later events turned out, many of these people, Jews and Gentiles, were never circumcised on the heart. Nor were some physically circumcised as per the Abrahamic Covenant which was a necessity for those following the Mosaic System. The person receiving The Word must be able to receive it and act on it - one way or the other]. Acts 11:14;

“ * ... Then remembered I the Word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.” (Those circumcised on the heart went down into the waters with John the Baptist to prepare for entry into the kingdom of God. But after Pentecost, all believers come into the kingdom on belief and go down into the waters of Baptism as an outward sign of their inward new nature). Acts 11:16;

“ * ... as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ...”. Acts 11:17;

“ ... Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life”. [Again this sort of statement must be carefully considered in context with other Scriptures. Obviously Adam, Methuselah, Enoch, Noah, Shem, Job and people like Jethro the Midianite priest were saved Gentiles. Men like Naaman (*circa* 800 BC) and; in Jeremiah's time (*circa* 600 BC), Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian unless he was a descendant of an earlier Proselyte; were obviously Gentiles who became believers. Later in Acts we learn that “from old time” (Acts 15:21) people came to Jewish synagogues to hear 'Moses', i.e., their *Tanaakh*, being read and discussed. Everyone before and after the Cross had to be circumcised in the heart (Leviticus 26:41, Deuteronomy 10:16, Jeremiah 4:4). It is the fact that “repentance unto life” comes to Jews and Gentiles in a new fashion, so to speak, because of the Cross which enabled, for example, souls of saints who had died before the Church Age (from Pentecost AD 30) to now go straight to Heaven rather than *languish* for a period in Sheol-Hell. Believers, because they are now 'New Men' (Ephesians 2:15), the former 'Wall of Partition' now broken down, are to constitute one body, the Church of Christ, rather than be spread over two units - Jew or Gentile - with spiritual blessings now held in common by both Jew and Gentile. Jews are still going to benefit from additional physical promises to Abraham ⁽³¹⁾ although Gentiles are going to share in the benefits of that situation too]. Acts 11:18;

“ * ... Now they which were scattered abroad..... were preaching The Word to none but unto the Jews only”. Acts 11:19;

“ * ... And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus.” [“Cyrene” has an importance or significance in the Scripture that is almost universally overlooked. It is named after *Tsor* or the Hebrew name for ancient Tyre. In modern-day Libya, Cyrene (Cyrenaica) was formerly the home of Simon who helped Jesus carry the wood for His Cross. That was a very significant task since that wood was earlier typified by the wood the also Thirty-Seven--Year-Old Isaac bore up to Mount Moriah 2000 years previously. *Tsor* was often used to symbolise a hill or mount. Modern Bibles translate the “Put” of Ezekiel 38:5 as “Libya” but modern and ancient Libya was only part of “Put” as we discuss elsewhere.

“Put” was the name the 7th Century cartographers gave to Tyre’s possessions or mercantile networks. So it is interesting to see men of Cyrene being prominently mentioned here in an evangelical connection. They came from the same society as Mary Magdalene and we know how important she was in the Lord’s first exhortation after the Resurrection to spread the “*Good Word*”. Clearly, this ancient base of the Tyrian-Phoenician mercantile empire, has much more significance than initially meets the eye. It is the Revised History that brings all this to light]. Acts 11:20;

“ ... a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord”. Acts 11:21;

“ ... And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch”. (When Paul and Barnabas spent a year there and “taught much people”). Acts 11:26;

“ * ... the Word of God grew and multiplied”. Acts 12:24;

“ * ... at Salamis, they preached the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews”. Acts 13:5;

“ * ... Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; desired to hear the Word of God”. Acts 13:7;

“ * ... (but) Elymas the sorcerer ... withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from The Faith”. Acts 13:8;

“ * ... the Right Ways of The Lord”. (Or “The Right Way” perhaps). Acts 13:10;

“ * ... Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord”. Acts 13:12;

“ ... after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue ... *asked* (Paul and Barnabas) .. have ye any Word of Exhortation for the people?” Acts 13:15;

“ ... Paul stood up, and ... said, ‘Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience’...”. (The ‘Ye that fear God’ obviously refers to the Gentiles who regularly attended synagogues to hear the One True God’s Words, c.f., Acts 15:21). Acts 13:16;

“ * ... Of this man's seed (David Son of Jesse) hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus ...”. Acts 13:23;

“ * ... Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the Word of this Salvation sent”. [Paul speaking to Jews and Gentiles but ‘Word of this Salvation’ could also be read from Hebrew as ‘This Word of *Yeshua*-Jesus’ and reflects John 1:14, “The Word became (or ‘was made’) Flesh and dwelt among us”]. Acts 13:26;

“ ... (The Jewish leaders) knew him not, nor yet the Voices of the Prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him”. (Confirming that the Prophecies are a crucial aspect of teaching about Jesus). Acts 13:27;

“ * ... And when they had fulfilled all that was Written of Him....”. (Teaching of not just the prophecies but of all the writings in the Old Testament. Exactly, “The Writings” are

the Book of Psalms and the other books such as *Job, Proverbs* etc., which are not part of the *Torah* or Prophets, “The Writings being the third main section of the *Tanaach* or Jewish ‘Old Testament’. In Luke 24:27, Jesus talked to the disciples at Emmaeus citing Scripture from “Moses and the Prophets”. In verse 44, Jesus added the “Psalms” representing the ‘Writings’ section of *Tanakh* to the list of sections of Scripture He referred to in verse 27. We see in that last chapter of Luke’s Gospel the three sections of the *Tanaakh* being used for teaching). Acts 13:29;

“ * ... But God raised him from the dead.” (A crucial aspect of “The Gospel” as I Corinthians 15:4 demands). Acts 13:30;

“ * ... how that the promise which was made unto the fathers (verse 33), God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee; And as concerning that He raised him up from the dead.” [The Promise would probably initially or primarily refer to Genesis 3:15 and the *positive* side of the Seed of the Woman Programme. It would include the promise that in the seed of Abraham (Genesis 12:3 and 22:18), Isaac (Genesis 26:4) and Jacob (Genesis 28:14), a promise made to each father-patriarch individually, all the world would be blessed]. Acts 13:32-4;

“ ... He saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.” (More aspects of what should be “The Gospel” from the “Writings”). Acts 13:35;

“ * ... that through this man (“Jesus” verses 23 & 33) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins”. Acts 13:38;

“ * ... And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses..”. [We have to be careful here re the law of Moses. Part of the problem with theology of the time is that Jews began to believe the Law of Moses Justified the believer. But it was only the already justified believer who ever seriously tried to follow the Law of Moses apart from those who did so out of lip service because they were born into a Jewish family. The latter rarely ever came to true belief or “Circumcision of the Heart”, Deuteronomy 10:16, 30:6 and Jeremiah 4:4, unless belatedly. It may well have been that they had been physically ‘circumcised on the Eighth Day’ by their parents and the religious authorities. However, there are traditions that laws in the Mosaic Code predated Moses ⁽³²⁾]. Acts 13:39;

“ * ... Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets”. (Although Paul here is directing the Jews in the audience to prophecies relating to Israel’s forthcoming struggles because she rejected her Messiah, until a new generation of Israel comes forth that will accept Jesus, the rest of us also need to take heed of the prophets). Acts 13:40;

“ ... Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you (Habakkuk 1:5)”. [This prophecy from Habakkuk is primarily about the Chaldean invaders who flattened Judea between 600-586 BC. At the time, the Jews could not believe that prophecy would be fulfilled, nor heed its warning of the depth and extent of the

destruction in 586 BC. In many ways, Israel did not really learn from that disaster. For example, when seventy years later, the call came to return to Israel after the deportations and “Exile”, the majority of the Diaspora of that era stayed in Babylon or Persia. In many ways that repeated the situation after Jacob’s descendants remained in Egypt for four centuries. The Babylonian-Persian diaspora, and its descendants, was still there when Jesus was born. Even in AD 30, The Jewish Diaspora formed the majority of World Jewry. But just as Israel did not learn from God’s Works in the past, they would not recognise what Jesus did either ⁽³³⁾. The Apocalypse generation of Israel will finally bring the nation to its senses]. Acts 13:41;

“ * ... the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath.” (This happened in that synagogue ‘after the Jews left’. People often jump to the conclusion that All Jews by implication rejected ‘The Gospel’. They would point to verse 45 certainly as the King James translation into English from Luke’s Greek. But Acts 14:1 says, “a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed”. Jews believed in Acts 13:43. The same is stated or at least implied in many other scriptures. Certainly a majority of Jews continued following their leaders’ dictum that Jesus was a deceiver or sorcerer. But the more important point for our discourse here is that the passage shows the Gentiles wanted this survey from the Bible’s Prophets and Historical record preached at the next sabbath. Presumably, the request came on behalf of those who had missed out on the *sermon*]. Acts 13:42;

“ * ... And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.” (They came to “hear the ‘Word of God’ not “The Gospel” which obviously is part of the Word even a central part of it). Acts 13:44;

“ * ... the Word of God should first have been spoken to you....”. (This is the momentous occasion when Paul tells the Jews opposing him that in future he will emphasise preaching “The Word of God”, again not “The Gospel”, to Gentiles. Paul did not stop preaching to Jews and he exhorted Gentiles to continue the work of convincing Jews about Jesus as he explains in Romans 11. In Romans, and elsewhere, we do find Paul using the term “The Gospel”. However, in these pages we want to put the use of that term into a wider perspective beginning with this survey of Acts and continuing in the Epistles to see what they say). Acts 13:46;

“ * ... the Gentiles heard this and glorified the Word of the Lord.” (It is “The Word of the Lord” they “Glorified”. The Scriptures are in fact primarily attesting to “The Glory of God”. We say, in technical jargon, that the Scriptures are therefore essentially “Doxological” not “Soteriological” nor “Theological”. Modern preachers ⁽³⁴⁾ of “The Gospel” tend to overlook this and over-stress the soteriology in one’s long experience listening to their sermons. Gary Brooker and *Procul Harum* sing “Ain’t no use in preachers preaching ⁽³⁵⁾ when they don’t know what they are teaching” ⁽³⁶⁾). Acts 13:48;

“ ... and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” (This brings to the surface the view that anyone who believes has been pre-ordained to believe. This is an extreme Calvinistic view. It could be correct but it is not given to anyone of us to know for any particular individual. So we still preach or teach the Word of God. The Apostle and ourselves may say “pre-ordained” but it might be that God surveyed the history of the Universe from beginning to end perhaps even before its creation. God foresaw who in the Universe, whether angel or man, did choose correctly in their lifespan and

then God recorded the name in the Book of *Eternal* Life). Acts 13:48;

“ * ... And the Word of the Lord was published throughout all the region”. Acts 13:49;

“ ... they (*were*) speaking boldly in the Lord...”. Acts 14:3;

“ * ... gave testimony unto the Word of His Grace ...”. Acts 14:3;

“ ... and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.” [In this verse we see three aspects to the work of the early church in spreading what is often euphemistically referred to as “The Gospel”. As we see in the previous items, we have “Word of the Lord”, “speaking” and “Word of His Grace”. In other words, we have ‘*Wording*’. To explain this arcane point, one could theoretically or plausibly see in this, in a Hebrew draft of this passage, something like “They were wording the words of the Lord and words of *His* Grace”. And there probably was a Hebrew *original* or *first* draft in which case we could envisage a sentence that would look like the following: “They were wording (*medebar*, מדבור) the words (*devri*, דברי) of the Lord and the word (*devar*, דבר) or his grace”. The root word here is “דבר”. To make the gerund or verb out of the noun one writes in Hebrew דבורה, literally *Deborah*, the female name. Also, “דבורה” means ‘bee’ in Hebrew because those *wee girls* do a little dance in the hive to tell the other bees where to find nectar and pollinate plants in the process. A wonderful design in God’s Creation. That **design** is also **designed** to show us that God is who He says He is in the Bible and that we should concentrate on His Words in the Bible rather than signs and wonders for our spiritual development. Thus, we should note that it is ‘The Word’ that has priority over the “signs and wonders”. Taken in the context of so many passages already in this so far relatively short part of our total survey, “signs and wonders” pale into insignificance beside what was said, spoken, preached or taught (“The Word”). In fact, a wondrous sign through Paul had the opposite effect to what was desired as Acts 14:11-13 show. Anyway, signs and wonders seem to have been confined mostly, if not always, to “Apostles”. And then only to some of them and only to confirm them as Apostles so that what they loosed and bound⁽³⁷⁾ would be accepted and finalised by the time they were deceased. “The Church’s One Foundation is Jesus Christ Her Lord” but He delegated some functions to that Apostolic Group and to it alone, not to any other later *apostles*⁽³⁸⁾]. Acts 14:3;

“ # ... And there they preached the Gospel” [This is the second time in this survey we find the use of the word “Gospel” (Greek *evangelion*) in the text. Previously we saw this word in Acts 8:25]. Acts 14:7;

“ ... (Paul and Barnabas speaking), “....we preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities (worship of Planets and statues representing them) unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and alltherein.” [Here what is preached also includes the Creation. These pagans needed to change their minds (repent or re-think) and worship the true Creator rather than planetary objects in the Creation which admittedly had caused Man and his planet much stress in the previous millennia in the manner Dr Velikovsky described. Elsewhere, we have commented on these passages where Paul and Barnabas were mistakenly identified as Mercury and Jupiter. We explain why the talkative Paul was identified with Mercury. Immanuel Velikovsky⁽³⁹⁾ explained why these planets became objects of worship and why they received various peculiar or unique characteristics such as Mercury’s role as a messenger between the

more powerful and 'larger' gods]. Acts 14:15;

" * ... the God who did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness". Acts 14:17;

" # ... And when they had preached the gospel to that city (Derbe), and had taught many, ..." (This is the third time in *The Acts* and the Epistles there is a direct reference to "The Gospel". We note that they also "taught" there). Acts 14:21;

" * ... exhorting them (the disciples in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch) to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." (Here we see the work also involved exhorting the believers who are now called "disciples". But being a disciple entails persecution although the word used in this KJV excerpt is "Tribulation". As a policy, we use 'Tribulation' for the Seven Year period called "The Tribulation" which is sometimes split into two segments where the latter half is called the "Great Tribulation". Meanwhile, we use "persecution" for the sort of nonsense disciples will get such as false allegations made against us, denial of work, ostracism etc., which is our daily lot). Acts 14:22;

" * ... preached The Word in Perga...". Acts 14:25;

" * ... opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles". [The phrase 'opening the door of faith' is used to remind us that Jesus gave the "keys of the Kingdom" to Peter. One uses a key to lock or unlock a door. In John 10:9, Jesus described Himself as the Only Door by which a man can enter Christ's Kingdom. The motif of the door and the key to unlock it is obvious. The sentence here, if it is not taken in context with many other passages in the Bible, suggests that Gentiles, or non-Jews, only got saved from AD 30 onwards. Obviously that cannot be the meaning here. It would mean all the believers before Abraham were eternally lost including even Noah. That clearly cannot be the case. It would mean Jethro, Moses' father-in-law', Ruth, the Queen who ruled Africa (Ophir⁴⁰), Naaman, Ebed-melech who rescued Jeremiah from the well, etc., would not be saved. Again that is obviously not the case either⁽⁴¹⁾]. Acts 14:27;

" ... Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." [This false statement was clearly NOT part of the 'Gospel' nor any part of God's Word. Only male descendants of Abraham, Issaac and Jacob were to be circumcised in the eighth day. The rite was necessary to bring Israel plus any who converted into Moses) under the Abrahamic Covenant. The blessings of that covenant went well beyond the terms of the Mosaic Covenant. Neither of these two covenants "saved" people from their sins. That was the wrong conclusion the religious leaders in Jesus' Day had arrived at after centuries of struggle in their theology. If the Plan for Israel had started in the ideal way we suggest in these pages, anyone wanting to engage in the blessings of God's covenants with Israel would have been circumcised but that would not save them. Only if people believed and were saved would comply with these covenants. Unbelievers ignored the covenants. Others simply followed the covenants because they had been brought up that way but they were not necessarily believers. Many Israelites that came out of Egypt had not been circumcised. They had let the practice lapse⁽⁴²⁾. So a major ceremony was needed in Sinai to get all those men who wanted to abide by the Mosaic Covenant to be circumcised. That did include a good number of Gentiles who left Egypt with Israel because they believed in Jehovah and not in the gods of Egypt. So it was

natural for some Jewish members of the early Church to think the same way. However, the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31 did not require physical male circumcision but circumcision of the heart **alone** - both Men and Women. The Law of Moses could only operate for people alongside the Abrahamic Covenant which is the one that required male circumcision ⁽⁴³⁾. Women, in effect, were covered by the fact that their father or husband was circumcised. Gentile men who wished to come under the blessings of the Law of Moses and the Commonwealth of Israel, had to be circumcised. But physical circumcision no longer had any role (except for baby boys under the Jewish Abrahamic Covenant) the removal of the "Middle Wall of Partition" (Ephesians 2:14) of the Mosaic system had been removed. Circumcision of the heart would still come by the action of God in the believer (regeneration). From AD 30 onwards, only full immersion in the waters of Baptism and commemoration of the Lord's Death, Burial and Resurrection would remain as physical rites ⁽⁴⁴⁾ for the Church of *the* Christ. But it is the internal, unseen regeneration or 'circumcision of the heart' that has always determined a person's salvation not works, deeds or removal of flesh from someone's body]. Acts 15:1, 5;

" # ... that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the Word of the Gospel, and believe." (This is the fourth time we read "Gospel" but on this occasion it is The Word of the Gospel" which sort of conjoins "The Word" and "Gospel"). Acts 15:7;

" * ... *Who* knows the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us." [This passage stresses that God also looks at the heart of the Gentiles who are the main subject in the passage, just as He did when He anointed David to be King of Israel. God has always been looking at men's hearts! It's the heart that needs *circumcising!* No rite is mentioned at this point in *Acts*, neither baptism nor circumcision⁽⁴⁵⁾. However, by New Testament times (AD 30), and in New Testament writings (AD 30 - *circa* 100 AD), the importance of the regeneration of the *inside* or the "circumcision of the heart" becomes even more explicitly paramount because of the Cross and *Pentecost-Shavuot*. Nevertheless, the importance or necessity of 'inward circumcision' is present in the Old Testament *viz.*, Deuteronomy 5:28 (implied), 10:16, 30:6 and Jeremiah 4:4. But more to the point here in Acts 15:8, it was only after The Atonement at the Crucifixion that the permanent and full indwelling of the Spirit of God in the Believer could be possible commencing from that first Shavuot-Pentecost fifty days after the Resurrection. It was that privilege that Peter was tasked to bring to the world with the "keys to the kingdom" given to him alone to use on the three occasions he did. The Old Testament calls for and looks forward to the New Testament situation but the pre-Cross Saints could not know how this was to be effected in exactly the way we read about in the New Testament. But all that should not be confused with the basic matter of who has been saved or unsaved throughout time. There were many Old Testament or pre-Cross saints but they could not have the privileges (as in Revelation 3:20) of the Church of Christ saint (*Christian*, Christ One, Disciple of Christ, *Believer* etc). Acts 15:8;

" * ... no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith". [Again it is the "heart" that is purified or regenerated. This is internal and metaphysical not external and physical. We must not forget that in Hebrew thinking the heart and mind were part of the one *whole*. The Greeks, however; in their language under their heavily Hellenist-influenced milieu; saw the heart and mind as being distinctly separate. But Paul and Luke would see the relationship in the Hebrew way. Nevertheless, with the Hebrew

perspective of the heart and mind, Romans 12:2 sees the importance of the need to **Change the Mind, Renew the Mind** etc., rather than change one's *heart* which basically, albeit importantly, just pumps blood around the system. Definitely the "Life is in the Blood" ⁽⁴⁶⁾ so the Heart as a physical organ is certainly important and may even have some significance not yet known to us from our scientific enquiry. But as we now know it is the Brain; even though it physically resembles the intestines that only have excrement in them; that drives much of our system and certainly has a major influence on our thinking and philosophies. People have to change or revert their anti-God minds into accepting God and what He says in the Bible as truth. This is the essential meaning of repentance - a change of mind and we might add, changing it to meet *God's perspective on things*. This leads to a renewing of the mind as Romans 12:2 calls for. It is that mind described in Romans that begins to "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God]. Acts 15:9;

" * ... But we (*Jews*) believe that through the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they (*Gentiles*)". Acts 15:11;

" * ... That the residue of men might seek after the Lord" (One of the purposes behind the preaching of these messages is to get men to seek after the Lord. However, we note at the end of the verse, it is " the Lord, who doeth all these things". In Revelation 3:20, the Lord is standing at the door knocking to get the man to answer and open the door of his life. But in this verse, James, as the leader of the Church in Jerusalem, points to action from the Lord's direction. Again we ask the question, does the man respond to God's call or is man so helpless that only if God does the work would anyone at all be saved? As noted elsewhere, that is one question that we shall one day know the answer to though we cannot adequately or sufficiently answer now. Unlike many other questions often relegated to this status which can and have been answered, the answer to this one remains enigmatic). Acts 15:17;

