

**TRADITIONAL
CHRISTIANITY**

TRUTH OR DECEPTION?

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*If Thy Word is no more valid
Where upon should my faith rest
I'm not concerned with a thousand worlds
But only try to do thy Word the best
(N. L. Earl of Zinzendorf)*

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PREFACE

Seeing the European constellation which is intertwined with religion and politics with a world-wide significance, I feel the urgency of writing this. I am now convinced that we are concerned with the most current themes. Something more timely cannot be transmitted. This book may be unique in certain regards. To search things most profoundly one has to find critical historical facts and lay them open. The development of Christianity must be reviewed from its very beginning.

I esteem that the moment has come for the truth to be made available to the broad public. My aim was to write in a simple way so that everyone can understand wherever on earth they may live, purposely not using theological or philosophical vocabulary.

Since this book will be published in different languages and countries, the following remarks should be made: All the religions and faiths are respected although I am of different opinion. It is commonly understood that we need to respect the dignity of every human being, even in case their faith and their practice might be strange or peculiar to us. If over 800 million Hindus believe the cow to be holy, then one has to just respect it. If the practising Hindu gentlemen put the ashes of the holy cow-dung on their forehead, no one can prevent them. If the Sikh-religion demands one to take off the shoes and wash the feet before entering the Golden Temple in Amritsar, then one has to do it, if one likes to go in. Whether in Islamic sanctuaries or temples of other religion one has to comply with their rules and regulations. This I have seen on many of the missionary journeys which have taken me to over a hundred countries.

Everywhere I went, I found open doors. I spoke at interdenominational conferences and in various churches as guest-speaker. Also in the Roman Catholic church in South Africa where I preached, the proceedings took their regular course. I fundamentally respect everyone because everyone has the right to decide for himself and to believe and to do as he likes.

A few times, I watched in St. Peter's Cathedral in the Vatican as people from all over the world kissed in their soul agony the foot of the St. Peter's-statue in vain. There and at other places, I have seen much more. Often I had very deep compassion because I feel very much for the human race. In this book, I have dealt with both the things which are right

and which are wrong from the Scriptural point of view. A mature reader should be able to judge the contents for himself.

Because of necessity, I had to deal primarily with the Roman Catholic institution in the light of God's holy Word and confront the same with the Holy Scriptures. Only in the light of divine revelation, we can see the truth and thereby obtain the possibility to recognise the deception and to know the error.

The claim of the Roman Catholic Church that salvation is only by her was more or less adopted by the other Christian confessions. All try to bring salvation in their own way, and that simply is not possible. But a church which refers to Christ and especially to Peter and the apostles must be ready to be checked whether its claims are right or not.

May all the readers be blessed of the Lord God Almighty.

INTRODUCTION

In our time, it is not easy to approach someone with the theme concerning God and faith. For some it is totally out and only for the old folks, others search for divine things within themselves and in nature, and again others deny the existence of a personal God while there are those who speak of a higher power. When certain tragedies happen even those who deny God and don't believe in Him ask: "Why does God permit such things?"

Since it has become openly known what happened in the past in the name of God and under the covering of religion, it has made more people to lose their faith in justice. This is mainly because they put this religious institution and God on the same level. In the course of time, historians have filled books with reports about the bad states of affairs in the different ages. In recent times courageous authors have brought things openly to the surface, which are almost unbelievable.

In every religion, there are people who are conscious of the existence of not only a natural but also a supernatural realm. It is understood that man is not born to die but to live.

In reality, there are only few who are convinced that everything ends at the point of death. But even they will have to realise latest in the hour of their death that they have erred.

Everyone is born in a certain country into a certain religion or ideology of which they are normally convinced to be the right one.

The present almost incomprehensible advancement, the development from the horse and wagon to the most sophisticated rocket launcher, from the coach-driver to the astronauts and cosmonauts, confirms what the Lord God had said almost six-thousand years ago: "... *and now nothing they have imagined they can do will be impossible to them*" (Gen. 11: 6). The consequence is that man more and more believes in himself and in his achievements, at the same time leaning more against God and doubting His Word. God's opponent started already in the Garden of Eden to plant doubt into the minds of the first human beings in regards to what the Creator had said, "... *hast God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*" (Gen. 3: 1). He did not deny God, but put a question mark behind His Word. Today he inspires the well educated,

intellectual and scientific minds of man, and he involves them into the various arguments, until he succeeds to bring them up against the Creator. God's Word is being doubted by many, simply because they look at the failures and actions of those who claim to represent Him.

If somebody is convinced that everything came into existence by some kind of an explosion, the same should view or show a place where an explosion had happened. If someone believes that all living creatures developed from one original cell, the same must tell us who is responsible to bring that particular cell into existence and cause life to be in it. Whoever believes in the evolution theory must explain why we still have the same low lives and living creatures, if such a development has been taking place. According to the statement of the Creator everything brings forth after its own kind. It is that way until today. Every day, in all the world, new life comes into existence by the millions and is a repetition of the creative miracle. Assertions which bypass the ever true evident reality come from one source and have one goal, namely to doubt the creation report in the Scriptures and to make the Creator non-existent.

