

Bible Studies

Grieving the Spirit

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Ephesians 4:30

What does this verse tell us about the Holy Spirit?



It tells us that the Holy Spirit is, 'of God' and It highlights His importance to us, because we are 'sealed' by Him. Most of all it tells us that the Holy Spirit is capable of being grieved.

There are people today who see the Holy Spirit as some sort of a force or an impersonal power. The Bible clearly shows that the Holy Spirit is personal in the same way that the Father and the Son are personal. You cannot grieve electricity, nor can you make the wind angry.

What does grieve mean in this context?

Grief means to afflict sorrow or deep trouble, but the Greek *Lupeo* also signifies pain of body or mind as well as distress, sorrow or heaviness.



Does being grieved imply disappointment?
Does being grieved imply the loss of something you had hoped for?
What is the difference between being grieved and being angry?
How do each of these questions apply to the Holy Spirit and us?

How does this relate to sin against God?

If you get a speeding ticket the policeman will not grieve, he will just do his job. The judge may get angry but he won't grieve. It requires someone to be hurt by your actions before grief is involved. When we sin against God, we do not just transgress an inanimate, unfeeling law, we offend a personal, caring God. Psalm 51v4.

This verse tells us that the Holy Spirit is personally involved with us. He is not indifferent or unconcerned. It also tells us that the Holy Spirit has an expectation within our lives. Grieving the Holy Spirit is an offence against love, not against law, power or control. It is a personal thing.

What is the Holy Spirit's attitude towards us? Romans 15v30

What are we to have in, or with the Spirit? Phil 2v1, 2 Cor 13v14

It is interesting how often love is referred to as a attribute of the Holy Spirit. Romans 5v5, Galatians 5v22, Colossians 1v8, 2 Timothy 1v7. Is it this that enables us to grieve the Spirit?

In a sermon Charles Spurgeon wrote on this verse, he asks the question, "do you love the Holy Spirit?" **Should we love the Spirit?**

What do you love about the Holy Spirit?

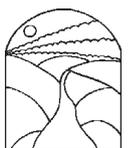
What do these verses teach about the Holy Spirit?

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Matthew 12v31	<input type="text"/>
Acts 5v3	<input type="text"/>
Acts 5v9	<input type="text"/>
Acts 7v51	<input type="text"/>
1 Thessalonians 5v19	<input type="text"/>

Yet they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit. So he turned and became their enemy and he himself fought against them. Isaiah 63:10



Read Ephesians 4v21-32
What context is this warning given in?



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How do you think that we can grieve the Holy Spirit?

To answer this question you need to think of the things the Holy Spirit works to promote in our lives and in the Church.



What pleases the Holy Spirit?

The immediate context of Ephesians 4v30 is the misuse of the tongue, perhaps this is especially irksome as the Holy Spirit has a special claim on our speech. Eph 5v18, Acts 2v4.

What are the things in my life that grieve the Holy Spirit?

Why do you think Paul highlights the danger of grieving the Spirit not the Father?



Read 1 Corinthians 6v19-20

What does this mean?

What effect should it have on us?

Some examples of grieving



While Jesus was preaching in a synagogue on the Sabbath, He saw a man with a withered arm, Jesus wanted to heal him. One group of the Pharisees believed this to be a sin. It says that Jesus was 'grieved by the hardness of their hearts' Mark 3:5 NKJV (deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts NIV).

The Children of Israel's behaviour in the Exodus, was a source of grieve to God. Psalm 95v10. .How often they rebelled against him in the desert and grieved him in the wasteland! Psalms 78:40. As was the behaviour of mankind before the flood. Genesis 6v3,6.

How is the Spirit described in Romans 1v4?

Not only does the Holy Spirit personify the Holiness of God, It is also His job to promote the work of Holiness in us. It is the Holy Spirit who forms Christ's image in us, and produces the fruit of the Spirit in us.

Romans 15v16

1 Corinthians 6v11

2 Thessalonians 2v13

1 Peter 1v2

What is sanctification?

Paul's object in Ephesians 4v30 is to encourage us to reject sin. There are many ways that he could have described the seriousness of sin or it's effects on God and our relationship with Him. The phrase '*to grieve the Holy Spirit*' is very vivid and emotive. It brings home to us clearly the consequences of sin.

What is the danger of grieving the Holy Spirit?

Read Psalm 51v11-12



How do you understand v11b?

How do you think David understood it?

Do you think there is a link between '*the joy of Your salvation*' and '*sealed for the day of redemption*'?

I do not believe that for the sin of grieving the Holy Spirit, God will remove His Holy Spirit from us, in that He will, revoke our Salvation, or take away the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. I do believe that grieving the Spirit will inhibit the Spirit's work in our live whether that be, the gifts, fruit, sanctification, guidance or the other manifold works of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Bible Studies

Quenching the Spirit

The term 'quenching the Spirit' comes from the KJV, to quench simply means to stifle, suppress or extinguish, the NIV translates this;

Do not put out the Spirit's fire; 1 Thessalonians 5:19

Clearly this is a serious warning.

Quenching the Spirit's fire



What does it mean to quench the Spirit?

Why do you think this is a bad thing?

What actions of ours are likely to quench the Spirit?

What is the difference between quenching the Spirit and grieving the Spirit?

Fire is often associated with the Holy Spirit, here it means the Holy Spirit's activity and work among the believers. To *quench the Spirit*, means to suppress or stop the Spirit's work. This could be His work in us as individuals, or as it seems to have been in Thessalonica, in the church as a whole. There are several ways that we may quench the Spirit.



Read 1 Thessalonians 4v16-24

Prophecy with contempt



Do not treat prophecies with contempt. 1 Thessalonians 5:20

Perhaps because there had already been false prophecies, 2 Thes 2v2, this caused people to discount all prophecy. Paul rated prophecy very highly, 1 Cor 14v1. It is necessary for building up the church, it strengthens, encourages and comforts. It allows God to speak directly into our services. To treat it with contempt is to lose the cutting edge of our faith.



Read Nehemiah 9v30

What was the result of ignoring the Spirit's voice?

How can you treat prophecy with contempt?

Not pay attention

Ignore it

Reject it out of hand

Dismiss it as of human origin.

Treating it lightly

Not asking if it is relevant to you

Not obeying it.

Forgetting it.

What are the dangers of treating prophecy with contempt?

Why is prophecy so important to us?

Does this mean that the moment someone claims a word to have been from God, we all accept it without question for fear of quenching the Spirit? No, Paul continues, Test everything. Hold on to the good. 1 Thessalonians 5:21. Prophecy must be tested, 1 Corinthians 14v29. Not all fire is the Holy Spirit, Leviticus 10v1. Not to test prophecy is to quench the Spirit, in its self.

Do you think this applies to other gifts of the Spirit?

Unbelief is a great way to quench the Spirit.

Is it possible to quench the Spirit without even realising it?

What tell tail signs might there be?

We need to encourage one another to use the Spiritual gifts we have received.

Feeding the Fire



A good way to put a fire out, is not to feed it. Maybe this is why Jesus told the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, Matthew 25. Psalm 18:28. We are told to be continually filled with the Spirit.

Is, not feeding the fire, the same as quenching the fire?

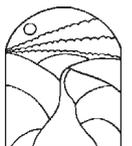
Do you think Timothy may have been guilty of this?

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1 Timothy 4v14, 2 Timothy 1v6

If God has given us a spiritual gift, whether it is tongues, prophecy, faith or encouragement, and we fail to continue to use that gift, then we are guilty of quenching the Spirit. The most common area where we see this, is with the gift tongues.

How do we feed the fire?

Read Galatians 5v16-18



What response should we have to the Spirit?

Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. Romans 8v5

Resisting the Spirit



If the Holy Spirit gives you a word and you fail to give it, or an instruction and you fail to obey it, then you are quenching the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is patient with us, while we are learning to hear and obey His voice, He give us latitude. But we must be careful to obey, what the Holy Spirit has said maybe of great importance to some one else present.

If an appeal is given and you know you should go forward but refuse, you are in danger of quenching the Spirit. If God is working on an area of your life and you won't cooperate, you are in danger of quenching the Spirit.

The Bible warns of those who resist the Spirit Acts 7v51, Hebrews 3, it is important that we remain sensitive to the moving of the Spirit in our lives

Does the Holy Spirit have the right to tell us what to do?

Why might we be slow or reluctant to obey the Spirit?

What should we do if there is an area in our lives where we have resisted the Spirit?

Forbidding Tongues



Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. 1 Cor 14:39 Paul warned against forbidding people to speak in tongues, in the same chapter he also warns about over emphasising the use of tongues. It appears that the Corinthian Church over used tongues in their services to their own detriment, we must find the right balance.

Read 1 Corinthians 14v2-4,9&16.



Why does Paul warn against over use of tongues?

Why do some people want to forbid tongues?

Impurity



Another good way to put out a fire is to pour water on it or cover it with dirt. Our sin and worldliness does just this. Hosea 7v1. I wonder how often we prevent ourselves from being used by the Spirit because of our impurity.

Read 2 Timothy 2v20-21



How does this apply to the Holy Spirit in our lives?

The danger in all this is that if we continue to quench the Spirit we will put His fire out in our lives. Paul makes a very interesting comment in 1 Corinthians 14:12, he says. try to excel in gifts that build up the church. While it is God who distributes His gifts as He sees fit, the word *try*, suggest that we have a part to play in receiving them.

We quench the Spirit

When our rules about how church is done stop Him for moving.

When we rely only on ourselves.

When we don't stop to listen to His direction.

How can we stir up or fan the Spirits flames?



Bible Studies

Blaspheming the Spirit

And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Matthew 12:31



The sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is one that has caused Christians much lost sleep. It seems that at sometime in each of our lives the Enemy will try to persuade us, that we have committed the unpardonable sin. Since Satan is not above misusing scripture for his own ends, it seems sensible that we study this sin systematically to find out if he is telling the truth.

What is the positive part of the above verse?

Is this forgiveness automatic?

Sometimes people talk about, *sin against the Holy Spirit*, being unforgivable. **Is this true?**

We have already seen that there are many kinds of sin against the Spirit, lying, grieving, quenching, resisting etc. It is only blasphemy against the spirit that Jesus isolates as a sin that will not be forgiven. Clearly Jesus had a specific sin in mind.



Read Leviticus 24v16 and Numbers 21v5&7 cf Leviticus 5v19
What distinction is made between these verses?

What is blasphemy?

Blasphemy has three meanings;



1 It means to use God's name as a swear word. Lev 24v11



2 It means to say something in the Lord's name that is untrue or to use God's name in a vow and then not fulfil the vow. The Jews probably understood the third command in this way. At it's broadest, living a hypocritical life and dishonouring God in our actions, can be considered blasphemy, because we bear His Name. Romans 2v24



3 It's widest meaning is to speak against or insult, rail at or revile, slander or defame, speak evil, or contemptuously of. This is it's most common meaning. 2 Kings 19v22
Can you be forgiven if you blaspheme God?

Jesus emphasises that **every** sin can be forgiven, except **one**. If there is only one sin for which there is no atonement, it seems obvious (some theologians miss this point), that all passages in scripture that talk of an unforgivable sin must be referring to the same sin.



Read 1 John 5v16-17.

John identifies two kinds of sin, one that leads to death and one that does not lead to death. Notice that John uses the singular 'there is a sin that leads to death'. It is clear that he has a specific sin in mind.

This verse encouraged much speculation on possible categories of sin. Starting with the apostolic father (2nd Cent. On), finding it's heyday in the Middle ages and still part of Roman Catholic theology today, a list of *seven deadly sins* was drawn up. These were called cardinal, capital or root sins and they led to a much longer list, defining what the church recognised as sin. This is clearly not what John intended.

All Sin is deadly

The Old Testament lists some sin for which death was the punishment. (Exodus 21v12, 31v15, Leviticus 20v9, 24v23.) This was not to create a distinction in sin, but rather to uphold social order. The Bible makes no distinction, a white lie is just as much sin, as murder.

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death,"

Ezekiel 18:4 "The soul who sins is the one who will die."

Genesis 2:17 "you must not eat from the tree of knowledge... when you eat of it you will surely die."

Romans 7:11 "For sin, seizing the opportunity... and... through the commandment put me to death."

The connection between sin and death is fundamental and inescapable.

What sins then do not lead to death?

John gives us the answer in **1 John 1v9**. Sin that is forgiven no longer leads to death. We should not be surprised that there is a sin that leads to death, but rather marvel that sin does not have to lead to death.

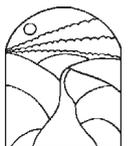
John possibly has the group of people mentioned in 1 John 2v19-23, in mind. This seems

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to be a group who knew Jesus, but chose to reject Him, or at least the truth about Him. John does not forbid people to pray, rather he seems to stress that such prayer is futile. A similar situation is found in Jeremiah 7v16, 11v14, 14v11.

Why do you think John encourages us to pray for sinners?

Galatians 6v1, 1 Samuel 12v23, James 5v19-20.



Read Matthew 12v15-32 & Mark 3v22-30

Matthew identifies Jesus as the one who would be uniquely empowered by the Spirit v18b (Isaiah 42v1, 60v1, 11v2) Jesus words and actions made this conclusion inescapable. The Sanhedrin seem to have already recognised this, all be it in secret. John 3v2.



What did the Pharisees accuse Jesus of?

Why did they make this accusation?

Were they believers in Jesus or not?

Who did they make the accusation to?

What was the Pharisees intention when they made this accusation?

Was their attack primarily against Jesus or the Spirit?

What explanation did Jesus give as a defence?

Who did Jesus attribute His work to?

Did Jesus directly say that the Pharisees had committed this sin?

The Pharisees spoke against Jesus, and only indirectly against the Holy Spirit. It was not the accusation that Jesus was in league with Satan, that drew the response from Him, (Mark 3v22) rather the attribution of what was so obviously the work of the finger (or Spirit) of God to that of an unclean Spirit. They set themselves to oppose what they knew to be true.

You could say their words were a symptom of the sin, not the sin itself. Jesus does not say directly that they had already committed this sin. What he says comes across as a warning of where the path they are on will take them.

This is not a case of the Jewish leaders making a mistake, or being full of unbelief. They knew that Jesus was from God but still refused to believe Him. They were in the condition described in Isaiah 5v10 of putting good for evil and evil for good. cf John 3v19. This was a sin from outside the church, not inside.

In addition to this the Pharisees intention was to cause people to doubt or reject Jesus as Messiah. In another place, this by itself provoked Jesus to give a serious warning. Matthew 18v6, Mark 9v42, Luke 17v2. It was a sin associated with a position of influence.



Read Mark 3v20-21, 31-33

Were Jesus family guilty of this sin?

What were the differences between Jesus family and the Pharisees?

Later we find Jesus brothers believed, James even became a leader in the Church. Gal 1v9.

Why weren't they guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?

Paul was a great persecutor of the Church, Acts 9v1, 1 Corinthians 15v9, he even spoke of himself as a blasphemer, 1 Timothy 1v13.

Did he commit this sin? 1 Timothy 1v13b.

What mitigating circumstances were there?

Had he ignored his Damascus revelation would he have been guilty of this sin?



What would be a modern day expression of this sin?

The specifics of this sin make it surprisingly hard to duplicate. You need to know the truth and then reject it as truth. It needs to be from an unbeliever in a position of authority and it needs to be intended to mislead others. This is not the kind of sin you could commit by accident, in ignorance or unintentionally.

Matthew and Mark write of the sin against the Holy Spirit in the context of unbelievers. Two passages we will look at next week put it in the context of believers.

According to these two passages blasphemy against the Spirit is a determined rejection of known truth. A deliberate apostasy. As we will see next week there is one further criteria that is necessary to make this apostasy unforgivable.

As is often pointed out there is only one sin that will subject a person to hell, that sin is a failure to accept Jesus, God's provision of salvation.

From what we have learned so far is Satan telling the truth?

Bible Studies

Blaspheming the Spirit II

We saw last week that Matthew and Mark define the sin against the Holy Spirit as a knowing and determined rejection of God. This sin was evident in the Pharisees when they ascribed the work of the Holy Spirit to that of an unclean spirit.

Why was blasphemy against the Son excusable, when blasphemy against the Spirit was not. Clearly many ordinary people failed to recognise who Jesus was, for that they could be excused, (even if their leaders could not), but to denounce the works that Jesus did, as being from the devil, was without excuse.

The Bible portrays the Spirit as the person of the trinity most open to offence. Others have suggested that it is because it is the Holy Spirit who calls us to Christ, who convicts us and sanctifies us. To blaspheme the Spirit is to cut ourselves off from the very one who can restore us. This is the age when God is present in His people through the Holy Spirit. The unforgivable sin is not exclusively, reckoning the Holy Spirit's work to be from Satan, but it is one way this apostasy can be seen.



Read Luke 12v8-12

Luke records the sin against the Holy Spirit in an entirely different context. Luke places it between two other statements. Neither statement is directly identified with this sin, but both have a bearing on it and perhaps lead to it.

Is Luke talking to believers of unbelievers? 12v1



Disowning Jesus (Matt 10v32-33)

Jesus says that He will disown those who disown Him. 2 Timothy 2v11-13.

Peter disowned Christ, did he sin against the Holy Spirit?

Mark 14v27-31, 66-72, John 21v15-19.

Was he eternally damned for it?

The question is what did Jesus mean by disown? If He meant in a moment of weakness to fail and fall, then Peter was guilty, and so are many of us. But Peter was forgiven, obviously Jesus meant something more.

To disown Jesus, is not repeating a formula of words rejecting Him. Nor is it to deny our faith, and realising what we have done, repent. Rather it refers to the course of one's life. Matt 7v21. This is a deliberate and continued disowning of Jesus. Again we can see a connection here to a determined rejection of Jesus. The word in the English language we use to describe this is apostasy.

What does apostasy mean?

What is the difference between backsliding and apostasy?

Jesus words may seem hard, but in reality Jesus is simply saying that He will ratify our own choice, on the day of Judgement. This verse does not describe Jesus cutting Himself off from us, but us cutting ourselves off from Him. No one is forced to go to heaven!

If we chose to, do we have the freedom to walk away from Christ?

Does the enemy have the power to make this happen? John 10v29



Refusing the Spirit's help

How does verse 12 describe the Holy Spirit?

We might ask the question, 'if I were put on trial for my life, would I be strong enough to remain faithful to Jesus?' Jesus assures us that in such an event the Holy Spirit will teach us what to say, ie He will give us the power to remain faithful. If having received that power, we then make a choice not to use it and disown Christ, that puts us in **danger** of committing this sin.

2 Timothy 2v13 makes a distinction between denying Christ and being faithless.

Do you see a difference between the two?



An eternal sin

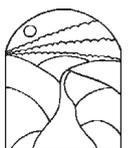
Luke makes it appear easier to commit this sin than perhaps you had thought. It is time to emphasize that this sin really is different from all other sins. *It requires that you continue in it.* Mark describes it as an eternal sin, 4v29. (Matt 12v32 can be translated *keeps speaking against*). It is not as though this sin is more serious than any other sin. It is not as though it is beyond the power of Jesus to forgive. (1 John 1v7 all sin) *It cannot be*

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forgiven because by its nature it refuses to repent and therefore put itself outside forgiveness. The Bible does not call this sin unforgivable, it only says, it will not be forgiven.

What is the difference?

Is there such a thing as an unforgivable sin?

All sin is forgivable, but forgiveness is only possible where there is repentance. This is a sin that puts you beyond repentance, not beyond forgiveness. Repentance is a gift from God, Acts 5v31, 11v18, 2 Timothy 2v25. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts of sin, John 16v8. If you are sorry for your sin and have a desire to change, then it is obvious that you are not cut off from the Holy Spirit.

Maybe there was a time when you;

Attributed the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan's work. Backslide

Denied that you believed in Jesus Deliberately turned your back of Christ

If you were willing to ask for forgiveness, then you have been forgiven.



Read Hebrews 6v4-9

Who is this passage addressed to believer or unbeliever?

The author clearly has mature believers in mind. The phrase 'fall away' sounds casual, in fact the Greek tense used implies *complete falling away* (Guthrie). This is not just backsliding or faithlessness, this is the same deliberate apostasy that the Gospels talked about. *Having been believers, they are now taking their stand with those who crucified Jesus, joining as the crowd that said 'away with him, we have no king, we will not have this man'.*

Does this passage say it is impossible for them to be forgiven?

What in fact the passage says is, that it is impossible for them to come back to **repentance**, exactly the point we made earlier. The problem is not that God won't accept them back, it is that they won't come back. Some of us are living proof that God does accept prodigal sons back into the family.



Verses 7&8 give a parable to explain this.

What is the land? What is the rain? What are the two crops?

The land is us, the rain is God's blessings (the Holy Spirit?) The crops are either belief or unbelief, along the works that both produce.

Are those who turn their back on Jesus cursed?

They are in *danger* of being cursed, ie if they don't come back to repentance before it is too late, then they will be cursed.

When is the Land burned?

It is *in the end*, that the land is burnt. Again this implies that the sin of deliberate apostasy require continued apostasy to the end.

There are those who are backslidden, they have drifted from the faith, they know they are not right with God, but they have not repudiated their faith. Paul talks of such in 2 Corinthians 3v15. The line between backsliding or faithlessness and apostasy or denial is by no means clear, Paul; continually warns against falling away, 1 Corinthians 9v27, 2 Cor 13v5, Galatians 5v4, 1 Timothy 6v10.

So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! 1 Corinthians 10:12

To commit the sin against the Spirit, is to knowingly and deliberately turn your back on what you know to be the truth, it is then to continue in this rejection until it is too late.



If someone has deliberately, turned away from God and fulfilled all the criteria for blaspheming the Spirit, and then come to their senses and repent will they be forgiven?

Yes. They will it is an eternal sin it requires that you continue in your apostasy until death. The problem is that having cut yourself off from God, the chances of you coming to that place of repentance is very small.

It is quite clear that blasphemy against the Spirit requires a hardened mind set to Christ. If you are frightened that you may have committed this sin, that by itself, is evidence that you haven't. If you had, you would arrogantly boast in it. You would not want to repent. If you can say the words, 'father please forgive my sin', you cannot have blasphemed the Spirit.

What attitude will those who have committed this sin show?



How does Satan use the fear of this sin in a believers life?

Is the sin against the Spirit, reciting a denial, or living a denial?

Is backsliding blasphemy against the Spirit?

Is it possible to be condemned for mistaking the Spirit's work for that of Satan's?
When was the last time you asked God to keep you from falling?

Bible Studies

Isaiah 58



Read Isaiah 58

This is a passage that talks about fasting and how to fast effectively. However it seems that Isaiah is using fasting as an example, to show the difference between an outward conformity to God and a true living faith in Him.



What is the difference?

Is this a danger Christians face today?

Can you think of some examples?

In the first verse, God calls on Isaiah to reprimand the people for their sin,
Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their rebellion and to the house of Jacob their sins.

But what is their sin? *Day after day they seek me out;
They seem eager to know my ways,
They ask me for just decisions.
They seem eager for God to come near them.
They even fast.*

What's the problem?

All this is good, it may even describe many of us. What was wrong with their approach to God? They did it; *as if they were a nation that does what is right
and has not forsaken the commands of its God.*

What does the 'as if' mean in this verse? What does it imply?

All their seeking God was a facade, because in their actions they were in rebellion against Him. They seemed to think that as long as they did their religious duty, they could organise the rest of their lives as they liked. They had a form of godliness, but there was no reality and no power in it. 2 Timothy 3v5



What are the dangers in this kind of a façade?

Do people today still do this?

Verse 3, tells us about their motives in fasting,

*'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and you have not seen it?
'Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?'*

What was their attitude towards fasting?

It seems their fasting was designed to twist God's arm.

Is this a valid attitude to have towards fasting? Matthew 6v16-18

The link between fasting and humbling yourself is valid, in fact it is one of the major reasons why we fast. But to humble yourself and then desire that it be recognised that you are humble, is closer to pride than humility!



Can you fool God with a front?

Can you twist God's arm by your actions?



What did the people do that was so offensive to God? v3b - 4a

What was the result? v4b cf Psalm 66v18.

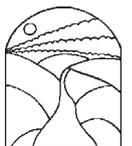
Fasting and sinning, seem a pointless combination, cherishing sin and asking God for guidance equally futile. (Cherish is a key word here, it means love, hide and harbour, if in recognising our inability to deal with sin we sincerely cry out to God, He will certainly help us.)



Read verse 5,

Does it seem that your attitude in fasting is more important than the mechanics of how you fast?

Does, "Only a day for a man to humble himself," suggest that fasting should have an on going effect, especially regarding our attitude to God?





What kind of fasting has God chosen? v6-7
How can we practice this kind of fasting?
Does this mean that we no longer need to fast physically?

No, this does this mean we no longer have to fast physically by denying ourselves food, if we give to the poor. Jesus said -When you fast not, if you fast. Mat 6v17. It does show us that God's chosen way to fast, require a right attitude to God **and** a right attitude to other people **and** doing His will, not doing as we please (ie sinning).

Can you divorce your relationship with God and the way you treat others?
 Our faith is not a esoteric exercise between God and us, it has to be seen in the way we treat the people around us. You cannot just be concerned with your spiritual relationship with God and forget you obligations to the other people.

What will be the result of this new attitude towards God?

Your will break forth like the dawn,
 Your will quickly appear;
 Your will go before you,
 The will be your rear guard.
 You will call, and the LORD will ; you will cry for help,
 He will say: .

What do you think this says about the reason we often have difficulty hearing God's voice? Cf Romans 12v2



Verse 9b-12 and 13-14, give two further sets of conditions and promises.

"If you do away with the yoke of oppression,
 with the pointing finger and malicious talk,
 and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry
 and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then....."

What kind of oppression was Isaiah worried about in his day?
What do you think the pointing 'finger and malicious' talk are?
How is this relevant to us, particularly in our circle of friends and family?

The phrase, 'spend yourself' is very graphic, Paul spent himself on behalf of the Gospel Philippians 2v17. Today's society is always looking for a return, as Christians we should look for what we can give, not what we can receive. In return God will guide us, meet our needs and strengthen our bodies (lit bones.) make us flourish and give us a legacy.

Is it OK to forget God as long as you care for the people around you?