" * ... Paul and Barnabas ... teaching and preaching the word of the Lord...". Acts 15:35;

" * ... every city where we have preached the Word of the Lord...". Acts 15:36;

" * ... forbidden of the Holy Ghost (or Spirit) to preach the Word in Asia,.....". [There has been much discussion why the Holy Spirit would take this seemingly restrictive or even peculiar action. It is possible that work was being conducted by others but not everyone is convinced by that reason. That Paul, Silas *et al* were in the region of Galatia (*Galadia, Chaldea*) is interesting from a revised History perspective. For it is the region of the diaspora Chaldeans or Kurds, descendants of the last exodus out of ancient Babylon (*circa* 100-800 BC). Even today, in their mysterious religion of Yesidism; which only a minority of Kurds involve themselves; that Kurdish *sect* is perhaps the last or most direct remaining link with the religion of ancient Babylon. This barrier set by "The Holy Spirit" may have something to do with the history and prophecy concerning Babylon. But it is not yet clear to us what that connection might be. It may be a space we need to watch out for as the prophecies 'unfurl' ⁽⁴⁷⁾]. Acts 16:6;

" # ... assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the Gospel unto them (*in Macedonia*)". [This is the fifth occasion we read of "The Gospel" being preached. After being barred from Bithynia (verse 7) Paul went to Troy (refer Addendum on Greek History). Also, as we shall see below, when writing to the Thessalonians, Paul was

primarily addressing Macedonians (e.g., I Thessalonians 4:10)]. Acts 16:10;

“ * ... Lydia ... of Thyatira who worshipped God, heard (*Paul*): whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things (*words* ?) which were spoken of Paul”. [In this act of outreach and witness we see that Lydia already “worshipped God”. Her “heart the Lord (*had*) opened”, and that it was “things” that Paul spoke which she listened to. “Thing” in Hebrew is the same word as ‘Word’. It is possible that in the process of translation and re-translations; in and out of Greek, Syrian (Aramaean), Latin and Hebrew; redactions etc., etc., that Luke originally had the Hebrew *Devar* in mind when writing “things” in this passage]. Acts 16:14;

“ * ... the Way of Salvation....”. [Refer Acts 9:2 & 27, 18:25-26 (twice), 19: 9 & 23, 22:4 and 24:14 & 22 for Luke’s use of “The Way”. Here, a demon-possessed girl actually spoke these words. The situation reminds us that Mary Magdalene was once likewise ‘possessed’. This ‘girl’ sums up Paul’s words as ‘the way of salvation’. But was that **all** Paul talked about? One of the cardinal points of the Dispensational theologians is that they see the Bible as being primarily Doxological not Soteriological⁽⁴⁸⁾. Although the ‘way of salvation’ is important is it all that “The Gospel” is about? In a subtle way, are we witnessing in this event the origin of a counterfeit Gospel that sells itself by assuaging the fears that most people have about what happens in the hereafter. This approach fails to mandate people to “be transformed by the renewing of your mind” to enable one to “prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:2. If one just concentrates on being or getting ‘Saved’ these other highly important aspects of the Christian life and discipleship tend to fall away or are even ignored. Only the milk of Scripture is discussed. No meat is eaten and the Believer remains impoverished and malnourished. He or She does not grow but remains at best a solely germinated seed or thorn-surrounded fruitless plant with meagre roots and no fruit]. Acts 16:17;

“ ... teach (*unlawful*) customs (and) to observe (*not*) being Romans ...”. [As with an earlier verse discussed above, this statement from Paul’s opponents needs to be closely observed because by deconstructing its points we can probably say something more about the things Paul **did** say. For example it is highly unlikely Paul taught the people any customs. Instead he would be liberating people from the rules of religion. “Religion” is derived from the Latin *Ligare* which means to bind oneself to rules. The Roman *Fasces* was a bundle of iron rods bounded with leather straps. The *Fasces* (or Fascists) symbolised a tightly-knit unit where everyone is bound together with little or no room for dissension, diversity or variation. Rome had its laws like any nation but Caesar (or The Senate) enforced them mercilessly. Yes we have to observe the Laws of Government but in Christ there really are none. Instead the rule of life is described as loving our neighbour as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for Her. Our conscience still pricks us when we do uncharitable things. Also, we are permitted but not mandated to use aspects of the Mosaic Law to “instruct” (Romans 2:18) ourselves in good behaviour. Paul, as a Roman citizen, surely did not tell people to disobey Rome’s laws. He even used Roman Law (e.g., as in verses 38-39) to defend his rights or liberate himself from the clutches of the Jewish High Priest who wanted him killed after his conversion. What Paul probably did talk about was Christ’s forthcoming kingdom. He would have said that we are citizens of, and heirs to, Christ’s Kingdom. We are ambassadors for Christ (II Corinthians 5:20 and Ephesians 6:20). That means we have to get on with the job of performing Romans 12:2 (quoted above)]. Acts 16:21;

“ * ... what must I do to be saved?(verse 31) ... And (Paul and Silas) said, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house’....”. [The question asked by the jailer was obviously in the context of the very public and well advertised preaching by Paul and Silas. Until now, the jailer like many others was weighing up the pros and cons of joining the Christians. But in this dire situation he began to panic and suddenly focussed on what really mattered. He obviously realised that his life is short and suddenly he is faced with the awful consequences of not being reconciled to God at the point of death. So his immediate response is, “What must I do to be saved”. But his question was surely asked with much of Paul’s teaching about the Word of God from the Creation through the Fall of Adam and on through history to make him face up to the reason why Man is on Earth and what is the ultimate destiny (one way or the other) of each man, woman and child (old enough to comprehend these matters). Too often, modern preachers take this “What must I do to be saved” out of its wider context and use it for a pretext to build their own congregation. One is not normally expecting a discussion about salvation to be under circumstances where an earthquake has smashed all the security barriers in a jail for which we are responsible. Then such preachers use this verse to justify that everyone in a family is counted in when there still needed to be a decision made by each member of the household, when each one is ready. One cannot use this verse to justify baptising infants]. Acts 16:30-31;

“ ... And they spake unto him the Word of the Lord...”. Acts 16:32;

“ * ... (Paul, in a Jewish synagogue in Thessalonika) ... reasoned with them out of the scriptures”. (Although this is just one verse that puts Paul’s preaching in this particular word-set or choice of words, it is in many ways what we are about in “preaching the Gospel”. We are “reasoning from the Scriptures”). Acts 17:2;

“ * ... that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ”. (Basically here Paul enunciates the text of I Corinthians 15:3-4). Acts 17:3;

“ ... These that have turned the world upside down”. [Again, we can deconstruct this statement made by some of Paul’s opponents. In the first place, it is obviously a figure of speech. But that is literally what did happen on that very important and unique day in *circa* 1445 BC when the Sun and Moon stood still ⁽⁴⁹⁾. In that context, the comment raises a smile as one sees the humour here. Then, the globe obviously did a somersault as it travelled around the Sun while continuing to spin on its axis. The reason for that event was to ensure God’s plan for Israel would no longer be obstructed by Jew nor by Gentile as was the problem when Adonizedek the Canaanite king of Jerusalem tried to defeat Joshua and the Israelites. Part of that plan was for Jesus to come to Earth as a son of Israel and to fulfill the promise of the Seed of the Woman made to Adam and Eve. God does move (figuratively and literally) Heaven and Earth to fulfill His Good, Acceptable and Perfect Will]. Acts 17:6;

“ * ... Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus”. [Again we can do some deconstruction here. Firstly, “Jason” is the Greek form of the Hebrew “Jonah”. The etymological development of this name from Hebrew through Phoenician or proto-Phoenician into Archaic- then Classical-Greek, involves an inversion of the original Hebrew. From “Jonah”, we get “Jonas” to put into the Subject Case for the Greek then the inversion to

Jason. I refer to this in my book (*Memphis, Merneptah and Ramesses*). In the Greek adventures of another “Jason” we see echoes of what happened to the “Jonah” mentioned in the Bible (*Book of Jonah*). But more to the point here, is that we see Paul must have mentioned Jesus’ role in the Messianic Kingdom to come. That is the Kingdom we pray for because God’s Will is to be executed in it. *Revelation* tells us it will be a thousand-year kingdom. But Israel’s rejection of Jesus’ Messiahship between AD 26/27-30 meant its delay until a new Generation of Israel is prepared to accept Jesus. Quite possibly, Paul had in mind the decrees that would have to be obeyed in the Messianic Kingdom. For example the Bible tells us that nations that fail to send delegations to the Messianic Kingdom versions of the Feast of Tabernacles will not receive rain in that year (Zechariah 14:16-18), or worse, if one is Egyptian, receive plagues! Very rarely do we hear church preachers talk about Christ’s forthcoming Messianic or Millennial Kingdom, and hardly ever in any serious detail. However, the Old Testament Scriptures do have a lot to say about the Millennial Kingdom. We cannot be at all dogmatic about what Paul precisely said because Luke did not give any details. Be we can reconstruct from our knowledge of the full Biblical text; from *Genesis* to *Revelation* (From *Alpha* to *Omega* or from *Aleph* to *Tav*); what he might well have said about Christ’s Kingdom from these statements by Jason’s opponents. From Paul’s perspective, looking forward to Jesus’ return was a valid possibility so that the Messianic Kingdom could have come into place even in his day. However, now *ex post*, it is so easy to see that did not happen that modern church folk and theologians go to an opposite extreme. They think that will never happen in the literal way Paul and others understood from the Old Testament passages about the ‘Kingdom of God’ with the Wonderful Government described in passages like Isaiah 9:6-7. Preachers are apt to overlook this. But if they too explained exactly what Christ’s future Kingdom will be like they would probably have people flooding to hear “The Word of the Lord”. Christ’s soon forthcoming kingdom will be far, far superior to any crap we get from current kingdoms, republics and dictatorships, Her Majesty QEII excepted]. Acts 17:7;

“ * ... they received The Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so”. (Most people find this hard to deal with because the verse obviously means these folk were reading the Hebrew Old Testament ⁽⁵⁰⁾. That means they were looking at prophecies regarding the Messiah. If Paul was talking about the Messianic Kingdom, and one would be surprised if he wasn’t, they would have been looking at Scripture concerning that. As we have said, there is quite a lot of Scripture in the Bible about the future Kingdom and its Messiah. But one would not know that attending sermons in churches over the past 55 years as this author faithfully and obediently has done). Acts 17:11;

“ ... Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few”. (We note here that the primary group saved in this instance comprised the Jews in the synagogue. At this stage in the Church’s history, plenty of Jews are believing the Word about Jesus]. Acts 17:12;

“ * ... The Word of God was preached at Berea.....”. (This was the group that “searched the Scriptures daily” (verse 11) to check out the things Paul was teaching. They were using the Old Testament of course. That shows us today that we still need the Old Testament to understand God’s Word. In fact unless one has a good grasp of the Old Testament one cannot understand very much apart from the basics in the Scriptures. This is why we prefer to see it as the ‘*Aleph*’ Testament which, with the New or ‘*Tav*’

Testament, again draws from the *Alpha-Omega* or *Aleph-Tav* statements by the *Godhead* in Revelation ⁵¹). Acts 17:13;

“ ... Therefore (Paul) disputed (*dialegomai*) in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons,....”. [Here we see Paul entering into **dialogue** with the Jews in the synagogues in Athens. The KJV’s “disputed” sounds a bit harsh today but the original Greek word recognisable in our word “dialogue” shows that Paul entered into conversations and doubtlessly steered the ‘dialogue’ into a discussion of how Christ came to fulfill Scripture. This means that he could explain why certain passages, some of them perhaps enigmatic or at least obscure, were in the Bible or Scrolls of Scripture. For example, he might have pointed out that the ‘little shoot’ or *nazar* of Isaiah 11:1 was directly related to the reference to Zebulun and Naphtali in Isaiah 9:1-2. Therein, away back in *circa* 700 BC through His prophet at the time, God intended to show His Only Begotten Son Jesus (John 3:16) would live and dwell in Nazareth which was merely some sort of fort ⁽⁵²⁾ in Isaiah’s time. Only God could have controlled the Scripture to be written in that way, i.e., to be seemingly meaningless to readers between 722 and 7 BC. Neither Jerusalem nor Bethlehem would be Jesus’ hometowns at His First Coming. He would be **born** in Bethlehem according to Micah 5:2 ⁽⁵³⁾. In fact, by living in Nazareth, Jesus was virtually a refugee up north so far away (relatively speaking) from His ancestral home and birthplace. In 700 BC, only God could have foreseen and organised for Jesus to live in a future city; not built until the Greco-Roman era 400 years after the death of Isaiah; which would “see a Great Light” (The *Shecinah* Glory). Although Christ’s *Personal* Glory between 7 BC and AD 30 was hidden for most of the time except at the ‘house’ in Bethlehem the Maji were looking for then at the Mount of Transfiguration. Only God could have foreseen the future establishment of a city that resembled a tree stump with its system of straight roots (routes) extending across the plain but all-gnarled-up at the base (refer endnote ‘52’). This was just one of many ways God shows His Glory in this magnificent writing in these prophecies (Isaiah 11:1 and 9:1-2). For mere men, it would be impossible to compose text with such deep predictive meaning. This is just one of many pieces of evidence for the Divine Inspiration of the Bible. But Paul could turn such verses around to explain how it was possible to effectively **prove** Jesus of Nazareth is, was and always will be The Messiah of Israel. Whether Paul did use these texts we will not know this side of the Millennium. But if he, or the other Apostles, did not, we certainly can! If it is possible to find these things out by searching the Scriptures as the Bereans were doing then it would not be necessary for the Apostles to explain them or all of them, because they obviously did explain how some prophecies applied. Presumably, we can work out the meaning of certain prophecies and we are expected to without being *spoon-fed* by the Apostles for all of our understanding. They expected us to read and study the Bible for ourselves. In fact, it’s possible even the Apostles were prevented from understanding some scriptures as implied by Daniel 12:4 & 9 and other verses which in turn remind or require our generation that it is our responsibility to work some of them out and not for previous generations who were not able to do that. For this task, we must be working fully-filled with the Spirit of God, allowing Him to teach us (‘God is my teacher’, *Morie!*). We need to dialogue with each other to learn things. Not just sit in an audience listening to sermons or lectures]. Acts 17:17;

“ * ... he preached unto them (philosophers) Jesus, and the resurrection ...”. Acts 17:18;

“ * ... this new doctrine”. [By now Paul is in the Aeropagus an Athenian forum for philosophical discussions. Our view of Greek history, let’s say from 1500 BC to the time

of Christ, is vastly different to the Establishment's. Before what we might define "Achaean Greek" civilisation there was the Minoan or Cretan phase. The general view is that a massive volcanic explosion on the island of Thera-Santorini destroyed the Minoans *et al.* The precise date is unknown despite the arrogant protestations of the geologists that they do know. The volcano destroyed the Minoans or their infrastructure though the people may have survived. Thus far there is some agreement between our view and the Establishment's. If that destruction was the same as that which felled Egypt in 1485 BC at the Ten Plagues, a date that is almost certain, then the Bible effectively gives us a very precise date for Santorini's blow-out. The people who survived presumably then began re-building on the relative safety of the Peloponese or Mainland Peninsula of Greece as we know it today. The Trojan War which we date at about 780 BC shows that the Achaean Greek states were able to assemble an impressive coalition of armies and navies to besiege mighty Troy with its mix of Phoenician, Chaldean and 'Greek' communities in *Troya* ⁽⁵⁴⁾ or *Tyra* = Tyre. So let's say it took the 'Achaean' about 700 years to approach the standards set by the Minoan civilisation. But the Ten Year Trojan Campaign wrecked the Achaeans or Aegeans and they disassembled into fractious city states into which Jews (Ionians) and Tyrians, Sidonians and Gebalites (Geba-Byblos) fled as they too escaped Assyrian domination from *circa* 800 BC to 600 BC. Those 'Ionians' and 'Dorians' (*Tyrians*), or Jews and Phoenicians, brought their talents and religions to the Greek Mainland from the immediate environs of the islands and bays or quays of Western Turkey (Quays of Tyre) where they had initially settled after getting out of "The Levant" (Israel-Lebanon, the "Punt-Land" of the Egyptians). That new cosmopolitan 'culture' blossomed into the great 'Greek' Classical Period from 600-500 BC after which the Hellenists came into their own especially after the Macedonian Invasion (350 BC) from Serbia and South Slavia or what we used to call Yugoslavia. It is in that Hellenistic milieu in AD 40; somewhat superceded by the *culture* of Rome (originally settled by Chaldean refugees from Troy in *circa* 753 BC); that Apostle Paul dialogued with evolutionist philosophers at the Aeropagus. These men said Paul's "doctrine" was "new". But all Paul was doing was to announce that the Seed of the Woman Programme that these philosophers had long-since either abandoned or decided to disbelieve ⁽⁵⁵⁾, had actually been activated as God had promised in Genesis 3:15(a). That baby born to the woman (Mary-Miri-Miriam, descendant of David) without a man's seed had actually grown up to become a Thirty-Seven year-old Man. However, in His Prime, this 'Last Adam' incredibly gave up his life so that Men may be saved from their sins. To prove He had achieved that He resurrected from the dead! The latter aspect of the message was certainly "New" but its full-Scriptural context was literally as old as Adam the First Man in *circa* 4000 BC. If the Aeropagite philosophers had not already rejected the Seed of the Woman Programme they had certainly forgotten about it. Part of the "Doctrine" was **not so new!** Unfortunately theologians and many others let these sceptical and often foolish not-so-deep thinkers dominate the agenda and fix what we believe as being all completely new. What was 'new' was that the Seed of the Woman Programme had now been completed and fully explained. The 'completion' was the Sacrificial Death then Burial and finally Resurrection of the baby born of the Woman's Seed alone. It is then possible to suggest that some people who believed in the Seed of the Woman Programme then rejected the death, butrial and resurrection as being a foolish and silly idea. If so, that might partly explain why Paul referred to "The foolishness of the Cross" (I Corinthians 1:18 and I Corinthians 1:23). The very idea that this 'Saviour' would do that was simply unacceptable to many 'educated' people. Perhaps that is why it is easiest to believe when one is a child before one receives too much 'education']. Acts 17:19;

“ ... certain strange things”. (What we teach must sound like that to the vast bulk of humanity now. In past times, when the preaching of the Word of God reached a watershed whereby nearly everyone would refuse to listen, had no interest in God or for one reason or another had no wherewithal to hear the message, God intervened with outstanding miraculous or catastrophic actions that awoke the populace with a bang! Which Biblically prophesied ‘Bang’ is to come as we write is unclear. However, the Ezekiel 38:1 to 39:16 invasion of Israel is a prime candidate and the most likely we suggest. That event is accompanied by fire from heaven (Ezekiel 38:22, 39:6) in its wake descending on both Israel’s invaders and on the “islands dwelling carelessly” away from the main theatre, However, as Matthew 24:8, Mark 13:8 attest whatever is the next ‘Big Bang’ there are plenty more to follow in accelerating succession ⁽⁵⁶⁾. Perhaps the Antarctic Ice Cap which is aquaplaning on 130 warm-water lakes might slip off into one or all of the oceans. The Indian Ocean is the most likely because increased volcanic activity on its floor is generating unusually large waves undermining the under-water ice shelves bulwarking or supporting the main ice pack on the land-mass]. Acts 17:20;

“ ... some new thing...”. [We note in these two examples a ‘strange’ or ‘new’ “**thing**”. Again we are reminded of the Hebrew *devar* meaning just ‘thing’ in modern Hebrew but having a far richer and deeper meaning in Biblical Hebrew. Its meaning in the Bible ranges from ‘Word’ to ‘Food’, or ‘Matter’, ‘Question’ and even ‘Bee’. The Hebrew *daleth*, *beit*, *reysh* (דבר, D-B-R) changed to *daleth*, *beit*, *shin* (דבש, D-B-Sh) gives us the word for ‘honey’ simply by exchanging the third last letter of the Hebrew alphabet (*reysh*, ר) with a *shin* (ש) the second last letter or the one immediately after the *reysh*. That subtle alteration provides us with the Hebrew word for ‘honey’ or the sweet fruit of the Word (symbolised by what is made in the hives by bees or *devorim* in Hebrew). This is an example of the word-speak or word-pictures that we can see in the Hebrew. It would appear such plays on words, and many varieties of word-plays, are **intentional** in the Scripture and are even the main form of metaphor found in Scripture. They provide a bit of fun and interest in the Scriptures for those keen to learn]. Acts 17:21;