It is very important to recognise the following fact: The prophets sent by God did not start a faith nor were they religious founders as history confirms. Neither Enoch nor Noah, neither Abraham nor Moses, nor Elijah nor Isaiah; no prophet who was truly sent by God founded a religion. This fact is of greatest importance. All have shared whatever they had received from God. Therefore, the entire Old Testament is one harmonious unit. Only one spoke and worked, namely the Lord God Himself who made known His plan to those whom He had called for a specific purpose. Such men were divine mouthpieces. They lived at different times and received their portion of the Word according to their divine commission and predicted prophetically the things pertaining to the plan of salvation. Even though they lived in different centuries and were apart thousands of years there is no contradiction but perfect coinciding in their writings.

The apostles who were sent by the Lord also did not found a religion. In humility and in simplicity they showed forth the overwhelming fact that Old Testament prophecies were precisely fulfilled. In regards to the founding and the building of a New Testament church, they left it totally to the Lord of Glory Who had said, "*I will build my church.*" He did not leave this to the apostle Peter or to Paul or to anyone else, but He placed various ministries and spiritual gifts for the up-building of the body of

Christ into the church (Eph. 4: 11; I Cor. 12 + 14). The Biblical church is not an organised institution by man but rather a living organism. It is the only place God chose on earth to manifest Himself, amidst the redeemed who found grace in His sight. It is also being referred to as the temple of God (Eph. 2: 21), and the house of God (Heb. 3: 6). God does not dwell in a temple erected by man nor in a sacred building (Isa. 66: 1-2; Acts 7: 48-49). He lives only in the hearts of His own. It is, therefore, necessary to return to the original and to the beginning to know for sure what the church of God is (I Tim. 3: 15), what it believes, what the teachings are and how the baptism is administered, etc. The answers are found only in the book of truth — God's holy Word. Upon this foundation and awareness of the responsibility before God, this publication is written.

Chapter 1
ON THE TEST-STAND
ECCLESIASTICAL RESEARCH
A TIMELY SPIRITUAL INVESTIGATION

I was encouraged to write freely because it is an established fact that nowadays nothing is simply accepted without it being proved. A typical example for this made headlines in September 1988 and came out in the mass media. The concern was about the Shroud of Turin. Hundreds of years it was believed to be absolute genuine and was venerated as a relic. Now the whole world became surprised after the independent tests in England, the USA and Switzerland which brought the same result that this piece of linen derives from the time of the dark ages and is by no means the shroud of Christ. In spite of this verified investigation, the respective clergy encourages that this falsification receives further on the veneration of a relic. Even after this had become known people are to remain in the same error.

In October 1988, the deputy Dr. Ian Paisley from Northern Ireland caused a stir in the European parliament at Strasbourg. He did dare to speak up as hardly any Protestant since the time of Reformation. He showed a poster with the text "John Paul II — antichrist" and so caused a tumult and protested against the pope to speak there. The mass media reported about it in most of the daily newspapers with the photo and report on the front page. The day after only a few spoke about it and again life went back to normal. There is something new to be reported daily.

It is sad but true that throughout the past the clergy and the laity have put God and church together. And the people because they were disappointed with their institution turned against Him and wanted to get rid of both. It is a very sad decision indeed which was followed by so many. I will never forget the evening in a kibbutz approximately 15 km west of Jerusalem. As the tour-leader I gathered the group for a small service after the evening meal. Various guests participated including some Jews. This was appreciated. I read a few passages from the Old Testament and showed how they were fulfilled in the New Testament. Suddenly a Jewish woman who had immigrated from Warsaw spoke up with inner emotions, "I have read the New Testament and I could believe that Christ is our

Messiah if He would not have been a Catholic, because the Poles who are such Catholics have done much harm to us.” We all were taken by surprise. Then I explained, “The Messiah was not a Catholic, He was the Redeemer who became flesh. And also Mary was not a Catholic.” But she simply could not comprehend this.

The ignorance of people in reference to their religion is unbelievable. Christianity without a living, personal connection to Christ has become a religion and, as some assert it is opium for the people. This exposition should unveil that which is not Biblical and which is being falsely called Christian and expose the religious legends which remain as they are irrespective of how long they have been in practice.

When faith in God and His plan with humanity is concerned, we must consult the book of all books. The expression “I believe nothing and nobody” is applicable only in reference to human beings but not in regards to the Almighty and His Word. He remains for ever the trustworthy. His Word is the fulfilled and confirmed truth and therefore is our absolute which is above every speck of doubt. He is not dead as some claim but He lives and all that live live by Him. His Word today is an ever living reality.

At certain times, there were people who were ordained for a special commission. In the history of mankind, we know of poets, of composers, of kings, of emperors, of politicians and special statesmen right until our time. The same applies for science and all other researches. A whole list of those who invented something could be filled with prominent names without whom our world would look very much different. In the same way, there were special men of God in Old and New Testament times who had a special task to do in connection with the plan of salvation. The same applies for the post apostolic time right up to the Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. Special personalities are spoken off. Also during the dark ages, there were those who played an important role in the church history. Best known are the names of those in connection with the Reformation.

Such men of God who were used for special purposes always had a global ministry overriding all church and religious barriers. It was a commission given for all. This is verified in the passage where our Lord said, “*Go ye into all the world*”. Those who are truly sent by God proclaim the Word of God in precise harmony with all the prophets and apostles. Whoever comes up with new doctrines or propagates new revelations must stand the test of the Holy Scriptures. If they are not in harmony

consequently the person and his teaching are automatically disqualified. God cannot contradict Himself. He also cannot alter His plan. The question with everything that is being done and taught must be, “Is it really true? Is it written like this? What does the Holy Scripture have to say about it?”