This has been a big danger for parts of the Church, they get so involved in care for the community (social Gospel) that they forget the worship of God, they leave their first love. Our service flows from our relationship with God. Both are needed. If the first of these two sections speaks about our responsibility to the oppressed the second speaks of our obligation to God.



"If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath
 and from doing as you please on my holy day,
 if you call the Sabbath a delight and the Lord's holy day honuorable,
 and if you honuor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please
 or speaking idle words, then ..."

This group of conditions centre around the Lord's Day. Notice however that both sets of conditions have something to say about our conversation!

The Jews of Jesus day (and today) had a very legalistic view of keeping the Sabbath holy. Jesus saw it as a gift to man, Mark 2v27, a day to do good, Mat 12v12, a day to enjoy yourself and God. Paul talks of all days as equal; Romans 14v5, Col 2v16. It seems that Isaiah steers away from all the rules about keeping the Sabbath and concentrates on our attitude, it should be our delight, something we honour.

Bearing this in mind how do we fulfil these requirements?

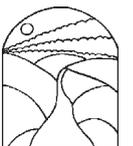


The result of this is that you will find your joy in the LORD, be blessed and receive the inheritance God has planned for you.

The mouth of the LORD has spoken.

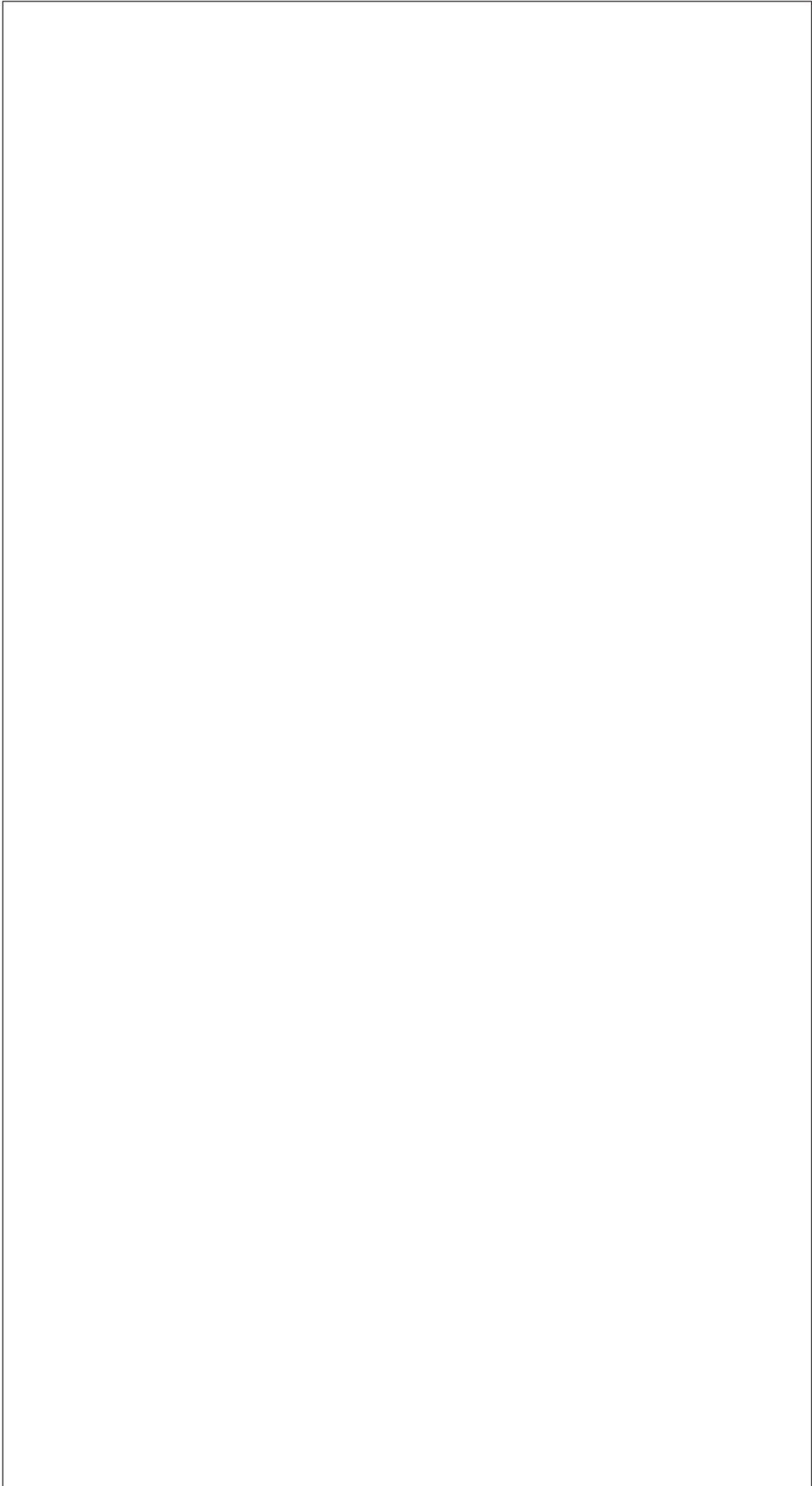
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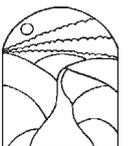
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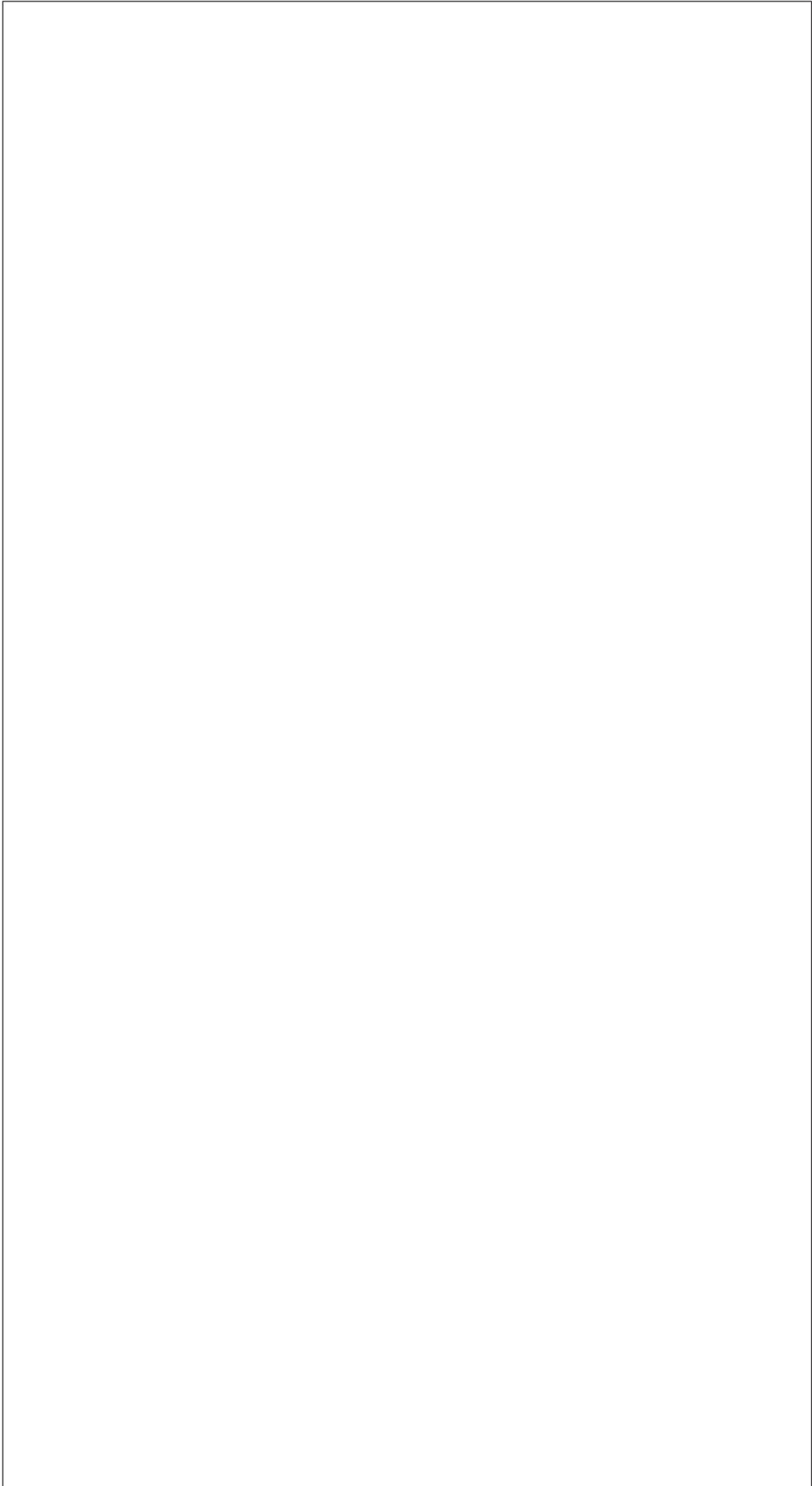
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Bible Studies

Devotions I



Read 2 Peter 1:3-9

As believers it should be our goal to grow in the faith. To leave behind childish ways and go on to maturity. No longer tossed about by everything we see and hear, by all the things we experience daily, but firmly anchored in Christ. But in your thinking be adults. 1 Corinthians 14v20 (In understanding be men. KJV)

Do you think attending Church once a week is sufficient to attain this? Why?

Read Psalm 63v1, Jeremiah 29v13, Psalm 46v10, Psalm 37v5

Christianity is a relationship with Jesus. Relationships take time to build, they require communication. If you assume on them too much they crumble, effort must be put into them.



What are devotions?

Sometimes we talk about "having a quiet time". Time that we set aside to spend waiting on God. Time that is dedicated to God. Time to listen and learn. Time to communicate.

Devotional times consists of;

- Bible Reading.
- Meditation.
- Pray.
- Waiting on God.
- Worship.

Do you think all of the 5 elements of a quiet time have to be done together? Other than the five elements above what else should we do in our quiet time?

Most of us experience frustration regarding our quiet times. We know we should do it. We feel good when we do. But most of us don't.

Maybe we have started a regular devotion, with a daily guide of a Bible reading program and have failed to keep it up. We started by enjoying it, then we petered out, we gave up, we felt guilty, we try again, - *Hello Lord, remember me?* Maybe we have dismissed the whole exercise as fruitless.

Have you considered that the unfulfilled desire to work out a good devotional life might be a sign an unfulfilled desire to know God better? If so the foundation has already been laid on which you can build.

Why do so many Christians struggle with practising a quiet time?

Why do you think we need to have a quiet time?



Rules for devotions

- Devotions should be daily.
- They must be done at the same time every day.
- This time should be first thing in the morning.
- They should last a minimum of 15 minutes.
- You should read the same amount every day.
- The time should be structured so we can get through our prayer list.
- If you don't feel close to God you have failed.
- The more chapters you read the better.
- The longer your quiet time the better.

What do you think, are these good rules for devotions?

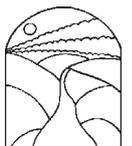
It might be good to remind ourselves that we are not under law but grace. Colossians 2v21-23 reminds us that man made laws, might seem spiritual, but do not bring about what God desires. It seems to me that one reason so many of us fail to have a regular quiet time is because we set unrealistic goals.

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What rules would you suggest for a quiet time?



**Does everyone quiet time have to be the same?
Does it have to be the same throughout your Christian life?**

Which do you think is better?



**Not having a quiet time because we cannot do it regularly (and feeling guilty about it) or having an irregular quiet time?
Enjoying a 5 min quiet time or straggling through 30 min of boredom?
Reading 4 chapters a day or 4 verses?
Keeping to a fixed length, or adjusting the length to suit our free time?
Feeling guilty about not managing a quiet time or working out a way that you can find the time?**

The traditional quiet time is for 15 minutes when you first get up, can you think of any other regimes that might work better for other kinds of people?

What is the advantage of doing your quiet time when you first get up?

What part does habit play in our quiet time?

What part does discipline play?



It was Jesus practice to go out by Himself into the countryside to pray.
Matthew 14v23
Luke 6:12
Mark 1v35

Did you notice that Jesus did not take his quiet time exclusively in the morning? The example recorded Mark 1 seems to have been a very busy time in Jesus ministry. **Why do you think he took time out?**

But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. Psalm 1:2-3

You cannot help but feel that King David *enjoyed* his quiet times, they were not a burden to him but a strength. They brought him close to God, which was just where he wanted to be. In them he found prosperity, it is almost as though his quiet time sanctified his secular time.

Do you think this might be the true for you?

First fruits



Deuteronomy 18v4
Romans 11v16
Proverbs 3v9

How do you think we might apply these verse to ourselves

Some of what I have written may suggest that a lax quiet time is perfectly acceptable. This is not my intention. I believe that devotions should be daily. Psalm 140v2, 145v5.

The important issue for us is not whether a quiet time keeps the rules but whether it works. Often our protestations are just excuses for a lack of discipline.

If you want to start practising a quiet time it is often suggested that you start once weekly, make an appointment with God. From there you can build.

The question is not can I afford the time for devotions, but can I afford not too.

Bible Studies

Devotions II

The word devotion has two meanings; It describes the state of being devoted to someone or something, loving them or being loyal to them. The dictionary says it includes devoutness and self-surrender. Secondly it is a religious exercise, it describes something that has been devoted to God, a votive. It is a kind of sacrifice. Both meanings apply to our quiet times, one emphasises our desire to know God, the other our duty to come into His presence.



'Quiet time is more than just a daily appointment with God. It's more like a visit with your closest friend.'

Three Questions

Remember a daily devotion consist of *Bible reading, meditation, prayer, listening to God and worship.*

Why do we need to have a quiet time?



What is the objective of our quiet time?

What will happen if we don't practice a regular quiet time?

Perhaps a better question to ask yourself is *what do I want from my quiet time?*

Answering that question will help you to design a devotional time to meet your needs

What different goals could a quiet time have?.

How you approach your quiet time, will to a large extent dictate how successful it becomes. If you approach it thinking, *this is boring lets get it over with*, bored is what you will probably be, if you approach it thinking, *I wonder what God has for me today*, you will probably hear from Him.

No Expectation  **No Concentration**  **No Application**

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water Hebrews 10v19-22

A devotional time is intended to give us an opportunity to come into God's presence and to wait on Him. The Bible makes a great deal of the presence of God and it's effects on people. Jesus created a way that we could freely come into God's presence. It is almost as if being in the presence we receive a spark of the divine life. Something is imparted into us.

What happened to Moses when he met with the Lord? Exodus 34v29



How is spending time in God's presence going to change us?

What things bring us into God's presence?

What are you going to find in God's presence?

How are these things going to effect your life?

Quietening outer noise and inner noise



The outside noise is all the distractions and the business that surrounds us. Often it is real physical noise. The things outside of ourselves that stop us for concentrating on God.

How are you going to quieten the outside noise?

What do you think the inside noise is?

The inside noise is the things inside us that stop us from concentrating on God. These could be sins, fear, problems, frustrations, stress, lack of faith or doubts. Sometimes it's our frame of mind or our lack of expectations or self discipline. Greatest of all, is our lack of desire.

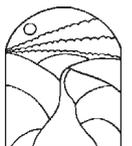
How do you still the inner noise?

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We have already talked about the elements that make up a quiet time.

What are the dangers of a quiet time that is too structured?

What are the dangers of a quiet time that is not structured enough?

What part should listening for God play in our quiet times?

How do you receive guidance in your quiet time?

Confessions of a bored Bible reader



Some of us have the problem that we have read the Bible so many times, we don't expect to get anything from it. (This is a fallacy the Bible is a multi-level book there is always a new way to see a verse). The solution might be to start reading,

A different version of the Bible,

To read with a different goal,

To use a different system.

What effect does the word have in our lives?

Joshua 1v8

Psalms 19v7

Jeremiah 15v16

Psalms 119v130

Psalms 119:165

Systems A Chapter of Proverbs a day
Five Psalms a day
The Gospels in a month

Topics A Gospel, noting how Jesus met people's needs.
Philippians, looking for verses on contentment
A Bible Character
Proverbs, noting verses about; money, friendship, wisdom or speech

There is a lot you can do with the Psalms, you can categorise them according to praise, thanksgiving or requests for Help. Or read them noting God's character and attributes, how to worship or following a theme like healing.

Methods

You can use a concordance and follow a theme like circumcision, forgiveness, anger or meekness - a Chain reference Bible is good for this.

You can read a commentary at the same time as you read the book.

For this kind of reading a note book or a Bible you can write in is a good idea.

Setting goals in Bible reading is important.

Vary the way you read so that you can read the whole Bible not just the bits you like.

Some people read; a psalm, a gospel portion, and a chapter from the OT & Epistles a day to get a balanced reading. Keep a note of the verses that strike you.

Complaints



How would you resolve these problems?

I don't get anything from the Bible, It doesn't say anything to me.

I'm rushing through this, I'm distracted or in a hurry.

I'm doing this because Christians are supposed to do this

I don't understand what this passage is saying.

Do you think this approach might help with other areas of your quiet time?

If you get bored with your quiet time what should you do?

How can changing the way we do devotions help?

For some of the material in this study I am indebted to *jump-starting Your Devotional life*, By Jan Johnson and David Mains.

Bible Studies

Meditation



To meditate means to consider, to ponder, think about or chew over. In modern thought meditation generally linked to eastern religion, it includes the idea emptying your mind. This is a spiritually dangerous practice and is foreign to Biblical meditation. In biblical meditation our goal is not to empty our minds but to fill them with the things of God.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly Colossians 3v16

Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. Matthew 4v4

For us meditation simply means thinking about the word of God.

Joshua 1v8

Psalm 1v2-3

Psalm 19v14

Psalm 77v12

Psalm 119v148



Why would a Christian want to meditate on God's word? What will we gain by doing so?

The Goal of meditation is to understand the Scriptures and to apply them to our lives. In doing so we will know God better and mature as believers.

Christian Meditation is an active practice, not a state of inaction (like Yoga). We actively think about something. But we must be careful to avoid distractions and we must also be careful that we are not so busy thinking it through, that we miss the Holy Spirit's guidance and wisdom.

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. John 16:13

Start with prayer, ask that the Lord to Guide and Help you as you think.



We can meditate on

The Bible, a single verse,
or a passage or story.

God

What He is like

What He has done

Where and when?

Isaac meditated in the field, Gen 24v63, David, on his bed, Psalm 63v6. Meditation can be focused, sitting at a table with, Bible, concordance and note pad. Or it can be casual. If you can memorise a verse, or write it on a card, then you can meditate as you go about your day.



First step

As you read the Bible, identify the key verses.

Look out for promises you can claim and conditions you must keep.

Statements about God.

Good and bad attitudes and their results,

Sins that you need to confess and avoid.

Tools for right living and examples to follow.

Commands to obey and principles to apply .

Verses to memorize and truths to believe.

Prayers that we can use in our devotions.

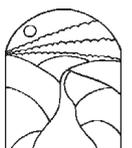
Look especially for any areas where the Bible and your life do not agree.
The Holy Spirit will guide you, He will make verses stand out.

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Who, when, why, and what.

There is a much used and time honoured method of understand a verse. It is very simple, you just ask the verse questions.

Lets take an example

Luke 11:28 He replied, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it."

The first thing you need to do is read the passage several time. Read it in different versions. Read the surrounding verses to get the context. Then ask God to help you understand the passage.

Who is Jesus talking to?

What was the context?

What is this passage about?

How did the first hearers of these words understand them?

Why are we blessed?

Why does Jesus say rather?

What is the difference between hearing and obeying?

Why does Jesus use the word obey not do?

What other verses are similar to this one?

Now look through the list given under first steps.

Which elements of this list are found in this passage?

From here we go on an ask;

How does this verse apply to me?

What do I need to learn from it?

What do I need to change because of it?

What questions would you ask these verses?



2 Timothy 3v16-17

Psalm 11v3,

What other ways could this verse have been put, why wasn't it?

Often it helps to paraphrase a verse for yourself, to put it in modern idiom, your own words.

If the passage is narrative, ask;

What the meaning of the story is?

Why is it recorded for us?

How does it relate to me.

Why did the characters act the way they did?

Which actions were right or wrong?

Why did they act this way?

Can you identify similar circumstances in your life?

What can you learn from this passage?

For example read Luke 17v12-19



What verse strike you?

What questions will you ask?

Have you ever been guilty of the sins in this passage?

What is the application, how will you change?

The most important thing in this is, **Always keep looking for the application.** How the verse impinges on your life. Then put it into effect, knowing the word is no good if you don't do it. Use what you have learned.

Share what you have discovered with someone else.

Turn your meditation into prayer.



Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them. John 13:17

Bible Studies

Devotional Prayer

Prayer styles of the Rather Famous

Who risked his life rather than give up his daily time of prayer?
Who got up early in the morning and went to the mountains to pray?
Who offered prayers of praise, thanks, and requests underwater?
Who 'wrestled in prayer' for the Colossians?
Who prayed so fervently that the priest thought she was drunk?
Who spent the night in prayer to God?
Who saw the angel Gabriel in the midst of his prayers?
Who interrupted his private prayers to ask his friends a question?
Who prayed after talking to the ruler of the land?
Who prayed while talking to the ruler of the land?

*Daniel 6:10, Mark 1:35, Jonah 2:1-9, Colossians 4:12, 1 Samuel 1:12-14,
Luke 6:12, Daniel 9:21, Luke 9:18, Exodus 8:30, 10:18, Nehemiah 2:4*

Types of prayer

Acts 12v5,12	I Corinthians 14v15	Colossians 4v12
1 Thessalonians 3v10	1 Thessalonians 5v17	1 Thessalonians 1v2
Ephesians 1v16	Ephesians 6v18	James 5v13
James 5v14	Matthew 6v6	

Reading through references to prayer in the New Testament, it is impossible to miss the conclusion that the early Church considered prayer a priority. Paul frequently tells his readers that he is praying for them and ask them to pray for him in return.

Devoted to prayer - 1 Corinthians 7v5

Faithful in prayer - Romans 12v12

Throughout the day we should pray for the situations we face and for our fellow believers. ***But what form should prayer take in our devotional times?***

I would say that devotional prayer tends to be personal. It is a time to bring to God the things that are close to our hearts. Our family, our walk with God and our own needs. Prayer should never be need orientated it should be God orientated.

Here is an outline.

Praise & Worship Psalm 33

Prayer should always start by concentrating on God, fixing our eyes firmly on Him. See Him for who He is and not just what He does and will do

Confession Psalm 51

We need to confess any unforgiven sin and ask for God's forgiveness. Not only is it necessary to keep short accounts on our sin, sin will hinder our prayers.

Requests Psalm 86

Scripture says we do not have because we do not ask. James 4v6. We should let our requests be made known Philippians 4v6. Scripture encourages us to be persistent in prayer, Luke 18v1. If there is something specific you need or are seeking pray for it every day.

Thanksgiving Psalm 116

Prayer should be given with thanksgiving, both for what God has already done and what He will do.

Pray in the spirit Ephesians 6:18

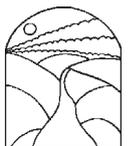
A close investigation of 1 Corinthians 14 shows that Paul use of tongues was primarily in his own devotions. This is a great way to build ourselves up. Jude v20. And is very useful when we do not know how to pray.

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All this is necessary for a balanced prayer life.

What will happen if you neglect each of these areas?

Pray for your needs but also let your prayers be guided by the Holy Spirit.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. Philippians 4:6

Paul's prayer for his Churches

Ephesians 3v16-19.

Philippians 1v9-11.

Colossians 1v10-11.

2 Thessalonians 1v11-12.

Philemon 1v6.

3 John 1v2.

The best example of how to pray in our devotions is of course the Lord's Prayer.

Lets put together a list of the things we need to pray for on a regular basis. Who we are going to pray for and the kind of things we are going to pray.

Who

What

Bible Studies

Waiting on God

Waiting on God is an important part of our devotional life. Our quiet time should be a dialogue, not a monologue. It should be interactive. We are in the driving seat, if we do not allow God to speak to us, we are sure to miss His voice.



Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret Psalms 37:7
Be still, and know that I am God Psalms 46:10

It is when we are still that we can hear from God. The busyness of our lives tends to block out His voice.

Waiting on God is not necessarily a separate part of our quiet time, it is an attitude in which we do our quiet time.

Waiting on God

As you read these verse note the promises they contain for those who wait on the Lord.

Psalm 5v3

Isaiah 8v17

Psalm 37v34

Psalm 27v14

Psalm 40v1

Psalm 38v15

Proverbs 20v22

Psalm 106v12

Psalm 130v5-6

Isaiah 12v6

Isaiah 40v4

Lamentations 3v26



What do you think it means to wait for the Lord?

It can mean waiting for the Lord to do something. (eg fulfil a promise).

Why might we have to wait for God to do something?



In the context of this study it means waiting on God.

What is the difference between waiting for God and waiting on God?

In a Biblical context waiting on God can mean;

Meditating

Being patient

Listening

Being silent in His presence

Hoping / Trusting

Being dependent on Him

Looking forward expectantly

Resting

Anticipating

Being submissive to His will

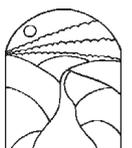
In English waiting can also mean serving.

Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope (Wait KJV) in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. Isaiah 40:30



What kind of strength does this imply?

What kind of a promise does this give for our day?



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The most frequently used Hebrew word is Kevah; *to hope strongly, to trust, implying firmness and constancy of mind, to hope for to wait for to expect, to hope that a thing will be effected and to wait steadily and patiently till it is effected.* Wilson's Thus waiting on God means waiting for Him to speak or waiting for Him to act. It is sometimes translated hope.

is waiting on the lord the same as prayer?

Waiting on the Lord means being open and receptive to His voice. It requires an expectancy. The Quakers call waiting on the Lord their, liturgy of silence

1

Waiting on God as we read the Bible, means letting the Holy Spirit draw our attention to a verse that may have a special meaning for us. Letting him give you some new understanding, revelation or application.

2

Waiting on God as we meditate, means allowing Him to guide our thoughts. To *guide you into all truth.* John 16:13. To bring to your memory things you may have forgotten.