“ ... the midst of Mars' Hill...”. [This is where Paul stood to address these Athenian philosophers and academics debating the world’s problems or opportunities and the governance required. In short, Paul was talking theology rather than Jesus and His Gospel *per se* and right in the inner sanctum of the main university of the Roman world. Ironically today (May 2019) governments and academics have many people seized with the *exciting* prospect of mankind making a voyage to Mars to establish a human colony there and add another great leap forward in the pursuit of the human dream (Genesis 11:4). In July 2015, the writer listened to three people on *Al Jazeera’s* TV’s *The Stream* discuss the *Dream*. Participants in the discussion all envisaged a non-return voyage to make it economically viable. But the problems of radiation poisoning and muscle-mass-loss ⁽⁵⁷⁾ from prolonged weightlessness were conveniently brushed aside. So space exploration is being used by governments to divert the world’s attention from other pressing issues for example Islam’s implosion as it follows or *repeats* a path Christendom’s governance system did until the end of the Thirty Years War ⁽⁵⁸⁾. Fore more, read the addendum below “Mars Hill Today”]. Acts 17:22;

“ ... The Unknown God Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you”. [Apostle Paul demonstrated here how he could adapt what he knew from the Bible and from his general knowledge and observation to a particular situation and declare: (see next passage)]. Acts 17:23;

“ * ... (The) God that made the world and all things therein...”. [Paul gets straight into the Creation with these evolutionists present. Aristotle around 300 BC began to investigate evolutionist ideas which were still quite primitive and formative at this time on Mars Hill compared to the sophisticated models of modern evolutionists. This reflected a growing view amongst the *modernists* of that era (300 BC onwards) that there was neither God nor gods. The stories of the gods in the myths and legends of Persians, Greeks, Romans; and before those nations, myths of the Babylonians, Egyptians and Assyrians; were quite unbelievable to the then ‘*modern*’ *mind* on Mars Hill. Hence the debate at the Aeropagus on Mars Hill ⁽⁵⁹⁾. Despite the perversions of pagan mythologies [refer endnote (59)] there had always been a proportion of the world’s population that had kept contact with the Jews, one way or another, and with The (written) Word of God in what we now refer to as “The Bible”. By AD 40, and probably since Persian times *circa* 500 BC, non-Jewish or Gentile believers, or those who “feared God”, typically were attending Jewish synagogues around the Roman Empire and no doubt in Persia, Babylon and even in *Sinim*-China ⁽⁶⁰⁾. Acts 17:24;

“ * ... they heard of the resurrection of the dead ...”. [Paul concluded his sermon on Creation, the Creation of Man, and that we are all related to each other as “the offspring of God”(verse 29). But men lost touch with God. He pointed out that all face Judgement and that Christ resurrected from the dead to win redemption for man and save us from the awful consequences of damnation. Paul called on the listeners to repent or change their mind about this “unknown God”, believe Him, Believe He is the Creator and that the Son fulfilled the Seed of the Woman Programme that had been promised to Adam and Eve the first parents of us all. But there was scoffing at the concept of resurrection. That would run contrary to their philosophy of evolutionism that says we return to dust for perpetuity. The Bible points out that the ‘return to dust’ is temporary until The Resurrection when all men and women are changed into an eternal body. In verse 34, Dionysius the Areopagite “believed”]. Acts 17:32-34;

“ * ... And he reasoned in the synagogue (*from the Scriptures ?*) every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greek...”. [Paul, now in Corinth, “reasoned” and “persuaded” both Jew and Gentile (“Greek”). The text does not add “from the Scriptures” as in Acts 17:2. But we may infer he did]. Acts 18:4;

“ * ... testified to the Jews that Jesus was *The Christ*”. [This may suggest that on occasions Paul may only have raised the issue of Jesus’ Messiahship with Jewish audiences. Certainly, from place to place, depending on the characteristics in the mix of people listening, Paul adapted or targeted his message in various ways. The discourse at the Aeropagus in Athens confirms that he did that on other matters such as Creation-Evolution. The Messiahship of Christ is for Israel to officially acknowledge so to some extent Paul may have considered this aspect was mostly relevant to his Jewish audiences. Nevertheless, everyone must understand and accept that Jesus of Nazareth **is** King of Israel and **will** govern the World as King of Israel, reigning from Jerusalem. That is going to be the Messianic Role that Jesus of Nazareth will fulfill. This Gentile is quite happy and contented with that promise! So one would have had no difficulty listening to Paul testifying to Jesus’ Messiahship. One could point to a comparison from AD 1660 in England and Scotland where the Public called on their late and executed king’s son to return from exile and reign from London as Charles II ⁽⁶¹⁾. It was not for the rest of the world’s nations to call Prince Charles back. Gentiles who nevertheless acknowledge and stress the importance of Jesus’ Messiahship cannot in any way directly affect Jesus return

to Earth as Israel can and will. There could be an indirect effect in terms of Gentiles' success in convincing Israel to come to that conclusion. Perhaps some Gentiles will be among the throng at Bozrah-Petra (in Jordan) where that great 'Last Day' Acknowledgement of Jesus' Messiahship and Request for His Return ⁽⁶²⁾ occurs. But the Bible says that only on the last three days of the Tribulation (Hosea 5:16 - 6:2) will "all Israel" (Romans 11:26) actually and finally yield to what will have become obvious]. Acts 18:5;

" * ... Justus, one that worshipped God". [If Justus were a proselyte, we probably would have been told that because other proselytes usually were identified that way in Scripture (Acts 2:10, 6:5 and 13:43). Nevertheless, Justus may have been an example of a Proselyte now coming to faith in Jesus having heard Paul's *Gospel* message. He already believed in the God of Israel, Jehovah or Yahweh). Obviously, Justus might have been Jewish because his house adjoined the local synagogue. Possibly, as was the experience of this observer who in the course of his employment ⁽⁶³⁾ occupied a dwelling *underneath* a synagogue, Justus might even have been a Gentile custodian employed by the Jewish. In that capacity, Justus would have assisted in the running and maintenance of the synagogue especially on High Holidays and Sabbaths as a *Shabbas Goy*. In many diaspora societies Jews assiduously following the Laws of Moses and rabbinical dictates on those matters, usually needed such assistance so they hired Gentiles in that capacity. Although this is speculation it's useful because it raises certain issues of interest. However, the term "worshipped God" shows that if he was a Gentile, he was like many other Gentiles around the world who were believers in the One True God. There had been many God-fearing believers since Adam and all through the 'Israel' Period. We should not overlook the existence, over eons, of God-fearing men and women who lived their lives outside the Commonwealth of Israel ⁽⁶⁴⁾ and somewhere else in the world]. Acts 18:7;

" * ... teaching the word of God". (So Paul stayed with Justus the Corinthian for eighteen months teaching and perhaps preaching in the Synagogue "The Word of God"). Acts 18:11;

" ... This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law". [The way this is written could give the impression Paul's opponents were alleging that Paul had persuaded men to disobey Caesar's commandments concerning religion ⁽⁶⁵⁾. The ensuing verses show that Paul was in no doubt they were using the Mosaic Law as the excuse to stop his teaching. But "Gallio cared for none of those things" (Acts 18:17)]. Acts 18:13;

" ... But if it be a question of words and names,.....". [Again we can deconstruct these words here of Gallio; probably a Roman and governing "Deputy" for Caesar of the Greek region of Achaia; and perhaps find out something useful. For instance, let's ask what Gallio meant by "words and names". We could use our knowledge of the etymology and historicity of place-names such as Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Nazareth for they are the three towns we most associate with Jesus. "Bethlehem", where He was born, means 'House of Bread'. Jesus came down to Earth as "The Bread From Heaven". "Jerusalem"; which He often visited not only through His Ministry but no doubt at least for all the three major Festivals each year from the ages of twelve to thirty-seven ⁽⁶⁶⁾; means 'God will see Peace'. That 'True Peace' (*Shalom*), is brought about in two stages. Firstly, Jesus' Sacrifice on the Cross there brought Soteriological Peace between God and Man. Then, soon for us 2000 years later, Jesus' Peaceful physical reign occurs from Jerusalem in the Messianic-Millennial Kingdom. "Nazareth" is even more interesting as we have explained

above (refer comments on passages in Acts 10:38, 17:17 and associated endnotes). Obviously, Gallio only got various excerpts from several different sources. It can hardly be expected such reports were exact or precise. But their imprecision may tell us something even so. Every good detective and journalist knows that. The meaning of “Nazareth” from Isaiah 11:1 and its association with Isaiah 9:1-2, is almost or 99% a virtual proof that Jesus must have been the fulfilment of those two therefore many other verses of Prophecy. No wonder Gallio thought this was all just a matter of “words and names”. Obviously such things were part and parcel of Paul’s approach to teaching and preaching. We should be using such strategies in our evangelism. Certainly, it is the intention of this author to promulgate such interesting material]. Acts 18:15;

“ ... reasoned with the Jews”. (Even though Paul, in Acts 18:6, appeared to have been so disgusted with the negative responses of some Jews in ‘congregations’ or “synagogues of the Jews”, we see here that Paul still “reasoned” with them. So He had not completely given up on them and Romans chapters 9-11 explain that very clearly ⁽⁶⁷⁾. In fact, there, Paul exhorts Gentiles to continue working for the salvation of the Jews even to the point of preaching to the Jew First, then to the Gentile). Acts 18:19;

“ * ... Apollos, born at Alexandria, and mighty in the scriptures and (verse 25) instructed in The Way of the Lord”. [There is a body of opinion that Apollos of Alexandria, Egypt, came to, or already was in, Israel to hear Jesus and John the Baptist preach between 27-30 AD. But he departed Israel before the Crucifixion and Resurrection. Therefore, despite his *mighty* knowledge of the Bible and recognition that Jesus must have fulfilled many prophecies, for example Isaiah 11:1 and 9:2, Apollos was unaware of the more recent or latest facts concerning the Passover (*Pesach*) and Feast of Unleavened Bread of AD 30 and subsequent new components of ‘Content of Faith’ for the believer as per I Corinthians 15:3-4. “Aquila and Priscilla” updated him]. Acts 18:24-25;

“ * ... Aquila and Priscilla... expounded unto him the Way of God more perfectly”. [Here it is “The Way of God” that is “expounded”. (Regarding “The Way”, refer Acts 9:2, & 27, 16:17, 18:25, 19: 9 & 23, 22:4 and 24:14 & 22). Aquila and Priscilla must have discussed many things with Apollos when updating or “more perfectly” expounding matters. Presumably, too, these discussions involved meaty scriptural issues which we will look at in this footnote ⁽⁶⁸⁾]. Acts 18:26;

“ * ... helped them much which had believed through grace...”. Acts 18:27;

“ * ... shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was (the) Christ...”. [Here, and elsewhere that similar groups met, Paul needed to explain to the Jews present that they also had to realise and acknowledge that a few years previously their leaders had rejected Jesus of Nazareth’s claim to Messiahship. Paul had to explain to Jews and others in Greece that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah or Christ. Back in Jerusalem in Israel, between AD 27-30, it primarily had been the Israelite (Jewish) leadership that led this rejection followed by most of the general population. The leaders dismissed claims by both ‘Jesus of Nazareth’ and many supporters that ‘Jesus was the Messiah (Christ) long promised by the Prophets and (OT) Scriptures’. A most telling couple of Scriptures in that regard, one might now add, lay in the enigmatic prophecies of Isaiah 9:1-2 and Isaiah 11:1 that no one in the Gospels seems to have directly referred to! Mind you, no one could make out what the first line in Psalm 110:1 meant. Paul may also have confirmed that the Seed of the Woman of Genesis 3:15, *manifesting* in Jesus of **Nazareth**, did indeed turn out to be

Israel's Messiah **as well**. Although that fact was probably reasonably clear to Old Testament Believers eg., or i.e., when God said to Abraham that "in his seed all the world's families would be blessed", it was not until Jesus' Advent when God made that obvious by identifying Who that person would be (c.f., or e.g., John 1:32). To the Gentiles in any of Paul's audiences, the specific blessing here is that Gentiles at all times, even after the special Calling to Abraham and his descendants, would continue to receive complete forgiveness from Sin. However, until Jesus' Advent and Death and Resurrection, that soteriological salvation would be through a special seed-descendant from Eve of course (Genesis 3:15) also right through the lines of Shem, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob-Israel etc. Every Believer since Adam received a temporal or temporary **covering for Sin** through animal sacrifice, but full, final and complete **atonement and remission for Sin** would and could only come through this special Seed of the Woman descended from the children of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Jesse, David, Nathan, and through their wives, then ultimately Mary descended from these men and women of old. The message to Jews needed to be differentiated on the point about the Messiah because Gentiles would not directly be involved in the change of mind Israel would have to undergo in order to get Jesus to come and save them from Armageddon. Many Gentiles after AD 30 would be commissioned to explain to Jews why Jesus was the Messiah-Christ. However, in regard to the as yet unfulfilled role of the Messiah in physically saving Israel from her enemies as also long promised in the writings of the scribes, prophets and sages, Gentiles can only be *bystanders*. The aspect of the Messiah role to save Israel from her enemies became known as 'Messiah Son of David'. The other soteriological saving role that directly ⁽⁶⁹⁾ benefits both Jews and Gentiles, i.e., that of saving us from our sins, was seen in a type of Messiah known as "The Son of Joseph" after the parallel with what happened to Joseph the son of Jacob and Rachel in the *Book of Genesis*. Jesus of Nazareth will end up fulfilling both roles. Modern Jewry, having rejected Jesus now expects two messiahs to come. In this, Jews share a common idea with the Muslims ⁽⁷⁰⁾ who are awaiting the Mahdi and Jesus, oddly enough. To summarise, Modern Israel must also repent of its own and its ancestors' rejection ⁽⁷¹⁾ of Jesus' Messiahship before He will return to rescue "all Israel" (Psalm 14:7, Romans 11:26) from destruction at Antichrist's hands. Soteriological Salvation is always on offer to anyone who repents and believes. The actual return, or *Second Coming*, of Christ is dependent on Israel calling on Him to save them from Antichrist *et al*; but as noted above, Gentiles are only bystanders, urging or egging them on in a sense, in that calling. However, it will also be, in that process, Israel will realise it needs to call on Him as Saviour of their **sins** as well. Isaiah 53 explains they will do that. Of course, many "*Messianic*" Jews already accept that. The Rapture, is a Special Return of Jesus just for the Church (of believing Jews and Gentiles) and all deceased saints (again of believing Jews and Gentiles). On that occasion, and in contradistinction to the Second Coming at only the Father's **behest and timing**, Jesus only comes as far as the skies above. That is in order to fetch-up in the "Great Evacuation" ⁽⁷²⁾ the living believers in the True Church or "Body" of Christ (Jewish and Gentile) and the "dead in Christ". Those alive will be "translated" in an instant into their Resurrected Body and are taken into Heaven which our sinful carnal body cannot enter. The believing souls now resting in Heaven (pre-Abrahamic, Jewish and Gentile), as they have been since the Cross, receive at this time their Glorified Bodies too. These new Bodies no longer require blood it seems. So at The Rapture, the dead will be resurrected and go to Heaven as Body and Soul are rejoined. Dead and Living Believers will hear "The Last Trump" as pre-figured by the Festival of Trumpets ⁽⁷³⁾. Only living believers will physically see this process. The dead just experience and probably hear but will not "see" in the manner living saints at the time will (c.f., Luke 17:22 in the last clause of the verse)]. Acts 18:28;

“ * ... spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God ...”. [The context here is that Paul had come across a group of twelve disciples (verse 7). Apparently, by implication of the first verse in the chapter, they had received teaching from Apollos. However, Apollos taught them before he had come to understand the distinction between John the Baptist’s message and that of The Cross and Pentecost-Shavuot. While John called on Israel to repent, ceremonially wash clean in the waters of the River Jordan and prepare Herself for Jesus’ Message and Kingdom Offer, Israel’s subsequent rejection of Jesus meant a new circumstance now applied since Apollos heard John. Apollos had apparently departed Israel after John’s and Jesus’ early preaching but before the Official Rejection of Matthew 12:23 and Luke 11:15 etc. Unfortunately, no one can be absolutely sure of this information about that situation concerning Apollos and his teaching. Nevertheless, it is quite plausible and is akin to our conjecture that the Syro-Phoenician woman’s daughter was in fact Mary *the* Magdalene. But we cannot be absolutist either way concerning these things. As we note from Exodus 4:8, God had enigmatically heralded or foreshadowed, but not explicitly stated as such, Israel’s AD 30 rejection of Jesus. God said that away back in *circa* 1485 BC there in the desert at the ‘Burning Bush’ with Moses. That message remained hidden, being left in the Subjunctive Voice. In effect God delivered that message via the two tricks He called on Moses to show Israel and Pharaoh that God was determined to effect His plans for Israel in Canaan (to be renamed “Israel”) - **not in Egypt!** The enigma of Israel’s rejection of Jesus of Nazareth has exercised the minds of not only Jews but also Gentiles looking on in disbelief so to speak. These things have exercised the minds of the theologians ever since. Now, we understand what Exodus 4:8 and the ‘Key’ in Revelation 19:10 ⁽⁷⁴⁾ are really telling us why the reason for allowing this *enigma* to operate for fifteen centuries has disappeared or become redundant. The apparent fact that this rejection was in process encouraged or motivated Mary Magdalene’s mother, the “Syro-Phoenician” or “Canaanite” woman, to so boldly approach Jesus for help. That was near Tyre and Sidon when Jesus visited the region for some undeclared and ostensibly unusual reason. She could see the parallels between Israel’s rejection of Jesus, or process thereof, and Israel’s rejection of Elijah and Elisha ⁽⁷⁵⁾ in *circa* 800 BC. Since God foreknew Israel’s rejection of Jesus’ First Coming, God gave Jesus permission to “build **His** Church” in the wake of Israel’s rejection of Messiah. The process of that rejection culminated in the accusation Jesus cast out deaf and dumb demons with the assistance of the Prince of Devils named (by tradition) “Beelzebub”. Entry into this new congregation or “church” (*kirk* or *eglise*, *ekklesia*) could only be brought about by permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers as Jeremiah 31:31 and other passages explained and prophesied. God would circumcise the hearts of men and women (Deuteronomy 10:16, 30:6 and Jeremiah 4:4) in a new and special way (i.e., the permanent and complete infilling and indwelling of the Holy Spirit) only made possible by Jesus’ sacrifice. On belief and acceptance that Peter had “Opened the Keys of the Kingdom”, Paul then explained “that they (this small group of isolated Jewish believers) should believe on him which should come after him (*John the Baptist*) that is, on Christ (*Messiah*) Jesus of Nazareth. (Acts:19:5) “ ... When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus”. Then verse 6 continues, “And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them”. Immediately, “they spake with tongues, and prophesied”. A similar phenomenon occurred with the Jews and Proselytes at Pentecost. It occurred with the Samaritans who heard Peter and John in Samaria City. Then it happened with Cornelius and the Romans at Caesarea where Peter preached in the company of Jewish witnesses he took with him. This ‘phenomenon’, an additional but one-off (**for each particular group**) special

manifestation of miraculous 'language' and 'prophesying' was deemed necessary to reinforce the "*new circumstance*" of this 'permanent and complete infilling and indwelling of the Holy Spirit' **spanned all men and women**. The permanent and complete indwelling and infilling of the Holy Spirit in the life of the post-cross believer remains as, day by day, each individual comes to faith, repentance or belief. However, their individual conversions will not be accompanied by tongues or prophesying unless, perhaps, the latter means some sort of 'exhortation' or perhaps *word of praise, song* or prayer. To some extent this brief interlude in *Acts* clarifies the slight *change in message* covering the interval between Old Testament and New Testament Saints and the special three and a half year period when John prepared, and Jesus offered, the Kingdom of God to that particular Generation of Israel. One way or another, no matter which way Israel opted - **Yes** or **No** - The Cross needed to occur. If Israel had voted "Yes" for Jesus then at the Resurrection Jesus would have immediately overthrown Rome and the world's other kingdoms and instituted His Own! In the *actual* event, after the Rejection, the Resurrection and Ascension, we saw instead the introduction of the Mystery Kingdom Age (or *stage of His Story*). That began with the institution or establishment of the Church of Christ. Thus a third 'Era' or another two millennia, or perhaps 'Two Days' (II Peter 3:8), has been inserted into Human History before the now-delayed or -deferred Millennial Kingdom eventually gets ushered in. Analysing certain prophecies explains it was to come some time after the *ascension* and immediately after the brief career and Fall of The Antichrist. In the very early days of the Church, the Ascension having occurred, there seemed to be little sign of the antichrist and even their attempts to label Nero as such proved to be a futile expectation. As already noted, it only was The Cross that effectively permitted or allowed for permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Believer, in the newly founded Church of Christ, in contradistinction to temporary infillings that pre-Cross Believers could experience, e.g., people like Enoch and Noah would have experienced. The Pentecostals' and Charismatics' claims that we have to miraculously speak strange languages or make predictions about the future to prove we are 'saved' is nonsense. So this excerpt in the first few verses of chapter nineteen is effectively slipped into the text almost un-noticed. However, careful reading and analysis of the text from a Hebrew and from correct historical perspectives helps clarify what is otherwise made to be an unnecessarily complicated theological *conundrum* ⁽⁷⁶⁾]. Acts 19:8; ###

" * ... But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that Way.....he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus ..". [We note here a reference to "The Way" once again. *The Acts* need to be especially carefully read to pick up the following points concerning "The Way". Altogether, we find references in Acts 9:2, 27 (in a sort of *double entendre*), 16:17, 18:25-26 (twice), 19: 9 & 23, 22:4 and 24:14 & 22 using this term "The Way". It is presumably derived from Jesus' claim that "I am The Way, The Truth and The Life; No one comes to The Father except by Me" (John 14:6)]. Acts 19:9;

" * ... Asia ... heard the Word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks". (Jews and Greeks responding to 'The Word' again this time in 'Asia Minor', today's modern Turkey. 'Asia' here does not refer to China or India etc., although perhaps some people from those lands nevertheless heard this message while travelling in the region as many no doubt were in those days when the Roman Empire was still the '*Centre of the World*'). Acts 19:10;

" * ... Jesus whom Paul preached". [Here the words are spoken by those with evil spirits.