We are not interested in the imaginations of man but we wish to hear and to know only what God had to say through those whom He called with an audible voice to serve Him. Thus were the Old Testament prophets. They foretold the course of the church history. The commission of the apostles included the verification of whether those prophecies of old had come to their fulfilment. According to the calling and commission, they had a part to acquaint us with God’s plan of salvation. In the Holy Scriptures, it is all well documented, and so the living Word speaks for itself even today to all those who are willing to hear the voice of the Spirit. There is no need that one should explain to the other. It suffices if all could believe from their heart just as the Scripture says. In this way, everyone is being taught of God through His Word as it is written (Isa. 54: 13; Jn. 6: 45). Here we don’t exhibit the scroll of doctrine of a church or denomination or a sect, but rather give an exposition of God’s plan as made known to us in His holy Word.

Some who are well acquainted with church history, as I am after studying for over twenty-five years, would know how different historians described the same ages, persons and things. In the themes presented for discussion, nothing is really new, but Bible believing Christians are hurt by the fact that critical research of the New Testament has left the matters with many question marks. Whether some parts of the New Testament, the gospels and the epistles at first were written in Hebrew, Aramaic or in Greek and later were assembled into the canon in the Greek language is not decisive for itself. It is a fact that God has chosen people who were speaking the Hebrew language. Moses and Aaron spoke to Pharaoh, “... *the Lord God of the Hebrews has met us ...*” (Ex. 3: 18). Jesus Christ certainly did not speak Greek but rather Aramaic which was commonly spoken by the Hebrews. If it was more of a low dialect as some claim or not is left for the scholars to fight about. For us it is important that our Lord after His resurrection still spoke in the Hebrew tongue as Paul confirms. “... *I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*” (Acts 26: 14). Also the argument that other letters were in circulation at that time can in no way harm the authenticity of the gospels. Most certainly at the very beginning

in the apostles days, there were other letters written. Luke informs us about this in his gospel in the first verse of the first chapter. There were also others who gave their reports. Such letters are called “New Testament apocrypha”. The Lord Himself took care that only those epistles which became part of the canon were written by His will and commission with all that was necessary for us to know.

It is very important for us to respect God’s Word in the right way (I Th. 2: 13) and believe that all Scripture is inspired (II Tim. 3: 16). Wherever in the New Testament the wording “as the Scripture says ...” or “it is written ...” was used, the reference goes back to the Old Testament. The New Testament is Holy Scripture as well. Both together make the Bible. In Luke 24: 44-45 we read: *“And he said unto them, these are the words which I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.”*

The Lord also said, *“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me”* (Jn. 5: 39). Paul summarises and makes the following point, *“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures”* (I Cor. 15: 3-4). The apostle Peter writes having Isaiah 40, verse 8, in mind and connects the word of the Old and the New Testament into a common denominator, *“... but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you”* (I Pet. 1: 22-25). The New Testament is the result and the summary of the foretold Old Testament prophecy.

Dr. Clarence Larkin, an internationally recognised Bible teacher, has written in his book «Dispensational Truth» that one-hundred-and-nine prophecies from the Old Testament were literally and precisely fulfilled at the first coming of Christ. The accomplishment of the prophecy vindicates the divine origin of the Bible.

If we are to check something and put it through the test we must not be prejudiced. Carl Schneider, one renowned theologian, writes, **“The forgeries began in New Testament times and have never ceased”** (K. Deschner, *Der gefälschte Glaube*, pg. 20). He is right. But this does not mean to say that we have a forged New Testament, but rather that unauthorised persons had already started then and continue until today presenting

forged doctrines with their own interpretations. The original word remains for ever in spite of all deceptions of which we shall speak more. The destructive insinuations about forged Peter's epistles led to the remark which is absolutely incredible, "**The holy book, the Bible is teeming with false documents**" (K. Deschner, *Der gefälschte Glaube*, pg. 20). **That is an unbelievable assertion and a vicious lie.** The so-called experts are referred to and they have already performed a good job. It is an impudence to accuse the writers of the New Testament being guilty of forgeries and to classify them as deceivers and the Bible-believing as deceived. By such deceptive manoeuvres of the critics the ever beaming truth cannot be darkened.

Of course, the four evangelists were simple men. Their reports at times show variations, but this proves that they did not sit together consulting each other and writing at the same time. Everyone wrote as he was guided, whether he referred to something he personally heard or experienced or whether he was told by others. The confirmed facts are the most important and not the described surroundings.

The Catholic theologian and Bible translator, Dr. Konstantin Rösch, has used the four living creatures lion, ox, man and eagle (Rev. 4: 6-8) to show the various characters of the four gospels. Already Ireneus has used these four symbols claiming that this was commonly understood in the early Christian age. The Bible is partly written in symbols and parables. According to that Bible translator, Matthew has the face of a man, Mark the one of a lion, Luke the one of an ox, and John the one of an eagle. In Ezekiel 1, the four living creatures are spoken of to have the appearance and likeness of a man (vs. 5). "*And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings*" (vs. 8). Every living creature has four faces but was introduced by one special face only. All the four gospels refer to the same Redeemer, but everyone has a different shape. Although every living creature appears with a different face, in the interior they are all the same. Thus it is with the four gospels. The inside, the actual kernel is the same. But the one shows the Lord more as the Son of man; the other one emphasises His divine authority in the symbol of the lion which is the king among the beasts; the third one is the burden carrier; and the fourth follows the characteristics of an eagle who flies into the highest heights not touching the ground of Bethlehem at all.