3

Waiting on God in Pray, means receiving His wisdom on what to pray for and how to pray, (P/o Praying in the Spirit.) Often as we do this the Holy Spirit will give us insight into the situation we are praying for. (A Word of Wisdom of Knowledge.)

4

Waiting on God in Worship, means worshiping Him in Spirit and in Truth, not just in songs and words. God often speaks during worship, *Psalm 95.* Consequently our worship should not be so pressured that we fail to listen for His voice.

In the words of the Land Transport Authority; ***SPEED KILLS*** You can't wait on the Lord if you are hurrying.

Waiting on God implies that our desire is fixed on Him.

Yes, LORD, walking in the way of your laws, we wait for you; your name and renown are the desire of our hearts. Isaiah 26:8

What do we mean by actively waiting?



Speak Lord your servant listens

These were the words of Samuel when he first heard the voice of the Lord. 1 Samuel 3. There is so much that the Lord has to tell us, we need to get used to listening for His voice. To adopt Samuel's attitude, "*here I am Lord what do you want to say to me?*"

What sort of things might God want to say to us?

Why does the Lord require us to wait on Him?

You may have heard the phrased "It witnessed" what does this mean?

Romans 2v15, 9v1



A Special Time

Waiting on God is part of our quiet time, but there may be periods in our lives when we feel the need to take time out and listen to what God has to say. This could be because we face a specific need, or it could be because we sense a dissatisfaction or hollowness that means God has something He wants to tell us.

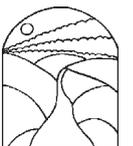
While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Acts 13:2

Again we must stress waiting on God does not mean *blanking out your mind*, this can be very dangerous. Notice those in Antioch were worshiping when the Spirit spoke. Likewise, when the disciples were waiting for the infilling of the Holy Spirit they were active in prayer, *Acts 1v14.*

It is quite possible that at such times you may start to evidence one of the Gifts of the Spirit.

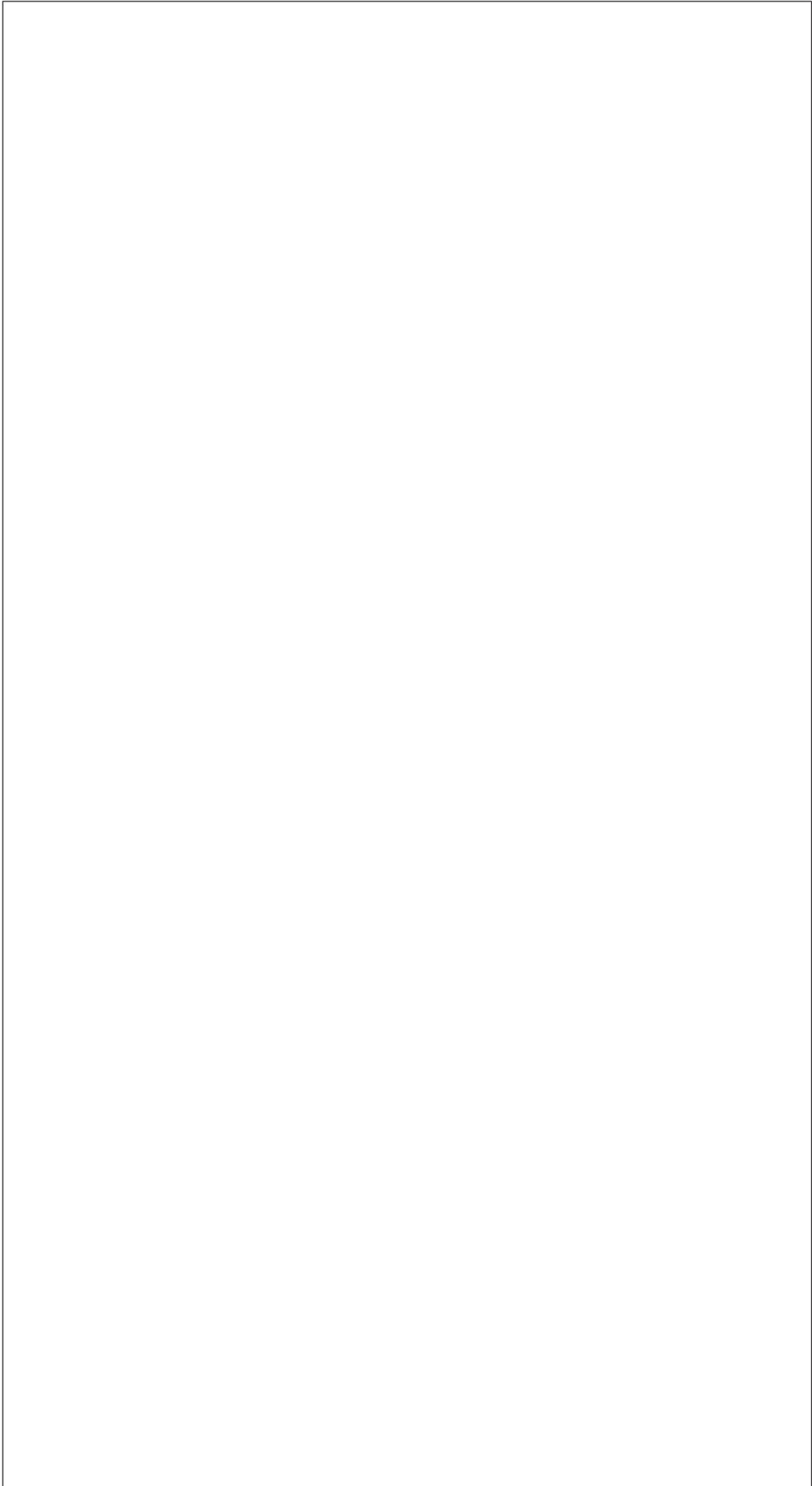
Bible Studies

STREAMS IN THE DESERT



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Bible Studies

1 Corinthians 14



Read 1 Corinthians 14v1-40

Corinth was a Church that lacked none of the Gifts of the Spirit, 1 Cor 1v7. This does not however mean they were complete, or even mature. Paul is forced to describe them as worldly, 1 Cor 3v1.



What showed their worldliness?

Chapter 14 is clearly written for the purpose of teaching the Corinthians how to use the gifts they already had, correctly.

Having read this chapter what would you say was the problem Paul wanted to rectify?

One of the problems in the Corinthian Church was the over use of tongues in their worship when they came together as a body. Since speaking in tongues is the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit (as the examples of the Book of Acts indicates), it is easy to reach out in faith and claim the gift of tongues. Because the individual's heart goes out to God as he speaks in tongues and is blessed and edified, it becomes easy to respond in tongues every time one feels the Spirit move. In Corinth this meant tongues were exercised so often in their meeting that the other gifts were neglected. Stanley Horton.



Paul teaches that both tongues and prophecy edify, what different edification do they bring?

How does tongues edify? 1 Corinthians 14v2, Jude v20

The gifts of prophecy and tongues have two distinct usages;

Prophecy

Acts 15v32
1 Corinthians 14v31
Acts 11v28

Tongues

Acts 2v4
Acts 10v47
1 Corinthians 12v30
1 Corinthians 14v13

The distinction here may not seem so clear, but there is the personal use of tongues which was, and is, considered normal for all believers. There is also a message in tongues, given in the congregation and subsequently interpreted. The Corinthians seem to have confused the two.

Why did Paul consider prophecy superior to tongues?

Under what circumstances were tongues as important as prophecy?

Does this mean the two are the same?

What danger is there in the over use of tongues?

Verse 9, 11, 23.

Some people think that Paul is devaluing tongues is this true?

Verse 5, v14-15, v16-17, v18, v22, v26-27, v39.

How would you say Paul used his gift of tongues?

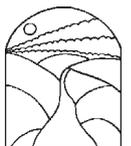
Verses 18-19

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In 1 Corinthians 14v27-28 Paul gives four directions about tongues?

***Why do you think only two or three, should give a message in tongues?
What does it mean that one should interpret?
Why should we pray to be able to interpret? v13.***

In 1 Corinthians 14v29-33 Paul gives four instructions about prophecy?

Who is responsible for disciplining the use of tongues and prophecy?

This passage makes it clear that the Holy Spirit does not force anyone to bring a message, the 'user' is in control.

Verses 16-17 indicate that where in prophecy God speaks to man, in interpreted tongues man **can** speak to God. Some believe that all tongues is directed to God, as it was on the Day of Pentecost. This does not seem to be a hard and fast rule, as interpreted tongues like prophecy edifies the Church.

In verse 1, Paul says that we should eagerly desire spiritual gifts, in verse 12, that we should try to excel in gifts that build up the Church, verse 15, that we should pray the he may interpret and in verse 19 that we should be eager to prophecy. Chapter 12v11 of the gifts that the Spirit gives them to each one, just as he determines. Hebrews 2v4, indicates that God distributes the Gifts according to His will.

How do you reconcile these verses?

What part do we have in seeking the gifts?

A Sign to unbelievers



1 Corinthians 14v22-25 have presented a problem for many theologians and translators. Verse 22 seems to contradict the rest of Paul's argument.

Read Isaiah 28v11 + observe the context

What kind of a sign was tongues to be?

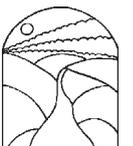
The tongues were the language of the invading Assyrians. We can understand this passage by saying that like in Isaiah, tongues is a judgement on wilful unbelief. Others think this is a rhetorical question requiring a negative answer, *are tongues a sign, then, not for believers, but for unbelievers?*

Do you think the passage describes what happened on the Day of Pentecost?

Tongues are a sign to unbeliever in that they alert him that something supernatural is happening. But it is only a sign, it is Prophecy, even though it may not be obviously supernatural, that will see him convicted of his sin.