Certain mischievous Jews enlisted some black arts specialists and occultists to call up demonic spirits that tried via their hosts to mingle black magic with the Word of God and generally undermine Paul's work. The Bible warns that even the demons (devils) know Jesus (James 2:19). But Apostle James (actually בַּקְעִי, *Yaakov* or *Jacob*) used the point to say that "Faith without works is dead". He said that in order to make sure believers do not go to the wrong end of the spectrum and think they can practise their faith without works. What constitutes works is a special topic on its own. Regarding the 'Black Arts', the following occurred at this stage of the edit process. During the week, the world was remembering the 20th anniversary of the death ("unlawful killing") of Diana Princess of Wales who, according to her brother, "was named after a hunter goddess" but "became the most hunted person" by the media. She played the media and they espied her alighting a helicopter to consult a medium of the sort of practitioner of black arts this passage in Acts refers to. A few days later she was dead like King Saul who met his death (probably at his own hand) a few days after consulting a medium. Mantras are the stock-in-trade of Occultists. We should be careful not to also slip into use of mantras and vain repetitions to the point that to "preach Jesus" ⁽⁷⁷⁾ itself becomes a mantra. Or to put it another way, "there's more to 'preaching Jesus' than meets the eye". The examples in the footnote collects may amplify and illustrate this point]. Acts 19:13;

" * ... The name of the Lord Jesus was magnified". (As a result of the scare from the demons who chased the Jewish troublemakers trying to upset Paul's work for the Lord in Ephesus). Acts 19:17;

" * ... So mightily grew the Word of the Lord and prevailed". Acts 19:20;

" * ... And the same time there arose no small stir about that Way". (This is another reference to "The Way". Refer to the entry for Acts 9:27 for the other examples. By this "time", Paul had despatched Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia (c.f., I Thessalonians 3:2 and 4:10 for the Thessaly-Macedonia link) while he stayed a bit longer in Ephesus. After their departure began the row about the silversmiths losing business because their statues and idols of Diana were no longer selling like hot-cakes. Presumably sales fell off to the many pilgrims coming to Ephesus. The city had become a major centre like Mecca would do 700 years later because of its religious significance. According to Acts 19:35 a stone from the Goddess's father Jupiter had landed there from heaven. Like Mecca, the place was revealed as a holy site of the planet-gods. Mecca's stone is still a shrine there and people can view the meteorite or asteroid fragment. The Ephesian stone has long since disappeared. Apparently it had the shape of a woman's breast confirming it to be female one supposes). Acts 19:23;

" * ... They be no gods, which are made with hands". (Obviously Paul would have said something like this. These are the words of a pagan merchandiser of idols for worship. He is accurately portraying what Paul said but he is annoyed because those believing Paul are turning to be former customers and he is losing business, networks and repeat orders. A bit of Deconstruction (c.f., Jacques Derrida) allows us to recognise that even in the mouths of the corrupt we can still learn things that are valid or even useful and valuable. Obviously, Paul's message talked about Creation and The Fall of Adam. He might have explained why people had ended up worshipping all these strange things and disbelieving the True God (Jehovah-Yahweh). It is unlikely that Paul could explain why these stones had fallen from heaven or explain how the catastrophes of the previous four millennia had occurred. He would have been able to refer to God's need to judge or discipline mankind

but he would be bereft of information we now have concerning the Cosmos etc. Paul's preaching covered many aspects of the Word of God, not just "The Gospel" and even when he used that term he carefully defined or qualified it each time). Acts 19:26;

" * ... Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus the Christ". (Some people might describe those words as an expression of "The Gospel". In Acts 2:38 the words "Repent and be Baptised" are used as a modern catch-cry for "The Gospel". That was Peter's statement and is covered in full above. The phrases here are further elaboration on the things Paul and others taught. When we use the term "The Gospel" we need to be specific. Otherwise the term simply becomes a jargon word or mantra. We recommend people refer to "The Gospel according to I Corinthians 15:1 - 57". Others, afraid to delve too deeply into all the Bible's revelation say we should stick to "preaching The Gospel". But that is an excuse, not evangelism). Acts 20:21;

" # ... the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God". (Here Paul distinguishes between a 'ministry' and 'the Gospel'. But we note here it is "The Gospel of the Grace of God". But that 'gospel' was known as far back as Adam who received God's Grace when the animals were slaughtered to cover their nakedness now felt because of their sin. That was God's Grace. The Hebrew word for Grace may not have appeared in the text at that point. The first time "grace" (חן, *chen*) appears in the Hebrew text is with Noah in Genesis 6:8. In Exodus 33:12-13, Moses knew he had found Grace in God's sight but he knew that from an earlier stage in his life not explained in the text ⁷⁸). Acts 20:24;

" * ... Ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the Kingdom of God ..". (Paul was speaking here in a very final and farewell speech. In the last chapter of *Acts*, written by Luke, Paul's faithful assistant, doctor, supporter, biographer etc., it is interesting that Paul is seen to be summarising his work as teaching and preaching the "Kingdom of God" rather than "The Gospel". This is a farewell speech as Paul is assuming here that there would be no more meetings with these people until in Glory. So here he is summarising his work of the previous years as "Preaching the Kingdom of God". Although the "Kingdom of God" is frequently discussed in the rest of the New Testament, only in *Acts* do we get these specific references to the preaching or teaching of the Kingdom of God (Acts 1:3, 8:12, 14:22, 19:8, 20:25, 28:23 and 31). Dr Fruchtenbaum, in his *Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology* expertly defines the "Kingdom of God" in all its manifestations. They range from the Universe and Heaven to the Theocratic Kingdom of God in Israel between Moses and Jesus. He points out the current age of Christendom is the 'Mystery' Kingdom Phase, a definition derived from one of the Eight Mysteries revealed in the New Testament. Writing about these "mysteries" in his epistles, Apostle Paul claimed they came to him from The Lord. Dr Fruchtenbaum succeeds best in developing a systematic theology and proper definition of 'The Kingdom of God' when most theologians have generally fallen short. In '*Israelology*', Dr Fruchtenbaum trawls through Covenant and Dispensational theologians and surveys their definitions of 'Kingdom of God' and 'Kingdom of Heaven'. As Fruchtenbaum notes, many try to distinguish between the 'Kingdom of Heaven', a term used by Matthew, from 'Kingdom of God' which is the more common term elsewhere in the Bible. As Fruchtenbaum shows, there is no difference between the two terms. Matthew simply replaced 'God' with 'heaven' because Orthodox Jews never refer to God's Personal name יהוה (*Jehovah* or *Yaweh*) but to "The Name" (*Ha Shem*). Luke's quotation of Jesus' reply to the last question the Pharisees posed regarding the Godly Kingdom's appearance or arrival

(Luke 17:20) is routinely misinterpreted by people. It is commonly taught that the 'Kingdom' is within each one of us despite the fact that in making this enigmatic reply the Lord was addressing a bunch of disbelieving Pharisees. They were simply mocking Jesus. They had no serious interest in His answer. So He dismissed them with a comment, or even *throw-away* line, that people ever since have misinterpreted ⁽⁷⁹⁾. Acts 20:25;

“ * ... I have not shunned to declare ... The Counsel of God...”. (In many ways the term 'counsel' is a far better way to summary any believer's ministry. We are all Counsellors of God and Ambassadors of Christ. On Galatians 5:9, "A little leaven leavens the whole lump", Fruchtenbaum, *Faith Alone*, page 48, says, "if they go away from the sphere of faith into the sphere of law ... i.e., pervert this aspect of salvation, they will eventually pervert the whole counsel of God". That was in the context of the Galatians being tempted to get themselves circumcised under the Mosaic law. In *Hebrews*, presumably the same applied but there it was the Messiah-believing Judean Jews near Jerusalem considering re-entering the Temple system to placate the hostility of the unbelieving Jews who were persecuting them). Acts 20:27;

“ ... made overseers by the Holy Spirit to feed the Church of God ..”. (This really applies more to church elders and deacons perhaps. But it is interesting to see Paul refer to the 'Church of God' here). Acts 20:28;

“ ... (Paul) ready to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus”. Acts 21:13

“ ... That thou shouldst know His Will, And see that Just One, and shouldst hear the voice of His Mouth”. (Paul later recounting what Ananias said to him in Damascus. Although not directly within the scope of this paper, the words "Know His Will" are very instructive because they effectively confirm that the Apostle would require an understanding of God's overall Plan and Will of which our salvation from sin is a very important but not sole commission in our Christian life. The unsaved man is not going to be able to discern God's Will and that leaves him in a precarious state of anxiety, doubt and of course guilt). Acts 22:14;

“ ... (Jesus to Paul), thou hast testified of Me...”. (Testifying of Jesus would seem to be a broader task than 'The Gospel'. Jesus' own testimony in *Revelation* is "I am the *Alpha* and *Omega*" or "The *Aleph* and *Tav*" and as we have demonstrated in the Hebrew those two letters at the beginning and end of the Hebrew alphabet are full of significant import and meaning. Within this testimony that goes from beginning to end the death and resurrection of Jesus is obviously central and very important but it is still only a part of the **Full Testimony**). Acts 23:11;

“ ... ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes ..”. (An accusation levelled at Apostle Paul by anti-Messianic Jews in Jerusalem. This makes Christians members of the Nazarene Sect i.e., of those following the Little Shoot" (*Nazar*) from the "roots or *Shorashim* of Jesse"). Acts 24:5;

“ ... I worship the God of my Fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets", c.f., Luke 24:27 & 44). Apostle Paul speaking before the Roman Governor. We would say much the same although as we were not members of the Commonwealth of Israel before Jesus had finished fulfilling The Law on the Cross, we are not quite like Apostle Paul in that we did not have to meet the obligations of The law at any

stage in our lives. We are under the law of Christ in the Gospels and Epistles not under the Law of Moses/. However various texts of History and Prophecy in the Books of Moses certainly are valid to us today. The prophets stand through Time, no matter what, until they cease by being 'fulfilled' when they become the rest of **His Story**). Acts 24:14;

" ... resurrection of the dead, both the just and the unjust ...". (We need to point this out to people as well. People do not want to be among the unjust when they are resurrected). Acts 24:15;

" ... heard him concerning the faith in Christ (Roman Governor Felix and Drusilla his Jewish wife listening to Paul about what he believes). Acts 24:24

" ... hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers... ". (Paul giving his defence before Agrippa and Bernice who went to Caesarea to see Governor Festus who had replaced Felix. Paul in making this point about 'the hope of promise' made to 'our fathers, raises an obvious question about which or whose fathers. If the 'Promise' is the one made to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:15 which was also a basis for 'hope' until Jesus came, our hope now in His return, then the "fathers" are Adam, Enoch, Methuselah, Noah etc., who are fathers of Gentiles as well as of Jews. Shem, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are Israel's fathers. It's a rhetorical question, for we need not ask because in the next verse, Paul refers to Jacob's Twelve Sons. It's the twelve sons of Jacob who constitute the basis for the Twelve Tribes of people who are "Israel". Of course all Jewish and Gentile Believers benefit from Israel's hopes and promises from God ⁸⁰). Acts 26:6;

" ... To open their eyes, and to turn *them* from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by Faith which is in Me ..". (Jesus words to Paul in defining His commission to the apostle outside Damascus. Paul here is reiterating the event many years later before the Roman Governor. The statement certainly covers "forgiveness of sins" as part of Paul's message "through Jesus of Nazareth *alone*". However, it also refers to our inheritance that is in Christ, and recognises the need to be free of Satan's powers on this Earth ceded to him by The First Adam but won back for those in Christ or The Last Adam). Acts 26:18;

" * ... Repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance". (Paul explaining to the Roman Governor how he (Paul) did this beginning at Damascus, then Jerusalem, Judea and then on to the Gentiles with the same message. The point about works is referred to in James 2:17. Acts 26:20;

" ... Saying none other things than those which The prophets and Moses did say should come". (See also Luke 24:27 & 44 and Acts 24:14). Acts 26:22;

" ... That Christ should suffer, and that He should be the First that should rise from the dead, and should show light to the people, and to the Gentiles". (Here Paul gives a summation of several prophecies regarding the suffering the Promised Deliverer would have to go through in order to lead us into a resurrected life in our new body but only if we put our faith in Jesus of Nazareth - The Christ or Messiah of Israel). Acts 26:23;

" ... Believest thou the Prophets"? (Paul addressing King Agrippa at this judicial hearing to decide what to do with Paul. This is a clear example that Jewish political leaders

believed the Prophecies in the Bible). Acts 26:27;

“ * ... he expounded and testified the Kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses, and out of the Prophets...”. (The audience here is Jews in Rome. They will have extra interest in the Kingdom of God because it is still on offer to Israel on her acceptance of Jesus. Until then, we can pray for it to come but its actual coming is in the hands of Israel. As we know, Israel will not make the call until the end of the tribulation. Or that is what our reading of the prophecies suggests. Paul is also “persuading them about Jesus”, presumably in accordance with Acts 26:20-23. Nowadays, churches teach about Jesus suffering and redemption of us but fall silent on the coming of His Kingdom instead believing the kingdom is present now in The Church). Acts 28:23;

“ * ... Preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus *the Christ*”. (Again, while Paul spends two years in Rome under house arrest, the “preaching of the Kingdom of God” still figures highly in Paul’s programme despite only some of the Roman Jewish leaders believing Jesus. He was urging people to believe Jesus and what He did for us on the Cross which is the key to entering the Kingdom of God. Obviously, Paul was fully committed to the hopes and aspirations we have in this yet to come Kingdom. It is not here within us as many try to argue from Luke 17:21. What is more pertinent to the individual believer’s situation is Colossians 1:27, “Christ in you the Hope of Glory”). Acts 28:31;

“ # ... The Gospel of God ...”. (In the first Epistle after the Gospels and the *Book of the Acts of the Apostles*, Apostle Paul refers to “The Gospel of God”. Paul uses the same term in Romans 15:16 and in II Corinthians 11:7. The fact of God, our Creator and Saviour, Saviour of the World from its many problems that began with the Sin of Adam, is of course good news - the very meaning of ‘Gospel’. This reinforces an important point behind the writing of this paper. One has to specifically define the term “Gospel” according to how it is used in the text. By not doing this, the term “The Gospel” separated from its meaning and use in the Bible has become a pretext used by many people involved in *religion*. The pretext is to get people to join a church or whatever but to ignore many other aspects of God’s counsel via the Scriptures. Once again, in verse 2, Paul refers to this as something the Prophets of Israel had foretold). Romans 1:1;

“ ... made of the of the Seed of David according to the flesh ..”. [Paul confirming the fulfilment of the Seed of the Woman Theme or Programme of Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 7:14 etc. The reference to the birth of Satan’s Seed may have been fulfilled in AD 2001 but we await further developments before realising that is confirmed. The baby Who would be ‘The Promised Deliverer’ born to one of Eve’s descendants, though she herself thought she was the woman to be chosen according to her comment in Genesis 4:1, did indeed arrive four millennia later (7-6 BC). But Jesus only had the ‘flesh’ of Mary’s egg for no man’s seed brought that child into life. It was God via the Holy Spirit Who made this possible). Romans 1:3;

“ * ... declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead”. (This of course is also good news. The fact of the Resurrection of Jesus ⁽⁸¹⁾ proves He is the Son of God and is able to do this. Only God can conquer death since He presumably created it as He did with darkness and evil (Isaiah 45:7). Believers in Christ will be resurrected to enjoy His Coming Kingdom on this Earth. Probably, Earth will be renovated to make it fit-for-purpose for the Millennium which follows Armageddon. At present, we are in the Church Age of the

Mystery Kingdom as described by the Parable of the Sower and ensuing parables. Jesus used those parables to train the Disciples in the building of Jesus' Church Programme that would operate here on Earth until The Rapture. It comes at any time. By now, it is clear The Rapture occurs just a short time before the introduction of the Kingdom but that only happens immediately after The Tribulation has finished its course. The Rapture spares living believers in those days from going through the trials and wrath of The Tribulation. That is why Jesus instructed people before Israel's rejection to pray "Thy Kingdom Come" in the hope the Jewish leaders would repent and accept Jesus. In the event, between AD 27-30 they did not. However, the prayer remains just as vital to us. It may be that Jesus only intended the church to pray this prayer because Israel had already rejected Jesus by then. However, there is every reason to think Jesus initially got the disciples to pray for Israel to accept the kingdom albeit knowing Israel would reject so in Jesus' plan it would still be relevant for the on-coming, in-coming or imminent church. Unfortunately, there is nothing in the Gospels to precisely time-and-sequence the instruction Jesus gave on 'how to pray'). Romans 1:4;

" # ... I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are in Rome". (Paul qualified this in the next verse). Romans 1:15;

" # ... I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto Salvation to everyone that believes". (This is a classic case of a verse people have in mind when they refer to "The Gospel". But they should then qualify the statement and be precise and say "The Gospel according to Romans 1:15-16" or "according to John 3:16" or "according to I Corinthians 15: 1:ff". But we must not forget the other ways 'gospel' is used in the Bible or that many other things were preached as well, e.g., Acts 20:24, "The Gospel of the Grace of God"; Romans 1:1, "The Gospel of God"; or Acts 19:8, "things concerning the Kingdom of God"). Romans 1:16;

" # ... In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus *the* Christ according to my Gospel". [Here we see Paul refer to "my Gospel". We can perhaps more easily understand this as '*according to my information*'. Later in I Corinthians 3:11-15, the Apostle would write about the seat from which Jesus 'evaluates' whatever we did or did not achieve while here in this Church Age. This is basically good news for we only appear before Christ at that seat if we are saved and the only question is what sort of rewards we there receive, if any, for use in the Messianic-Millennial Kingdom. The bad news is that people who instead appear before the Great White Throne, from which Jesus also issues judgement, find out what degree of discomfort they will receive in their world to come which is the place of weeping, darkness and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 22:13 and Luke 13:28). Here we see the word gospel being used rather more generically]. Romans 2:16;

" # ... That I should be the minister of Jesus *the* Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God". (Paul is also making the point here that Gentiles too are sanctified by God's Holy Spirit as the Jews were at Pentecost-*Shavuot* by the permanent infilling of God's Spirit made possible by the Blood-Price for our redemption being paid at Calvary. We can also see in this example that the 'Good News' or "Gospel" is primarily about God. The Apostle also used "Gospel of God" at the beginning in Romans 1:1 then again in a letter to Corinth (II Corinthians 11:7). Furthermore, the Son of God has appointed Paul to be a Minister specifically to Gentiles although Paul continued to minister to Jews as well. The Gospel of God is surely about all things concerning God, His Will which is "Good, Acceptable and Perfect" according to Romans 12:1 and which is about God's Plan for the

World and Creation especially as Adam had removed us all from God with his transgression or failure to obey God's one and only commandment to him). Romans 15:16;

" # ... Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ". (In II Corinthians 12:12, Paul makes a similar point about the signs and wonders accompanying his work. Following on from verse 16, the Apostle points out there is Good News about both God and His Son the Christ or Messiah of Israel). Romans 15:19;

" # ... I strived to preach the Gospel ... *but not* to build on another man's foundation". (In this verse Paul simply refers to "The Gospel" and at this point is specifically talking about the salvation available to us through Jesus. Here is an example where "The Gospel" is specifically about Jesus and His Ministry to save us. However, too often people use this to avoid talking about many other issues concerning God, His Kingdom, matters of Prophecy and many other things. Such people preach a very narrow message and avoid discussing the full counsel of God. They end up taking verses out of context and using them as a pretext. That has been harmful to the Lord's Work over the centuries). Romans 15:20;