If one evangelist records something and the other not, or if one gives

more importance to an event than the next one, that is permissible. If one evangelist writes that the Lord fed four-thousand with seven loaves of bread and the other that He fed four-thousand men not counting the women and children then both are right. That means only one went into more details. If one reports that two blind men were healed near Jericho and the other that only one blind man was healed, then both are right again. One evangelist was present when it happened but the other met the one man who was healed and gave his report. One evangelist states that both thieves who were crucified with Christ mocked Him (Mt. 27: 44), the other reports that the one at His right-hand side was touched in his heart and cried out: "*Jesus, remember me ...*" (Lk. 23: 39-42). Again both are right. At first the two mocked Him then one of them recognised who was crucified next to him and called upon Him.

Also the statement: "*Verily I say unto thee, Today thou shalt be with me in paradise*" is being misconstrued by the critics. They conclude that Jesus should have gone directly to heaven after His death. But the Scripture says that He went down to the lower regions. They did not comprehend that the place for those who would inherit salvation after the day of the crucifixion was not above but down below. In Luke 16, we are clearly told that the two places were only separated by a gulf and no one could cross that separating line. Those who had put their hope into the coming Redeemer were kept like in a prison. And according to Mt. 27, from verse 51, many saints came up with Christ in His resurrection. From that time onwards, paradise is no more down below but above. Christ ascended and has taken captivity captive and gave gifts unto men (Eph. 4: 8-10). Those who waited for their salvation to be realised came up with their Redeemer.

Also in this regard, there is no discrepancy if one evangelist reports about two angels being present at the day of the resurrection who spoke to the women (Lk. 24: 4) and the other who reports about one (Mt. 28: 2). Once they are mentioned to be in the sepulchre and the other time they were standing outside. Both are true again. Inside they have shown where the Lord's body was laid and outside they proclaimed that He is risen. That's the way it actually took place. Even if two were there one was the speaker, and so he was mentioned in particular by the one writer. Thanks be to God for there are not only self-appointed critics, but there have been excellent men of God who could show us the perfect harmony of the Scriptures which must convince everybody. One of those was Dr. C. I. Scofield, an internationally recognised scholar and Bible translator. He

has written an excellent preface to the four gospels.

The critics did not at all understand the prophetic character of the New Testament. They accused the apostle Paul that he did err in his eschatological expectations, *“For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not precede them who are asleep”* (I Th. 4: 15). The apostle Paul had to write in the present tense because the Holy Spirit in Him was dictating the Word of the Lord for the whole course of the time of salvation. The whole New Testament is written in such a way that it can be read throughout the whole time of grace, ever valid and timely. It can be preached and believed from the first to the last generation, when the respective outstanding predictions at the parousia of Christ will be fulfilled. The same Paul wrote speaking of himself, *“For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day ...”* (II Tim. 4: 6-8).

At all times, people living on earth were expecting the return of Christ in their days. Those who did not expect will have a very slim chance to participate in the first resurrection as they did not have this living hope within them. Martin Luther believed the end to be near as he counted on the return of Christ. For the antichrist he used the word “end-christ”. He wrote, **“This year 1540 the total of years is exactly 5,500. Therefore the end of the world can be expected, because the 6,000 years will not be completed, as the three days of Christ after His death were not completed.”** (H. Heinz, *Zwischen Zeit und Ewigkeit*, pg. 137). Whoever had a living hope expected the return of Christ. So it should be today. There are people now on earth who, based upon the fulfilment of the Bible prophecy, expect His return in this generation.

The blinded critics have reached the summit of their misconstrued assertion that Christ’s prophecy, *“Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled”* (Mt. 24: 34) was not fulfilled. In that statement the Jews are the generation of people He spoke about and it is not a generation as we know it as a span of time. The Jews had to go through very hard times, they were murdered in most cruel ways but they remained as the Lord said right until now. So it is predestinated in God’s eternal plan as Jesus said. Also the statement, *“Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come”* (Mt. 10: 23) was

totally misunderstood and exchanged for His return. Did He not come as the Son of man when John saw Him on the isle of Patmos walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks? That is the way He will come again when He starts His Kingdom on the earth. He will come with all His majesty. *“His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were like a flame of fire; And his feet like fine brass as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice like the sound of many waters”* (Rev. 1: 14-15). It was actually fulfilled as Jesus said. With God’s Word itself every construed argument of the critics can be brought to nothing. Those who thought to make question marks behind the Word should realise that eventually everything will happen according to the Word of God.

It was not Jesus or the apostles who were mistaken but those critics who were blind and have erred in course of the church history. Right into the present time, they refer to those who were a prey to the same deceptions and their words are found again now. Thereby they actually reveal their ignorance concerning God’s plan of salvation. When it comes to the historical part they see how wrong things developed in Christianity, especially with the universal church. But when it comes to the Word of God and the Kingdom of God, they simply have no revelation and don’t understand. As Bible believing Christians, we cannot remain silent in such a case. People who have no access to the Holy Scriptures and to the therein hidden and revealed plan of God prove this by their question marks. They speak about the greatest falsifying and of contradictions they think they see. They can only do so after they themselves have interpreted the same into the Scriptures.