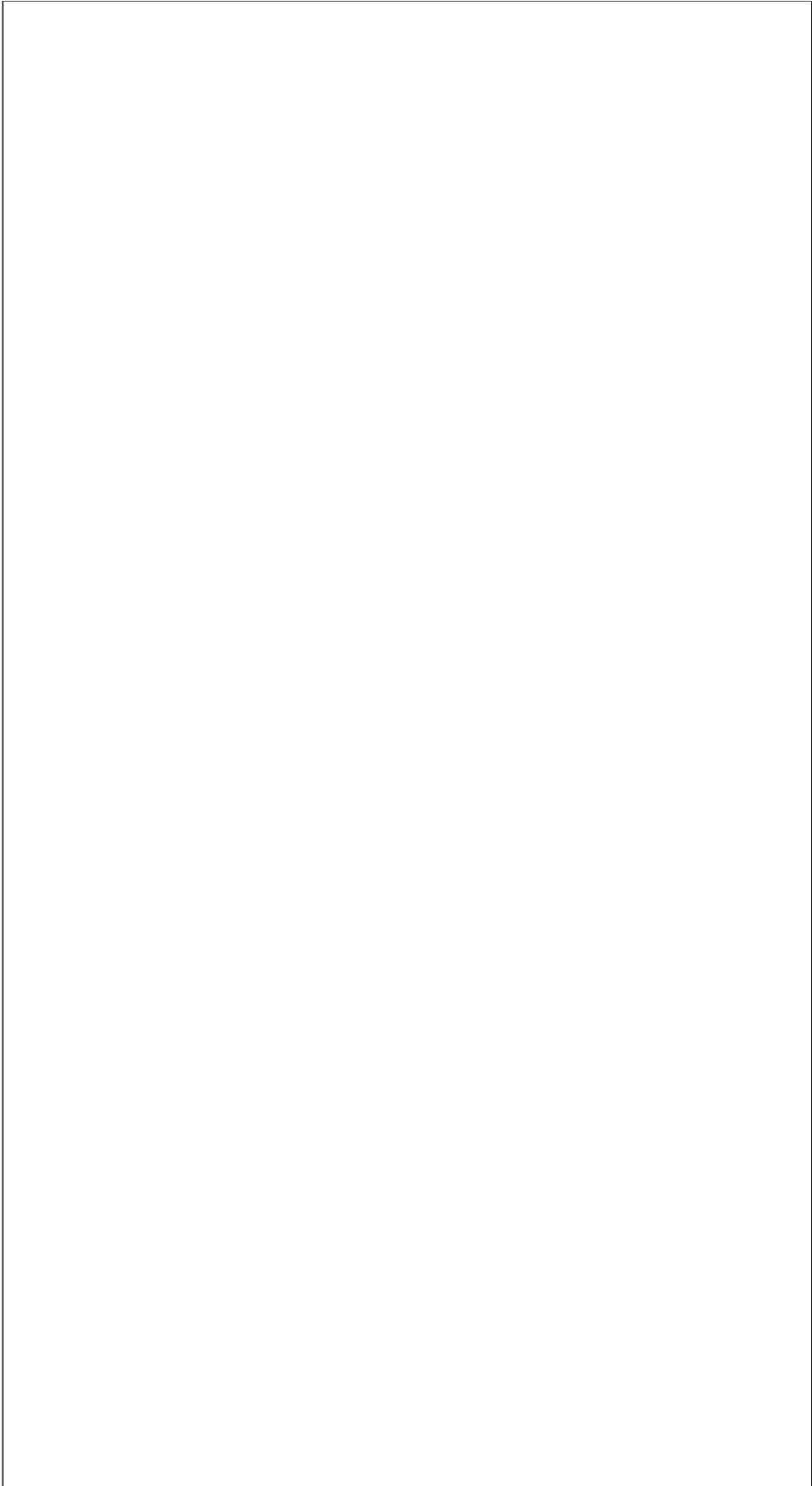
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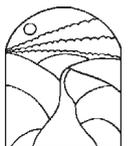
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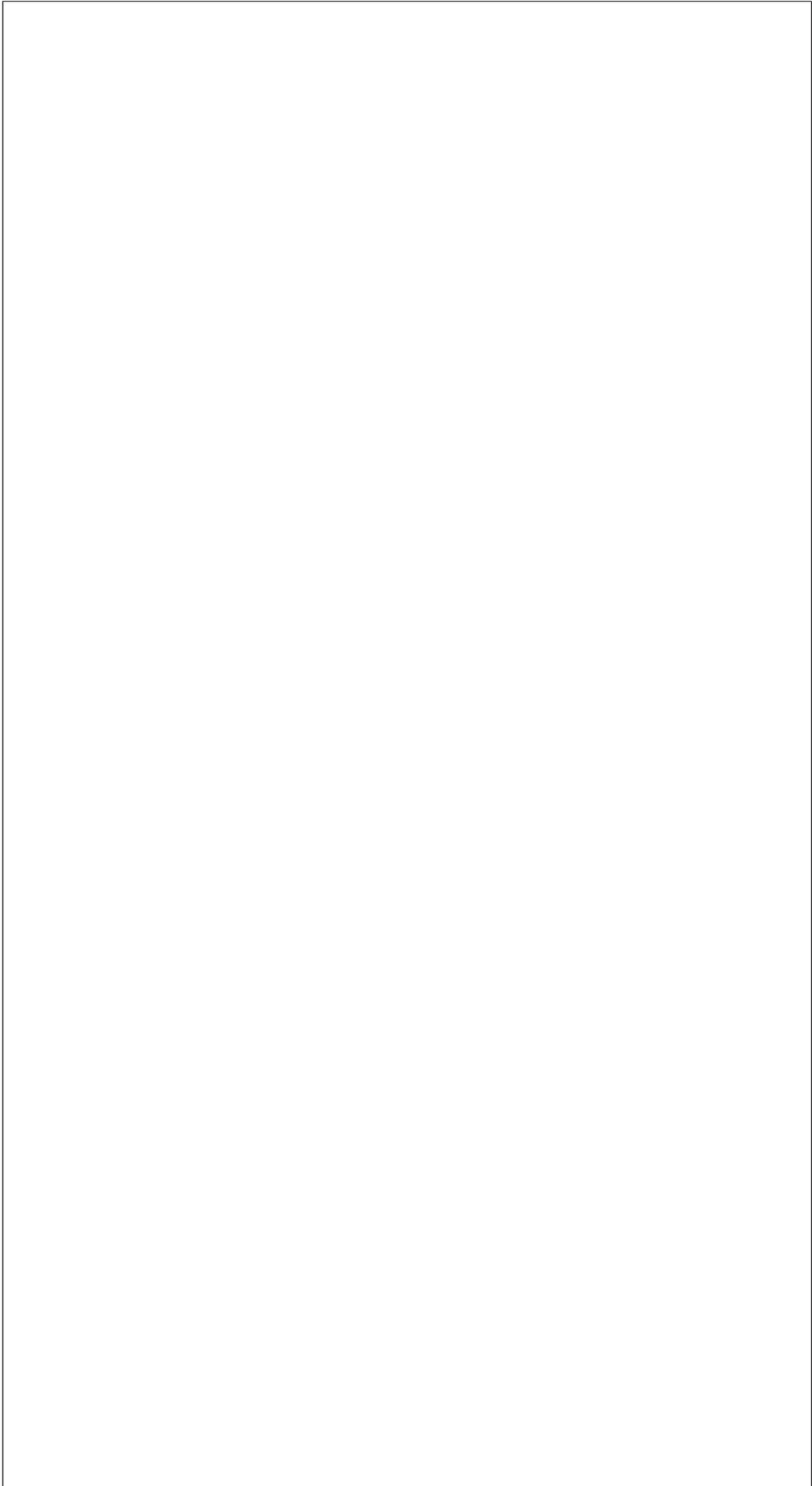
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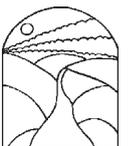
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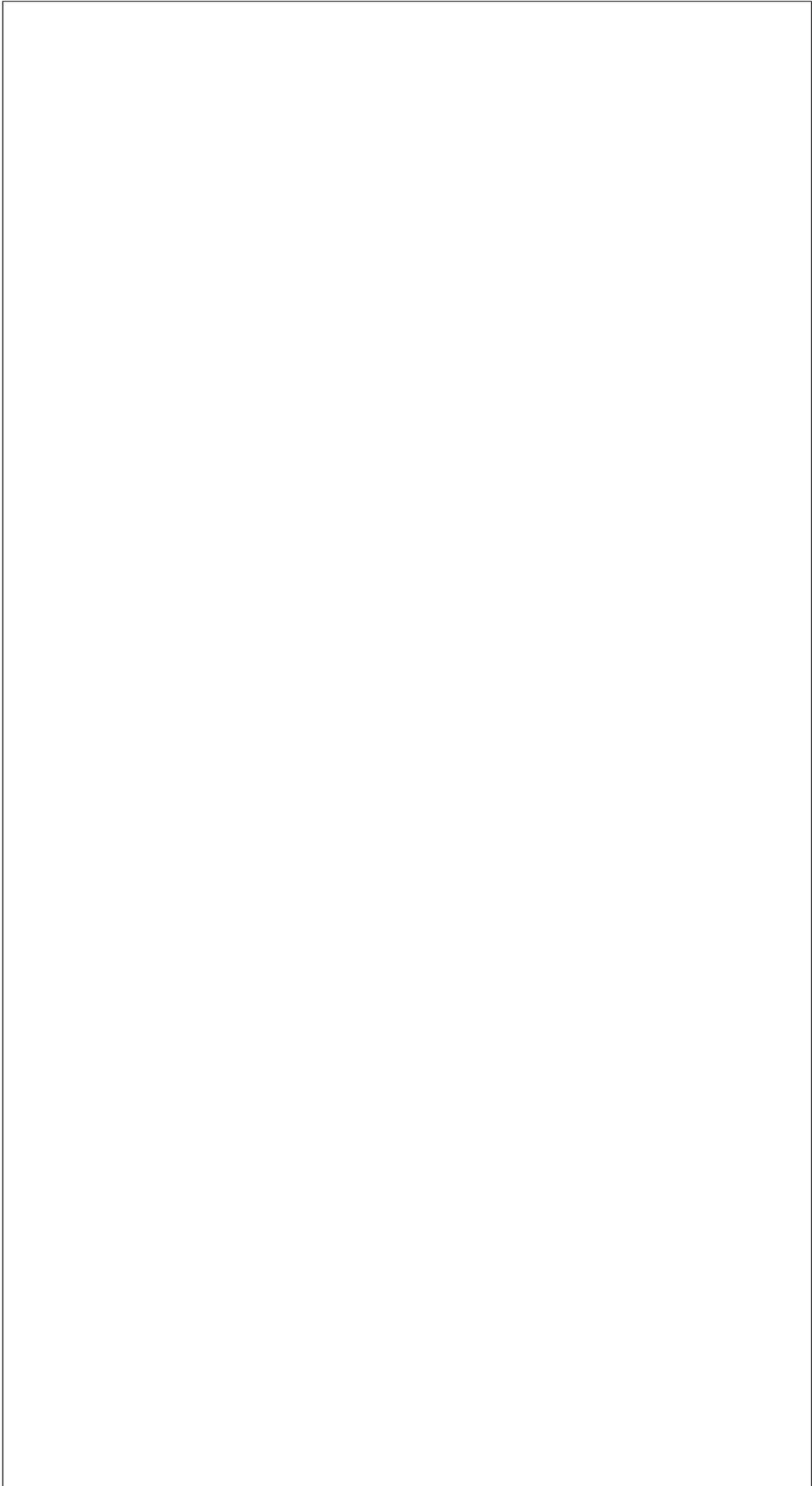
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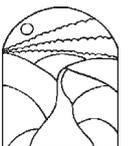
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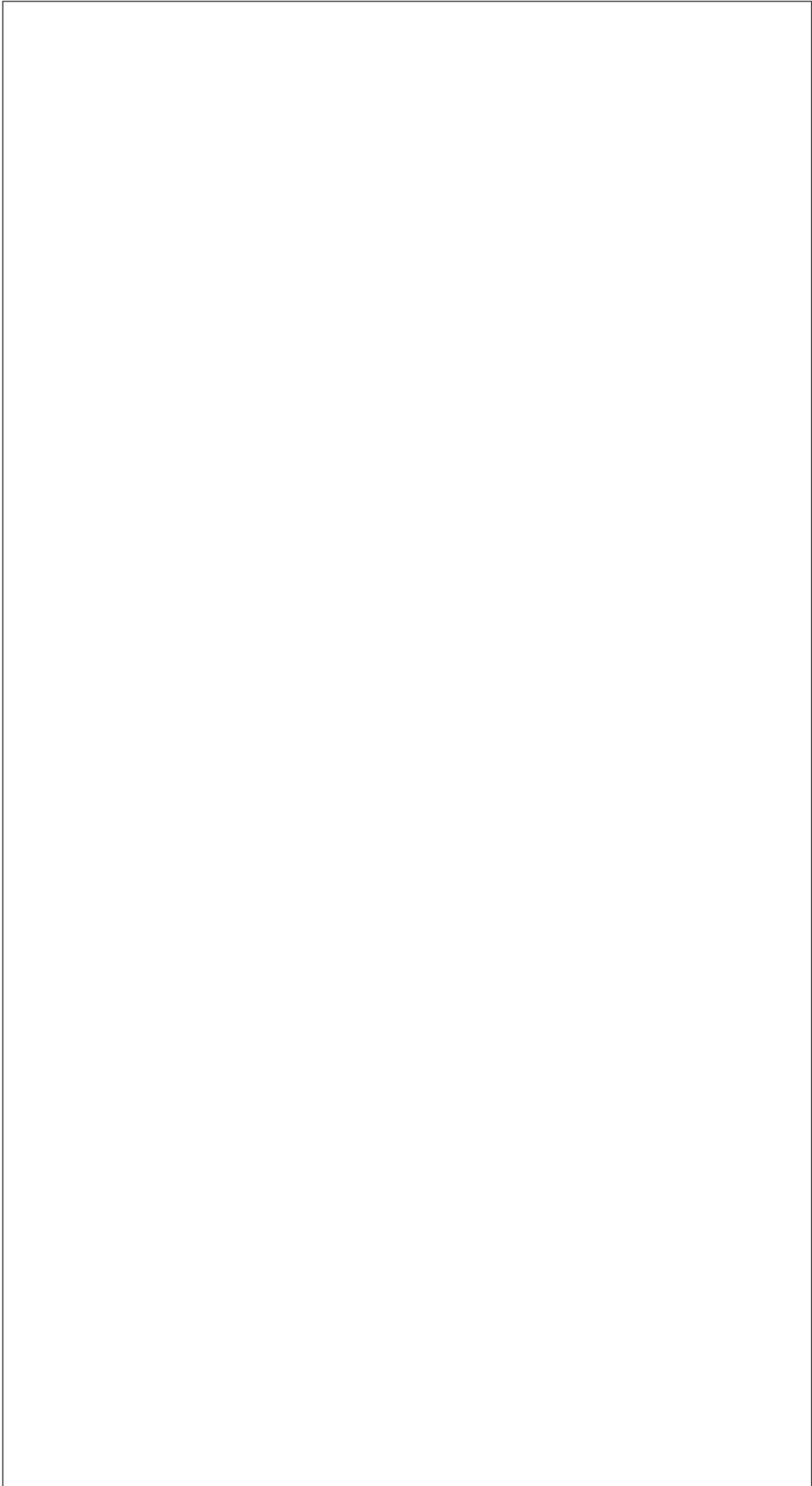
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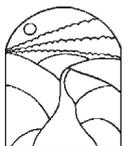
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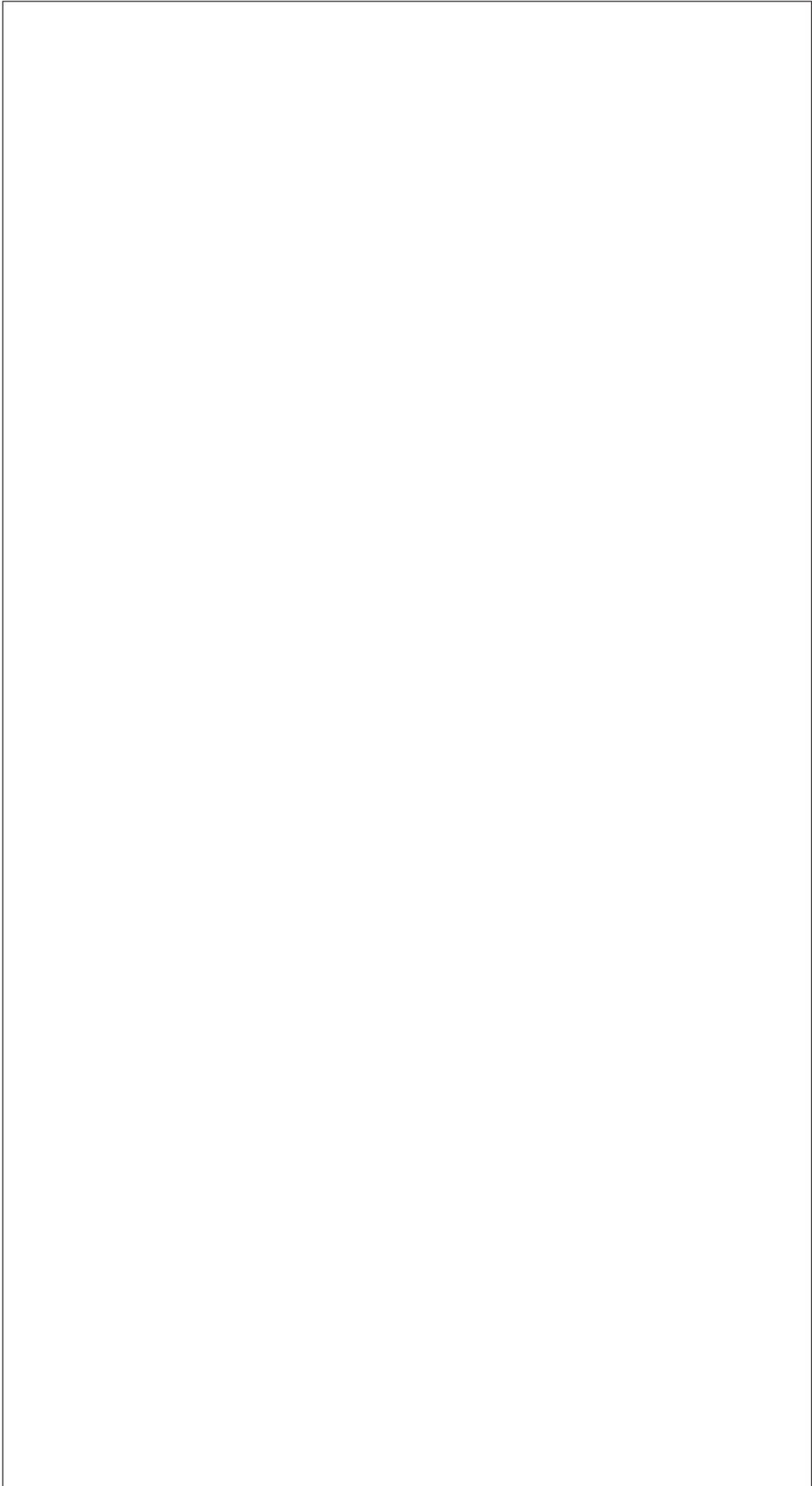
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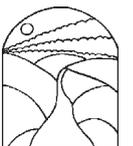
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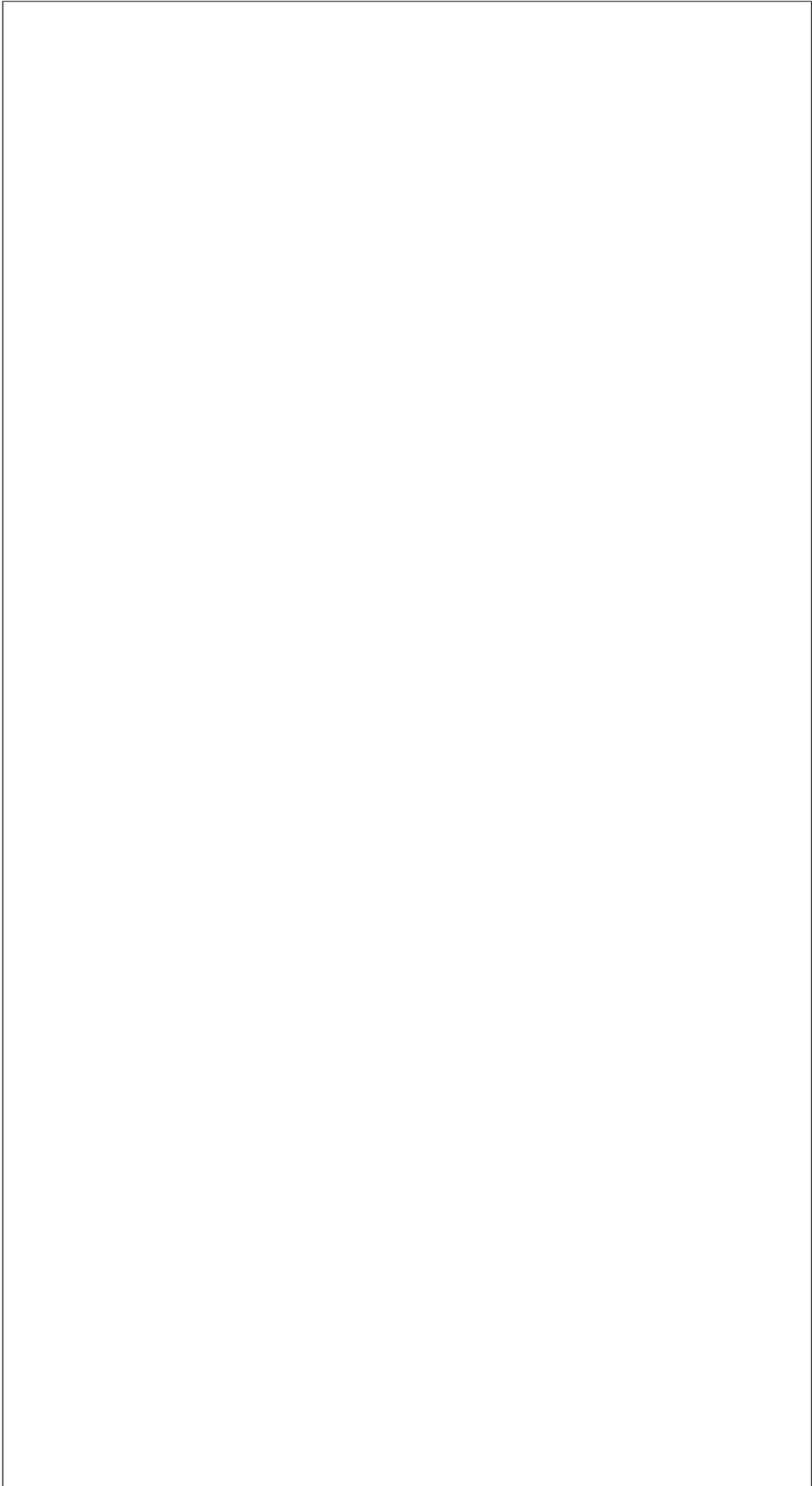
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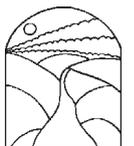
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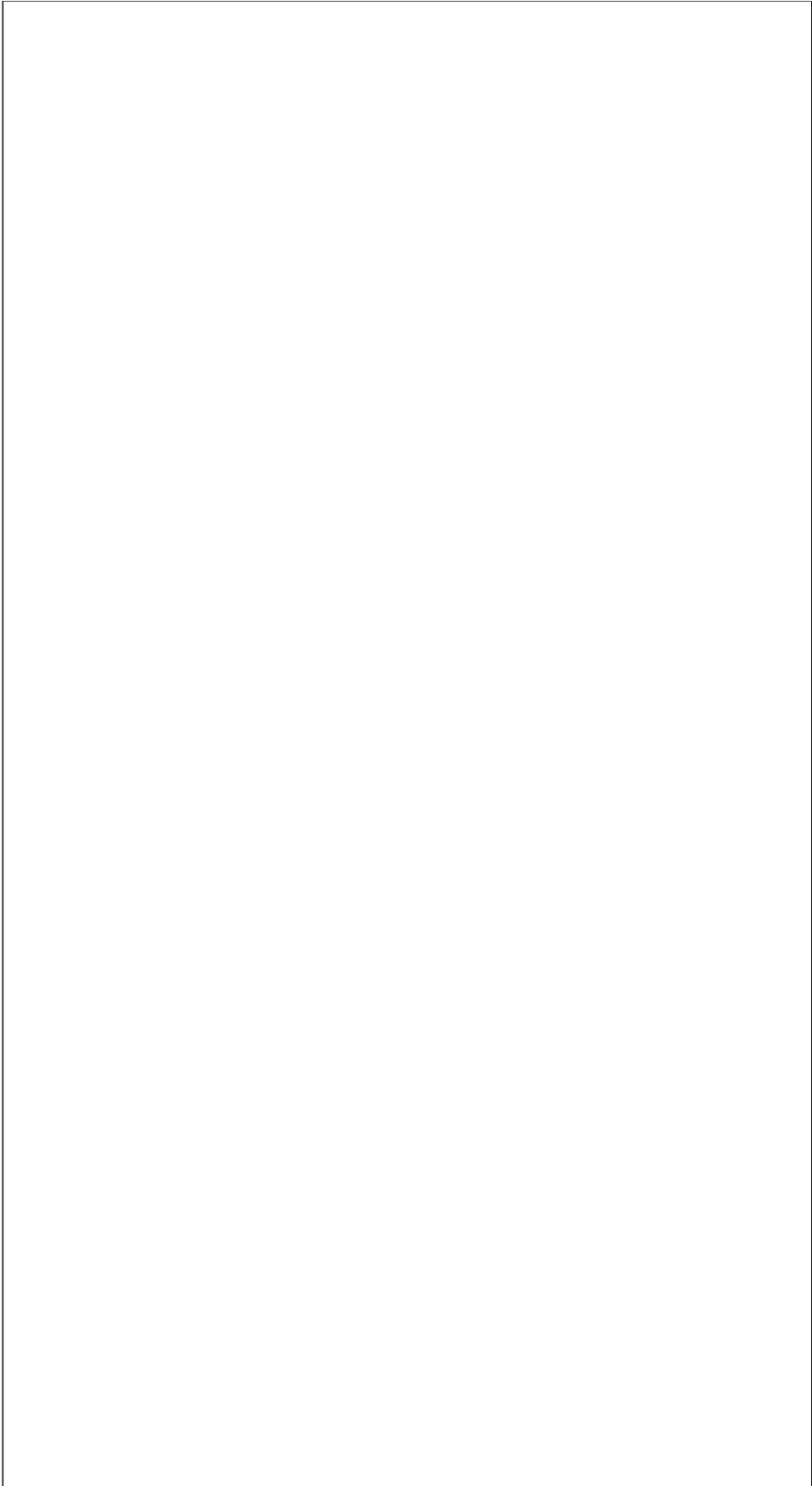
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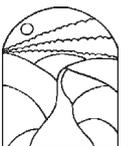
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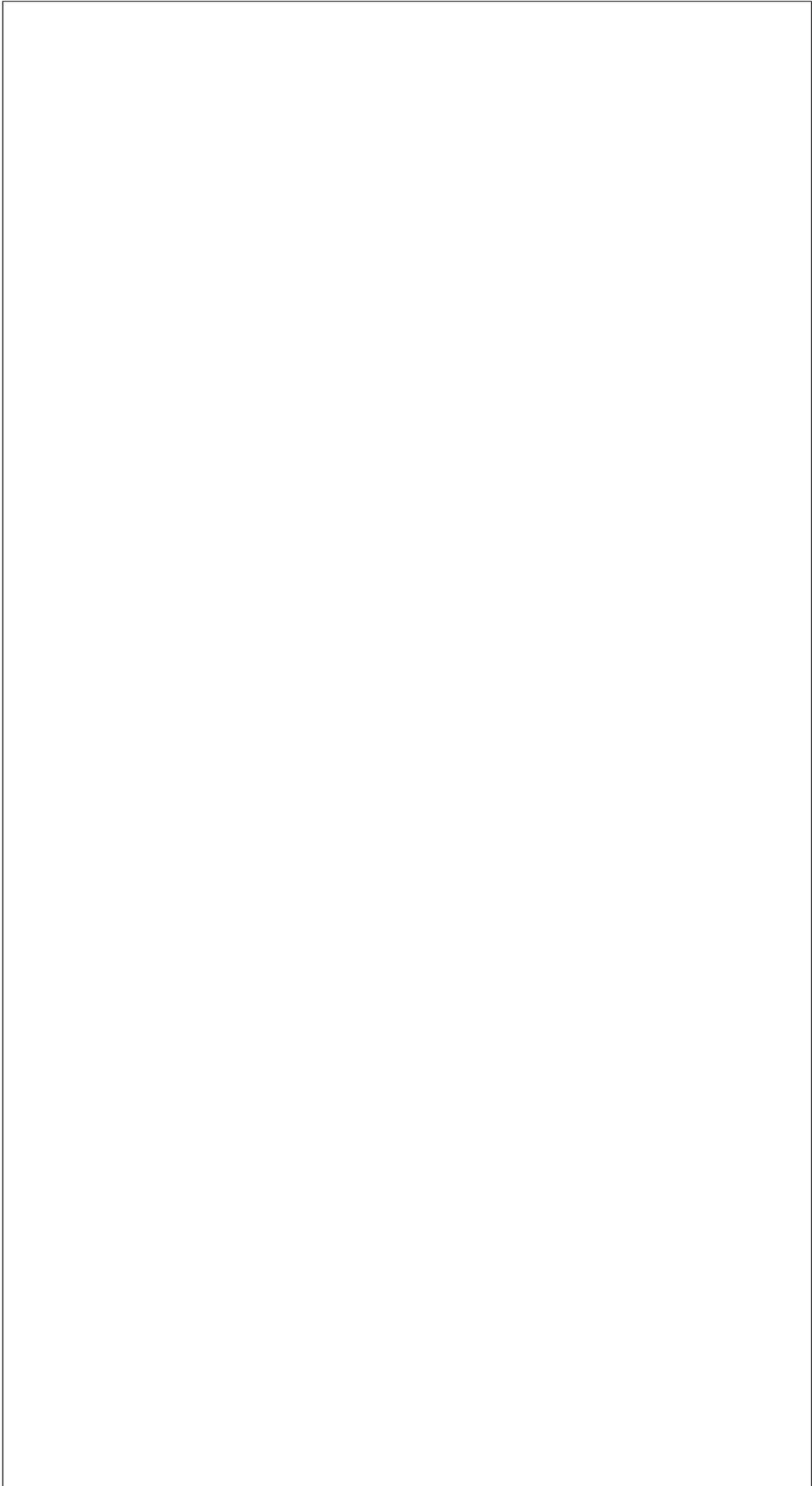
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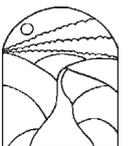
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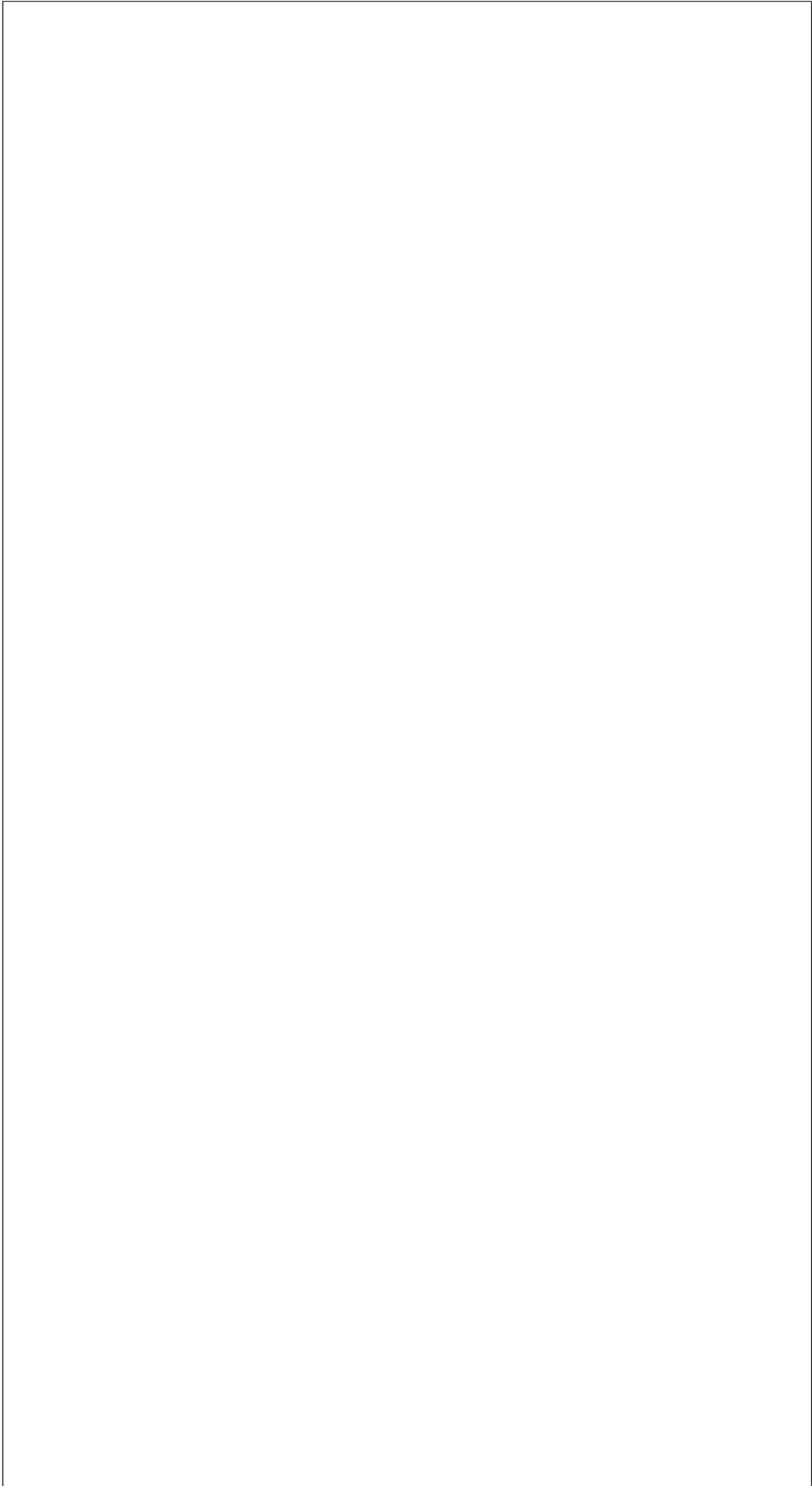
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Bible Studies

JOY



What is Joy?
What is Happiness?
What is fun?



Joy is a gift from God:

You have filled my heart with greater joy than when their grain and new wine abound. Psm 4:7
You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, Psm 30:11
Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, 1 Peter 1:8

This Gift is found in our salvation



With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. Isa 12:3
Restore to me the joy of your salvation. Psa 51:12

Joy in Scripture is often associated with worshiping God, this should bring Joy and be a joy. Most of the references to joy in the Bible fall into five categories.

Festival



Deut 16:15
2 Chronicles 30:26
Ezra 6:22
Nehemiah 8:12&17
Esther 8:17
Psalm 27:6

Presence



Leviticus 9:24
1 Chronicles 16:27
1 Chronicles 29:22
Psalm 16:11
Psalm 21:6
1 Thessalonians 3:9

Obedience



Psalm 19:8
Psalm 119:111
Proverbs 10:28
John 15:10-11

Holy Spirit



Luke 10:21
Acts 13:52
Romans 14:17
Galatians 5:22
1 Thessalonians 1:6

Trust



Psalm 28:7
Psalm 21:1
Psalm 126:3
Rom 15:13

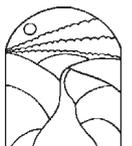
What is Christian Joy rooted in?

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What if there is no Joy?

What has happened to all your joy? I can testify that, if you could have done so, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me. Galatians 4:15



It seems to me that if there is no joy then one of the above elements is probably missing. In the case of the Galatians they had departed from obeying God. They had also become 'religious'.

Does everyone have the right to be happy?

If we are disobeying God, are we likely to have joy in our lives?

If we don't believe God's promises are we likely to have joy in our lives?

If we do not believe what God has said about us are we likely to have Joy?

Often we are miserable because we believe the Enemies lies instead of God's truth.

How much of our level of joy is associated to our attitude toward life & God?

Is God's joy automatic?

Isaiah 58:14 then you will find your joy in the LORD, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob." The mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Where is Joy found? Is the word 'find' significant?

Can circumstances rob us of our Joy?

I have great confidence in you; I take great pride in you. I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds. 2 Corinthians 7:4

Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. 2 Corinthians 8:2

How could Paul still have Joy in the face of all kinds of trouble?

Why do you think the Enemy is so keen to rob us of our joy?



What is likely to happen if the Enemy succeeds in taking our Joy?

How should Christians express their joy?

What things are going to increase your joy?

Is it wrong for a Christian to be miserable?

weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning. Psa 30:5

Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him. Psa 126:5-6

Two of the signs of mental health are; the ability to show appropriate emotion Rom 12:15; and expressing spontaneous joy. Jesus showed such out bursts of Joy, Mat 11:25.

Is the Christian walk supposed to be miserably?

Joy and Strength



This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." Nehemiah 8:10

Sing for joy to God our strength; shout aloud to the God of Jacob! Psalms 81:1

A happy heart makes the face cheerful, but heartache crushes the spirit. Prov 15:13

Joy and Satisfaction



So I commend the enjoyment of life, because nothing is better for a man under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad. Then joy will accompany him in his work all the days of the life God has given him under the sun. Ecclesiastes 8:15

Be happy, young man, while you are young, and let your heart give you joy in the days of your youth. Follow the ways of your heart and whatever your eyes see, but know that for all these things God will bring you to judgment. Ecclesiastes 11:9

Paul learned the secret of being content in all circumstance. Hebrews tells us to be content with what we have. This is one of the secrets of happiness.

Bible Studies

The Blood

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. 1 Peter 1:18-19

The New Testament frequently refers to Jesus Blood. People outside the Church often see this as morbid, while within the Church many have developed wrong understandings of the Blood. The object of this study is to see what the Bible says about Blood.

For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life. Leviticus 17:11

In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. Hebrews 9:22

The life of the creature is in the blood. Sometimes it is even called the 'lifeblood'. Because of this there were very strong prohibitions in the Bible against eating blood. Gen 9:4, Lev 7v26-27. These even find their way into the New Testament, Acts 15v20. The blood represented the life of the creature, therefore, to an extent, when we read of *the blood of Jesus*, we can understand it as, *the life of Jesus*. Eg Shed His precious blood means, gave His life. Ironically, we can also understand it as His death.

What significant does 'I have Given' have?

Right back in the Old Testament, God ordained that Blood would be the substance that made atonement for sin. Perhaps an illusion to this is found when God provided skins for Adam and Eve.

It was not only people that needed to be purified with blood, the Tabernacle and its utensils were all sprinkled with blood to sanctify them.

Hebrews tells us that sins cannot be forgiven without the shedding of blood, but in the next chapter it also says;

It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Hebrews 10:4

What conclusion do these two verses force us to draw?

The threefold work of the Blood

To establish covenant.

Exodus 24v8

Zechariah 9v11

Mark 14v24 (Matthew 26v28, Luke 22v20, 1 Corinthians 11v25)

Hebrews 9v18-20

John 19v34-35

Purchased by His Blood

Acts 20v28

Ephesians 1v7

Hebrews 9:12

Revelation 5v9

Purification by the Blood

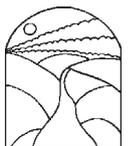
Romans 5v9

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Hebrews 9:14

1 John 1v7

Revelation 1v5

The joint effect of the above is to establish a firm relationship between God and man; But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. Ephesians 2:13

And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. Colossians 1:20

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, Hebrews 10:19

Someone once said 'God sees us through the blood' is this true?

Applying the Blood

Under the Old Covenant the blood of sacrificed animals was collected and sprinkled on the altar, the veil, the atonement cover, the priest and the people. 20 times in Leviticus we read of the sprinkling of the blood. Hebrews 9v21 sums this up "In the same way, he sprinkled with the blood both the tabernacle and everything used in its ceremonies." The blood not only had to be shed it had to be applied. Christ's sacrifice was no exception.

You have come... to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. Hebrews 12:24. cf. Hebrews 11:4 & Genesis 4v10.

What do you think the blood of Abel says?

What do you think the blood of Christ says?

The Blood of Abel cried out for retribution, for the injustice and sin of all mankind. The Blood of Christ speaks forgiveness and peace.

To God's elect... chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood 1 Peter 1:2

The grammar here is uncomfortable. This is because both the NIV and KJV have tried to retain a strange anomaly. While the context require that Christ sprinkle us with His blood, the subject Gk verb 'sprinkling' is the same as that for 'obedience' ie. it is something that we do.

Which part of the threefold work of the Blood do these verse pertain to?

Exodus 12v7 & 13

1 Corinthians 10v16

John 6v53

Revelation 12v11

What does it mean to plead the Blood?

In light of the threefold efficacy of the Blood are we justified in doing so?

Romans 3v25 Faith in His Blood helps us here. If our understanding of the power of the blood is in line with the above, then I believe we are justified in so doing.

When we say "I'm trusting in the power of the blood", we are referring to the victory that Jesus won by shedding His blood and the position it has bought us into. Such confession of faith is awesome. (In Rev 12, it was applied personally and back up by action.) Cf. The Cross, 1 Cor 1v17, Gal 6v14, Col 2v15.

The danger is that 'applying the blood' becomes meaningless rhetoric or at worst straight superstition. Cf. Acts 19v14-15

Bible Studies

Worry

An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up. Proverbs 12:25

Read Matthew 6:25-34

What are we told not to worry about?

What is the objective of the Two Comparisons made? (birds, lilies)

What reason are we given for not worrying? father knows what need

Jesus says that worry is a sin, He gave it more attention than he did murder, adultery or divorce. Having read this passage **why do you think worry is classed as a sin?** The key is found in the references to God given in this Scripture.

For me to worry excessively is to show a lack of trust for God's providence. It is saying "I do not believe that God can see me through". To murder is to show disrespect for God's creation and God himself as lawgiver. But to worry is to show disrespect for God as a father.

Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? Matthew 6:27

This can be translated "add to his height". It is often pointed out that worrying can do the opposite!

What do we worry about?

What is worry?

Are there constructive forms of worry?