" # ... I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ". (Here Paul said he was sure he would get to Spain with the "fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. Again, we do not have a precise description from Paul what exactly is the 'Gospel of the Christ'. From the new History we are discovering in these papers, we know Apostle James (*Yaacov*), the brother of John (*Yohannan*) and first cousin of Jesus (*Yeshua*) on His maternal side of the family, had already been to Spain (Pontus). Also, possibly, James travelled from Spain to Tarshishite colonies elsewhere in the North Atlantic (NATO), perhaps even over in the Americas in places like Santiago, San Diego, and Cartagina on the Magdalene River over in modern day Columbia which straddles both the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans just south of Panama on the South American Continent. We do not know if Paul got to Spain and if we take his point in Romans 15:20, he may not have made it there). Romans 15:29;

" # ... Now to Him that is of power to **establish you according to my Gospel**, and the preaching of Jesus *the* Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the World began ,, , verse 26 ... but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the Prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of Faith: ...". (Paul concludes "with one of his famous benedictions. This long extract is necessary to illustrate the broad message Paul covered in his ministry. Again he refers to "my Gospel" presumably meaning as noted in the example above in Romans 2:16. Regarding the "mystery" ⁽⁸²⁾, Paul refers to, we draw the reader's attention to Dr Fruchtenbaum's analysis on the matter). Romans 16:25-26;

" * ... the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you ...". (This might be a better way to describe our message. We could refer to "The Testimony of *the* Christ" instead of glibly saying, "we preach The Gospel". Again we need to be careful about context. A careful study of the context of revelation 19:10 where the man says to John, "Worship Jesus for the Testimony of Jesus is the Spirit (*key to understand*) of Prophecy". There the Testimony is simply, "I am the *Alpha* and *Omega* (*Aleph* and *Tav*)". But in the context of Paul's letter to the Corinthians, this is yet another way the Apostle chooses to summarise his original

message to the Corinthians which was “confirmed in”, or had brought results in, the Corinthians). I Corinthians 1:6;

“ # ... Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel: ..”. (Paul is using this phrase ‘to preach the Gospel’ as a counter-point to baptizing. The sacrament (Baptism) had quickly become a point of boasting between people depending whether Paul, Peter (“*Cephas*”) or Apollos had baptized, presumably referring to water immersion (verses 12-13). The Apostle does not want to explain in any detail the entire curriculum of his preaching and teaching schedule suffice to say preaching ‘The Gospel’ was more important than seeing to the ritual baptismal sacrament we are instructed with. Baptizing is an important Ministry but Paul had more to do which he summarised in the term ‘preach the Gospel’ which if one were to expand at this point, one could do by saying “preach the Gospel according to I Corinthians 15:1-58”. The trouble is that many people claiming to ‘preach the Gospel’ do not like teaching all of that chapter. We certainly do here). I Corinthians 1:17;

“ * ... for the preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness ...”. [Preaching the Cross is another short-hand way the evangelist can summarise his work. This emphasises the method of execution that ensured the redemption of us all. Our Lord had to be sacrificed or slaughtered in one way or another to shed His Precious Blood. This essentially is a soteriological message. Overall, the Bible is, however, Doxological as we note in our first paper on the *Components of Systematic Theology*. ‘The Roman Cross’ was the method of execution. “Crucifixion” entailed the victim hauling the lumber used for the procedure to the point of execution (up a hill) just as Isaac did with the wood for the fire in which he would have been sacrificed had God not stayed Abraham’s hand. As Isaac noted, they had the wood etc., but “no lamb for a burnt offering”. To Isaac’s question, Abraham replied, The Lord will see Himself a lamb for a burnt offering - My Son (and *not your’s Abraham*”, as one could feasibly read into the *context*). No doubt Paul referred to that incident in some of his sermons etc which could go on for a few hours though not all day as some imply from Acts 20:7. We don’t have any full records of these long sessions, as such, but there’s lots to tell when ministering God’s Word to the World and Paul would not lack in Height, Depth nor Breadth of Scriptural reference in some of those longer oral dissertations]. I Corinthians 1:18;

“ * ... we preach Christ crucified ... a stumbling block to Jews ... foolishness to Greeks ...”. (The focus here is on the actual crucifixion standing alone separate from the resurrection. One person said to me that Roman Catholics focus on the crucifixion while Protestants focus on the resurrection. That may or may not be so. It was the observation of an outsider. Sometimes such opinions alert us to inadequacies in the way we teach and preach. The whole concept of a national saviour dying in this way was foolishness to Greek or Western ways of thinking. A common Jewish perception had expected their Messiah to introduce the utopian world of the Kingdom of God. Where they ‘stumbled’ was over timing and failing to recognise the Plan God had for the salvation of the World firstly soteriologically then physically and to restore it for those saved soteriologically for the Millennium. That happens when as *Revelation* explains there would be a period where the Kingdom of God on Earth would reign before the Universe was discarded and a new Heaven and Earth created. The Millennium would be the seventh (day) and one of rest for Man after six millennia (days) of chaos emanating from Adam’s fall (II Peter 3:8, *School of Elijah*)]. I Corinthians 1:23;

“ * ... Declaring unto you the Testimony of God ...”. [In Acts 14:3 (“The Testimony of the Word of His Grace”), 23:11 (Jesus speaking to Paul) and in verse 6 of the previous chapter (“The Testimony of Christ”) we find this word used to speak of the missionary and evangelical work of the Apostle. In Revelation 19:10, as we have noted above, the man addressing John reminded him that the Testimony of Jesus is the Key to or Spirit of Prophecy. There Jesus’ testimony simply is, “I am the *Alpha* and *Omega*. Or, as we infer, the *Aleph* and *Tav*, representing the First and Last or Beginning and End (c.f., Isaiah 46:10). However, the letters Aleph (א) and Tav (ת) make a special word in Hebrew as shown in Exodus 4:8, 8:23, 12:13 and Zechariah 12:10]. I Corinthians 2:1;

“ # ... For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel”. (Here Paul summarises everything he has taught the Corinthians, even though they are too ‘carnal’ to eat meat, in one word - Gospel. I Corinthians 4:15;

“ ... bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where (*sic*) in every church”. (In noting this statement from Paul we see he is referring to what he teaches as “my ways in Christ”. In verse 10 he talked about being “fools for Christ’s sake”. He is talking about the example of his life in Christ along with what he actually taught. Teaching and/or preaching “The Gospel” is also by example). I Corinthians 4:17;

“ # ... but we suffer all things, lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ”. (Paul is saying here in the context of the previous few chapters that matters concerning food, marriage and fashions of the world are not worth worrying about in the business of explaining to the world God’s Word per the “Gospel of Christ”. Again, he is using words such as ‘Gospel of Christ’ as a shorthand but there is much that is covered by other phrases like “the Testimony of God, “witnesses unto Me” (Acts 1:8); “speaking the Wonderful Works of God” (Acts 2:11); “Words of Jesus of Nazareth” (Acts 2:22); “times of restitution of all things” (Acts 3:21); “the Word of God” (Acts 6:2); “the lively oracles” (Acts 7:38 using Romans 3:2); “preaching The Word” (Acts 8:4); “things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus *the* Christ” (Acts 8:12) etc.,]. I Corinthians 9:12;

“ # ... the Lord has ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel”. (Paul making the same point as in I Corinthians 4:17 and 9:12. One might say today, “walk the talk”). I Corinthians 9:14;

“ # ... for though I preach The Gospel, I have nothing to glory of: ...”. [The Apostle would not say so himself for obvious reasons which he plainly states. Nevertheless, in I Corinthians 15: 51-2, he shares a “mystery” which the Lord privileged him to do regarding The Rapture that would be “seen” only by a unique group of saints but experienced by many ‘dead in Christ’ as well. How the apostle learned of this mystery is not completely clear. He would have known what Jesus said about The Rapture in the Gospels ⁽⁸³⁾. Perhaps the apostle, with the background of a very considerable education, realised at some stage in his ministry that there would have to be a situation such as **The Rapture** as he described in at least two or possibly three passages (I Corinthians 15:52, I Thessalonians 4:13-18, Titus 2:13). I Corinthians 15 begins, “The Gospel I preached unto you ...”. However, as we note elsewhere, the chapter contains five ⁽⁸⁴⁾ very fundamental discussions or perhaps the implication or consequences of what we believe. When the context of the full chapter is considered it is taken to be a broader analysis of “The Gospel” in which one can see that “The Gospel” is a very considerable body of teaching. The problem is that evolutionism and modern scepticism causes people to either teach there

is no such thing as “The Rapture” or the event is allegorized into a vague concept that is rarely discussed and almost brushed under the carpet. Evolutionism causes the matters about Resurrection, First Adam-Last Adam and the discussion of the resurrection body using the seed analogy as matters likewise to be brushed under the carpet. For such people, the term “The Gospel” becomes a handy way of saying what one believes without getting into too much **embarrassing** detail because too many Christians do not adequately understand what the rest of I Corinthians 15 means. I Corinthians 9:16;

“ # ... What is my reward then? *Verily*, that when I preach the Gospel, I may make the Gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the Gospel”. (The Apostle is stressing that he is not in any way using what he knows nor the position he has in Christ to glory himself, lord it over others, make money or be rewarded in any other way except from Jesus. As Paul notes from discussions elsewhere the rewards he will get come at the Judgement Seat of Christ). I Corinthians 9:18;

“ # ... and I do this for the Gospel's sake”. (Paul said in verse 22 that he might be all things to all men that he might by all means save some. As he writes in verse 33, “I please all *men* in all *things* and not seeking my own profit, but the *profit* of many, that they may be saved”. He is doing anything he can to acquaint men with God's Saving Word. Again, here, when we read the word “Gospel” it is a shorthand for many things and Paul uses the word to summarise all of them). I Corinthians 9:23;

“ # ... the Gospel which I preached unto you ...verse 2... by which also you are saved”. (Refer comments and notes under entry for I Corinthians 9:16). I Corinthians 15:1-2;

“ * ... we have had our conversation in the world ...”. (Paul used this phrase while talking about the sufferings he had endured in his ministry. It is an unusual term but it shows our whole life should be about a conversation with God and in that conversation there are avenues for witnessing to the world at large. And the conversation is about all God's oracles where and when they are appropriate). II Corinthians 1:12;

“ * ... For the Son of God, Jesus *the* Christ, who was preached among you by us ...”. (Again we have another variation from Paul. It may be that he had talked about the coming of the Promised Deliverer of Genesis 3:15, 4:1, Isaiah 7:14, 48:12, 16, Romans 1:3, Revelation 1:8 & 17, 21:6, 22:13 and 16. If so, that might have prompted a comment like this from the Apostle. The Gentiles had long been awaiting the coming of the Promised Deliverer along with believing Jews. Presumably, they were aware He would be God's Son if the conception involved a woman's seed alone. So a sermon on that matter might have prompted a comment like this. Of course, our message should incorporate this information but it rarely does in churches these days. That neglect is because of widespread unbelief in the Bible even in Churches. We include excessive and unnecessary allegories and Typologies in that mode of unbelief. We say “mode of unbelief” because people prefer an allegory or type since they cannot make sense of the literal statement). II Corinthians 1:19;

“ # ... When I went to Troas (Troy) to preach Christ's Gospel”. [Note here it is “Christ's Gospel”. Jesus came to preach about the Kingdom of God as well as to pay the blood price for our sin to redeem us. But His message about the coming Kingdom of God (or Kingdom of Heaven”); clearly a significant aspect of His Good News, or ‘Gospel’; is neglected these days by churches. They prefer to get us ready to play our role, get up in time for work, stay sober etc., assisting this world's failed governance systems. We note

here the reference to Troy (refer addenda below)]. II Corinthians 2:12;

“ * ... We are not as many which corrupt the Word of God ...”. (Paul distances himself from corrupt preachers here but we note that it is “The Word of God” not the “Gospel” which some people were corrupting then). II Corinthians 2:17;

“ * ... ministers of the New Testament ..”. (Or of the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31, 32:40; Isaiah 55:3, 59:21, 61:8-9, Ezekiel 16:60, 34:25-31, 37:26-28, Romans 11:27). II Corinthians 3:6;

“ * ... “handling the Word of God ..”. II Corinthians 4:2;

“ #... “If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost ..”. (Here the Apostle is contrasting what Jesus could do that Moses could not. Israel had more or less buried the Tanaakh in favour of the Talmud and commentaries. Its religious leaders were like the third man in the parable of the talents where the first two, probably representing Moses and the Prophets, did much with the Word of God that the Apostle also “handles” without “dishonesty”, “craftiness” nor “deceit” as he says in II Corinthians 4:2. However under the Latter-day Rabbis, the Word of God had become a series of strict rules for living with no heart nor spirit in them, for hearts of stone rather than flesh. By the time of Christ, the rabbis had whittled down the Old Testament to something far less than it preached. They were concerned only with ‘circumcision of the flesh’ not of the heart). II Corinthians 4:3;

“ # ... The Glorious Gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God ..”. (In part, this helps to explain the point made in the Creation account (Genesis 1:27). We are made in God’s Image. It is the image that Jesus would take on at the incarnation. No other creature was blessed in this way. That is partly how we point out the Biblically distinctive difference between Man’s creation and formation in contrast to that of other life forms on Earth. There are other pointers to this distinction via the Hebrew text but that is a matter for discussion for elsewhere in the 3-D *Aleph-Tav* Bible Study). II Corinthians 4:4;

“ ... For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus The Lord ..”. II Corinthians 4:5;

“ ... The ministry of reconciliation .. Verse 19 ... to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the World unto Himself ..”. [This is only possible under the Triune God whom the Old Testament speaks. Our understanding of the Tri-Unity is best obtained from the Old Testament, especially by studying the precise Hebrew in verses like Genesis 1:1 (מִיְהוָה), 26; 4:1; 18:2, 22:8, Exodus 33:11 (מִיִּנְפֵי מִיִּנְפֵי־לֵא), Numbers 12:8 (הַפּ הַפ־לֵא), 14:14 (וַיַּע וַיַּעֲב), Deuteronomy 5:4 (מִיִּנְפֵי | מִיִּנְפֵי); 7:9, 34:10, Joshua 15:13, 24:1, or Isaiah 48:12-16]. II Corinthians 5:18-19;

“ # ... whose praise is in the Gospel throughout all the churches ..”. (This was in reference to someone sent to Corinth to help Titus. This other ‘Brother’ was deeply moved by ‘The Gospel’. “Gospel” is not defined here apart from via the basic meaning of the Greek meaning ‘Good News’). II Corinthians 8:18;

“ # ... They glorify God for your professed subjection unto the Gospel of Christ ..”. (Paul told the Corinthians that the recipients of their giving would glorify God because these Corinthians were giving aid or money to help other fellow Christians, or fellow *subjects* of Jesus of Nazareth. Those in distress were probably believers near Jerusalem as the

political circumstances descended into the trough or *nadir* that would be the AD 66-70 Roman siege then destruction of Jerusalem and its temple, “no stone being left unturned (or un-excavated)” Matthew 24:2, Mark 13:2 and Luke 21:6. The Jewish believers near Jerusalem were being persecuted by fellow Jews and others for their “subjection” to the Gospel of *the Christ* (or Messiah of Israel). Therefore they even considered returning to join the temple services demanded by the Mosaic Law in order to curry favour with their fellow religious Jews and perhaps keep their jobs, homes etc. The money and alms raised from the Corinthians would support those beleaguered *Judean Jewish Believers in Yeshua* (Jesus). The *Book of Hebrews* expressly warned them of the consequences of doing that. Instead they were advised therein to look to greater things about what in effect is the complete Gospel or Good News about Jesus the Messiah of Israel (or ‘Christ’ from the Greek *Christos*). The ‘Gospel’ here is not limited to the first few verses of I Corinthians 15 but to the whole chapter, not just to John 3:16 but to everything written in the Bible about Israel’s Messiah. For example, that He is the same person who fulfills the promises God made in Genesis 3:15 and who fulfills many other verses in the Bible such as those referring to the mysterious “Nazar” of whom we write in a separate paper and many prophecies etc). II Corinthians 9:13;

“ # ... for we were the first to come even as far as you in the Gospel of the Christ ..”. (Obviously Paul is here again using ‘Gospel of Christ’ as a summary of his overall preaching and teaching. No doubt he taught the Corinthians many things from Scripture). II Corinthians 10:14;

“ # ... to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond you ..”. [At this point Paul had made it to Greece. However, he desired to turn eastwards at some point in his ministry. He got as far as Galatia but he was prevented from going even further East toward or into Bithynia (Acts 16:7) “by the Spirit suffering them not to go there”. At this point it may be instructive to turn to the Parable of the Sower. There we find that seed will only germinate and put down roots in fertile soil. If one perceives that fertile soil to be understanding of the Scriptures of the Old Testament which were well known outside Israel by the ancients before Christ, it seems there was no such *soil* as one reached Bithynia. Our History would indicate that might be the situation. One cannot be dogmatic on that point. But by stark contrast westwards, the colonies of ancient Tyre, Sidon, Byblos etc., stretching across the Mediterranean and out to the Atlantic at Gibraltar (Gebel-Tyre) it was another history. People in those places knew much about the role and history of Israel in God’s Plan for the world. They had Israel’s Scriptures though whether many studied them a lot, much like our generations, is another matter. Preaching the ‘Gospel’ or ‘Good News’ in **that soil** would entail a narrative that would explain the history of those peoples, telling them how the Word of Israel’s God was being fulfilled, the **additional** or **new** Good News being that the baby promised to Eve who would save mankind from its dilemma had arrived and was born in Bethlehem in 6 or 7 BC, after 4000 years of waiting. But when that baby arrived (God Incarnate), the child grew to be a man who laid down His Life in His Prime, aged 37 years, so that the blood price that had to be paid, and for which animal sacrifices had been a sort of down-payment, was now fully paid (*Testalatos*). That’s the Gospel in a nutshell or the Good News that Paul was spreading along with many other missionaries such as Joseph of Arimathea and Mary Magdalene. But the better soil appeared to be West of Bithynia rather than east]. II Corinthians 10:16;

“ * ... or a different gospel which you have not accepted ..”. (This verse follows on from one about Eve being subtly deceived by Satan. Paul applies it to preachers coming to speak

to the Corinthians sometime after Paul brought his message. This occurred a couple of centuries later in Britain. The first missionaries such as Joseph of Arimathea and Mary Magdalene brought the True Word but later Roman Catholic missionaries brought in subtle counterfeits and even some heresies. Here Paul is referring to something subtly different and counterfeit. It looks very much the same kind of thing but this later deceptive message is in fact a cunning and subtle counterfeit. It only works as a counterfeit because it looks so much alike the Truth Paul preached. But it is false nevertheless. That's one of the issues of concern in this paper that by failing to define 'Gospel' in its fullest context, the term gets taken out of context and becomes a pretext and people use "The Gospel" to mean anything. That's why we are looking at every instance of the word 'gospel' in the New Testament and at other phrases that reflect what is meant by 'gospel'). II Corinthians 11:4;

" # ... preached to you the Gospel of God ..". [Having referred to counterfeit gospels, Paul here defines the True Gospel as 'The Gospel of God'. He also says this in Romans 1:1 and 15:16. It reminds us the Bible is an essentially Doxological document. It is about the Glory of God and how, according to Romans 8:28, "all things will eventually work out for Good (Good) to them who are called according to His purpose". Those called are those who accept God's Words about Salvation through Jesus of Nazareth. However, that's only the first step, all-important of course nevertheless. God's Word, His 'Gospel' or Good News, explains how, why and to what conclusion or end things are working out. The Bible explains what has happened, is happening or will happen is all discussed therein throughout the entire text with every word, *yod* (י) and 'tittle' (the difference between כ and ב, ר and ד or ה and ח) considered. The Bible helps us to establish models to explain what we see around us. Nothing makes good context unless one does that. The sorts of people Apostle Paul was writing to had no idea why they existed. They did not know what was happening in the *Topsy Turvy* Roman Empire and its whimsical Emperors and pliant senate. They did not know what was the point of everything etc. God's Good News is that things are the way they are from the beginning with Adam's sin then from much else that stems from what that first couple did in the Garden of Eden. God, not leaving us destitute without any record of the Past, Present and Future, preserved for us the Bible which takes us all the way through to the New Universe where another tree combines both the Trees of Knowledge and of Life in that blessed place. The Bible explains much else between those two ends]. II Corinthians 11:7;

" ... The Truth of Christ is in me ..". [This echoes Colossians 1:27, "Christ in you the hope of Glory" described by Paul there as a "mystery" (Greek, *mysterion*) and II Corinthians 13:5]. II Corinthians 11:10;