There is no need for a historical proof of the existence of Jesus Christ. He is the central point of the history of mankind. Whether Josephus and the other historians have written about Him or not, that is not our part of a debate. Prophets and apostles wrote it, because they were directly commissioned to do that. And we believe them and that is sufficient. As far as I am concerned I believe the reports of those who were present when supernatural things happened. From the birth of Jesus Christ until His ascension to heaven, there were true eye and ear witnesses. But as it is today it was in the past. Whenever God does something supernatural on earth the people never report about it, simply because it does not happen in the established churches and religions. The official reporters have no knowledge of it. For those who can believe, everything is sufficiently witnessed in the Scriptures and there is no need for them to listen to any false witnesses who may appear very late on the scene and

think that they have got something to say. Nobody needs to listen to them.

If critical church historians write about false and manipulated faith then they cannot possibly refer to the original church or the Book of Acts, which means the church at its very beginning of the New Testament. Manipulated false faiths, doctrines and messages are such, which are not contained in the Holy Scriptures and therefore do not coincide with them but were later invented.

Chapter 2

ORIGINAL CHRISTIANITY AND THE FOLLOWING EPOCHS.

In the church history, the various epochs which followed the beginning of the Christendom are very well described by the historians. We shall therefore in this exposition deal only briefly with these eras. The time span could be arranged like this: firstly, the time of the church at its beginning up to the year 100 A.D., then the following space of the post-apostolic time with the developments right until the council of Nicaea 325 A.D., the establishing of the Roman state church, the space into the dark ages, the Reformation as a new beginning, the revival movements after, the introduction to the full gospel and the bringing back of the church into its original position before the return of Christ.

The church historical writings do not give an unanimous picture. Many had some presumptions which they spoke about, others made legends of them and then there were of course those who thought they were facts. It is also obvious that a Catholic oriented writing is totally different from a protestant one. An overall picture about the different epochs and the developments therein is necessary to be able to compare things with the original at the very beginning. Only from the apostles have we received the apostolic doctrine. A brochure which was found in a convent in 1883 and was peradventure backdated to the years 80-120 A.D. carries the title "Doctrine of the twelve apostles" or "Didache". It has certainly nothing to do or in common with the apostles of the Lord. So also the so-called apostolic creed which came into existence 300 years after the apostles and was formulated at various councils. This can certainly not be attributed to the apostles. In such a way, without intending it, the false things began to creep in. Only in the Book of Acts and in the epistles written by the apostles of the New Testament, we do have the true teaching. The apostles were men who had heard the Word directly from their Lord and by His commission gave unto us what they had received from Him. Through them, the New Testament church has received the pure, unfalsified Word of God which alone carries His seal.

Paul was called in a supernatural way, chosen to be a special tool and was placed with the original apostles of the Lord. He could say that to him a direct commission was given. Therefore, he could make the statement,

“For I have received of the Lord which I also delivered unto you...” (I Cor. 11: 23). He has written the majority of all the epistles, exactly 100 chapters with 2,325 verses where as Peter has written only 8 chapters with 166 verses. Paul had received the gospel in the same way as the prophets have received the Word by divine revelation (Gal. 1: 11-12). Therefore, he had to give the admonition which goes right through the bones, *“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you let him be accursed”* (Gal. 1: 8). Whatever does not agree with the original gospel preached by the original apostles is under a curse. If we look at it like this we are facing the fact that there exists a Christianity falsified and under a curse. This must have been the Christianity the critics were looking at when writing.

The four evangelists give testimony of the Redeemer. They described His life, His ministry, and actually everything from His birth until His death, His resurrection and His ascension to heaven. The Synoptists Matthew, Mark and Luke give a complementary report and an overall picture. John does not refer even to Bethlehem nor to the genealogies but he directly flies into the heights and shows in his very first verse in the first chapter who Christ really is. The four gospels record the accomplished salvation on the earth, God being in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. These records are trustworthy because the reports were given by true eye and ear witnesses as a testimony for all (II Pet. 1: 16-18; I Jn. 1: 1-3).

The Book of Acts introduces to us how the original church was supernaturally founded by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost (chapter 2). It was indeed an event that came right from heaven. In his first sermon, the Spirit filled apostle Peter spoke, by the commission of God, to those who would be converted and come to the faith. He spoke about the necessity of repentance and the Biblical water baptism (vs. 38) and also about the experience of receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost as experienced by the hundred-and-twenty. He proclaimed, *“For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord, our God, shall call”* (Acts 2: 39). God alone saves and adds to the church those who believe (Acts 2: 47).

The original church consisted of men and women who truly had an experience with God. Those who believed and were baptised in water were also in a supernatural way baptised with the Holy Ghost as members into the Body of Christ (I Cor. 12: 13) in which the spiritual gifts are in

operation (I Cor. 12 + 14) and also the fruits of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5: 22-23). As God was in Christ, His Body being the temple He dwelled in and did all He was pleased to do, so also the original church with the redeemed was the body of the Lord (I Cor. 12: 12). He is the Head (Col. 1: 18). So He could continue His service through His church. He said, "*As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you*" (Jn. 20: 21). Through the great commission, many things were to be taken care of. So He placed apostles, prophets, teachers, pastors and evangelists into the church (Eph. 4: 11).