Some kinds of worry, better labelled 'concern' motivate us to constructive action. Often action removes the need to worry. Most of the time worry just feeds itself. One of the keys to resolving problems is to separate what you can change from what you can't. Perhaps this is what Jesus meant when he said Tomorrow will worry about itself.

Worrying about what you can't change is;

destructive

tiring

sin

illogical

Choose carefully what you are going to worry about!

What does this passage tell us we should do instead of worrying?

What is the promise that follows this?

How good are we at putting his kingdom first?

Worry ← ? → Trust

What is the connection between worry and doubt?

Stress

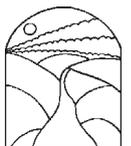
Stress and Anxiety are problems endemic to our lifestyle. Stress produces chemicals in our bodies that do us harm. Stress is the root of many medical conditions. Jesus has removed from our lives the need to worry. How can we worry when we know God has our future in his hands.

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How well we respond to a situation will determine how much stress we suffer.
For example; Getting old, Going bald.

Read Deuteronomy 28v65-67 cf Exekiel 4v16, 12v19
What causes this anxiety?

Read Luke 21v34 cf Matthew 13v22
What danger is inherent to anxiety?

So then, banish anxiety from your heart and cast off the troubles of your body, for youth and vigour are meaningless. Ecclesiasties 11:10

Banishing anxiety is a choice.

How to you banish anxiety?

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7

What two meaning does he cares for you, contain?

Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall.

Psalm 55:22

The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him, Nahum 1:7

Read Philipians 4v6-9

What are we to do instead of worrying?

What does v8 imply about controlling our thoughts?

What does v9 imply is part of knowing God's peace?

Solutions to Worry

Put God first

Chose to Trust

Commit in Prayer

Stand on the Promises

Do what is right.

Bible Studies

New Wine.

Luke 5v29-39

²⁹ Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and 'sinners?'"

³¹ Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ³² I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

³³ They said to him, "John's disciples often fast and pray, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours go on eating and drinking."

³⁴ Jesus answered, "Can you make the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? ³⁵ But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; in those days they will fast."

³⁶ He told them this parable: "No one tears a patch from a new garment and sews it on an old one. If he does, he will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not match the old. ³⁷ And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. ³⁸ No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins. ³⁹ And no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, 'The old is better.'"

Why did Jesus eat with sinners?

The pharisees and John's disciples critics Jesus through his disciples. Avoiding Sinners, prayer and fasting were signs of religious piety and devotion. Jesus did not fit the norm that the religion of the day expected.

Can we conclude from v33 that the disciples did not pray or fast?

Matthew 6v6, 16 & 17.

Jesus gives to parables or illustrations to answer John's disciples accusations.

Historically what does the Old Garment represent?

Historically what does the New Patch represent?

Historically what does the Old wine skin represent?

Historically what does the New Wine represent?

Traditionally we understand the new wine to be the Holy Spirit, this is true. In context Jesus is speaking of the Gospel and his person, in effect the three are closely linked.

What point is Jesus making?

For the first decades of the early church, faith in Jesus, *the way* as it was called was part of Judaism, one of many different streams with diverse faith of Judaism. After all Jesus was Jewish, he was the Messiah, a wholly Jewish concept, he fulfilled the Jewish Scriptures and his life was a fulfilment of the law and promises given to the Jewish people. The early Disciples could see their faith (quite rightly) as true Judaism. They were waiting for the rest of their kinsmen to play catch up. The new wine was too powerful, too radical for the old wineskins, it could not be contained as a denomination within Judaism. Men like Stephen, Paul and those who planted the church in Antioch realised this early than many others. Christianity had to stand on it's own.

What do the garment, patch, wine skins and new wine mean for us?

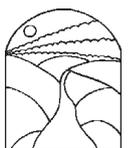
Old wine skins speak of religious structures, it is almost impossible to avoid creating

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this kind of structure. The danger is that they become too comfortable, too confining and too brittle, to contain what God wants to do.

Can our view of God be an old wine skin?

Can our expectations be an old wine skin?

Can our church liturgies be an old wine skin?

Can rules like those restricting tongues 1 Cor 14 be an old wine skin?

We must be careful not to cast off all restraint, even new wine needs its new wine skins, it cannot be tipped over the floor.

Do you think this idea applies more to the church or the individual?

Obviously a wine skin could not be used just once, before reuse they were rubbed with oil and beaten to make them soft and pliable once again. Scripture tells us that we are to keep on being filled with the Spirit.

How can we ensure that we are “new wine skins” ready to be used?

What happens if old skins are used?

Something new.

Ruth 4v15

Psalm 103v5

Isaiah 43v19

Hosea 10v12

Romans 12v2

2 Corinthians 4v16

*My eyes are dry, my flesh is old.
heart is hard, My prayers are cold
And I know how it ought to be,
Alive to you and dead to me.*

*What can be done for an old heart like mine?
Soften it up with oil and wine.
The oil is You, Your Spirit of God
please wash me anew in the wine of Your Love.*

Where do I need to be renewed?

And no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, “The old is better.” Luke 5v39

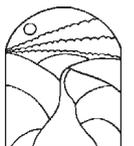
Is Jesus contradicting himself?

This comment is certainly true, people want to stay with what is tested and safe. To be able to retreat into convention. They don’t want the danger of trying the new. But in the case of the Gospel they are wrong, it is the new that is better!

What do you want more the old or the new?

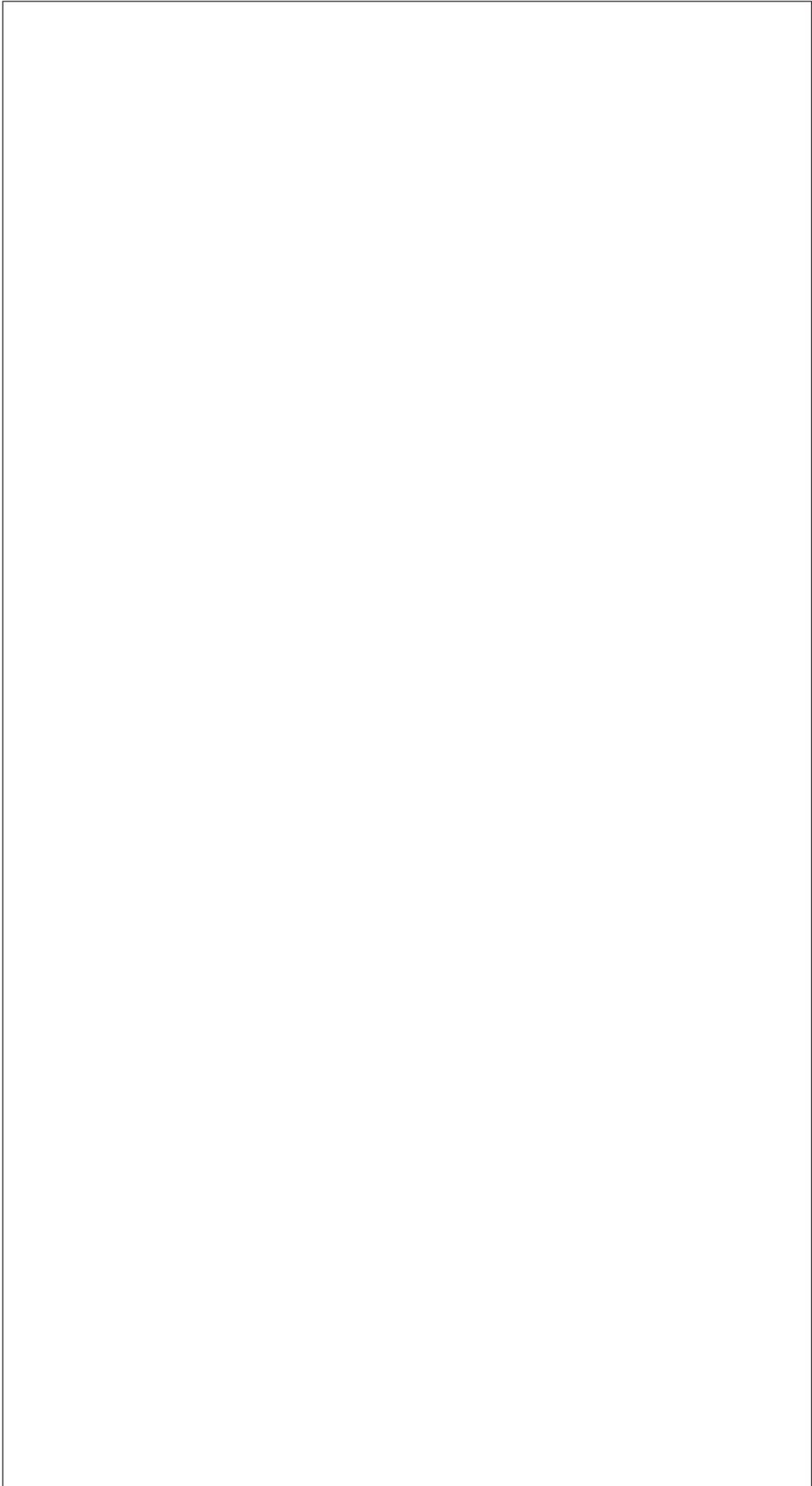
Bible Studies

STREAMS IN THE DESERT



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Bible Studies

What is hell like?

The subject of Hell is neither popular nor pleasant, but the Bible considers Hell a sobering reality. The object of this study is to discover what the Bible says about hell. Hell is the destination of those who's names are not in the Lamb's book of life *Rev 21:27*, ie those who have not made a commitment to Jesus and been 'saved'. John calls it *the Second Death*, *Rev 2:11*. Luke, the Abyss, *Luke 8v31*.

Read Matthew 25v41



Who was hell made for?

Does this mean people do not go there?

It appears that God did not make hell for mankind but for the fallen heavenly beings. The reason for this is clear; The Lord ... is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. *2 Peter 3:9*. This is spelled out time and again, God has gone to exceptional lengths to keep people out of hell, *John 3v16*. He has done everything short of force them.

Heaven is God's gift, but hell is earned. *Romans 6v23*.

Jesus concludes the parable of the Sheep and the Goats by saying "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life." *Matthew 25:46*

Did you notice three descriptions of Hell from Matthew 25?



An overwhelming description

Matthew 5v22
Mark 9v47-48
Hebrews 10v27
Revelation 20v14-15
James 3v6
Jude v7

What is it?



In Mark 9v47 & Matthew 18v9, the word for Hell is *Gehenna* the Greek name for the Hinnon Valley. Where the ashes of the sacrifices and temple rubbish were thrown, here fires burned day and night, giving a *type* or illustration, of hell. cf Isaiah 66v24 Revelations *Lake of fire*, is in stark contrast to it's description of heaven as a *Sea of Glass*, like crystal, *Rev 4v6*.

Another description

Matthew 25v30, Matthew 8v11, 22v13, 24v5
Jude v13 Jude v6
2 Peter 2v4
2 Peter 2v17



What is it?



How literally should these descriptions be taken?

Considering these descriptions would you say hell is a state or a place?

C.S.Lewis wrote of the austerity of hell.

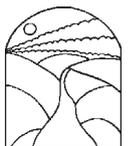
Heaven is prepared for those who have been made righteous, to know yourself a sinner and that the time for forgiveness is passed, would make heaven very uncomfortable.

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The rich man and Lazarus

Read Luke 16v19-31



We have to be careful that we do not read too much into a parable, Jesus is not teaching about the afterlife, on the other hand it is inconceivable that Jesus would mislead us. It must also be noted that this description of the afterlife is prior to Judgement (for the rich man's brothers are still alive).

What is Jesus point in this parable?

What does this parable tell us about Hell?

What does it tell us about a person in Hell?

Who's in charge?

Revelation 20v10

Revelation 20v14-15

Matthew 10v28

Luke 12v5



The Bible uses hell as both the regime of evil and the destiny of the wicked, we should not confuse the two. While Satan is in charge of the forces of evil, he will not be in charge of Hell. He will be an inmate not the governor.

What does this do to the idea of hell as fun?

People think of hell as a place where anything goes, where anything is allowed, where there will be a reunion with old friends.

In light of the scriptures we have read is this an accurate view of hell?

The OT frequently refers to 'Sheol', sometimes this means no more than 'the grave', but often it refers to an 'intermediate state', a place of remand, prior to final judgement. This explains the Revelation 20v14, where death and Hades (Sheol) are thrown into the fire (hell).

Just as the NT talks of reward in heaven, so it indicates degrees of punishment in Hell. "But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you." Matthew 11:24

Summary

Hell is:-



Separation from God	2 Thessalonians 1v9
Exclusion from Heaven	Revelation 21v8
Removal from His blessing	Isaiah 38v18
Extreme suffering	Revelation 20v10
Memory and remorse	Luke 16v19-31
Unsatisfied desire	Luke 16v24
Sorrow and Loss	Matthew 24v5
Shame and eternal contempt	Daniel 12v2
Unpleasant company	Revelation 21v8
Hopelessness	Proverbs 11v7

There are three views of hell that the Scripture clearly rules out, **Universalism**, that because God is love He will subject no one to hell; **Restorationism**, that hell is temporary to purify sinners for entry to heaven; **Second Probationism**, that there is a second chance to be saved between death and judgement.

We may not like the idea of Hell, but we must remember that God is totally just and amazingly loving, and will do nothing that is not 100% right. We do not need to fear that God will do anything unjust. We do need to recognise the seriousness of rejecting/failing to accept Christ.

Bible Studies

What is Heaven like?

People seem to have an abiding view of heaven as cold marble floors and harps. A Sunday morning worship service that goes on for ever.

Heaven is where God lives.



Jesus taught us to pray, Our Father in Heaven. It is where His lordship is supreme, again we pray, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

When the Father spoke, He spoke from Heaven, *Matthew 3v17*. When Jesus prayed he lifted His eye to heaven, *Mark 6v41, 7v34*. Jesus came from heaven, *John 3v31,6v38, 1 Cor 15v49*. He ascended to heaven, *Luke 9v51, Acts1v2*, and will return from there, *Acts 1v11, 3v21, 1 Thes 1v10, 4v16*. There are many OT references to Heaven as God's dwelling and of God acting from heaven. The idea of heaven as the abode of God is so strong that most of the time the Gospels use heaven, to mean God. eg *Matthew 21:25*

Heaven is God's Throne, *Matthew 5v34, 23v22, Isaiah 66v1*

Heaven is above



The Bible always talks of heaven using words like *above, up, ascend* .

Heaven is not physically located above the earth, it is not part of the universe as we know it. It is on a different plain. It is spiritually above. Some people claim that the use of above is misleading and indicates a believe in a three tired universe, but what other language could be used? In contrast to Jewish writers of the NT do not try to give a geography of heaven or divide heaven into realms, the only exception is *2 Cor 12:2*.

The Hebrew and Greek words for heaven sometimes mean sky.

What does the NT say about heaven.

Prepared

In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. *John 14:2-3*

What does this passage tell us about heaven?

The word rooms (Gk. Mone) means abodes, staying places, it is the same word used in *v23* will come to him and make our home with him.

Mat 25v34 & Heb 11v16 also speak of heaven as prepared for us.

Citizens

Philipians 3v20

Hebrews 11v13-16

What implication does Citizen of Heaven - Alien on Earth have?

What is heaven described as?

Hebrews uses the word Heavenly to differentiate what is real and eternal from what is temporary, a shadow. Heaven is the reality compared with earths transience.

With the Lord

Each of these verse tell us that heaven is to be with the Lord, but each one also tells us something extra.

2 Corinthians 5v8

Philipians 1v23

1 Thessalonians 4v17

We shall also be like Him

1 John3v2 2 Corinthians 5v1-4

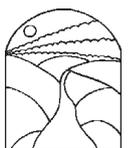
1 Corinthians 15v49,53-54

In what ways will we change?

Reward

Matthew 6:20

1 Peter 1v2



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Rewards for what? What do you think the rewards will be?**Service and rest**

Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labour, for their deeds will follow them." Revelation 14:13

Therefore, "they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Revelation 7:15 cf 22v3

Fullness of Knowledge

Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. 1 Corinthians 13:12

Made perfect

Hebrews 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect,

Rejoicing

I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent. Luke 15:7

Purity and Light

The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. Revelation 21:23

Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Revelation 21:27

But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. 2 Peter 3:13

Just imagine no sin to mar God creation. A place ruled by God's Love & Righteousness

Read **Revelation 4**
 Revelation 21v1-5, 9-18, 22-27
 Revelation 22v1-5

What do these passages tell us about heaven?

There is a story of a girl born blind, who was given sight by a ground breaking operation. When the bandages came off she could see for the first time, staring out of the window, at the trees and grass, she exclaimed, "mummy why didn't you tell me it was beautiful." How can you explain such beauty to someone born blind? The Apostle John in Revelation struggled with just this problem.

We can learn a lot about heaven from this world and from ourselves. The God who made this earth also made heaven. This world is corrupted by the consequences of the fall and man's sin and yet it is world is full of diversity and beauty. Within in it we can find challenge, fulfilment and satisfaction.

If this is so then what will heaven be like?

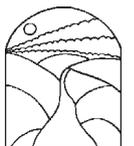
To quote Keith Green, "this is living in a garbage can compared to what's going on up there"

Will heaven be boring?

Imagine the thing you most enjoy doing. God created pleasure, work and satisfaction. He did not create the drudgery and frustration that so often mark our lives. Heaven will be full of pleasure and activity. One thing I am convinced of, is that heaven is not the end. It is the beginning.

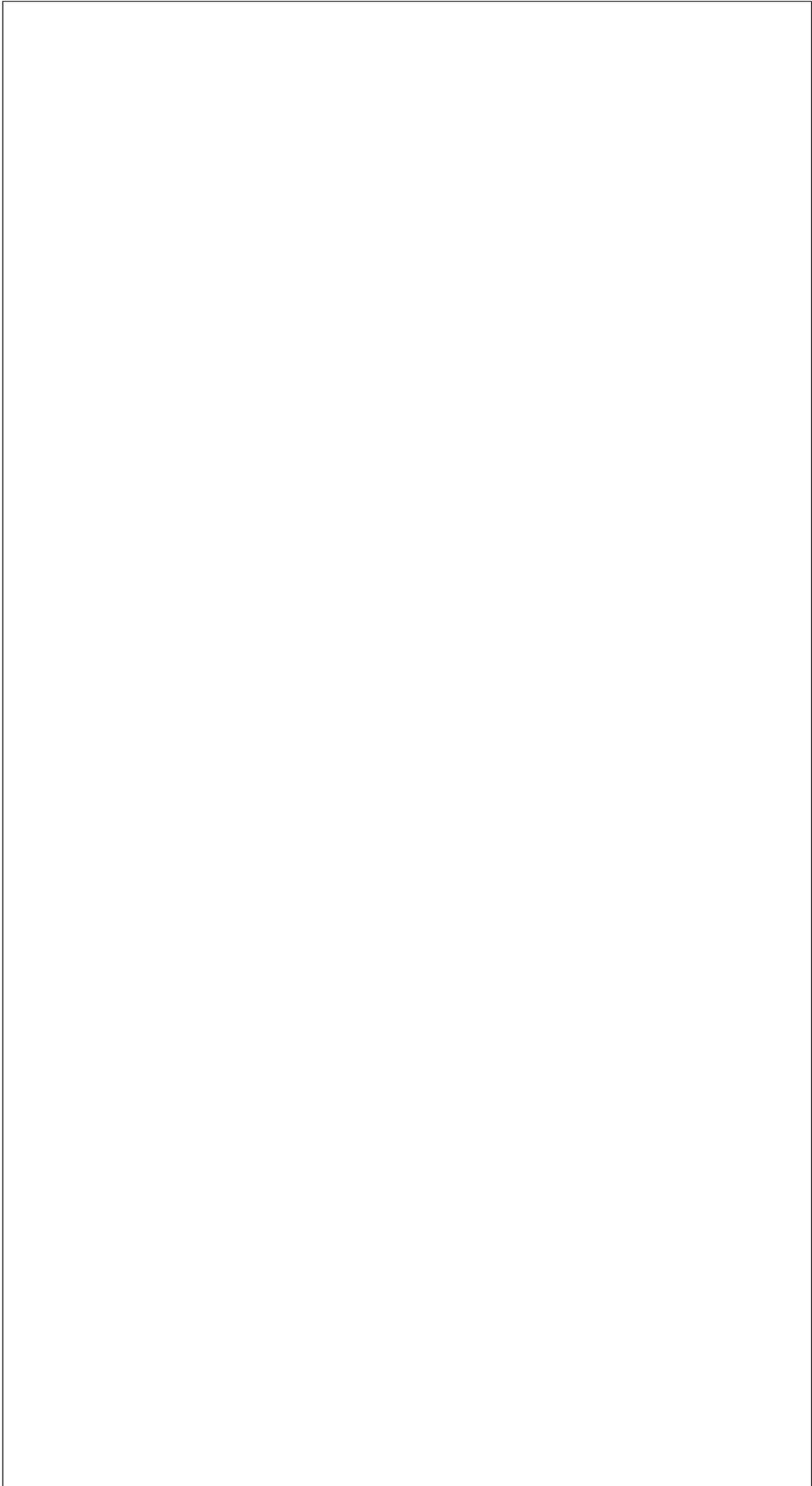
Bible Studies

STREAMS IN THE DESERT



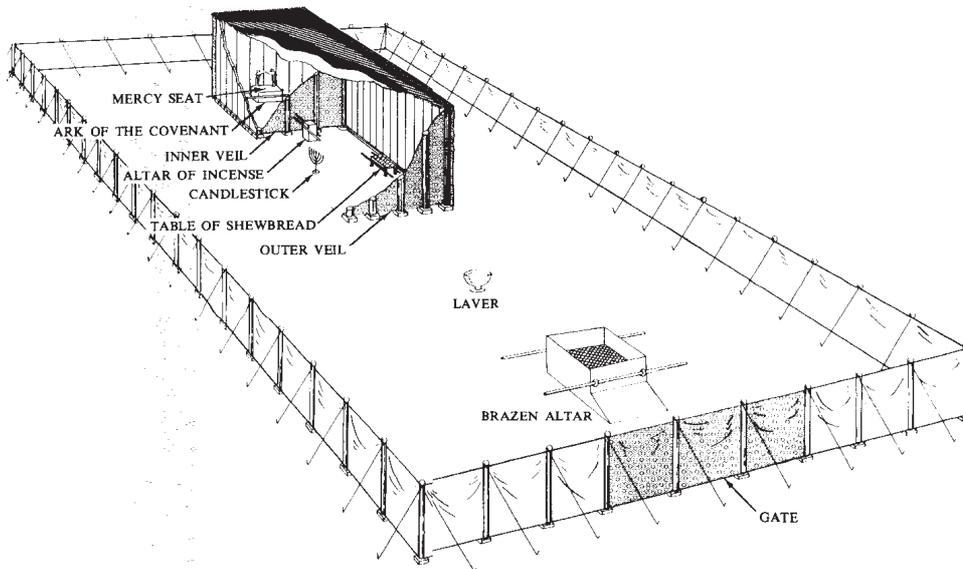
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Bible Studies

The Tabernacle



The Tabernacle was built by Moses as a mobile place of worship and sacrifice. It stood for some 450 years until Solomon replaced it with the Temple.

God commanded the Tabernacle to be built.

Exodus 25v8

God showed Moses the plan.

Exodus 25v9, Acts 7v44

God filled the craftsmen with His Spirit.

Exodus 31v2-3

The materials were donated by the people. (Is this significant, where did they get)

Exodus 25v2 cf Exodus 36v5-7

It was a copy of a Heavenly Tabernacle.

Hebrews 9v11

It was a 'type' of spiritual truths

Hebrews 9v1-5

Why was it so important that the Tabernacle was made just right? Hebrews 8v5

The tabernacle was not just a place of worship, it was intended to reveal truth.

If you read the early chapters of Revelation, you will not find direct reference to a literal tabernacle in heaven, you will find that many of the furnishings alluded to. There is no altar, but there is a slain lamb. Rev 5v5. There are seven candlesticks and a seven fold, Spirit of God. There are golden bowls of incense. There is also a throne room, where God dwells. All of these are illustrated by the items found in the tabernacle.

Bezalel is the first person in scripture who is specifically said to have been filled with the Spirit. Not a king, prophet or priest, but a craftsman and a worker.

Do you think this is significant? If so, what is it intended to tell us?

The Holy Spirit is given to us for practical reason, specifically so that we can witness. Acts 1v8. The Holy Spirit is given to us so that we can build God's house today.

Two Hebrew words are translated tabernacle, *olam*, which simply means tent, and *miskan*, which means dwelling. From *miskan* we get the word *shekinah*, the presence of God.



The tabernacle represents and explains;

The way to approach God.

The way of Atonement.

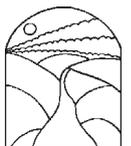
The way of Worship.

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As a whole, the Tabernacle is a picture of Christ and his work on the Cross. Luke 24v27.



General description

There were three parts to the Tabernacle. The **outer court**, 100x50 cubits (50x25m) which was an open area where the sacrifices and ordinances were carried out. It must have bustled with activity. The **Holy Place** measured 20x20 cubits (10x10m), Here the priests carried out their duties and entered regularly. Divided from the holy place by a thick curtain stood the **Holy of Holies**, where God's presence rested. The high priest entered the Holy of Holies once a year on the Day of atonement.

Do you see a pattern?



The Tabernacle was designed to let men approach God, but also to keep them at a distance. Each area restricted access further. Everyone could come to the gate. Men with sacrifices could come to the Altar. Priests could go as far as the Lavar. One priest chosen by lot, entered the Holy place morning and evening. Only the high priest entered the Holy of Holies and only once a year.

Why did God need to restrict access?

What is the connection between these two verses?

Hebrews 9:8 The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still standing.

Mark 15:38 The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

What does this mean for us? Hebrews 10v19-23

Over the tabernacle stood the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.

Exodus 40v36-37. Numbers 9v15-17

What did the cloud and fire represent?

It symbolised the presence of the Lord.

It guided them.

Exodus 13v21-22

It protected them.

Exodus 14v19-20.

At night it gave light to the camp.

Psalm 105v39.