" ... *Our Lord Jesus the Christ* who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world ..". (The sorts of things He will deliver us from are listed in Galatians 5:19-21 such as, "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, sedition, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, revelling, and such like" which will not exist in the forthcoming "kingdom of God". Meanwhile we should not be living a life "after the flesh" and practise those things as the unbelievers do, because we should "walk in the Spirit" according to Galatians 5:16). Galatians 1:4;

" # ... The Scripture seeing beforehand .. preached the Gospel to Abraham. "All nations will be blessed in you (*your seed*) ..". Fruchtenbaum in *Faith Alone*, page 27, "The Gospel

of Good News to Abraham was that he would have a son ... the Gospel to the Gentiles was faith in the promise of the Son, the Messiah". Galatians 3:8;

" ... That the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles through Jesus *the* Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith". [In II Corinthians 1:22 & 5:5 ("earnest", 'part-payment', or 'deposit') and Ephesians 1:14 {"earnest ('pledge') of our inheritance"}], in order to explain why we receive "The Spirit of Promise" (Ephesians 1:13) on or as part of coming to belief, Apostle Paul used the Greek word *arrabown* (αρραβων) or Hebrew word *erevon* (עֹבֶרֶת). There was no Greek word he could use so he resorted to the best Old Testament word he could and simply transliterated it into Greek. The word is found only in Genesis 38:17, 18 & 20. We leave it to the student to study the history behind Judah *ben* Jacob and his role in that generation of the primaeval Israelite family). Galatians 3:14;

" ... the promise by faith of Jesus *the* Christ might be given to them that believe". Galatians 3:22;

" ... *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith (or 'cleared of all guilt' per the KJV commentator)". (The Apostle here was referring to the Law of Moses which the Christian notes was a schoolmaster or teaching aid to "bring us to Christ"). Galatians 3:24;

" # ... I preached the Gospel unto you at the first". (Paul noting that despite an infirmity in the flesh, or while he was very ill, he "preached the gospel"). Galatians 4:13;

" # ... You heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your Salvation .. Ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise". [As noted above under the paragraph on Galatians 3:14, the Holy Spirit, the Comforter in John 14:16, 26 ("which is the Holy Spirit"), 15:26 ("The Spirit of Truth") and 16:7 is a guarantee and seal of a a very important Promise. That is God is going to fulfill all His Plan exactly as he tells it in the Scriptures. Merneptah and others in 600 BC ("Israel's Seed is castrated; The Land razed to the ground") were convinced God would not even continue with that part of the Plan to bring The Saviour into the world through a woman of Israel in a 'Virgin Birth'. They turned out to be quite wrong and God fulfilled that part to every 'jot' and 'tittle'. We are made absolutely certain that the rest of the Plan, or those parts not yet installed specifically The Messianic-Millennial Kingdom, certainly will be. Providing each believer with this surety or guarantee to comfort us while Jesus resides in Heaven is the **main role** of the permanently indwelling and fulfilling Holy Spirit-Comforter. This is indeed a very great comfort. Ephesians 1:13;

" ... for by Grace are ye saved through Faith ... the gift of God". Ephesians 2:8;

" ... (Jesus) ... came to preach peace to you who were afar off". (Written to the dwellers of the city of Ephesus who forbade any other religion to exist in this city dedicated to the one goddess, i.e., Diana. Paul here is showing what great lengths God is going to here to save mankind). Ephesians 2:17;

" # ... Gentiles should be fellow-heirs and partakers of His Promise in Christ by the Gospel. (Paul continued, "whereof I was made a minister"). Ephesians 3:6;

" * ... Preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ". (A lot more of these 'riches' are available to us now for 'searching'. Certainly more than many ministers would

have one believe. But not until we have repented and accepted Christ and received the Comforter-Holy Spirit. The 'Gospel' is often used as a term to 'get people saved'. But the justification stage only sets the scene for the sanctification process. In that process we can begin to delve into these "unsearchable riches". It's not that they cannot be understood but more a matter of them being limitless. The more one applies oneself to delving into them the more one receives). Ephesians 3:8;

" # ... to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds". (Paul writing about his ministry while languishing in a Roman prison). Ephesians 6:19-20;

" # ... For your fellowship in the Gospel ..". (Paul thanking God for this fellowship). Philippians 1:5;

" # ... in the defence and confirmation in the Gospel ...". (Paul telling the Philippians that their assistance is helping him with the Gospel while in a Roman prison and that they consequently share in the Grace given to Paul). Philippians 1:7;

" # ... unto the furtherance of the Gospel". (Paul assuring the Philippians that rather than his imprisonment leading to suppression of the Gospel it has led to "furtherance"). Philippians 1:12;

" * ... speak the Word without fear". Philippians 1:14;

" # ... (verse 15) .. Some preach Christ .. (verse 17) defence of the Gospel ... (verse 18) .. whether in pretense or in Truth, Christ is preached". (Paul arguing that no matter how something is preached, whether in truth or pretence, the message about Jesus gets through so that one way or another a person at least gets challenged or even provoked into taking some action which might yet lead to salvation. Although the Apostle validly put up this explanation, he would have been horrified at the way it since has been applied. *Leaders* have subsequently used the principle to justify ineffectual preaching and teaching and reduction of the scripture to purely allegorical, soteriological and hamartiological analysis). Philippians 1:15-18;

" # ... Let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ ...". (This is a good example of the way in which the Apostles themselves used "Gospel of Christ". It is a catch-all term for living which includes the advice Paul gave in Galatians 5:16 & 18. In the 19th verse of this chapter Paul referred to the "supply of the Spirit of Jesus *The Christ*". In Galatians, Paul listed very un-Spiritual vices such as witchcraft, drunkenness and murder but here he brings the spirit-filled life into the very normal day-to-day matter of conversation and is probably one realm we all slip into *misbehaviour* if one is honest about it). Philippians 1:27;

" # ... he served with me in the Gospel". (Another example of the way in which the Apostles themselves used "Gospel of Christ" as a catch-all term or quick summary, or even code- or jargon-word for quickly and succinctly describing their work for the Lord). Philippians 2:22;

" # ... ye heard before in the word of the Truth of the Gospel". (The result of receiving the Good News here was that they "knew the Grace of God **in Truth**" as in verse 6. After the Gospels, so far we have found direct references to this 'Grace' in Acts 14:3, 15:11, 18:27

and in Ephesians 2:8. In Acts 20:24, is the only full reference to the “**Gospel of the Grace of God**”. The Bible declares or implies God was gracious to Adam and Eve when He sacrificed two animals to give them skins to ‘cover their nakedness’. God was gracious to Cain when he protected Cain from revenge from others for killing Abel. In effect this verse is telling us we know this Grace but now directly or explicitly through Jesus’ teachings as He is The Way, The Truth and The Life. Jesus is not just a ‘way of life’ like religions are but Jesus is **The Truth** as well. If anyone had doubt before about the theoretical or supposed ‘graciousness’ of God, Jesus proved it to be a fact). Colossians 1:5;

“ * ... I am made a minister ... to fulfill the Word of God, .. (verse 26) ..even the Mystery ... (verse 27) ... which is Christ in you the Hope of Glory”. (Ever since the Fall, mankind has been distanced or separated from God. In the meantime since Adam’s Fall we have moved through a cycle of sorts in regard to this *separation*. In Eden, before the Fall, there was no separation. After the Fall, mankind nevertheless continued to live in ‘hope’ of reconciliation via the baby born of one of their women who had conceived without a Man’s *input*. There was some comfort for them living in sight of the visible presence of the Shecinah Glory via the Lord’s Angel (perhaps Jesus Himself). Presumably people who did stay within sight of God’s Shecinah Glory believed God’s promise, regularly sacrificed animals in recognition of their sin etc. They would have been Old Testament saints, i.e., believers. Cain, however, had to go further East where he no longer was in the visible presence or face of God. Although Cain’s descendants are assumed to be like their antediluvian patriarch and godless, which may not be a fair judgement of Cain himself who may have repented, they presumably or mostly would have been unbelievers. However, one of Cain’s descendants was named “Methusael” which translated can mean ‘man of God’. That suggests some of Cain’s descendants were believers and may even have rejoined those who lived near Eden’s Garden and the presence of the Angel of the Lord. We do not absolutely know either if all those who did remain in that presence of the Angel were believers. One reason for staying so close to Eden’s *gates* is that there was the **hope** God would save them from their dilemma. As it happened, wickedness gradually took over driving out the Good. The Flood had to take place as God judged that era. The Garden was destroyed in The Flood so now man only knew about the omnipresence of God except for the more devout. Such men, as in the examples like Enoch and Noah, received Divine spiritual blessing. Israel’s Temple services once again regularly witnessed the Shecinah Glory meeting with Israel’s High Priest in the Holy of Holies. After Israel’s disobedience and the destruction of Solomon’s temple, the world was without even God’s presence in the Holy of Holies until Jesus arrived to *grace* Ezra’s temple greatly extended by the half-Edomite Herodians. The point of this verse is that an hitherto impossible to disclose “Mystery” was now revealed and that is the permanent presence in the believer’s life via the pledge of the Holy Spirit (II Corinthians 1:22, 5:5 and Ephesians 1:14) hence “Christ in you the Hope of Glory. Thus, in a sense, we have come virtually full circle until our glorification and the coming of the Messianic Kingdom. We do not have the *privilege* of living within eyesight of God’s Shecinah Glory or the Angel of the Lord, even though that was of limited comfort because it would be a 4000 year wait before the God-Man would incarnate in the ‘Christ-child’. However, we do have these hopes from the verses quoted here). Colossians 1:25-28;

“ ... My fellow workers unto the Kingdom of God”. (Here we have an indirect reference to the ‘Gospel of the Kingdom’ as has been discussed concerning Acts 1:3, 8:12, 19:8, 20:25, 28:23 and 31). Colossians 4:11;

“ # ... For our Gospel came not unto you through Word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost”. (As noted above in the commentary on Colossians 1:25-28, the early human family dwelled around the gate (or ‘Arch’?) that allowed entry into the Garden of Eden. They hoped to be let back in before long as implied by the Promise of a Saviour child per Genesis 4:1, 26 and 5:21-27 (*methuselah*, מֶתוּשֶׁלַח, or ‘when he dies He or it will come’). The *arch*-angel kept them out but the angel also represented The Holy Shecinah presence of God. That at least was a comfort (or a *noah*) to the human family for it kept alive in their hearts, souls and minds the promise given to Eve that one of the eggs of either herself or of one of her daughters or grand-daughters etc., would conceive the ‘God-Child’ as *Magnificat* Mary eventually did. They were not to know that four millennia would pass before that became the case. Now the Good News has come to these Thessalonians “not only in Word” but with the permanent indwelling “Holy Spirit” Who because of the Cross and its implications would and now could act as a permanent, infilling and indwelling guarantor [*arrabown* (ἄρραβων) and *erevon* (עֲרֻבֹרַע)] of the completion of God’s Wonderful Gracious and Merciful Plan that declares His Glory. This great news powerfully affected many. They did not become powerful, but those who heard it and believed as the Holy Spirit convicted them were so *overpowered* that they readily and joyfully accepted all this. They had received, so to speak, the infusion of God’s Holy Spirit dwelling in them so that they shared what the Colossians had been told was a wonderful mystery. They were empowered or enthused to share this wonderful reality with others (verses 7-8). They did not keep this to themselves. That ‘Mystery’ was “Christ in you, the Hope of Glory”. His resurrection guaranteed everyone who believed a future resurrection into Glory. Unbelievers still get resurrected but into damnation not Glory). I Thessalonians 1:5;

“ # ... *speaking* unto you the Gospel of God with much contention. (“Gospel of God” is a term Paul uses three times in this chapter. We only find it once more after these three and those in Romans 1:1, 15:16, and II Corinthians 11:7, in I Peter 4:7. In all, there seems to be seven occasions where this term is used. Thus only in the epistles do we find “Gospel of God”. But that is important for we are talking about **all** the Good News that God has declared in the written scripture, in any scripture “written on our hearts” via that inward ‘*circumcision*’ etc). I Thessalonians 2:2;

“ # ... allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel ...”. (In verse 6 Paul and his colleagues described themselves as Apostles of Christ in bringing this Gospel of God. Elsewhere Paul uses the term “ambassador” (II Corinthians 5:20, Ephesians 6:20). Israel was now in the throws of being punished for the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit as Jesus warned in Matthew 12:31. Recognising this, we understand from Exodus 4:8 etc., that the task or responsibility of witnessing to God, His Word, His Testament or Plan for the fallen world is now entrusted to the church or synagogue of His Only Begotten Son. Had Israel accepted Jesus, that nation would have completed its task by AD 30. However, that last Seven-year stage, to finish the previous sixty-nine fulfilled by AD 30, for Israel to complete her pre-Messianic Kingdom **His Story** will soon be at hand assuming we are correctly reading the prophecies. At the Rapture is when the Church completes her task and the responsibility returns primarily to the Jews. So to speak, the baton in the race was taken off Israel in AD 30, handed to the Church and soon is returned to Israel for one final spurt to complete the race up to the Messianic Kingdom. Implementation of the task will involve the 144 000 “witnesses” from the Twelve Tribes of Israel (Revelation 7:4, 14:1-4), Elijah (Malachi 4:5-6), and other saints such as the Two Witnesses (Revelation 11:1-13) whomever they are. Assuming the Rapture occurs a short time before the signing of the Seven-year Treaty with Antichrist, these witnesses may be already actively involved shortly

before the Tribulation). I Thessalonians 2:4;

“ * ... imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls”. (They put body and soul into their task with these very worthy Thessalonians, many, if not most in respect to ‘Gentiles’, being Macedonians (I Thessalonians 4:10). They “laboured night and day” according to verse 9). I Thessalonians 2:8;

“ * ... We preached unto you the Gospel of God”. (They did this without charge or ‘for free’ because they were required to by God. He had entrusted them with the most important task to make as many as possible aware of God’s Great Plan. God wants us to work hard to show people how the message is open and available for everyone to be part of it etc. Although we have to advise or warn others there is an awful outcome for anyone who does not want to take advantage of God’s Grace and Mercy. Certainly we should emphasize the positive side of the message, i.e., “The Good News”. But there is bad news for others who do not believe. The work of being God’s witness must be done well. If one feels one needs training, by all means seek it). I Thessalonians 2:9;

“ ... God, Who hath called you unto His Kingdom and Glory”. [Again this is an example of a clause that amplifies, or perhaps more fully describes, what ‘The Gospel’ involves. It’s also about being called into God’s Messianic Kingdom. Next, we enter the Eternal Age in the New Universe. Although some of us will receive our glorified bodies at The Rapture if still alive when God makes that Call and sends Jesus, the archangel’s Trumpet ad all, the term ‘Glory’ here might refer to the Eternal Age. That era is when **all** saints, including Millennial Saints, are glorified. In the Messianic Kingdom many who are called to sainthood will have to await the New Heaven and Earth to receive their glorified bodies. Thus Paul’s point here could reflect two different situations to come. Firstly the Messianic Millennial Kingdom then when that concludes with the final or Last Gog-Magog war in the last year of the Millennium. Then there is the Eternal Universe. In some sense, the Messianic Kingdom is the *Aleph* (א) to the Eternal Age’s *Tav* (ת)]. I Thessalonians 2:12;

“ * ... Ye received the Word of God ...”. [This is another amplification of the definition of the Gospel. It is the Word of God. It’s not the word of men. It is the Word of Truth (אמת) which in the Hebrew can be read to mean, “from Aleph (א) to Tav (ת)” or “Aleph (א) with Tav (ת). Either way, the Hebrew word is a wonderful picture of what Truth involves. In summary, only Jesus could describe Himself as The *Aleph* and *Tav* or in Greek by transliteration, the *Alpha* (Α) and *Omega* (Ω)]. I Thessalonians 2:13;

“ * ... Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved”. (In using this verse one is departing a little from the main objective of this paper. However, there are two useful points to make. Firstly, it is implying “The Gospel” here, as most people in *Churchianity* understand the term is essentially as in the first few verses of I Corinthians 15. It is all about getting people saved. The idea that the Word of God is so rich in God’s Wisdom and is useful for our instruction on what really is happening in this chaotic world is of little interest to this strategy of getting people saved at all costs. Certainly, it is not until a person is regenerated, ‘born again’ or ‘born from above’ that he or she can understand the Scriptures. Learning about that wisdom is a vital part of the sanctification process as the person matures through their faith in Jesus alone. Secondly, in going out to the Gentiles, *The Gospel* generated wrath and jealousy from the Jews who had rejected Jesus but not, of course, from Jews who had accepted Jesus. Indeed, Paul and all the Christian missionaries at this stage of Church History were Jews. Many of these ‘Thessalonians’

were in fact Macedonians. Originally, their ancestors were from Sidon (יְהוּדִים מִסִּדוֹן or יְהוּדִים מִסִּדוֹן). Remembering some of Sidon's anti-God or anti-Israel antics in the past long before the Roman Empire (e.g., re Athaliah, Jezebel etc, I Kings 16:30-31, II Kings 8:26, Ezekiel 26:1-28:23), some Jews may well have been aggrieved that Paul tried to save 'Macedonians' in Thessaly (I Thessalonians 4:10). However, in all probability, the non-believing Jews' anger was most intensely directed at Paul and others. Therefore, in verse 16 Paul also says, "... to fill up (or complete) their sins always: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost". Most people do not realise that 'wrath' specifically referred then to the forthcoming destruction of Jerusalem and its temple by Titus' and Vespasian's soldiers in AD 70 which Jesus prophesied in the part of the Olivet Discourse covering the temple's stones all being upturned. Just before and perhaps during the early part of the Apocalypse and with Antichrist's approval (but not God's), Israel will build another temple and reinstate levitical services in order for the "Abomination of Desolation" to occur. That is specifically referred to in Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:14 along with the other events following the peculiar circumstance of the 'Nation against Nation and Kingdom against Kingdom' condition recorded in Matthew 24:7, Mark 13:8 and Luke 21:10. However, the Bible also refers to God's wrath in two other ways. Firstly, with the rest of the world (Revelation 3:10) apart from the Church of Christ which is spared by Jesus' Coming at The Rapture (I Thessalonians 1:10 and Revelation 3:10) a future generation of Israel will undergo the Seven-year wrath of both God and the Antichrist in The Tribulation (or Apocalypse). Secondly, like any unbeliever of all time, unbelieving Jews and non-Jews or Gentiles will suffer God's Eternal Wrath at the Sin of Adam that comes to all of us unless we repent. However, in the context of this verse the reference to "wrath" is the fulfilment of Jesus' prophecy that "not one stone of Herod's temple will remain unturned" (Matthew 24:2, Mark 13:2 and Luke 21:6) as happened in AD 30 along with a Roman massacre of Jews. I Thessalonians 2:16;

" # ... Timothy our fellow labourer in the Gospel of Christ". (We note here the term is "Gospel of Christ" or more properly the 'Gospel of **the** Christ' or Messiah of Israel. Timothy, being Jewish, was probably interested in the fact of Jesus of Nazareth being Israel's long awaited Messiah. For everyone, Jesus is the fulfilment of the long awaited child of the woman of Genesis 3:15. For Timothy, he was also looking forward to that blessed time or era of The Messianic Kingdom which we Gentiles should also look forward to). I Thessalonians 3:2;

" # ... taking vengeance on them ... that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus *the* Christ. [The context here is persecution of the believers. Concerning those who are under persecution, Paul is reminding us that our detractors who are not "obeying" Jesus' Gospel will suffer a terrible end. Unless they re-think, i.e., repent concerning their attitude towards Jesus and His Work. It is not for us to take re-action against them. Although where one has to work at the toilet block and where one is often on the receiving end of the stick of the BBC crowd (boozers, baccy- and cannabis-users etc.,) one realises that society is doing nothing to force these people to get out of, or off, their vice-wagons. It would be for their own long-term mental and physical health if some sort of serious action along such lines was taken. Meanwhile, one simply has to suffer their slurs, insults and vandalism plus ostracism from most of the rest of society etc. The more interesting theological point is the use of the word 'obey' here. We normally think of believing and accepting "The Gospel". In the Greek text for this passage the word is *hupakono* which means to 'hear, attentively listen to, hearken, heed or conform'. It has the meaning of 'obey' in the sense of conforming to a higher authority's commands. One often gets this sort of nonsense in

witnessing. The subject does not listen, keeps changing the subject, raises silly little objections, gainsays anything one says etc. Even in doing that they effectively persecute the person delivering God's message. After one has discharged one's responsibility in witnessing the time comes to discontinue casting pearls before swine. Some believers put far too much effort into 'rescuing' such people at the expense of helping other more worthy candidates or perhaps more likely responders in the positive]. II Thessalonians 1:8;