In the original church, were not dignitaries but there were only men of God who were called by the highest calling and in dignity they served the Lord and His people under the leading and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The original church did not know about the priests or any clergy taking an office, but the whole body of the redeemed, those who were born again, together formed the holy priesthood and the holy people of God (I Pet. 2: 9, Rev. 1: 6). As already mentioned, the fivefold ministry is meant for the church as a whole and is not restricted to a local assembly. The leaders or the elders of the sovereign local churches had their responsibilities. Those among them who took leadership were called bishops, and they had to be married (I Tim 3: 1-7; Tit. 1: 5-8). There was also a local church with more than one bishop, that is to say, with at least two leading elders in the local assembly (Phil. 1: 1). This agrees with James 5: 14 where it is written that if somebody gets sick he should call the elders of the church to pray for him. Paul and Barnabas were received in Jerusalem by the assembly, the apostles and the elders (Acts 15: 4). In the original church, this divine order was in existence.

To take care of practical things connected to a local church there were also deacons, and they had to be married as well (I Tim. 3: 8-18). It was necessary for the bishops and the deacons to be married to understand and to counsel in a practical way from their own experience, belonging to the local church and having family problems and so forth. The New Testament church did not know the office of a bishop as it is being practised in some churches today. According to I Tim 3: 15, the body of believers make up the House of God which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. Both, the foundation and the pillar of the truth. Private interpretations and false things have no place therein. The true church is God's habitation on earth and through it His will is being done as in heaven and so on earth.

At the beginning since the foundation of the New Testament church, the pure proclamation of the true gospel, the true teachings and the apostolic practice was found in it. The original church was penetrated by the Life of Jesus Christ and was led by the Holy Spirit as a living organism but not as an organised denomination.

After some time, Paul and the other apostles had to deal with heresies and with deceivers. Pluralistic developments began and a number of different directions started running parallel. But there was always one group of believers that stayed with the true Word, the true gospel, the true doctrine and practice as originated with the apostles. The apostle John has also written about the different directions coming into existence at that time. He states, *“We are of God. He that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.”* (I Jn. 4: 6).

Already at that stage, there were various mixed Christian directions putting their own interpretations to the Word of God which later became doctrines. Such men the Holy Scriptures describe as false brethren who came in unaware without having a divine call to the ministry. Paul speaks very definitely concerning this subject. *“And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in secretly to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage”* (Gal. 2: 4). These were men who preached another Jesus, who had received another spirit and who were preaching another gospel (II Cor. 11: 4). Peter warns the believers of false brethren who secretly introduced damnable doctrines (II Pet. 2: 1-3). The apostle Jude has also spoken about these Christian directions. *“Woe unto them! For they have gone in the way of Cain and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Korah”* (vs. 11). The false brethren brought fourth falsifications and those who went astray pulled their group after them and as a result the various spiritual directions came into existence.

As these groups deviated more and more, John saw the beginning of the antichrist movement. Anti means against, and therefore, everything that is against Christ and His Word must be called antichrist. He writes, *“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be manifest that they were not all of us”* (I Jn. 2: 19). The apostle Paul also gave a very clear warning when he made the statement, *“For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not*

sparing the flock” (Acts 20: 29). In Revelation 2, verse 2, the apostle John writes like this: “... *and thou hast tried them who say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.*” How were they able to test without fail that these men who claimed to be apostles were not? They gave them the Word-test and checked if these men preached what Peter and Paul had already preached. The examination must always be done with the apostolic proclamation and practice. That is the only valid measuring rod. The question now arises: What is truth and what is falsification? It had already started in the early Christian age.

From the Bible passages already mentioned, it is obviously that parallel to the true church of Jesus Christ false directions began to establish themselves. Already before the turn of the first Christian century, there were different teachings and mixtures. One group believed in the doctrines of Balaam, the others held with the teachings of the Nicolaitanes, others listened to a woman named Jezebel who called herself a prophetess (Rev. 2: 20) and so it went on and on, as it is confirmed in church history.

In order that we know which is right and which are the pure and true doctrines of the apostles, they are clearly given to us in the Holy Scriptures. Also the various teachings which were brought in by unauthorised persons are mentioned therein. The challenge “*Prove all things; hold fast that which is good*” still holds good for today. Many have taken for granted that their practice and doctrine is right without proving and checking it. Others judge things from their own point of knowledge and doctrine as well as their own practice and have totally neglected to consider that the only valid measuring rod to prove all things is the entire testimony of God’s holy Word.

In the following century, all these groups developed along the side of the church of the living God which always believed what Christ and His apostles taught. Those movements which deviated from God’s Word gained more and more prominence. The narrow way was broadened and the gate was widened. Everyone of these movements had the aim to get as many members as possible just as it is among denominations of today. To the true church of Jesus Christ, the same promise applies in all the ages, “*Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom*” (Luke 12: 32). Those belonging to the little flock of the Lord will only listen to the voice of the good Shepherd Who gave His life for the sheep. They will hear only His Word. This is the ecclesia, the called out

church at all times and the little flock which listens without compromise to the voice of the good Shepherd.

In the post apostolic times, Polycarp († 155) who knew and was together with the apostle John, and Ireneus († 202) who was a student of Polycarp are known to have fought for the true faith. Even so, if one examines thoroughly their teachings it becomes obvious that the pure and original doctrines and the beliefs of the apostles were not found with them in its entirety. The step down from the divine organism to a human organisation became evident in that age itself.

The developments until the council of Nicaea, 325 A.D., were very controversial. Apparently the majority of the so-called Christian religion established itself until the recognition of Constantine and then it became a very strong force in the whole of the Roman empire. The so-called Christian faith was made into a new philosophy. Oriental beliefs were mixed with Hellenistic thoughts to destroy the original faith. At that time, the debates of the so-called Christology began and the tree of life was exchanged for the tree of knowledge.