In the day time it gave shelter from the sun. Psalm 105v39



Christ in you, the hope of glory. Col 1:27

And I myself will be a wall of fire around it,' declares the LORD, 'and I will be its glory within.' Zechariah 2:5

God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." Hebrews 13:5



What happened when the cloud moved? Numbers 9v19-21

What implication does this have for us?

It's Position

The Tabernacle stood in the center of the Israelite camp, 3 tribes to the north, 3 to the east, south and west. Numbers 2. It is likely that the openings of the tents faced in.

Why? (Defence, unity, God in center, see the cloud, centred thoughts on)

The Tabernacle faced east (as later the temple did) It faced the sunrise. Matthew 24v27.

The furniture in the Tabernacle forms a cross with it's foot at the altar, the place of suffering and sacrifice, and it's head at the mercy seat, the shekinah glory of God. The cross bridges the two. **What does this mean for us?**

When the people moved from place to place, the Tabernacle moved with them in a procession. The Ark of the Covenant travelled in the center.



Pillar of	three	Tabernacle	three	Tabernacle	six
cloud	tribes	Structure	tribes	Furniture	tribes

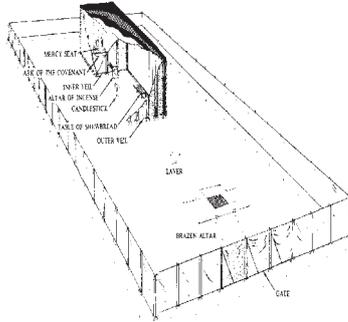
There was only one Tabernacle for all the people. One place to come. There is only one Calvary and only one Cross. Only one place to find God.

Bible Studies

From the outside in.

The courtyard

Exodus 27v9-19



Description: Surrounding the tabernacle was a wall of linen, enclosing a rectangular court 50x25m. There were 20 posts on the south and north sides and 10 on the east and west sides. Each was 2.5m high. Each had a bronze base, a silver capital and guy lines to keep them from falling.

Meaning: In the Scripture white linen stand for righteousness. *Rev 19:8*. The white Tabernacle must have stood out in stark contrast to the black tents of the Israelites. *Phil 2:15*

The linen wall was:

A **barrier**, it prevented unlawful approach, stopping people or animal from wandering through the sacred place, thus preserving its sanctity.

It created a **separation** between the holy and the secular, the church and the world. *2 Cor 6:14&17*

It created a way of **approach**. Man thinks he can come to God any way he likes, but God says there is only one way. *John 14v6*



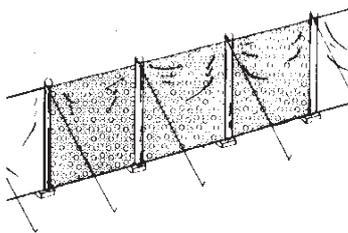
All of the wood used in the tabernacle was aachaia wood, which is by nature short knotted and twisted. It speaks of humanity. It must have taken considerable skill and work to make poles and planks from this kind of wood. In us, God took what was twisted and made it straight. The bronze speaks of sin which God has put under foot, and the silver of redemption. (Redemption price was paid in silver. *eg Hosea 3v2, Zech 11v13, Matthew 26v15*)

Application: *How does this apply to us?*

The Gate

Exodus 27v16

Description: At the eastern end of the courtyard was the entrance. It was made of a brightly coloured curtain and suspended between 4 posts. It may have been rolled up for entry but it is more likely that the people had to push through the curtain.



Meaning: It was the **only** gate, just as Christ is the only gate, *John 10v7*.

It was **wide**, 10m, larger than you would expect, this speaks of universal access.

It was **accessible**, not made of wood with bars and bolts, anyone could push through. It could not be locked. If you want to come to God, you must push through.

It was **beautiful**. Woven from

blue,	(deity).
purple	(Royalty / redemption.),
scarlet	(blood / sin)
white	(righteousness)

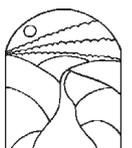
The four posts are sometimes spoken of as the four Gospels, the way to enter.

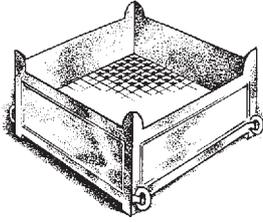
In what way does the gate speak of Christ?

The Altar of burnt offerings

Exodus 27v1-8, 38v1-7

Description: The first object in the court was the brazen altar, (Heb. Mizbach). It was made of aachaia wood overlaid with bronze. It measures 5x5x3 cubits (2.5x2.5x1.5m) and may have been filled with earth or stones, *Exo 20v24-26*. It had rings on the corners so that it could be carried on poles.





Meaning: It was the place of sacrifice and death. On it the sacrifices were burned, the blood was sprinkled on the base of the altar, Exodus 29v12 and the ashes taken outside the camp. Lev 4v12, Heb 13v11-12. Such sacrifices were called 'Alyot' which means 'lifting up', so Christ was lifted up from the earth. It was both the way to God and a barrier to God.

What does this altar represent?

In what way does the cross bar the way to God? 1 Cor 1v23

Application: Romans 12v1 Matthew 10v38-39 Romans 6:11

We do not need to sacrifice to win admission to God, Jesus has done that for us but we must apply that sacrifice to our lives. We must adopt the same attitude of sacrifice. Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Ephesians 5:1-2

Hebrews 13v15 1 Peter 2v5

How will an attitude of sacrifice show itself?

To bring a sacrifice to the Tabernacle was very public, everyone could see that you had sinned again. It was a way of confessing sin. This reminds us that to enter God's presence we must confess our sin. But we must also go on from there and leave our sin behind us.



To get closer to God each item in the tabernacle needs to be taken seriously and acted upon. There are no short cuts. We can only come through Christ the Gate and we cannot approach God before we deal with sin at the altar.



It was from this altar that the priests took their food, but we have an altar from which those who minister at the tabernacle have no right to eat. Heb 13:10

What does this mean?

The altar was also the place of sanctuary. To take hold of the horns of the Altar, was to find safety from the avenger. 1 Kings 1v50-51, 2v28. **What does this mean for us?**

"Come to the altar and sacrifice your sin offering and your burnt offering and make atonement for yourself and the people;" Leviticus 9:7



The Laver Exodus 30v17-21

Description: The laver was a basin used for washing. No description of it is given, but the one that later stood in the temple held 50,000 litres of water. It was placed between the tent and the altar.

It was made from the women's bronze hand mirrors. Exodus 38v8. Traditionally the priest washed under running water, which was collected in a basin. They did not wash in the basin, for then they would be using soiled water. It may have been shape like a cup and saucer, the cup being the reservoir with taps on the side pouring water into the saucer below.

Meaning: Only the priests washed here not the people. (As Christians we are all priests 1 Peter 2v5) they washed before each priestly act, it was not optional. They washed their hands (=actions) and their feet (=direction). They washed when they entered the holy place to minister to God, and when they minister to the people at the Altar.

Is it significant that it was made from mirrors?

Application: The Laver represent ongoing holiness (Sanctification) it is not enough to be forgiven at Calvary, we must walk in holiness, continually coming to God for cleansing. Psalm 119v9 Ephesians 5v26 John 15v3

We need this holiness in our relationships with those around us and in our relationship with God. Asking for forgiveness must be frequent, just as it was for the priests. It is a prerequisite to worship and ministry.



Summary

Through the Gate

The Altar

The Laver

Coming to the father through Jesus

Jesus Sacrifice for our sins - entrance to the house of faith

Selfexamination - Forgiveness - Holiness

Bible Studies

The Holy Place

In the courtyard stood the Tabernacle itself, it measured 30x10x10 cubits (12x4x4m) it contained the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. The metal used in the courtyard was bronze, in the Holy Place we exchange bronze for gold.



Construction

The hoards: Exodus 26v15-25 The 'tent' was constructed of 48 achaia wood boards each 10 cubits high and 1.5 cubits wide. Again the twisted, knotted achaia wood must have been worked hard to form straight planks. The planks were then overlaid with gold. They represent us. Wood speaks of humanity and Gold divinity. This is an illustration of how God has taken our old twisted nature and straight us. The Gold overlay speaks of His image in us. *You participate in teh divine nature 2 Peter 1:4.* The planks were held together by bars passed through rings on their outer face. They stood in unity, *Then He will purify the lips of the peoples, that all of them may call on the name of the LORD and serve him shoulder to shoulder.* Zephaniah 3:9

How does God choose to surround Himself? cf Revelation 4v4.

The Foundation: The planks stood in Silver foundations which separated them from the desert floor.

Where did they get the silver from? Exodus 38v25-28

This silver was the half-shekel atonement money collected from each man in the community. Exodus 30v11-16. It was the only item that was not donated as a free will offering. It was still being collected annually in Jesus day, Matthew 17v24-27. (It was the reason there were money changers in the temple). In Scripture silver is used to purchase life, (to buy or redeem a slave). The foundation of the boards, their feet and capitals, the bars and rings which held the planks together, were all made of this silver, which speaks of Christ's atonement for us.



What binds us together as a Church?

What separates us from the world around?



The Covering: Exodus 26v7-14. There were two sets of curtains and two coverings that went over the tabernacle,

- 1** The first set of curtains was of linen Exodus 36v8 (= Christ our righteousness).
- 2** The second set of curtains was made of goat hair (Black in colour = Christ as our sin offering Isaiah 53v6).
- 3** The inner covering was made of rams skins died red, (the ram was an animal of substitution = Christ as our substitute).
- 4** The outer covering was made of the hides of 'sea cows' (KJV badgers, possibly dolphins?) This would have been a protection from the rain and sun, weather beaten and unattractive. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. Isaiah 53:2

The Menorah Exodus 25v31-40



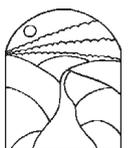
Description: The Lamp stand was made of 34 kg of Gold, it was hammered from a single lump of gold, an amazing piece of work! It stood on the left side of the Holy Place. It had seven branches, three each side of a central pillar. Each branch had a dish containing olive oil, in which a wick burnt, giving the only source of light in the holy place. It burned 24 hours a day. The priests trimmed the lamps morning and evening.

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Meaning:

The menorah has two meanings

Revelation 1v12-13 & 20

Matthew 25v1-13

Revelation 2v5

John 9v5

Zechariah 4v2

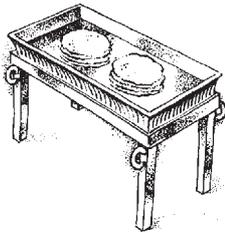
Matthew 5v14-16

The menorah speaks of God's presence in His church and in the individual, in the persons of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. It also speaks of God's presence in the world in his people.

Application: It is God's light in us that makes the difference. We need the oil of the Spirit in our lives. We need regular trimming.

How does this item explain how we come to God and how we worship him?

The Table of Show bread Exodus 25v23-30



Description: The table of show bread stood on the left hand side. On the table, as described in Exodus, twelve loaves representing the twelve tribes were placed in two rows. This was known as the bread of the presence (lehem paniya = face bread) It was changed by the priests once a week on the Sabbath. The old bread was eaten. Matthew 12v3-4.

Meaning:

Gods provision

It reminded people of the manna

The Covenant

Part of the weekly covenant meal (Communion)

The Word of God

Matthew 4v4, Isaiah 55v10.

Jesus

The bread of life John 6v50

Doing the will of God

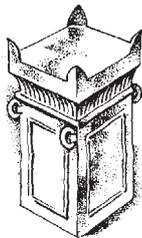
John 4v34

Application:

Jesus is our source of supply, if we do not eat of him we have no life in us. John 6v56. Jesus is the presence (face) of God 2 Cor 4v6. We need communion with him. He is our sustenance.

How does this item explain how we come to God and how we worship him?

The incense altar Exodus 30v1-10



Description: Much smaller than the bronze altar, the incense altar stood in front of the veil separating the Holy place from the Holy of Holies. On it incense was burnt twice a day. On the Day of Atonement the blood of the guilt offering was poured out over it. Hebrews 9v24-28. The incense offered was very expensive and was prohibited being used for other purposes on pain of death. Exodus 30v34-38. The warning here is not to use what is holy for the secular. It was here that the sons of Aaron offered unauthorized fire and were put to death Lev 10v1-2.

Meaning:

Psalm 141v2

Revelation 5v8

Isaiah 60v6

The incense altar speaks of prayer and worship.

Application

My sons, do not be negligent now, for the LORD has chosen you to stand before him and serve him, to minister before him and to burn incense. 2 Chronicles 29:11 The way to enter the Holy Holies is three fold; The blood of Jesus on the altar, Prayer and Worship. We must not be negligent.

**Summary**

The Holy place is the place where the priests ministered eg Luke 1v5-22

The Menorah The Spirit of God in us

The Table Communion with God in Jesus

The Altar Intercession and Worship.

Bible Studies

The Holy of Holies



The Veil Exodus 26v31-35

Between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place was a veil, or curtain. For the 1500 years that the Tabernacle/Temples stood it bared man from approaching God, (though not God from approaching man!) The veil was supported by four wooden pillars covered with Gold, each had a silver base (redemption money). They had no capitals. Some have linked this to Isaiah 53v8 ie that Jesus life was finished before it's natural time.

Description: The curtain was made of blue, red and purple thread and of linen (white) It had a design of cherubim woven into it. The work was extremely skilful and tradition says that it was a hands breadth thick and very strong.

Meaning: In Scripture, Cherubim are seen guarding the presence and glory of God. In Revelation, we find four Living Creature surrounding the throne, they in turn are surrounded by thousands of Angels, Ezekiel 10v14 describes the same 'Living Creatures' and calls them cherubim. The design is of cherubim for it is a copy of the Heavenly Tabernacle, where the cherubim surround the throne.

Typology:

What is the veil? Hebrews 10v20

What happened when Jesus died? Mark 15v38. (Mat 27v51, Luke 23v45)

What does this mean?

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, Hebrews 10:19-20

Is it significant that the veil was torn from top to bottom?

The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still standing. Hebrews 9:8

We can conclude, that in Christ, it has now been disclosed. The curtain symbolised the separation between man and God caused by sin. When Christ died that separation was ended. Nothing stops us from approaching God.

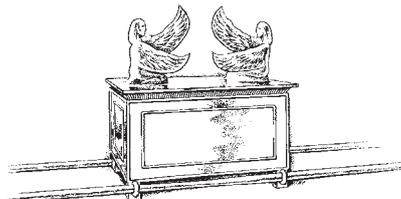
Can the curtain be mended?



The Most Holy Place

Behind the veil was the Most Holy Place (or Holy of Holies). It had no source of light other than Gods Glory *Rev 21v23*. Into the Most Holy Place the High Priest alone would come on the Day of Atonement, first to make offerings for his own sin, then for the sins of the people. He took the blood of a lamb or goat and sprinkled it on the mercy seat to make atonement for sin. These regulations are found in Leviticus 16.

The Ark of the Covenant



The ark was the only furniture in the Most Holy Place. It was an open wooden box overlaid with gold. It measured 2.5x1.5x1.5 cubits (1.1x0.7x0.7m). It had four golden rings so that it could be carried on poles which were always left in place. When it was moved it was always covered, It had to be carried by hand.

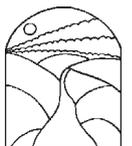
What happened when these regulations were ignored? 1 Chr 13v9-10
It had a moulding around it's top. A solid gold slab formed a lid for the box, this was call 'the atonement'. On this lid two cherubim were fashioned out of gold, one on each end of the slab. The Cherubim faced each other, their wings overshadowing the gold lid.

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In the ark were placed the tablets of the Ten Commandments, Aaron's rod that budded, and the golden jar of manna. Later the Philistines added 5 gold mice and 5 gold tumours as a guilt offering 1 Sam 6v11. It is also likely that a copy of the law, Deuteronomy or Leviticus, was placed in the ark.

The ark's lid is often called the 'mercy seat' this is an excellent description, but a poor translation. (Seat as in seat of government, not a place you could sit down.) In Hebrew it is named with a single word, *Kipporah*. In a common sense this means a lid or cover, in a spiritual sense it is the word used for atonement. The NIV rightly takes both meanings and translates it Atonement cover.

What does atonement mean? 1 John 2v2, Romans 3v25

Meaning: The ark is also called the testament (Heb *Ehoud*, witness). The ark itself was a reminder of and witness to the covenant between God and Israel. Its major significance is its association with God's presence.

Leviticus 16v2

Exodus 25v22

Numbers 7v89

Seven times in the OT God is described as Enthroned between the Cherubim.

Such a mystic surround the ark that the Israelites thought it would make them invincible in battle, 1 Samuel 4v3, it didn't.

Do we ever assume on God in a similar way?

The ark disappeared at the time of the exile 600BC, tradition says that Jeremiah hid it. There was no ark in the temple in Jesus' day. Despite this its aura continues, hardly a year goes by in Jerusalem without some latter day Indiana Jones hunting for the ark. They obviously have not read **Jeremiah 3v16**.

Where is the ark today?

Where is God's presence today? John 14v23, Eph 2v22, Rev 22v3



The Day of Atonement

This was Israel's most holy day, the day on which the sins of the people were atoned for. The day the High Priest entered the Most Holy Place. The day went like this. A bull and a ram were sacrificed for the Priests' sins. The Priest put on white linen robes. The Scape Goat was prayed over and sent into the wilderness. The High priest made atonement in the MHP for his own sins. A second goat was sacrificed, the high priest took its blood and sprinkled it on the Atonement cover in the Most Holy Place.

Aaron could not approach the ark however or whenever he wanted? Lev 16v2



Can we?

How do we approach?

How then do we compare to the OT High Priest?

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Hebrews 10:19-22

In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. Ephesians 3:12



Jesus fulfilled the Day of Atonement ritual. Hebrews 9v11-12

Application

The effect of all of this is that

Our sins are forgiven

We can know communion with God every day

We can receive His help Hebrews 4v16



Is it an option or a command to approach God?

How does all this effect you

Have you ever known the awesome presence of God?

How close will you come?

Bible Studies

Jesus Said

Part 1



Mark 2:17 On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”



Matthew 5:20 For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.



Luke 18:25 Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”



Mark 7:6-7 He replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: ““These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.”



Luke 14:11 For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”



Luke 16:15 He said to them, “You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God’s sight.



Matthew 6:24 “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.



Mark 12:17 Then Jesus said to them, “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.” And they were amazed at him.



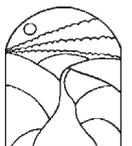
Matthew 16:3 and in the morning, “Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.’ You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.

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Matthew 10:37 “Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me;



Luke 9:62 Jesus replied, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”



Matthew 8:22 But Jesus told him, “Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.”



Matthew 7:21 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’



Luke 12:15 Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.”



Mark 2:5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”



Luke 7:50 Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”



Luke 8:48 Then he said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.”



Matthew 4:4 Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”



Matthew 10:32 “Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.

Bible Studies

Jesus Said

Part 2



Matthew 6:19 “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.



Mark 12:43 Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. 44 They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.”



Mark 14:7 The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me.



Luke 12:21 “This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God.”



Luke 12:34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also



Luke 14:12 Then Jesus said to his host, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid.



Luke 14:13 But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, 14 and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”



Mark 4:24 “Consider carefully what you hear,” he continued. “With the measure you use, it will be measured to you—and even more. 25 Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.”



Luke 16:10 “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.



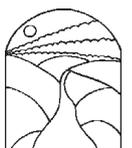
Luke 16:11 So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?

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Matthew 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.



Luke 11:34 Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are good, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are bad, your body also is full of darkness. 35 See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness.



Matthew 6:1 "Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.



Luke 17:10 So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.'"



Mark 8:34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.



Mark 8:35 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. 36 What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? 37 Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?



Matthew 10:40 "He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me. 41 Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward.



Matthew 18:8 If your hand or your foot causes you to sin cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire.



Mark 2:27 Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. 28 So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."



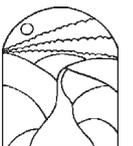
Matthew 7:18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.



Matthew 12:7 If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent.

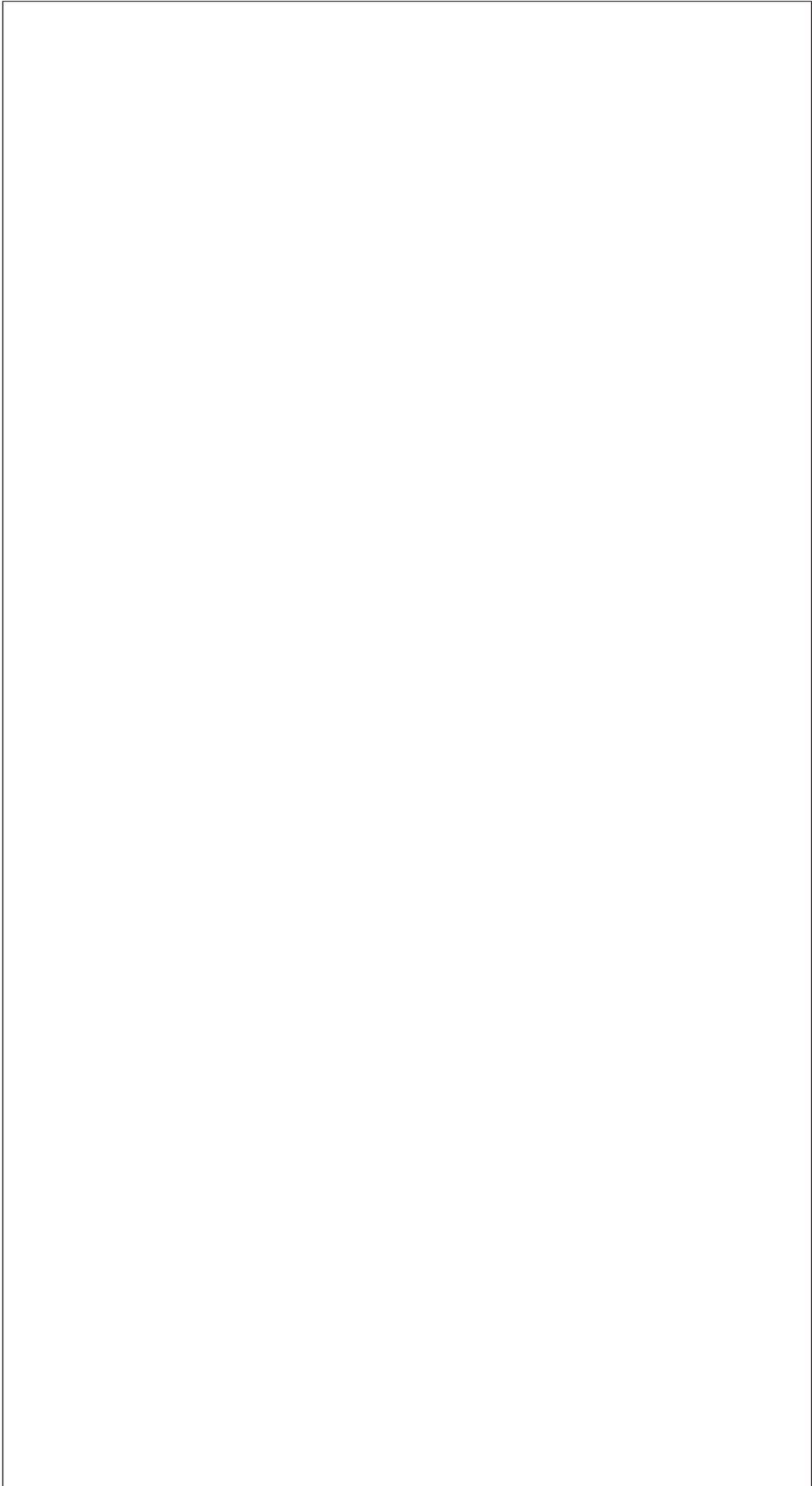
Bible Studies

STREAMS IN THE DESERT



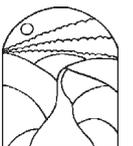
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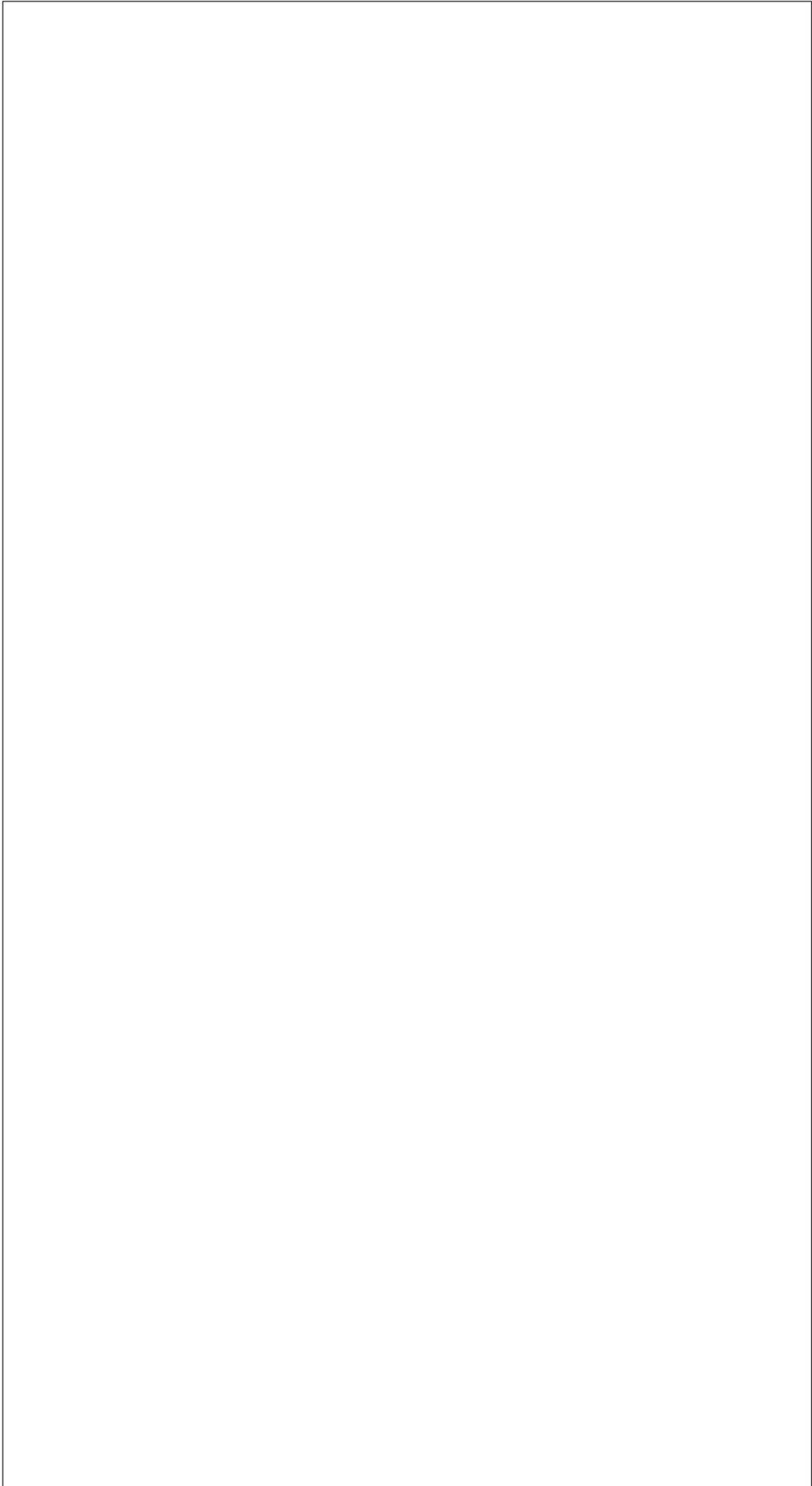
Bible Studies

STREAMS IN THE DESERT



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Bible Studies

Royal Priesthood

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 1 Peter 2:9

In 1517 Luther nailed a list of 95 'propositions' to the door of a church in Wittenberg, Germany. These propositions were areas where he felt the Catholic Church's teachings deviated from Scripture. The most controversial of these was his view of the 'Priesthood of the Saints'. This doctrine is now a cornerstone of our church practice.