" # ... Whereunto he called you by our Gospel ...". (In the previous verse Paul wrote another very succinct statement on soteriological Salvation, "... God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth". It is "our Good News" about the obtaining the "Glory of our Lord Jesus *the* Christ". Having said that, in verse 15, Paul exhorts us to follow the traditions not of elders or church fathers but of The Word and by "our epistle (or letter)" and these we have in our New Testaments). II Thessalonians 2:14;

" # ... According to the glorious Gospel of the Blessed God ...". [Paul writes that it was "committed unto my trust". In the previous verses, Paul explained that The Law was given for the unrighteous not the righteous. In fact, anything that is contrary to the "doctrine" that is in the "Gospel of the Blessed God" is wrong. Then he listed several examples of unrighteousness to go with the list of typical "works of the flesh" he outlined in Galatians 5:19-21. They are also things that will not be seen whatsoever in the coming Kingdom of God when Messiah returns. Those who do want to practise such things will do so in the other place prepared for the unsaved. Although we doubt that in fact they will be able to do those things there apart from perhaps ruminate upon what living by the flesh had delivered them in the course of their lifetime. Indeed it is a Blessed thing to be on the right side of God rather than on the wrong side and the Gospel essentially explains how that comes about. As Paul wrote in verse 15, "Christ (Messiah) Jesus came into the world to save sinners"]. I Timothy 1:11;

" # ... the appearing of our Saviour the Lord Jesus *the* Christ (Messiah) ... has brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel". (Here the Gospel is associated with the "appearing" of our Saviour. At His First Appearance, Coming or Advent He saved us soteriologically. At the Last or Second Coming, He comes to save the world physically. Jesus could have done that at the First Coming had Israel accepted Him and His offer of the Kingdom then. Now we await the end of the Sixth Millennium before the Seventh, i.e., the Messianic Kingdom begins and the world is saved physically then). II Timothy 1:10;

" # ... Jesus *the* Christ of the Seed of David was raised from the dead according to my Gospel". (Or in effect, "according to my Good News" or "the Good News that I have". Here Paul also notes indirectly Jesus is the fulfilment of prophecy perhaps most instructively here concerning one that we find in Isaiah 7:14). II Timothy 2:8

" ... God .. Hath manifested His Word ... through preaching ... committed unto me according to the commandment of our Saviour". [Instead of using the term 'Gospel' Paul gives us more detail about what exactly the Lord commanded him to do. In Jesus, "The Word became ('manifested' as) Flesh" as John 1:14 explains. We witness to The Word in both the Flesh as in Jesus but the Written Word too, i.e., to the whole Bible not just parts of it. In the previous verse we read this includes the "hope of Eternal Life promised before the World began". In respect to the statement "committed unto me according to the commandment of our Saviour", we should refer to Galatians 1:12. There, Apostle Paul

claimed he had independently received his commission and information about Jesus directly from the Lord Himself. One reiterates here a point we make about the Biblical statements about certain matters only being understandable to the last generation of believers. After all, we are recipients of the permanent indwelling Spirit of God. He, God's Spirit, assures us as a pledge (*Erevon-Arrabon*) that we can absolutely rely on God to fulfill all His promises and prophecies. But how are we to understand some of them by implication if we cannot rely on the Lord's independent revelation of their meaning to the current crop of believers to the exclusion of every previous generation? And that question does not even begin to address another problem. That is by the way the false chronology of the ancient Middle East is begging the theologian's attempts to figure out which prophecies have already been fulfilled in History or ***His Story!***] Titus 1:3;

" # ... in the bonds of the Gospel .. ". [Paul wrote these words from a lonely prison. That is the fate of many serious believers throughout History. The bonds of a prison are the outcome of a wonderful bond by being in Christ or Christ in us (Colossians 1:27, c.f., II Corinthians 13:5, "Christ is in you"). However, society's jails also provide an opportunity or place to write. Paul took the opportunity to do much of his writing in prison from which he was later released until he was taken back in for execution (as far as we know). We sometimes hear of people taken captive by terrorists and crammed in some sort of confinement. Some of them have told us how they psychologically survived by writing. The persecuted believer is open to doing the same thing except that the process for the believer in Christ is not just mental and physical but spiritual as well. There is also a variety of prisons. In some, there is even a certain measure of limited freedom to leave as long as one guarantees to return at the end of the day, after a few hours or so, or even after six weeks annual leave. Joseph, Moses (in the Arabian desert), Jeremiah, Paul and oneself know what it's like]. Philemon 13

" ... A great Salvation; spoken by the Lord ... confirmed unto us by them that heard *Him*". [The word 'Gospel' does not appear here but the point made essentially encapsulates what most church folk mean when they refer to "The Gospel". The details of this "Great Salvation" offer are recorded in verses like John 3:16 or I Corinthians 15:1-4. It is not certain who wrote this letter to the Hebrews. The closing reference to Timothy suggests Paul's signature. Furthermore, Hebrews 10:34 has the writer referring to the time when the readers "had compassion of me in my bonds". Of course anyone could have written that, for example, Peter who also spent time in "bonds" in the very early days of the Jerusalem Church. However, those last four verses after the "amen" of Hebrews 13:21 might suggest a group of people, including Paul, i.e., the "us" of this verse, combined to write the epistle's words. Perhaps Paul added a single personal note as an appendix. Other co-writers may have done the same thing but we only received this one, ostensibly from Apostle Paul. In any case, apart from this rather unusual Pauline ending, it is clear that the contributors to this epistle, assuming more than one writer co-authored it, had received testimony from others because they were not themselves direct witnesses of Jesus and His Words and Ministry. In Galatians, 1:12, on the other hand, Paul declared he had independently received the commission of the Gospel directly from the Lord Himself. Considering these two situations, one must wonder if Paul would have signed himself up to the words in this verse. Paul would have said he would be one of "them that heard *Him*" even if he was the last man to be able to say that (I Corinthians 15:8). It's all a bit enigmatic and one might be reading too much into this. The authorship of the Book of Hebrews is an interesting issue but one that is massively outweighed in significance by the critical situation then facing the persecuted Jewish believers near Jerusalem in the last few months before the

Romans moved in to prevent the Jewish insurrection that led to the AD 66-70 destruction of Jerusalem and its temple. Those were the circumstances into which the Epistle had to be written and 21st Century believers face a parallel crisis wherein the Book of Hebrews advice to move on from eternally discussing “first principles of the Oracles of God” (Hebrews 5:12) but to move off milk and onto “strong meat that belongs to them that are of full age” (Hebrews 5:14). That strong meat should not only be the ability to “discern both evil and good” (Hebrews 5:14) but to move on to the “more sure word of prophecy” (II Peter 1:19)]. Hebrews 2:3;

“ ... Jesus ... *who* by the Grace of God should taste death for every man”. (Another verse encapsulating the essence of what most people mean by “The Gospel”. Interestingly, the copy of the KJV one is using for this exercise also quotes in the margin John 3:16). Hebrews 2:9;

“ ... To make reconciliation for the sins of the people”. (Again a verse encapsulating the essence of what most people mean by “The Gospel”). Hebrews 2:17;

“ # ... For unto us was *the Gospel* preached, as well as unto them ...”. [The writer here is probably referring to ‘Gospel’ in the generic sense of good news, or, in other words, “a gospel”. One will note we put ‘the’ in italics because it probably should read in English ‘a gospel’ or the good news God spelled out to that particular generation of Israel. However, that ‘gospel’ (good news) to those wandering in the desert in *circa* 1485-1445 BC was not the detail of Jesus of Nazareth being crucified for our sins on a Roman Cross only to be buried in a rich man’s tomb and be resurrected on the Third Day to ascend some forty days later into Heaven, for a time before returning. Instead, the good news for that generation of Israel was an offer of entry into Canaan, God defeating their enemies for them, the land flowing with milk and honey and a place of rest compared to the harsh toil of the desert. This verse in *Hebrews* continues by saying of that generation of Israel in Moses’ day; “ ... not being mixed with **faith** in them that heard it; i.e., *that blessed message*; subsequently missed out on that offer. Instead, that gospel or good news was offered to the next generation of Israel that did enter Canaan *circa* 1445 BC. And that is what will happen as a result of Israel’s AD 30 rejection of Jesus. A later generation **of Israel** is now going to receive all the promises given to Abraham of which all but one he missed out on during his lifetime nevertheless understanding that he, Isaac, Jacob *et al* would be resurrected to enjoy the promise which failed to mature in their lifetimes and with all their believing descendants. This verse is an excellent example of how we need to carefully consider terms like ‘gospel’ in their proper context. It also illustrates the problems we have when translating from one language into another and then perhaps into another or yet even another again. For example, translating from Hebrew into Greek then into Latin, then into *Olde English*, into 16th Century English then 19th Century English with a multiplicity of paraphrases through the last century, the 20th. In that ‘mix’ an indefinite article can easily become ‘definite’ especially if an *a priori* assumption (*Covenant Theology*) is allowed to take hold over the translators]. Hebrews 4:2;

“ * ... Taste the Good Word of God, and the powers of the World (*Age*) to Come ..”. [“Good Word”; Good News; we nearly have the word ‘gospel’ here. What’s a bit more interesting here is that one is also getting a taste of the wonders of the “World (or Age) to come”. That is the Messianic Kingdom to be followed by perhaps an even greater wonder of life in a new, perfect and undefiled Heaven and Earth. In our discussion in the passages Galatians 3:14, Colossians 1:25-28, I Thessalonians 1:5 and Titus 1:3, we develop the importance of the

pledge or guarantee [*arrabown* (αρραβων) and *erevon* (עֲרֻבֹן)] we have that all this will occur for us. Like Abraham *et al*, we are believing in faith that God will do these things He has promised mainly via the covenant with Abraham that he also made with Isaac and Jacob, then with David in regard to the Kingship of Messiah. In many ways it is simpler for us to believe because we are in the Age that received the Holy Spirit permanently and fully indwelling us. That was not a privilege for believers before the Cross. In that sense one might ask if our faith is somehow '*easier to come by*'. This is a deliberately rhetorical question. No one in Abraham's day disbelieved God was the Creator. Although people obviously chose to ignore Him. Or, just as likely, many people gave up on God's Promise to save man from his post-Fall dilemma. As events before the Flood then the Tower of Babel indicate, many such people decided they might just as well live for the moment of their lifetime, and experience as many fleshly experiences as possible in the centuries of life available to some of them in those early days before genetic mutations set in with vehemence. In our day and age it is *infra dig* to believe in Evolutionism so that to come to belief in an era where brainwashing has become the *Magnus Opus* of today's Academy and Media. In the final analysis, there is not much point comparing different levels of faith if such a thing is possible comparing one generation of believers versus another). Hebrews 6:5;

"... Jesus the mediator of the New Covenant". (That is, the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34, 32:40; Isaiah 55:3, 59:21, 61:8-9, Ezekiel 16:60-63, 34:25-31, 37:26-28, Romans 11:27, II Corinthians 3:6, Hebrews 10:16). Hebrews 12:24;

"... Begotten us ... a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus The Christ (Messiah) from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible ..". (Another classic aspect of the statement that forms an essential part of the thing churches refer to as "The Gospel"). I Peter 1:3-4

"... The power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the Last Time". [A continuation of Peter's explanation of "The Gospel" (refer previous item) as it is commonly understood by Church Tradition. However, Peter also refers to the point in Hebrews 1:2 about "These Last Days" meaning here, as in Hebrews, The Third Era of the Church. This is a manner of the dispensational approach to dividing the Scriptures into various ages or eras based on 'economies' or covenants. We use the three eras of Conscience, Israel and The Church, each possibly consisting of two thousand years or two millennia or two days as per II Peter 3:8. Although every generation or people of each era knew their salvation is based on faith in God, the content or manner in which that salvation was effected in AD 30 could only be revealed logically as it happened at that particular and special point in History or **His Story**. Psalm 119:99 says, "I have more understanding than all my teachers because I keep thy precepts". In the context of the Last Days complemented by the privilege of the believer since Pentecost-Shavuot having the inward pledge and guarantee of the Holy Spirit of God's presence with us permanently and completely those who do keep by God's precepts will indeed have more understanding than all the teachers of the Past and Present. These days, "keeping thy precepts" presumably means keeping to the literal interpretation of the text as long as an obvious reference to allegory or parable requires caution when doing that. Passages that could only be understood in "The Last Days" better served people by having some allegorical teaching than none at all, or so previous generations assumed. Once the Last Days came into play, "understanding" became so much deeper. For example, better than any other generation, we can see just what it meant **long term** for Adam to try to learn and build knowledge apart from God. More than any other previous generation, we see the disastrous effects of that]. I Peter 1:5;

“ # ... them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven”. [Here we note the Gospel comes with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven at the same time as it is preached and achieves conviction in the soul who hears and believes]. I Peter 1:12;

“ # ... the Word (of the Lord) which by the Gospel is preached unto you”. (Here is an example where an Apostle appears to make a distinction between ‘The Word’ and ‘The Gospel’ suggesting the latter is a subset of the former. Although, in practice, both are part of the same thing for one is preaching the Word of God via the Gospel. It’s a bit like a parallel with belief and receiving the Gift of the Holy Spirit as one believes and is regenerated. There are not two separate and distinct events here. Or, it can be likened to the way the Jewish world-view sees no distinction between Heart and Mind while the Greek does make a very clear distinction between the two. With our non-Hebrew world-views, we also tend to see these things in very distinct dualistic or reductionist ways rather than as a *symbiosis* where the two come together, or ‘live together’ as the dictionary definition of symbiosis adds). I Peter 1:25;

“ # ... For unto this end was the Gospel preached even to the dead, that they might be judged indeed according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit”. [In this example one has used the 1901 American Standard Version but in the King James it is written, “For, for this cause was the Gospel preached also unto them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit”. In *The Messianic Jewish Epistles*, Dr Fruchtenbaum explains that “judged according to men in the flesh” refers to believers martyred in this life. Of course we live in the Spirit. Fruchtenbaum concludes, “The death and resurrection of Jesus (presumably *The Gospel*) guarantees the final coming judgement for the unbeliever but, for the believer, it is an encouragement to live spiritually”. That surely means growing and maturing in Christ and being “transformed” by “renewing” our “mind” to “prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect Will (Plan) of God” contained in the rest of the Scriptures]. I Peter 4:6;

“ ... The Oracles of God”. I Peter 4:11;

“ ... The end of them that obey not the Gospel of God”. (Here the Apostle is referring to judgement in general. However, he fears for those who do not “obey”. It’s a reference to people disobeying God, not repenting and taking no notice of everything God has instructed us in the Bible). I Peter 4:17;

“ ... The Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus *the* Christ”. Revelation 1:2, 9; and

“ ... another angel fly in the midst of Heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach ..”. Here, for the Gospel to be everlasting it has to be something that preceded Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection. Indeed it has to have existed in Eternity. So what is it? The verse actually goes on to tell us. It is explained by describing those who follow it: “To them that dwell on Earth (during the Apocalypse in context), ... saying with a loud voice, ‘Fear God, and give glory to Him; ... worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters’ ”. Patently, from now on and as Earth approaches the apocalypse, the prevailing view in the world today is there is no God to fear. *Ipsa facto*, God did not re-format or create in any way our environment and universe. But who in the churches today really believe all that God has inspired to be written in the Bible about His acts as Creator?

Revelation 14:6.

Addenda

Addendum on Pre-Christian Saving Faith

Jesus called upon Apostle Peter to open the “door of faith” (Acts 14:27) in Christ not just to Gentiles (Acts 10:1ff) but to Jews (Acts 2:1ff) and Samaritans (Acts 8:14ff), or ‘half-Jews, too. The question is this, “What exactly was behind the heretofore and implied ‘closure’? The ‘Faith’ always had to be in the One True God of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David etc; that is in the God named Jehovah in the Bible. That had never changed. That door had always been open. By God’s Grace and Mercy there would be a plan to save fallen Man. People knew that before Christ so that was not a closed or locked-up door. The One True God’s Grace and Mercy was, is, and always will be the basis for our salvation and that never changed. So Salvation was never on the basis of merit or something we could somehow earn by good works, purchase with money or donations or gain by or because of status. Thus far all of Christendom officially seems to be in broad agreement though in practice many branches of Christendom appear to believe otherwise.

Where the problem enters is that the actual content of the faith required in any of the eras the Bible describes has changed. But there has only been one such change. That was in AD 30 and due to the Cross. Before the Cross people did have to believe that a woman would conceive a Saviour Child without a Man’s seed (Genesis 3:15). In the Christian era we also believe that but now we also know precisely who that child is. Also, we know precisely just how Jesus of Nazareth, and at a terrible personal cost for Him, achieved that salvation for us. We know the exact manner in which He carried it out and that he arose from the dead in a resurrected body. That’s the main gist of the change in content of faith for the post-Cross era compared to the two pre-Cross eras and that was one point Apostle Paul was stressing in I Corinthians 15:1-8.

Also, therefore, rules of life for believers have changed over the three broad areas we identify in these pages of the 3-D *Aleph-Tav* Bible Study. The rule for life from Adam to Abraham was in one’s conscience. If one knew something was wrong, don’t do it! This still applies to everyone today. Believers in those days followed Adam’s and Abel’s examples and sacrificed animals to cover their sin. Animal sacrifices covered their sin until the Promised Deliverer paid the price in full but they did that without understanding the technicalities of I Corinthians 15:1ff. Additionally, after the Flood of Noah murderers had to be executed rather than merely branded for life. In another change in life-rule, meat could be consumed after the Flood. Government had to be introduced to arrange for the trial and execution of murderers and by implication sustain law and order or as II Thessalonians 2:7 indicates, to restrain the “Mystery of Iniquity”.

However, Man’s wickedness continued to flourish so God called Abraham (*circa* 2000 BC) to create a new nation, Israel, that would follow a new rule for life encased in what became the Law of Moses. But that plan did not get started until Moses in *circa* 1485 BC and even then it took another 450 years to pass by until King David (*circa* 1000 BC) rallied Israel to take Moses’ Law seriously and be entrenched within Israel’s Constitution. That delay was again the fault of men including Abraham, Jacob and other leaders of Israel⁽⁸⁵⁾. Even after David and Solomon, who were not perfect either of course, the leaders of Israel, and the population generally, failed much of the time to abide with God’s *ideal* Plan for Israel.

Ultimately it came to an end with the rejection of Jesus' Messiahship. Peter unlocked the door to allow believers to enter the Church of Christ Age with the permanent infilling (or baptism) of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer who henceforth disciple himself under the Law of Christ. It is at this point that the Content of Faith took on a significant new element. Now the believer had to acknowledge that Jesus was unjustly executed and buried to pay for our redemption as a perfect sacrifice on our behalf, standing in as the Last Adam to pay for the mistake of the First Adam (I Corinthians 15:22ff). And we have to admit we would have been that First Adam if we had been in his place. That is why we pray as "**The** Sinner that Jesus died for". Apostle Paul seems to be the first Biblical scribe to make this specific point about the First-Last Adam. He made the point twice to the Romans and to the Corinthians (Romans 5:12-14, I Corinthians 15:45).

We do not exactly know if pre-Cross generations of believers understood that they too would or could have been that First Adam and make the same mistake and plunge us all into the crises we now face and have faced for 6000 years. Possibly they did because it is not rocket science to work that out from the text. Certainly, they did **NOT** know that Jesus would die on a cross, be buried for "three days and three nights ⁽⁸⁶⁾" then resurrect from a ('rich' man's) grave. Since AD 30, when we eventually found out after 4000 years how God would finally execute His Plan to save fallen Man, the content of Faith became a bit more specific. The object and basis for saving faith remained unchanged as it would need to. But the content adopted one significant new aspect to incorporate. God gave two eras; firstly Conscience, then Law of Moses plus Conscience; to have about 2000 years each to show whether under these regimes Mankind could meet the standards God set for Man in those eras. After Man's failure in both eras, God then intervened as planned in His Sovereign Foresight or Fore-Knowledge and executed **The Atonement**. Between 7 BC and AD 30, God interrupted proceedings with the execution of the plan to sacrifice His Son for the redemption of fallen man. It was the Act of Love Satan could not have foreseen when he successfully deceived Eve and got Adam to disobey God.

So in the wake of Israel's failure and knowing: As indicated with the careful crafting of Exodus Chapter Four and the statement in verse 8; That Israel would fail, in her First Test to accept His Messiahship despite His plea; Jesus then had the opportunity to build His Church or Synagogue (of Christ). Later, Jesus gave Apostle John a vision in Revelation 2:1 to 3:22 to see how it would perform under His Direction, Law and Standards. For example, under the Law of Moses, the believer had to "love his neighbour as himself". Although God preferred they do better than that ⁽⁸⁷⁾. Under the law of Christ, the believer loves his neighbour "as Christ loved us and gave up His Life to save us" (Ephesians 5:25). We also fail, sadly, despite the wonderful example Jesus set for us with much scriptural text describing His Life. We, or Christendom at least, also fail despite the presence of the indwelling Spirit of God in us or "Christ in you the Hope of Glory" as stated in Colossians 1:27. Arguably, the true body of Christ, i.e., the genuinely believing disciples of Christ does come close to meeting the standard Jesus' set for His "Church". That we don't is ultimately a result of The Fall of Adam.