Chapter 3

TRAGIC INITIATION —

ORIGIN OF CALAMITY

As long as the gospel remained on the Jewish ground, there were mainly Jewish assemblies and, therefore, no discussions about the Godhead were known. At this stage, Roman and Greek thoughts and pagan thinking over gods and goddesses were brought into the discussions. The spiritual and prophetic view that what was foreshadowed in the Old Testament became an apparent reality in the New was lost more and more, even though Tertullian emphasised quite strongly the thought: **“... that Old and New Testament agree and prophecy is the connection between the Old and the New Testament”** (F. Hauss, *Väter der Christenheit*, pg. 20). In regards to doctrine, Christendom was slowly taken step by step from the Jewish foundation and placed upon heathen thinking. This happened in contrary to the apostolic and the direct post-apostolic times. Then, the Old Testament was being applied in connection with some passages of the New Testament against the Jews. Already in the second century, spiritually blind leaders who were in co-operation with the Roman Caesars have set the initiation against Judaism. The word “anti-Semitic” used only for the Jews is not correct as all Arabic nations are Semitic.

The Roman Caesar Constantine used a great strategy. He availed himself of the apostate Christendom and at the same time he did not break totally with heathenism. He supported the building of heathen temples and also the erection of Christian churches. Already in the year 315 A.D., Constantine declared the conversion to Judaism as a capital crime. Jews who converted others to Judaism and the converted Christian, were both to suffer death. In 321 A.D., the decree was issued that Sunday must be observed as the state holiday. This was not enough. The Jews were threatened to be punished and were forced to deny the Sabbath and celebrate Sunday. Constantine only proclaimed what the bishops of that time had already decided.

At the council of Nicaea, Arius and Athanasius were the two main speakers. Their statements and views were thoroughly documented in the church history. Apparently Arius had no knowledge about Christ. Athanasius instead testified freely, **“that in Jesus God Himself appeared to**

us, God manifested Himself to us, and redeemed us, in Him we have the Father Himself ... that in Jesus the Father Himself redeemed us“ (K.D. Schmidt, Grundriß der Kirchengeschichte, pg. 98).

Since this time, the Roman church constituted itself. At the time of the Nicene Council, there was yet no pope or no cardinal known of. Also there was no Roman bishop who would have claimed the pre-eminence. In this regard, church history is partly backdated, manipulated and gravely falsified. It was Constantine who ordered the Nicene council. He himself was the host and also the chairman of the council. It was his aim to unite the various fractions into one church which would serve in his state. The uniting of state and church together took place and thus the state-church came into being.

In the year 380, Theodosius the Great and Gratian set an end to common religious freedom. **“At the II Ecumenical Council (381) the bishops sanctioned the edict of Caesar Theodosius I decree in February 380 in which all Roman subjects were challenged to receive the Christian trinity belief as it was formulated at Nicaea in 325 ... The belief in the trinity which consists of the trinity of God as Father, Son and Holy Ghost was thereby the only valid creed for all Christians. It became the state-furthered religion.”** (B. Harenberg, Chronik der Menschheit, pg. 212). **“Gregory of Nyssa was one of the central figures at the II Ecumenical Council in Constantinople. He defended the Nicene creed and formulated decisively the trinity doctrine.”** (B. Harenberg, Chronik der Menschheit, pg. 214). **“Every citizen from henceforth was obligated to be an orthodox Christian. Heathenism and heresy were declared to be a capital crime.”** (K. D. Schmidt, Grundriß der Kirchengeschichte, pg. 83). All those who because of their conscience could not follow this decree and did not join this state-religion were branded as heretics. From then on, the persecution was started by this Christian state-church against the members of the Biblical church.

Under pope Leo the Great (440-461), the universal church experienced an enormous growth. By most of the church historians he is believed to have been the first pope. But in the list of popes by *Herder*, 246 popes are named including Paul VI and therein Leo I is listed as the 45th pope. In this official book, question marks are found after the first fifteen which according to the listing began with Peter. The overwhelming majority of protestant historians place question marks behind forty-four popes. It is commonly agreed that the papal history began with Leo I. He himself had to be satisfied at the council of Chalcedon (451) to

be treated in the same way as the bishop of Constantinople. Even then the thought of primacy was not known but it began to develop.

The completion of this state-church institution happened under Caesar Justinian (527-565). The priests were made civil servants. It is very obvious that Christ is not the one who created this universal state-church. It was done by political and religious leaders who were interested to put all powers together for the interest of the whole Roman empire. Since the 4th and the 5th century, we are dealing with the church historically. On one side with the church of Jesus Christ and on the other with all the groups which deviated from the true faith and joined together in this great church. The tragic history of this heathenish-Christian world institution took its course.

The bishops were made dignitaries endowed with religious and political power. All were carrying the same title, because they were looked upon as spiritual fathers. Rome was the capital of this empire and, therefore, the Roman bishops systematically assumed the various titles of honour. It started with the "Pontifex Maximus". This title was already used by the heathen high priests, the Caesars in the Roman empire and also by Constantine. The wrong developments connected to the church of the popes were accompanied by strife for power and recognition in special positions. **"Since Bonifatius VIII (1294-1303) is the belief on the pope even necessary to obtain salvation, because all inhabitants of the earth are subdued under him. Thus also said Gregory VII (1073-1085) in his Dictatus papae. The Roman pontifex only is rightfully called universal"** (H. Heinz, *Zwischen Zeit und Ewigkeit*, pg. 176). Thus Churchianity and Christendom was established without emphasising a personal experience and relationship with Christ. The only thing which counted was to belong to this great institution. The authority was taken away systematically from Christ and the Word of God and placed upon this institution and its representatives. Christ is the Head of His church while the popes are always the head of this universal and institutional church.