The Catholic Church was the only established Church in Europe, it had a monopoly on worship. It taught that the only way to approach God was through the Church, its seven sacraments and its priests, who exclusively administered the sacraments. Ordinary Christians were not holy enough to know God for themselves, they were even discouraged from reading the scriptures. Luther saw that this was not what the Bible taught. His actions in Wittenberg are considered the start of the Reformation, which eventually led to the formation of Churches like ours.

Why was this such a controversial teaching?



What is a priest?

A priest ministers to God on behalf of man, for example in the Tabernacle or the Temple. A priest represents man to God and God to man. He is an intermediary or go between.



Who could be priests?

In the days of the Patriarchs (Adam to Joseph), it was the head of the family who acted as the priest. So Abraham interceded for Abimelech *Gen 20v17*, Job sacrificed for his family *Job 1v5*, etc.

Later under Moses, Aaron and his descendants (the tribe of Levi) were appointed as priests, for the whole nation. Israel itself was to be a priestly nation on behalf of all people.

Could anyone be a priest?

Numbers 3v10
1 Kings 13v33-34
Hebrews 5v4

How did you become a priest?

The patriarchs became priests because they were the head of their family, the Levites by descent. But as Hebrews 5 points out a priest is a priest because of God's call.



What did a priest do?

They served at the altar

They judged religious and civil law

They declared people clean

They pronounced on contamination & cleansing.

They taught the Law

They mediated between God and Man

The priests made sacrifices.

They prayed for the people.

Lev 27v14, Deut 17v8

Luke 17v14

Lev 13v9

Malachi 2v7

Deut 17v12

Lev 5v8

2 Chro 30v27

They worked in Tabernacle/Temple offering sacrifices. Because there were so many they did this in shifts. There were 24 sections of priests who ministered for a few weeks then returned to their homes in the villages around Jerusalem. Eg Luke 1 (birth of John the Baptist foretold) Zechariah entered the holy place, he was chosen by lot, it was a great privilege that may never be repeated, some priests never got to enter the Holy place.

The priests were required to live by a higher standard of purity than the ordinary people. Leviticus 21-22. To this day in Israel Jews with the name Cohen (=priest) or Levi are restricted to whom they can marry.

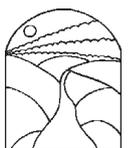
It was required that they were sanctified and consecrated. They were given special clothes to wear which symbolised their purity.

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Jesus our Priest

Selected from among men	Hebrews 5v1
Represents Men	
Sympathises with our weakness	
Appointed by God	Hebrews 5v4
In a new order after Melchizedek	Hebrews 5v9
He is a permanent priest	Hebrews 7v23
He makes intercession for us	Hebrews 7v25
Did not have to offer sacrifices for his own sin	Hebrews 7v26
A perfect priest who meets our needs	
Entered the heavenly Tabernacle	Hebrews 8v3
Offered Himself	Hebrews 10v5
With His own Blood	Hebrews 9v17
Mediates a New Covenant	Hebrews 9v15
Made one sacrifice for ever	Hebrews 9v25

Jesus is our Great High Priest. He represented God and Man perfectly and was therefore the perfect substitutional sacrifice. **Why was this?**

Christ opened the way for us to approach God. *Hebrews 9v8*. Our priesthood relies on His High Priesthood.



Our Priesthood

1 Peter 2v5 & 9

Revelation 1v6, 5v10, 20v6

Each of us including women is a priest, this was God's intention, 'you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' Exodus 19v6

We are called *1 Pet 1v2, 2v9* Jesus said You did not choose me, but I chose you John 15v16

We are to be Holy Colossians 3v12

We have a higher standard, Romans 12v2, 1 Peter 4v17

We have special clothes (Put on Christ Romans 13v14

Garments of Salvation, Robe of Righteousness Isaiah 61v10)



**If we are all priests, what does this say about the role of a pastor?
In what way does our priesthood differ from Jesus?
How do the higher standard and the special clothes, relate to us?**



Our Job as Priests

The patriarchs were priests for their families, does this have an implication for us?

To minister to God in worship that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 1 Peter 2v9

To bring a sacrifice of praise Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that confess his name. Hebrews 13v15

To offer spiritual sacrifices be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 2v5

To come near to God let us draw near to God Hebrews 10v22, 7v19, James 4, Eph 2v13. This is an obligation not an option what good is a priest who cannot come near to God.

To bring requests Revelation 5v8

What kind of requests?

To intercede for the people The High priest had a breastplate on which the names of the tribes were engraved, he carried their names before the Lord, we do the same

Who should we intercede for?

To serve God to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles with the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, Rom 15v16

To reign with Christ Revelation 5v10



Who else do we function as priests towards?

Not only are we priests as individuals, we are also a kingdom of priests. cf Exodus 19v6. This means we have a responsibility to the world around us.

What kind of responsibilities do we have as priests to the world?

Bible Studies

Gifts of the Spirit

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The Gifts of the Spirit are supernatural abilities, imparted by the Spirit for special ministries.

Read 1 Corinthians 12v1-3

It is often noted that the things about which Paul did not want his readers to be ignorant, are things about which there is still confusion. Paul wants his readers to have real understanding.

Before listing the gifts, Paul makes two observations;

1

First the gifts of the Spirit have nothing to do with paganism or the occult. (Most of the gifts are counterfeited in the occult world)

Is this a reason not to practice them?

What assurance does Jesus give us in Luke 11v11-13?

2

Secondly, Paul says that you can only say “Jesus is Lord”, through the work of the Holy Spirit. The words can be said (but you’d be surprised how often they can’t) but they can only ever be words if the Spirit is not there. We cannot be saved without the assistance of the Spirit, Romans 8v9. Therefore we all *have the Spirit*, but this is not the same as the *baptism in the Spirit*. John 14v17 Paul’s main point here is that the Spirit always glorifies Jesus. John 16v14. If our use of the gifts does not bring glory to Jesus, then our use is wrong.

Read 1 Corinthians 12v4-7

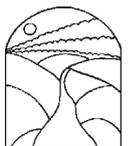
Paul speaks of the Gifts of the Spirit, (Gk Spirituals) in three terms; Charismata, grace gifts; Diakonia, service gifts and Energemata, power gifts. There are not three different types of gifts, but description that fit each of the gifts. Paul emphasises the diversity of the gifts.

<i>How many gifts are there?</i>	1 Corinthians 12v8-10
<i>How many gifts are there?</i>	1 Corinthians 12v28
<i>How many gifts are there?</i>	1 Corinthians 12v29-31
<i>How many gifts are there?</i>	Romans 12v6-8
<i>How many gifts are there?</i>	Ephesians 4v11

Depending on how you count, there are up to 20 gifts of the Spirit. The same words for the gifts are used in each of the above lists, but obviously the five fold ministry gifts of Ephesians are different from the nine gifts of 1 Corinthians 12. Some gifts overlap, prophecy and encouragement can be the same, 1 Cor 14v3, or different, Rom 12v6-7. Do gifts of healings, require a gift of faith to operate? Paul emphasises *diversity* of gifts, *singularity* of Spirit and *unity* in the use.

Division of the nine gifts

Word of Wisdom		
Word of Knowledge	Revelation	Knowing Gifts
Discerning of Spirits		
Faith		
Miracles	Power	Acting Gifts
Healings		
Prophecy		
Tongues	Utterance	Speaking Gifts
Interpretation		



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**What qualifications are needed to receive the Gifts of the Spirit?**

They are gifts not rewards! No criteria of maturity or knowledge are ever given. Rather they are;

1 Corinthians 12v11

Hebrews 2v4

Ephesians 4v7

Because they are only gifts, they cannot make the user superior to someone else.

How does 1 Corinthians 4v7 explain this?

When Paul writes to the Corinthians he is writing to a Church that lacked no gift, 1 Cor 1v7. Paul does not need to explain what the gifts are only how they should be used correctly. (this is why a chapter on love is sandwiched between two on the gifts.)

What does this imply for us?

Just because God gives you a gift does not mean you will automatically use it right. It also tells us that to a large extent we control how we use the gifts. Operating in a Gift of the Spirit does not mean that God automatically endorses our actions.

Have you seen examples of gifts used wrongly?**Is a gift a natural part of my personality.**

I.e. if I am a naturally clever person, does that mean I have the gift of wisdom. Or if I am a good preacher do I have the gift of Prophecy?

No God's gifts are supernatural abilities that he puts in your life. They do not rely on your natural abilities, but on God's supernatural power. Sometimes a gift will supplement your own ability.

**Is a gift given for you personal use?**

Read 1 Corinthians 12v7

It is very clear that the Gifts of the Spirit are give for the common good, ie for the up building of the body of Christ. In a very real sense the church has the gift, which an individual holds and uses on their behalf.

**Is the gift your own possession?**

Like a passport or a bank card, the gift is never yours to own, only to use.

**How many gifts can a person have?**

We may all at different times operate in each gift, but in practice there will be one, two or a few gifts that we will regularly use.

**Do I have a gift?**

For Paul it was inconceivable that a believer should be giftless. I agree. If you do not operate in one of the gifts, then two things are possible; 1] you have not received the gift(s) God has fore you and need to seek them. Or 2] you have not recognised the gift you in fact already have.

**How do I receive a gift?**

Read 1 Corinthians 12v31, 14v1, 12

You ask, seek desire. Then you do what your hand finds to do. Often the gifts come to fill a need we face.

**Do I need the Gifts?**

Only if you really want to serve the Lord!

Are some gifts more important? 1 Corinthians 12v31

The order in which the gifts are given does not indicate their importance. For Paul, it was the gifts that most built up the Church, that were more important. I guess it depends what our needs are.

What does the Bible want us to pursue in connection with our desire for the gifts?

Read 1 Corinthians 13v4-7, 14v1

Why does Paul not want us to be ignorant of Spiritual Gifts?

Bible Studies

Word of Wisdom



To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, 1 Cor 12:8

This is called a message or word, (proclamation or declaration), rather than a gift because it is a spoken gift. It does not make the recipient wiser, but gives God's wisdom into a situation.

It provides guidance in solving problems or difficulties. It applies the wisdom of God and the Word of God, to a given need. It gives God's perspective of how a difficulty should be handled. A Word of Knowledge reveals a fact, but a Word of Wisdom reveals God's will and purpose, it gives direction and guidance. In this it can be similar to prophecy.

Wisdom is the application of knowledge, in this case not our knowledge but God's.

Scripture associates Wisdom with;

interpreting dreams and vision	Acts 7v10
skill in managing affairs	Acts 6v3
Dealing with unbelievers	Colossians 4v5
Explaining christian truth	Colossians 1v28
Godly living	James 1v5,
Applying Scripture	Matthew 13v54
Defending our faith	Luke 21v15

Read James 3v13-18



What are the two kinds of wisdom?

How would you describe heavenly wisdom?

If someone operated this gift what will the outcome be?

If someone is especially wise does this mean they have the Word of Wisdom?

Does the Word of Wisdom rely on human wisdom?

As we have seen the gifts of the Spirit are not natural abilities, they are direct from God and do not rely on our talents. In 1 Corinthians 1, Paul is very keen to contrast human wisdom with God's wisdom. Some people are natural very wise, this too is a gift from God, but it is not the Message of Wisdom.

Goes God's wisdom always seem wisdom to us?

Examples

Read Haggai 1v1-2

The people had come back from Babylon to rebuild the Temple, after c20 years it was



still not done, Haggai suddenly got insight into what was going wrong.

What did he say?

This was not something the people were saying, part of the problem was that the temple had not been mentioned for years. They said it in their hearts and actions. Haggai got insight into the situation by the Holy Spirit, then he tells the people what they need to do.

Read Acts 6v1-6

This was the first major internal problem, the Apostles had to deal with.

What would have happened if the problem had been ignored?



What did they do?

Who set the qualifications for the seven?

Who chose them?

We are not told this was a word of wisdom but it certainly fits.

Read Acts 15v13-21

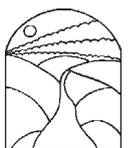
Another problem, what to do with gentile believers, should they convert to Judaism to become followers of Jesus? There was a debate in which the whole subject dis-

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3

cussed.

Was a vote take?

Instead James stands up and gives God's wisdom, it is recognised as such and the issue is settled.

Was this a word of wisdom? It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us *Acts 15:28* indicates that James' speech came as a gift of the Spirit.

The OT is full of words of wisdom, times when God gave direction on how something should be done, Joshua at Jericho *Deu 34:9*, David against the Philistines at Raphaim, *1 Sam 5v23*, or Jehosaphat, sending out his singers first, *2 Chr 20:15*.

As a young and inexperienced pastor, I had to take over a homegroup/Bible study for 6 weeks, several of the people resented an outsider leading the group, they wanted to do, but were not suitable, consequently each week, three of them tried to disrupt the group. Each week God gave me a different way to deal with the attempted disruption. Each week peace and order were maintained in a way that did not offend or put anyone down. It was not until much later that I realised that I had received words of wisdom.



Do you think the message of wisdom is often recognised for what it is? Does this matter?

In what circumstances might you need a word of wisdom?

Can you remember a situation where you have received a Word?

What kind of situation do you think a word of wisdom might be needed?

Jesus promised that when we stood on trial for our faith, or having to give an answer for our faith, we would be told what to say, this is another example of a word of wisdom. *Luke 21v12-15*. Note the goal was not always to bring an equal by that the gospel might be preached *v13*.



Stephen was a good example of this when he witnessed about Jesus. But they could not stand up against his wisdom or the Spirit by whom he spoke. *Acts 6:10*

Is a word of wisdom always on a spiritual level or can it work in secular situations?

This gift is often found in Church leadership, Those who have responsibilities need this gift badly.

Is it exclusively for leadership?

If someone was always claiming a word of wisdom to justify their actions, but their schemes always went wrong or caused grief;

What would you say?

Do words of wisdom need to be tested?

The Bible is God's wisdom, as is the message of the Cross, a grounding in the Scriptures will help you recognise and administer this gift correctly.

How do you know if something was a Word of Wisdom? Matthew 11v19

Bible Studies

Word of Knowledge



To another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, 1 Corinthians 12v8

Like wisdom, knowledge is also described as a message, word, proclamation or declaration. It is a specific word for a specific occasion, a fragment of knowledge for your temporary need. It does not make the recipient especially clever. Nor is it produced by learning, study or careful consideration. It is a revelation from God.

Two application of the Word of Knowledge

It is the revelation, by God, of a fact past of present that you did not know.



Examples;

John 4v16-18
John 1v48
Matthew 9v4
2 Kings 6v8-10
Acts 5v1-3

In each of these cases, information was received about something, which could otherwise not have been known. This is a Word of Knowledge.

Please note in the first example, how carefully Jesus used the knowledge. Knowledge is a dangerous thing, it must be used with wisdom. Sometimes God tells you something so that you can pray, not so that you can share it with everyone. Much damage has been done by failing to recognise this. It is not an excuse for being a busybody.

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. Hebrews 4:13

And your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. Matthew 6:18

For the director of music. Of David. A psalm. O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD. Psalm 139:1-4

This gift is also connected with Prophecy and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, "God is really among you!" 1 Corinthians 14v25

When do you think this gift would be helpful?

Counselling	<i>Reveals the problem.</i>
Evangelism	<i>eg Nathanael John 1:49 1 Corinthians 14:25.</i>
Intercession	<i>Being told when some one needs prayer.</i>
Giving	<i>Knowing when there is a need.</i>
Spiritual Warfare	<i>When and where the Enemy is active.</i>
Encouraging	<i>We don't always see when people are down.</i>
Rebuking	<i>Finding the root of something that needs to be dealt with.</i>

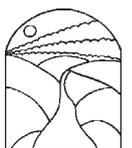
Will God reveal all your secrets to someone else? Many people live in fear of this, and it does on occasions happen. If you are fearful of this, then maybe the Holy Spirit is convicting you. If you deal with the sin you need have no fear. We are a family, we are to deal gently with one another, not to condemn or embarrass one another. The gift is given to help one another not to bring condemnation.

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Does God ever do anything that is not for our good?



If someone came to you and said the Spirit told me that Mr brown has a sin in his life. **What would you do?**

Most people associate a word of Knowledge with the preacher who stands up and says, “*there is a person here with a bad back*”. I believe this is a valid expression of the gift, but I can quote no Scripture as an example, it is certainly no the major thrust of the gift.

What kind of knowledge do you think God might want to give? For what reasons would he give the information?

During my time in Jerusalem, there were several groups who worked against Christians, on several occasion I walked into the back of the church, saw just the back of someone’s head and knew they were a plant, to spy on us. Later they would start to ask questions, the wrong questions “*do you have any Jewish believers here?*” but by the Spirit we were prewarned.

Who needs this Gift?

How would you like to use this Gift?



It brings knowledge into God’s word.

One of the jobs of the Holy Spirit is to led us in all truth. John 15v26,14v26,16v13 Some people consider this the most important aspect of this gift, it brings understanding into the Bible and into the mysteries of God.

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, Colossians 1:9-10

We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand (know) what God has freely given us. 1 Corinthians 2:12

Read 1 Corinthians 14v6&26



Here the Word of Knowledge is clearly an insight into the meaning of a verse.

My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, 1 Corinthians 2:4 Pauls message did not contain demonstrations of the Spirit’s power, it was a demonstration of the Spirit’s power.

When I started out a preacher I was quite young, I was very self conscience of my age. Paul’s words, Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, 1 Timothy 4:12 reassured me. I thought he was saying “*you Ephesians, Timothy might be young but your not to look down on him*”. On day I realised that it was *Timothy* who had to act, he was to let no one look down on him, I too had to act in this way. This word of Knowledge empowered my ministry.

The knowledge that the Lord most wants us to have, is that of Himself, His will, His Word, the requirements of the Gospel. This will truly edify the whole body.

Bible Studies

Faith



To another faith by the same Spirit, 1 Corinthians 12:9

Faith is the third Gift of the Spirit recorded in Corinthians. It is the first of what are sometimes called power gifts. Faith is the only Gift of the Spirit which is also a Fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5v22 Faith & Faithfulness are the same Greek word).

Faith is an essential part of the Christian walk

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. Hebrews 11:6

Three kinds of faith;



Saving Faith

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—Ephesians 2:8



Serving Faith

This is the faith that enable us to live a Christian life and to please God, Faith that God is in control, faith that He will see us through, Faith that He will work through us.



Special Faith

This is Faith that Corinthians call a gift of the Spirit. It is the faith to meet extra ordinary situation.

Are the fruit Faith and the gift Faith the same kind of faith?

Clearly the nature of the Gifts of the Spirit is such that not all have the Gift of faith,

Does this mean that not every one need have the fruit of faith?

Saving faith is a gift, special faith is a gift, Is serving faith a gift?

Yes it is, but more often I would say it is a choice.

Jesus said "Have faith in God," Mark 11:22, this is something we must all have, the Gift of faith goes beyond this.

Special Faith



1 Cor 13 is a continuation of Paul's teaching about the place and use of the Gifts.

How does 1 Corinthians 13v1 describe faith?

Donald Gee described it like this "a quality of faith, sometimes called by our older theologians the "Faith of Miracles." It would seem to come upon certain of God's servants in times of special crisis or opportunity, in such mighty power that they are lifted right out of the realm of even natural and ordinary faith in God. And have a divine certainty put within their souls that triumphs over everything... It was faith of this particular quality of which He could say that a grain of it would remove a mountain. Matt 17v20. A little of that Divine Faith, which is an attribute of the Almighty, dropped into the soul of man- what miracles it can produce!"

More simply :trusting God for a specific need, with the divinely given assurance that he will meet it. Stanley Horton.

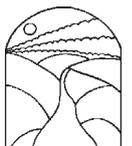
This kind of faith is seen in Hebrews 11, were men carried out great deeds in God's service.

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An example of this kind of faith is found in Elijah

Read 1 kings 18v33-38 & 41-46

Or when Moses stretched out his hand over the Red sea, or when Jesus said to the centurion, “go it will be done for you”. Matthew 8v13.



Often this faith is associated with other Gifts of the Spirit, like healings, miracles and discerning of spirits. It is faith that raises to the occasion.



It is also linked with,

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| blessing, | eg Isaac |
| protection, | eg Daniel |
| provision, | eg Elijah |
| perseverance | eg Jeremiah |
| winning victories | eg David |
| to pray | eg Elijah |
| taking a step of faith | eg Abraham, Peter |

What areas might this faith be expressed?

The gift of faith enables us to trust God for something he wants us to do.

An example of this is George Muller. He felt led by God to open an orphanage, only he had no money, but because God called, he did it anyway. Times are recorded when the orphans sat around an empty table and thanked God for food they didn't have. A knock on the door would come and food would be given from the most unexpected sources.

It was faith that enabled George Muller to do the impossible.

Harold Horton defines it like this; *Those who possess Faith the Gift of the Spirit believe God in such a way that God honours their word as His own and miraculously brings it to pass, "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Mark 11:23*

We must be careful, for we do not have the right to order God, nor to presume upon Him. The Gift of Faith only ever speaks out God's will never man's. Such faith is in very great need in the Church today.

Sharing Faith



There is another way in which the gift of Faith operates. It is the Gift that enables an impartation of faith into the body of Christ. It communicates faith, nurtures and releases faith in others and so builds up the Church.

Read Galatians 3v5



When Paul preached, faith arose in the Galatians, the believed and the Holy Spirit moved. Maybe it is this Gift that Paul had in mind when he wrote I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong—Romans 1:11

The ability to stir faith in others is also very much needed today.

Bible Studies

Gifts of Healing



To another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, 1 Corinthians 12:9

In the Greek both words are in the plural *Gifts of Healings*. The Human body is very complex and there are many kinds of Illness; bacteria, virus, cancer. Bits of us that break, strain, things that wear out or stop working. Chromosomes and birth defects. Mental and emotional Illness. The causes of illness are equally varied, sometimes the cause is simply physical. But today Doctors recognise that people get sick because of stress, anxiety, frustration, or other Psychosomatic reasons. To these we can add more spiritual causes; sin, demonic activity, disobedience, unforgiveness, bitterness. Cf. 1 Corinthians 11v29-30

The need for healing is for the whole person

Body, Soul, Spirit.
Physical, Mental, Emotional.
Conscious, Subconscious, Unconscious.

The Gifts of Healings are for manifold needs.

Some take the plural *Gifts of Healings*, to mean that each healing is a new gift from God. Other believe it means that different people get used to heal different kinds of illness. Still others that it is the sick person who receives the gift. Mat 9v22, Acts 3v6

What do you think?

Surely he took up our infirmities ... and by his wounds we are healed. Isaiah 53:4-5
Praise the LORD ... He ... heals all my diseases Psalm 103v3
I am the LORD, who heals you." Exodus 15:26

Have you ever been healed? Do you know of anyone who has?

The Gifts of healings are part of the Church's inheritance. They were a major part of Jesus, Peter and Paul's ministry.

They will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." Mark 16:18

Is any one of you sick? ... And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. James 5:14-15

The Method;

Mark 6v5.
Luke 11v14
Luke 6v10
John 9v6
Matthew 8v8
Matthew 9v20



What conclusion can you draw about Jesus method of healing?
What different ways might God choose to heal someone?

Did Jesus ever pray for the sick?

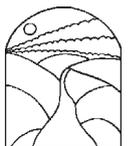
Because of this some people believe that prayer for the sick comes first, then comes laying on of hands and healing. His father was sick in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him. Acts 28:8

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Three things that Jesus did (that we often don't)

1

He asked them what they wanted? Mark 10v51

It was obvious to Jesus what Bartimaeus wanted, so why did he ask?

Asking People engages faith, this should be part of our practice in healing.

Desire → Faith → Expectation.

2

He talked about Faith

Jesus turned and saw her. "Take heart, daughter," he said, "your faith has healed you."

And the woman was healed from that moment. Matthew 9:22

Jesus did some bazaar things when he healed people, why?

3

He told them to sin no more

Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, "See, you are well again. Stop

sinning or something worse may happen to you." John 5:14

Do you think there is a connection between healing and forgiveness of sin?

The Bible associates oil with Healing.

James 5v14

Mark 6:13

The oil has no magical properties (in Jesus day it was thought of as a medicine) it is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, a declaration of faith, and an act of obedience.

In James 5 why is it important that the sick person take the initiative?

There are no formulas in healing. And no rules about 'who has to have the faith' (and whose failure it is if no one gets healed). Instead we fix our eyes firmly on God who alone can heal the sick.

Too often like the cripple at the pool of Bethesda John 5, we are looking to a formula or a man when Jesus is there to heal.