Addendum on Greek History (Acts 16:10)

As noted in the entry for Acts 16:10 Apostle Paul received a vision to go to the homeland of Alexander the Great (Refer, "Alexander the Great" below). Modern commentators and theologians unaware of the Reconstructed and Revised Chronology of ancient Egyptian History and the **con-sequential** effects of it, fail to see the significance of Troy ("*Troas*")

here. Furthermore, they are thus unaware of the constituency of the two groups aligned against each other for that Great Battle (refer, “The Great Battle” below) or Ten-Year Campaign and Siege of Troy in *circa* 780 BC, not “13th Century BC” as the archaeologists claim. The defenders of Troy included Greek-speaking Kurdo-Chaldeans, Greeks and other ethnicities such as Phoenicians, Medes and Persians. They refused to join Agamemnon and Menelaus’ confederation of *Greek* Achaeans or dwellers of the ‘Peloponnesian’ (Refer, “The Peloponnesian below). This Peloponnesian ‘Achaean’ Confederation (Refer, “The Achaean Confederation”) was organised ostensibly to act as a bulwark against Assyria (Refer, “Assyria” below) the (still rising, *on the way up*) great power of 780 BC. Down the track, the Confederation aimed to ward off rising powers further East such as the Persians, Medes, and Kurdo-Chaldeans in the Assyrian-built cities (Isaiah 23:13) in South-East Turkey (i.e., north of the border of present-day Northern Iraq). Also, Scythians (*‘Russians’*) were in the mix of tribes that ultimately defeated Assyria in *circa* 620 BC. No doubt, Paris did elope with Menelaus’ wife Helen. But that sort of thing was commonplace (Refer, “Phoenicia” below). But it was just the convenient excuse Agamemnon needed to call-in his chips with the other Peloponnesian Greek states, and little Ithaca off the North-West coast of the Peloponnese. Odysseus a.k.a Ulysses ruled Ithaca. Galatians, certainly, and possibly Bithynians, were in Troy in 780 BC. So in this passage we have Paul wanting to preach the Gospel further East, or certainly Bithynia, but being constrained instead to go West to the home of the ‘Western’ (or, in this case, the Aristotle-trained) leader who sacked and demolished the Eastern powers after they had about 230 years under mighty Persia-Iran’s suzerainty (**earlier end note**). So this strange set of passages in this part of *Acts* does indeed draw out attention to some important matters from History or **His Story**. Perhaps that is what God wanted all along. We are to take note!

Alexander the Great

Alexander the Patricide as I prefer. Velikovsky showed that the Oracle at the Siwa Oasis, in the Egyptian desert out towards Libya, could not tell Alexander whether “all his father’s murderers had been caught and tried”. Since Alexander must have been in the plot and equally guilty of this murder, it was obvious that he could tell if the Oracle was fake or real by seeing if the Oracle knew the answer. The Oracle responded by asking Alexander, “Would you repeat the question Oh Zeus?” If Alexander were Zeus, as crowned by the Egyptians a few weeks earlier, then clearly his father had not been murdered. So Alexander did not catch the Oracle out in this little trap. Alexander solved the riddle of the Gordian Knot by slashing his high-tensile iron sword through it but the Oracle could not solve Alexander’s inquiry. Whether he then realised the Jewish prophets, especially Daniel, were indeed writing what God had told them, we do not know. As Alexander’s bones began wearying at around age “Thirty”, he realised he was an ordinary man like anyone else except Jesus obviously. But that raises the whole question of the Seed of the Woman Prophecy in Genesis 3:15. Everyone in the ancient world knew about it but did not necessarily believe it or followed some corrupted theology about it. The prophecy explains a lot about that world’s ancient leaders and heroes, many of whom asked or wondered if they were indeed this ‘son of God’ or ‘son of a god’. We could list people like Nimrod, Ashur, Thutmose III, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar until his humbling, or Caligula (refer *I Claudius*) who must have entertained perverted thoughts along these lines.

The Great Battle: For New Zealanders and Australians, Troy is Gallipoli which in turn means the Polis of the Galli or Chaldi. Their ‘Great Battle’ was in the 1914-18 war in which Sir Winston Churchill deployed them into the disastrous campaign there against the ‘Turks’

many of whom may well have been Kurds. Churchill later complained he had been misled by the generals and that was why he opposed Eisenhower's push for the Normandy Landings in WWII fearing another Gallipoli. In retrospect and guided by our new knowledge, it may be that Sir Winston; sadly himself besieged by the Historians' delusional and false mystics concerning Troy's ancient battle, the dates even very wrong as we have proved; actually made a good call. For the diversion drew away Ottoman Turkey's best soldiers (especially if they were tough and longtime battle-experienced Kurds), to defend against the Maori, other New Zealanders and Australians, for the Turkish leaders knew how tough they were. It meant that Palestine, the Gulf at Aqaba-Eilat at the north-end of the Red Sea would now be prone to the soldiers of the British Empire who would effectively see to the re-establishment of the Jewish State. But the 'disaster' is seen in New Zealand as the basis for a new religion that commemorates war-dead (*Shades of Shintoism*). Once again we think of the statements that "One thing we learn from History is that we do not learn from History" and "Those who do not know their History are doomed to repeat its mistakes". The big mistake here is to reject the Bible and its messages. Finally, perhaps Eisenhower did learn from Galipoli.

The Peloponnese: That is to say the mainland of Greece plus nearby islands or very similar in boundaries to modern Greece. But for centuries 'Greeks' inhabited many parts of modern Western Turkey bordering the Aegean or 'Achean' Sea. It seems though, that this, shall we say 'Greek', part of (modern) Turkey was populated by Ionians and Dorians who arrived there from elsewhere. We say "elsewhere" was Israel and the Lebanese cities of Tyre, Sidon and Byblos. This is probably why Paul was able to work much of his time in that part of Turkey - the islands and ports of Western Turkey. In fact "Tur-Key" is the "Quay of Tyre". Its heritage owed much more to Israel and Tyre than any other culture. Although the *Lingua Franca* was Greek, the heritage of the people in the churches of Ephesus and the other six churches of *Revelation* was Phoenician and Jewish. That would explain why Jews were able to have a synagogue in Ephesus which was otherwise dedicated to the monolatrist worship of Diana of the Ephesians. And of course, both the Jesus-rejecting Jews and idolaters would join forces to drive Paul and the Christians out of Ephesus especially when the pagan religious economy was challenged.

The Achaean Confederation: Agamemnon wanted Troy to join the Confederation but King Priam of Troy knew that would divide his people. His Kurdish-Chaldean subjects were kith and kin to the Assyrians from their time in Mesopotamia-Iraq. Although many Kurdo-Chaldeans would later participate in the demise of Assyria in alliance with Medes and Scythians in *circa* 620 BC, they presumably balked at supporting Agamemnon and fighting Assyria in 780 BC. Lower Iraq-Mesopotamia had turned suddenly into desert probably from over-irrigation from the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. These rivers had lost some of their northern feedstock via global warming and perhaps catastrophic earthquakes that diverted feedstock northwards into the Arctic Ocean instead of south to the Persian Gulf. Perhaps Kurds blamed Assyrians for that disaster because Assyrians live upstream and it was their fault the downstream Kurds took the environmental hit. Elsewhere we discuss the global warming factors back then. But sometime prior to 780 BC, Assyria had been involved in aid schemes (Isaiah 23:13) to re-settle the diaspora Kurds. The latter were probably on balance grateful to Assyria for that - at least in *circa* 780 BC. Later, in *circa* 620 BC they had changed their minds after a couple of centuries of cruel Assyrian dominance. So they joined in with others to teach the later-arrogant Assyrians a lesson. Sadly, we cannot be absolutely sure about this analysis but we are confident it is reasonably accurate. However, Today (March 2015), the last remaining Assyrians in North Iraq are ironically depending on Kurdish

soldiers to protect them from Islamic fanatics. This is not history repeating itself but the descendants of the players in an ancient time replaying a different scenario or the Last (*Tav*) Scenario before the Second Coming.

Assyria

Or the second of the five fallen empires or kings of Revelation 17:9-10, The seven heads, mountains or kings: The five fallen as at *circa* AD 90: Egypt, Assyria, Chaldeo-Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece; "One is", i.e., Rome I and "one yet to come" i.e., Rome II.

Phoenicia

We know that Phoenician sailors were always going off with Greek women or more likely the Greek women eloped with the virile young Phoenician sailors. Greek playwrights Menander and Aeschylus wrote many dramas, tragedies and comedies involving such events. Somewhere, probably in Homer, Phoenicians are blamed for the Trojan War. Elsewhere, we write about Mary Magdalene the Tyrian woman and daughter of the Syro-Phoenician or Canaanite woman. Jesus deliberately selected Mary in order to declare before her that great statement of John 20:17, "go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God". Here, Paul is being restricted from going 'East' and obliged to go 'West' as it were, much like James the brother of John who almost certainly seems to have gone to 'Tarshish' to spread The Word

Persia-Iran

Was often allied with the Medes of North Iran. Their combined hegemony *circa* 550-330 BC, was the eventual beneficiary of the Assyrian demise in *circa* 620 BC but only after the Chaldeans had their relatively brief period (*circa* 620-560 BC) of suzerainty mainly under Nebuchadnezzar.

Addendum on Circumcision

Evidently the Prophets' warning on failure to be heart-circumcised had fallen on many deaf ears between *circa* 900-600 BC. Between the deaths of Ezra and Nehemiah *et al* and the coming of Jesus, the lessons from the Babylonian Exile on this point of the circumcision of the heart had been forgotten by most people. However, quite apart from Israel's wrongful attitudes or understanding about circumcision a far more horrible thing has occurred going back to ancient times.

The awful development of the practice of female genital mutilation (*circumcision*) spread far and wide across the world, but particularly in Africa, because of the false focus on physical circumcision. This probably goes back to some heresy initiated after the Queen who Sheba'd Ophir-Africa (Hatshepsut) converted after she came to Israel to hear Solomon. Any '**Physical** Circumcision' was mandatory for men-only to undergo if as Gentiles they converted to following the Mosaic Covenant in order to receive its blessings. Not even under Moses had there been any reference to women in this regard because there never was any application to them.

Circumcision had only applied to males under the Mosaic Covenant because God had wanted to stress the anger he felt at Adam's disobedience of the instruction in the Garden

of Eden. It was Adam's **primary** responsibility to obey, not Eve's, though she was required to obey of course. Men of Israel, and male converts (proselytes to Moses) were required to be witnesses to this disobedience and be called on to be obedient in this matter. Once Christ had paid for the sin of the world, no man needs to be circumcised in order to receive God's blessings on offer to saved people quite apart from blessings like rain and sunshine which all men get irrespective of their attitude towards God. The Mosaic situation was closed off or removed by Jesus' Sacrifice. The Mosaic being fulfilled by Jesus means there are no longer any benefits under Moses to anyone. Blessings under the Abrahamic do remain in place **for Israel** directly and Gentiles indirectly through Israel's eventual Soteriological Salvation.

More generally, the reason for male circumcision came about because Adam, apparently having learned about his sexuality from the Tree of Knowledge initiated some sexual advances on his wife, as was intended, but before God had instructed him on the matter. Adam became embarrassed when he heard God coming in the Garden as he was sort of 'caught-in-the-act' or perhaps as a result of '*foreplay*'. God's anger was directed at the disobedience not the sexual circumstances *per se*, of course. Nevertheless, God chose Israel to practise the rite under the original Abrahamic Covenant that set up Israel. This seems to be one of the unique roles God mandated to Israel as part of His overall Plan for the Salvation of the World from Adam's disobedience as **symbolised** by, or given in evidence by, whatever sexual activity actually took place in those last days in Eden for Adam and Eve.

Thus God's rite can only be for men i.e., boys eight days after birth (Genesis 17:12, Leviticus 12:3). Male circumcision on eight-day-old boys was the 'Sign' of the Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 17:11) whereas the Sabbath was the 'Sign' of the Mosaic (Exodus 31:13). It seems God intended Israel to bear through the Abrahamic Covenant, not through the Mosaic; probably because the Abrahamic would apply right through to the end of the Messianic Kingdom; this reminder or sign of Man's offence in Eden. God still in effect uses Israel to be a continual witness on the point because between the Church's Rapture and Armageddon Israel will re-continue her role of witness during the period of the Tribulation, and perhaps for a short time before because the church will have been raptured to Heaven by then.

But there is no soteriological efficacy from the practice. There is no longer any need for Gentile men to be circumcised in order to receive blessings available since AD 30 to Jesus' Congregation, Church or Body. Although we have no interest in this point, if Gentiles still want to convert to Judaism, that's a different matter anyway but they must be circumcised because the rite still applies to Israel under the Abrahamic Covenant. There never was any need to circumcise women, neither Jewish nor Gentile. But it is important for men and women, and desirably even boys and girls, to be circumcised by God **on the heart** for only He can do that. In most churches, the parallel confusion is found in the physically harmless rite of infant baptism (water sprinkling). Unless that forms some sort of phobia in the baby this practice is physically neutral or just mildly annoying for the infant who would probably prefer to be asleep in his or her wee cot. Any potential spiritual harm, however; formed in the child's soul by confusing Baptism with physical circumcision; could well be mentally and spiritually damaging. Baptism by full immersion, undergone by adults or children who understand, symbolises circumcision of the heart - not of sexual organs!

Addendum: Mars Hill Today

The illogical and factually incorrect counter-arguments debated today in governments and the Academy reflect the low standard of science-instruction now after 150 years of neo-Darwinism demonstrating the same degree of lostness exhibited by those scholars on Mars Hill. Our schools and universities have produced a generation which cannot think 'Science'. They are just seized with the rhetoric of pseudo-science or *scientism*. That is the world we are in (2019). It is one where 'cultures' are clashing violently both within and across cultures which in some cases have a total number of adherents equalling one! Paul would have found that on Mars Hill. For example, across cultures, Islam is at war with adherents of Confucius, Zoroaster, Buddha or Tao. It's also at war with Protestantism, Catholicism, Orthodox Christendom and Jewry. It is especially antagonistic to the Secular Evolutionist Materialists (SEM's) students of the Western Academy's godlessness, materialism and evolutionism which are now the underlying philosophies controlling international debate and policy. All the religionists and philosophers (Confucius, Zoroaster, Buddha, Tao etc.) are excluded from the debate (or policy) or they are given a token *fifteen minutes*. But that seems to be what the Treaty of Westphalia originally envisaged. In Europe, it set up the secular nation-state as the only truly legitimate form of government. That strategy has been adopted after the disaster of the Thirty Years War that in turn followed 1400-1500 years of inefficient Christendomite government in Europe. Other governance systems elsewhere in the world that also tried to combine politics with philosophy and/or religions likewise were decaying or collapsing. Now Islam is repeating or taking up its peculiar version of the disastrous Catholic-Protestant-Calvinist contest that erupted into civil war about 400 years ago. Perhaps out of these crises with Islam there will appear the Ten Nation World system that arises out of the "World Government" prophesied in the Bible. Presumably, Apostle Paul had no idea all this history had to pass by before the Second Coming. But our survey of the Bible leaves us with little doubt about many of the details of God's Plan to show what Adam's folly would lead to. That Plan must be allowed to pan-out all of its lessons for us and for the angels to study and cogitate upon. It may have run for about six thousand years for us, so far, but with God that is a mere Six Days. That in itself is a clue that the 'Day of Rest' or Seventh Day, presumably the Messianic Millennial Kingdom, is at hand! We can but hope. However, we have good reason to hope that way because our survey of economics, politics, true science and pseudo-science, archaeology, history, theology etc., suggests very strongly most elements of the Great Lesson Plan have now been demonstrated. Hopefully, there are not many more lessons to come - for the Church at least

Addendum on Proselytes

Concerning Acts 2:10, 6:5 and 13:43 and Acts 18:7, as a proselyte, if he was one, Justus would not have been allowed or able to perform the functions of a *Shabbas Goy* for he too would have to meet the demands of the Law of Moses. The term 'Jew' in its original or base meaning denotes one who "praises" or "worships" God. Therefore why state that he "worshipped God" if he were a Jewish Old Testament-Saint? Overall, the implication seems reasonably clear. Justus was a believing Gentile who was probably putting his life into the service of Israel or Jewry. But we cannot be dogmatic on most of these points. As "proselytes" men like Justus would have followed the Laws of Moses. They would have circumcised their boys on the 8th day after birth under the Abrahamic Covenant. That situation led to confusion in the very early Church because many people assumed new believers amongst the Gentiles would still need to be circumcised. The Jewish nation still needs to circumcise under the Abrahamic Covenant and anyone wanting to convert into Judaism likewise. Messianic Jewish believers also need to circumcise their boys if the

family still wants to count as a member of the Abrahamic Covenant for Israel. But that is irrelevant for gentile Christians for they are not under the Abrahamic Covenant. A Christian Gentile marrying a Jew is free to choose what he does, if male, but if he has sons with his Jewish wife he could either have the boys circumcised at birth or leave that decision for the child when he becomes an adult. Such situations are very rare but this is the sort of technical point that can arise and it is easy for confusion to enter. So Paul had to deal with the problem in his day. Today, there still can be issues to deal with but in the very early stages of Church history the debate was especially shrill and significant. In respect to Mosaic Laws, anyone is free to observe any of them, especially Jewish folk who have grown up used to abstaining from pork etc. However, they are no longer **mandatory** for anyone. Modern Judaism attempts to follow Mosaic Law but in effect has ended up following Rabbinical Law albeit much of it based directly or indirectly on Moses.

Conclusion

(Stimulated by a Blessing I wrote down on 16/8/19): The term 'Gospel', often interpreted to mean "Good News" as in *Good News For Modern Man* a liberal interpretation of the New Testament, is used in quite a wide variety of circumstances. In its essential meaning, "Good News", the term refers to matters that are no longer News but have now become History and indeed **His Story**. Really, the Good News or Gospel today is the fact that certain very interesting as yet unfulfilled prophecies, given or confirmed by Jesus, are now coming to fulfilment. Between AD 30 - 60, the news about Jesus' resurrection was very newsworthy. News travelled rather more slowly across the world than it does in these days of social media so it remained 'News' for two or three decades. Thus while Paul and the others were writing their gospels and epistles, the resurrection news on top of the news broadcast after Jesus' birth which reached Persia and the East perhaps up to two years after the Advent or Incarnation, i.e., *circa* 4-5 BC, was still quite recent and **literally** qualified as "News". Now it qualifies as History. We have new News intrinsically rooted (Hebrew רצנ) in that History about Jesus

The most recent events that are News now are the prophecies now coming into play. In particular the climate change, environmental problems and the Days of Noah. In mid-July 2019, Auckland University reported that its study into tree rings (Dendrochronology) had yielded a date of 2488 BC for the first Kauri trees to begin growing after the Flood of about 2500 BC. This is especially Good News for it adds yet another persuasive piece of evidence supporting the Bible's account of **His Story**. This comes at a time when virtually everyone has given up trying to reconcile the Bible with common and scientific reality. Yet, out of the blue, comes a figure from dendrochronology that confirms something one has been saying for years. The mountains came up out of the ocean just 2450-2500 years ago so that seeds from arboreal detritus, originating from the landmass recorded in the first chapter of Genesis, came to settle on the new soils of these islands from about 2500 BC. About 12 years later, in 2488 BC, the first Kauri began growing in Northland, NZ. Some lizards arrived having drifted here on the ocean waves. Birds flew here a bit later. Men brought Moa, kiwis and some flightless parrots, then rats, mice, stoats, cows and sheep over the next three or four millennia. Here at the ends of the Earth, we are witnessing some of the most astounding evidence that the prophecies of the Last of the Last Days are now upon us. That is today's Good News. It is the latest news at that. Events concerning Jesus' life on Earth and His Ministry are now almost *ancient* History. His prophecies, and those of the Prophets of Israel still unfulfilled, are just becoming News having lain dormant for anything up to six millennia. Believing the News of AD 30 that is now **His Story** provides

the ticket to experience the Good things of the unfulfilled prophecies and avoid the bad things about them.

Don Stewart

<http://donstewartresearcher.com/book>

<http://don-stewart-research.blogspot.co.nz>;

Email: dons@fresher.net.nz

Mobile Phone: 0064 (0)210 2989 320

Address: 35 Vivian Street, Wellington, NZ 6011

Landline Phone: 0064 4 384 7648

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Endnotes