Why don't people always get healed?

For many of the reason people get sick, (unbelief, unforgiveness, sin etc) and often for no reason I ever understand. I don't know.

If someone is not healed;

Don't pretend.

Affix no blame.

Ask God for Guidance.

Keep exercising faith.

Keep praying.

The bottom line is that God is Sovereign. The command for us, especially those who have this gift is to pray for the sick, healing is God's business. Have Faith, Expect healing.

Healing and Evangelism

Healing is an evangelistic gift, though do not assume people to come to faith even if dramatically healed. Offer to pray with those who are sick, tell them the gospel.

?

How do you know if you have the gift of healing?

What might stop you exercising this gift?

We must use the gifts God gives us. If you have the gift of healing, pray every day for an opportunity to use the gift.

Should only people with the gift of healing pray of people to be healed?

Bible Studies

Miracles



To another miraculous powers, 1 Corinthians 12:10

The KJV call this The working of Miracles. Like healings, the Greek for both words is plural, *the workings of miracles*. The word *workings* in the Greek is *energema* (from which we get energy) cf v4, The word *miracles* is the word *Dunamis* (from which we get words like Dynamic, Dynamo). One definition of this gift calls it 'deeds of power' or miraculous miracles.

A hint of what Paul is getting at is found in Ephesians 1v19-20 and his incomparably great power (*dunamis*) for us who believe. That power is like the working (*energema*) of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,

Paul speaks of his apostolic ministry like this To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, (*energema*) which so powerfully (*dunamis*) works in me. Colossians 1:29

What is a Miracle?

Works contrary to nature, accomplishments of the impossible, sudden and unaccountable reversals of the order to which we are accustomed. Harold Horton.

Supernatural powers that go beyond what man can do.



For example;
Parting the Red sea
Manna in the dessert
Three men in the furnace
Turning Water into wine
Feeding the 5000
Walking on Water

These are associated with **protection** and **provision**, they display the Glory of God. They are given to enable God's will to be fulfilled.

Often people try to explain how these miracles can be scientifically explained, such an activity is futile. For example, the Quail that the Israelites eat in the desert do migrate and a wind change could dump them in the Israelite camp. But if by an amazing coincidence they arrived at just the right time, isn't it still a miracle? Sometimes the miracle is in the timing.



The word *energema* is used almost exclusively of God's activities, (Matthew 14v2, Mark 6v14, Galatians 3v5, Philipians 3v21) or Satan's activities (2 Thessalonians 2v7,9, Ephesians 2v2) It has been suggested that this gift is especially operative in the conflict between God and Satan.

Acts 13v9-11
Acts 5v5 cf v3

If this is so it would include the work of casting out demons.

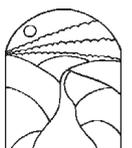
Another form of this gift is raising the dead.

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Acts 9v40
Acts 20v9-12

It is often pointed out that Acts records very few of these kinds of natural miracles, but it does record enough that we should expect them too. It is a relatively rare gift.

Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead? Acts 26:8

God is the God of the impossible - It is God who says what is possible.

“Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you. Jeremiah 32:17 He also said Nothing will be impossible for you, Matthew 17v20. If God exists why shouldn't he do miracles?

?

What miracles have you seen or heard about?

Many of us suffer from a small dose of Agnosticism, we do not believe that God will act on our behalf, somehow we believe God is weak, he needs our help. This unbelief dampens our faith and expectation and in the end fulfils itself. (If you don't believe in miracles you are less likely to experience them.)

For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards Him. 2 Chronicles 16v8 KJV

But as for me, I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the LORD, and with justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression, to Israel his sin. Micah 3:8

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

There are frequent references to Signs and Wonders in the NT;

John 4v48
Mark 16v17-18
Acts 2v22
Acts 2v48
Acts 14v3

These are often Healings but also include Miracles, they help boost our faith. Sometimes they work in evangelism, they are “God's way of advertising”.
As someone once said “Remember, It's easy when God does it.”

Is everyone who does miracles from God? 2 Thessalonians 2v9

LORD, I have heard of your fame;
I stand in awe of your deeds, O LORD.
Renew them in our day, in our time make them known;
in wrath remember mercy. Habakuk 3:2

Bible Studies

Prophecy



To another prophecy, 1 Corinthians 12:10.

Prophecy has a very high profile; Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy. 1 Corinthians 14:1.

Consider;

- Numbers 11v27-29
- Joel 2v28a
- 1 Corinthians 14v31
- 1 Corinthians 14v39

**Based on the above would you say prophecy was a restricted gift?
When Paul says, you can all prophecy, does that mean that all will prophecy?**

Some distinctions need to be made, Just because from time to time you prophecy, does not necessarily mean you have the gift of Prophecy, and Just because you have the Gift of Prophecy it does not automatically make you a prophet.

Prophecy speaks out to men, what God wants to say to them.

The Nature of Prophecy;

- 2 Peter 1v20-21
- Jeremiah 1v5-9
- Deuteronomy 18v18

Who speaks?

Prophecy has two parts; **Forthtelling** and **Foretelling**. Forthtelling speaks what is on God's heart for us now, foretelling speaks what God is going to do in the future. often the two overlap.



Forthtelling

Paul expands on this kind of prophecy in 1 Corinthians 14, he says;

But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their

- 1** strengthening,
- 2** encouragement and
- 3** comfort. 1 Corinthians 14:3

but he who prophesies edifies the church. 1 Corinthians 14:4,

For you can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may be

- 1** instructed and
- 2** encouraged. 1 Corinthians 14:31

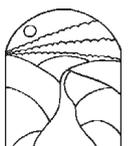
Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers. Acts 15:32

What five things does prophecy do?

This kind of prophecy takes many forms and is often not recognised for what it is. It may be a few words someone says to you, a part of a sermon, a word given in the middle of worship, or even an action someone does.

General, it does not direct people, but it can exhort people to do what God has already layed on their heart, or is revealed in Scripture.

What might God say to us through Prophecy?



Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said. 1 Corinthians 14:29

Why should we weigh carefully what is said?

How do we judge prophecy?

The major test for prophecy is, *does it agree with the word of God?* If not, reject it.

The second test for prophecy is; *does it fulfil it's five purposes?* A third test for prophecy is the gift of *discerning of spirits*.



Foretell

This is what we traditionally think of as prophecy, but it is forthtelling that takes the major role and is far more common.

Acts 11v28

Acts 21v10

How do we judge such prophecy?

Deuteronomy 18v21-22

Does this mean we believe everything he says?

Deuteronomy 13v1-3

Notice, that in Acts 11v28, the people acted on the prophecy, before it came to pass, Agabus, was tried and proven, from previous experience.

Other criteria for judgement; *is the prophet known? was it given in order? Does it focus us or divert us from ministry? Does it honour Jesus?*

Prophets of old, like Isaiah, filled both of these roles, *Isaiah 53*, for example foretells the sufferings of Jesus, while in *Isaiah 58*, he cuts through the spiritual facade the people of his day, had constructed for themselves.

The Dangers



Read again Acts 21v16-12

Did Agabus tell Paul not to go to Jerusalem?

Those around Paul, immediately assumed that Paul should not go, but we know he went to Jerusalem at God's direction, compelled by the Spirit Acts 20v22.

Lesson: We must be careful what we read into prophecy.

Read Acts 21v4

Is the Holy Spirit contradicting Himself? No, prophets of less experience added to the message, this is a very frequent mistake.

Lesson: Say only what God gives, don't add to it your own understanding or interpretation.

So why did the prophecy come if it was not to be acted upon?

Paul had many who opposed his work, God was ensuring that his arrest in Jerusalem could not be interpreted as divine judgement on his ministry.

Personal predictive or dirrective prophecy. A word of prophecy telling you what you should do, (eg go, stay, buy, sell), should not be accepted unless it **confirms** what God is saying to you. Personal prophecy **only ever confirms** it **never directs**. This is hard because often we want to hear from God through others, it is very attractive, but ultimately very destructive. **Read 1 Kings 13**, if you don't believe me.

Prophecy sometimes attracts those who are spiritual unbalanced, because it seems to be free from accountability of control, but this is not the case. The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets. 1 Corinthians 14:32 No loose canons.

Do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. 1 Thessalonians 5:20-21 "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Matthew 7:15-16

and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Matthew 24:11

We are called to be a prophetic people. A people who speak the word of God to the world around us. This is a role of OT prophets excelled in.

What do you think this means?

How do you think we do it?

Is it a matter of speaking or of action?

"For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Revelation 19:10

Bible Studies

Discerning of spirits



To another distinguishing between spirits, 1 Corinthians 12:10

The KJV calls this *discerning of spirits*. It is the last of the three gifts of revelation, along with Wisdom and Knowledge it gives complete insight. God's Omniscience touching our limited abilities.

This is not the Gift of Discernment, ie Judging people, there is no such gift! This gift exclusively distinguishes between different spirits.

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 1 John 4v1

Three Spirits

God's Spirit
Man's Spirit
Demonic Spirits

These are the spirits which this gift distinguish between.

You may be surprised to see man's spirit included in this list. But man is a spiritual being to, man's spirit is the part of him that responds to God.

Proverbs 20v27
Isaiah 57v16
Zechariah 12v1
1 Corinthians 2v11

***If a prophecy is give that is not from God were else could it come from?
What is the most likely place?***

The gift of distinguishing between spirits help us to know what comes from God, man or the devil.

The gift gives a sensitivity to what is happening in the spiritual realm.

Areas of operation

Prophecy Distinguishing between spirits comes after the gift of prophecy and is often associated with judging prophecy. Eg 1 John 4v1b As we saw in a previous week prophecy needs to be judged, we gave several criteria for such Judgements. The chief of these was comparison with Scripture. But like all Gifts Discerning is not a question of weighing up the arguments it is direct revelation from God.



Is it possible for a prophecy to contain nothing but Scripture and still be wrong?

The enemy is a master at quoting Scripture to his own end.

How do you think this gift is operated?

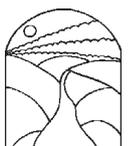
For me it is often just an uneasy feeling that I can't pin down, other times, I just know but have no idea how I know. Sometimes I physically feel something. Once I heard a audible voice mocking Christ, I was astonished to find out later that no one else had heard it! Often discernment seems to work in a vision.

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2 **Recognising the Enemies work.** Sometimes the problem, spiritual and physical that we face are just what happens to everyone. Other times it is the activity enemy. We can say as in the parable of the weeds, 'An enemy did this,' Matthew 13:28. The source will determine how we deal with the situation.

3 **Healing** Often when Jesus healed, he dealt with physical ailments, but sometimes He identified the sickness as a spirit and cast it out.

Matthew 12v22

Mark 9v25

Luke 13v11

Does this mean that all illness is demon related?

Verse like Matthew 8:16 or Luke 7v21 differentiate between natural causes and spiritual causes; and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick.

Discernment tells when it is an evil spirit that needs to be cast out and when it is an illness that needs prayer.

4 **Miracles** The Scripture records miracles and counterfeit gifts of the Spirit done but evil force and warns that as the end of the age approaches they will become more frequent. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible. Matthew 24:24. Discernment helps us know what is of the enemy.

Is Discernment the only way to spot the enemies work.

And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve. 2 Corinthians 11:14-15

5 **Deliverance** Distinguishing of spirits, helps to identify where there is demonic oppression and to identify what spirits need to be dealt with. In dealing with such situations it is important to be sure it is demonic. Sometimes it is the Gift itself that seems to cause a spirit to manifest.

6 **False teachers** The Bible continually warns of false teachers;

Acts 20v29

Jude v4

2 Peter 2v1

1 Timothy 4v1

An example; Several years ago two young girls did the rounds of the Churches in town prophesying. We had been pre warned. They stood up and prophesied in our service too. I could not fault what they said scripturally, but the spirit in which they said it stunk. Normally I would have said something, but this time there was no need the whole congregation recognised where it was coming from. The gift of discernment was working in the church.

When might you need this gift?

Who might need it?

Bible Studies

Tongues



To another speaking in different kinds of tongues. 1 Corinthians 12:10

The Greek here is *glossa*, which means *language* or *dialect*, *Heteroglossos* (other tongues means *foreign language*). Different kinds of tongues has been translated as different families of languages. Some have called this gift “*ecstatic gibberish*”, but the Greek is not used for nonsense talk, but of real languages.

Harold Horton described the gift like this. *What is the Gift of diverse kinds of tongues, or speaking in tongues? It is supernatural utterance by the Holy Spirit in languages never learned by the speaker- not understood by the mind of the speaker- nearly always not understood by the hearer. It has nothing to do with linguistic ability, nor with the mind or intellect of man. It is a manifestation of the mind of the Spirit of God employing human speech organs.*

What does *is a manifestation of the mind of the Spirit of God* mean?

Tongues is not the ability to understand a language that you have never learned, (if it was Paul would have used it as such), nor is it eloquence in your own language. It is just speaking a God given language, that you do not know.

Jesus said: And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; Mark 16:17

Tongues has three different manifestations.



Initial evidence, Consistently in Acts we read that the infilling of the Holy Spirit was evidenced by speaking in tongues. The two exceptions are; Paul Acts 9v17, who later said “I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.” 1 Cor 14:18, and in Samaria, where Simon the sorcerer was so impressed by what he saw, that he offered money to be able to impart the baptism of the Spirit. Acts 8v18. Clearly evidence of the Baptism of the Spirit is more than a warm fuzzy feeling. Prophecy is also noted as an evidence of the infilling, but it is tongues that is given as the sign.

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Acts 10:44-46



Personal Tongues, The Gift of the Spirit that is given to us when we are first baptised in the Spirit, stays with us for personal use. Praying in tongues, worshiping in tongues, singing in tongues. While this is sometimes done collectively, it is still of benefit only to the speaker.

Consider 1 Corinthians 14v2

1 Corinthians 14v16-17.

Read 1 Corinthians 14v18-19

Paul spoke in tongues more than anyone, but in the Church he would rather have spoken 5 words of plain old Greek. **So when did Paul speak in Tongues?**

It appears that in the Corinthian Church, this personal use of tongues was dominating the services. Paul writes 1 Corinthians 14 to correct this misuse. Unless you realise the destination in the Gift of Tongues, this chapter makes no sense.

But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. Jude 1:20
Do not underrate this kind of devotional tongues, it is of great benefit.

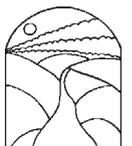
How does it benefit us?

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3

A message in Tongues. This is a short speech in an unknown language, given in the church and subsequently interpreted.

Read 1 Corinthians 14v26-28

How do we know that it is this kind of Tongues that is the Gift of 1 Cor 12?

It is because only this kind of tongues benefits the body as a whole. And that only when it is interpreted. 1 Cor 14v13.

It is therefore of the Gift (message) of Tongues that Paul says “Do all speak in tongues?” 1 Cor 12v30. This verse cannot be applied to tongues as initial evidence, or in personal usage. On the Day of Pentecost they did all speak in tongues.

If tongues are languages what kind of languages are they?

Acts 2v5-6

1 Corinthians 14v10

1 Corinthians 13v1

There have been many cases of languages being recognised, there have even been occasions when missionaries have preached in tongues and been understood by their hearers. This is not always the case, they many be ‘tongues of angels’. Foreign languages often sound like gobbledy gook, This is exactly the point that Isaiah makes in the passage that Paul quotes in 1 Cor 14v21 (Isaiah 28v10-11 see NIV footnote v10). These meaningless sound, were to be the real language of the Assyrians, whom God would use to punish Israel.



Speaking in tongues is speaking to God; For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit. 1 Corinthians 14:2. It helps us communicate with God on a deeper spiritual level, it bypasses our limited vocabulary. It helps us to pray when we don't know how we should pray.

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will. Rom 8:26-27



Speaking in Tongues is declares God's greatness & praising Him, Acts 10:46.



Tongues: a new way of praising, a new way of praying, a new way of edifying.

Paul teaches in 1 Corinthians 14, that the Gift of Tongues, should be part of our worship, but should not be overemphasised.

How do you think we do as a church in this regard?

He also teaches that a tongue is under the control of the person who gives it. It is not forced by the Spirit. It is your mouth, your lips, your voice, your control. The Spirit does not take over, but it is His words that are spoken. It is the Spirit who gives utterance Acts 2v4.

Why are we told not to prohibited speaking in tongues, 1 Cor 14v39?

Many people want to be filled with the Spirit, but they do not want to speak in tongues.

Why do you think this is?

Is there any reason to fear speaking in tongues?

We cannot dictate to God the terms on which we are baptised in the Spirit

If I speak in tongues privately, or in worship, does that mean I have to bring a message in tongues?

How important do you think tongues is?

Bible Studies Interpretation



And to still another the interpretation of tongues. 1 Corinthians 12:10

The gift of interpretation is not the ability to divinely interpret Scripture or to give a translation of a foreign language. It is Interpretation of Tongues, it exclusively explains the meaning of a message in tongues that has been given in the church.

He who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may be edified. 1 Corinthians 14:5

While 1 Corinthians 14 gives much instruction on tongues and interpretation, there is no example recorded for us in Scripture.

Tongues by itself can only edify the speaker, but tongues interpreted edifies the Church. So it is with you. Unless you speak intelligible words with your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying? You will just be speaking into the air. 1 Corinthians 14:9.

If the church overemphasises uninterpreted tongues it can do great harm because it isolates those who cannot participate. 1 Cor 14v11.

If you have the Gift of Tongues what should you also ask for?

1 Corinthians 14v13

In practice A message in tongues will be given, (this is quite distinctive from ordinary tongues) there may be a period of silence. Someone will receive an interpretation and will speak it out, sometimes there may be more than one interpretation. The one who speaks the tongue does not understand what he says, his mind is unfruitful, 1 Cor 14v14b. (There may be exceptions when the person does have a broad idea what they are saying.)

What is interpretation?



Interpretation gives the meaning of the tongue. It is not a translation, the length of the interpretation may be quite different. While the basic meaning of the Greek used here is to translate, it can mean to explain thoroughly.

Why is this the gift of interpretation not translation?

Such a meaning would have been common to Jews of the time, for a tradition of the *Targum* (Hebrew = to translate) was well established. This was teaching from Hebrews Scriptures, to an audience that could not understand Hebrew, by expounding at the same time as translating. Several *Targumim* in written form have survived to us.

An example: Read Daniel 5v22-25



This is not an instance of this Gift, but it does illustrate the point. If Daniel had interpreted the words, he would have said, Dollar, Dollar, Kilo, Division; and no one would have been any wiser. Instead he gave the interpretation, the meaning of the words, which was considerably longer than what it translation. Tongues can work like this.

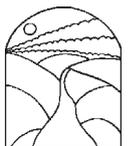
Sometimes interpretation is a literal translation of a tongue that was a 'real' (human) language, I have heard this, but it is the exception rather than the rule.

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What sort of message will it be?



Paul says **two things**; For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. 1 Corinthians 14:2a. This means that the tongue could be a prayer to God or worship and praise of God (as it was at Pentecost and Cornelius' house).



Secondly it can be a word very similar to prophecy; Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit. 1 Corinthians 14:2b Paul's use of the word *Mystery* means a revelation of the truth of the gospel, ie a word of correction or rebuke. Clearly tongues is not exclusively aimed at God for it can also edify (*Strengthen, encourage, comfort. Instruct*) the church. 1 Cor 14v5.

The interpretation of a tongue can be, pictorial, parabolic, descriptive or literal. Like prophecy, an interpretation can be received as a vision, burden or suggestion. Often only the first few words are 'received' and the speaker must step out in faith in order to receive the bulk of the interpretation.

Like Prophecy the Holy Spirit does not override the personality of the interpreter, one may say "*Thus Says the Lord...*" while another may say "*I think that the Lord is saying...*". the way of expression could be very different, with different people, but the kernel of the message is the same.

We had a good example of this recently. An interpretation was given. It had to do with taking off Lazarus' grave clothes. I also received an interpretation. It had to do with leaving the dead to do what dead people do. Totally different words, same metaphor same message.

This is a good way to start with either Prophecy or Interpretation, If you have in mind something similar to what someone else has spoken out, it could be that God is using you in this gift. Next time have the courage to speak out yourself.

If the person stutter or trips over their words does this mean it is not from God?

What should you do if there is no one present to interpret? 1 Cor 14v29

Does this mean the gift is under the control of the user?

Who gives the interpretation?



Normally it is someone other than the person who gave the tongue. It is also good for a variety of people to interpret, rather than it always be the same person.

Why?

There are usually people in the Church who can interpret, if they do not the leadership will seek God for an interpretation, finally the person who gave the tongue should seek for the interpretation.

Is it the end of the world if it is not interpreted?

What should we do in such a situation?

Can the Tongues be sung and then interpreted in song?

Often when you sing in tongues the interpretation just seems to flow on.

Bible Studies

What if?

Everything in Church is going fine when suddenly.... Shock, horror, catastrophe...
So what would you do if it happened? What is more do you know what you should do? Are the two the same? Why would you it? What does the Scriptures say?

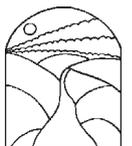
You disagreed with something the Pastor said or did?
You felt the Pastor had taught something contrary to Scripture?
You felt undervalued in Church?
You felt under used in Church?
You could not get along with someone else in Church?
Someone offended you?
You knew another brothers secret sins?
God told you what someone else's problem was?
You thought the Church was going in the wrong direction?
You heard a juicy bit of gossip?
Your brother began to backslide?
You saw a fellow believer in need?
No one talked to you?
Someone hugged you?
Someone suddenly laid hands on you?
Someone tried to tell you what your ministry should be?
God called you to be a missionary?
God called you to be a pastor?
Someone gave you a personal prophecy?
God gave you a spiritual gift?
Someone gave you a gift of money?
Your worst enemy got saved?
If God told you to help your worst enemy?
If God told you to witness to your worst enemy?
Someone told you church was boring?
Someone in Church let you down?
The Church did not recognise the ministry God gave you?
God directed you to give a message in tongues?
Something really good happened?
Someone asked you why you go to Church?
Someone asked you why you believe in Jesus?
Someone asked you how to become a Christian?
God asked you to give up something you enjoyed doing?
Someone criticised your Christian friend?
Someone badmouthed your Church?
You had twelve months to live?
God asked you to share a failure with someone?
You needed help with a problem?

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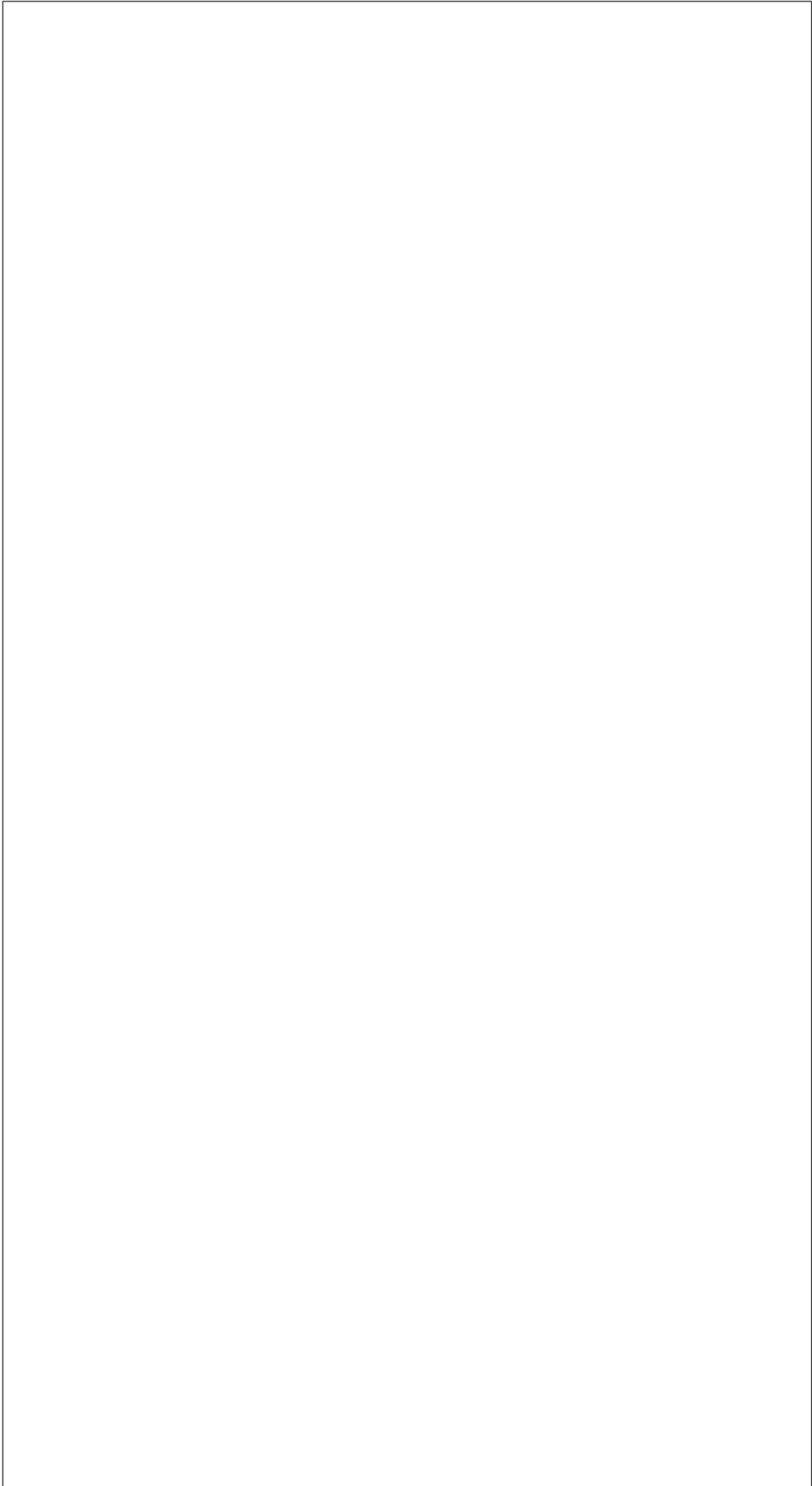
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Bible Studies

What if?



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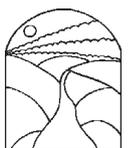
You needed help with a problem?

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