Into this state-church, people were baptised by force and later were made members of the same right after birth without having the possibility to decide for themselves. This unscriptural baptismal practice was used to make members by force and it became the very base for the people's church. Also church tax was introduced, with which the financial aspect for extensive power of this church was guaranteed.

Parallel to this development “away from the Word of God”, the disconnection from Judaism took place and later on also from the Jewish Christian churches. This was not enough. Already Justin, bishop of Smyrna (167 A.D.) made derogatory statements. The Christians were declared to be God’s Israel and the Jews to be renegades who had fallen away. The apostle Paul looked upon this matter in a totally different way, *“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God”* (Gal. 6: 15-16). The apostle Peter also made an important statement in this regard *“... of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him”* (Acts 10: 34-35).

Polemical statements against Jews were already in circulation very early and became more aggressive. Bishop Ignatius of Antiochia began to implant antijudaistic thoughts into the minds. The antijudaistic parables uttered by the representatives of the church in the first centuries are well documented in the history books. They were responsible for the killing of over a million Jews before the Roman church itself was instituted. The clergy took the right to call the Jews “murderers of Christ” even “murderers of God”. They were accused of many other things, and therefore were killed in various manners. The church has totally annulled for itself the commandment *“Thou shalt not kill”*.

The church father Chrysostomos (354-407), one of the most vicious enemies of the Jews, taught: **“... with Jews one may not dare to have communion just as not with the devil. They are not better than pigs and goats ... the synagogue is not only a theatre, it is a house of prostitution, a den of robbers, a shelter of unclean animals and a dwelling place of the devils. Christians should not consult Jewish physicians but rather die and turn away from all Jews as from a pest and from the epidemic of the human race”** (K. Deschner, *Kriminalgeschichte des Christentums*, Vol. I, pg. 134).

Cyril († 444), patriarch of Alexandria, already spoke of the final solution to the Jewish question. In the 20th century, this final solution has reached its climax. Cyprian and Tertullian, Athanasius and Hieronymus, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrosius, Augustinus, Justinian and many others had such a hatred for the Jews and planted the same into all the clergy and the people for all times. The slogans against the Jews became part of the thinking with all belonging to the Roman empire. The Jews were accused

and held responsible for any calamity, and therefore they had to be exterminated with all means possible. What our Lord said was equally fulfilled with the Jews as well as with the followers of Christ, *“They shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, the time comes, that whosoever killeth you will think that he does God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them ...”* (Jn. 16: 2-4).

Indeed those murderers were convinced of doing God and the church a great service. The trinitarian Christianity was to be freed from the Jewish monotheism. Also Christians were being persecuted because they did not submit to that state-church. It was impossible for them to become part of this blood-stained system. They remained in fellowship with Christ. Even the esteemed reformer Martin Luther could not rid himself of the hatred towards the Jews. As a monk this idea penetrated into his flesh and blood. One can read but hardly understand what he said, **“Luther said in his last sermon on Feb. 15th, 1546, about the Jewish physicians that they prescribe medicine by which one later must perish.”** (H.-J. Gamm, *Das Judentum*, pg. 64).

From century to century, the hatred mounted and the statements against the Jews became more severe. Partly passages from the Scriptures were used to justify all that cruelty. When Jesus spoke of the unbelieving Jews, that was one thing and when He referred to the believing Jews, that was another. But the same applies to all the people and nations.

Considering this, the universal church must allow itself to be asked whether it brought salvation as claimed or whether it brought the most destructive actions without mercy against Jews, the heathens and those who believed differently because they had their own goals in view. It was responsible for all the wars, all the persecutions, confiscating properties and committing crimes and murders right until the dark ages, when a third of the European soil was under its possession. Property from the living and the dead was found therein. Princes and kings nor anyone in the authority dared to withstand but on the contrary all were eagerly co-operating. **“Rudolf von Habsburg declared in 1286 the Jews with person, possessions and land as belonging to his chamber”** (H.-J. Gamm, *Das Judentum*, pg. 84).

All the curses which were repeated especially by the popes, the

bishops and the whole curia have laid the foundation for the Jews and those believing differently to be persecuted without mercy at all times by the Roman church. It will only be clarified at the last judgment whether the six-million Jews who were killed and exterminated by the Third Reich during World War II will be put on the account of the German people or on the account of the Roman Catholic church. For the Catholics Hitler, Himmler and the Jesuit Goebbels, the ground was long prepared. Popes have repeatedly spoken of the providence as did the deceiver — Führer Hitler.

Whoever has read the literature about popes and their doings right into our time would have been shaken. Jews and believers of different faith were simply regarded as nothing. The Jesuit-pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) declared, “**Anathema on the one who says: the Holy Spirit does not want us to kill the heretic**” (E. Paris, *The secret history of the Jesuits*, pg. 167). Since when does the Holy Spirit kill? According to the testimony of the Scriptures, the Spirit brings life. Those who did not stay true to the state-church were branded as heretics, and the clergy gave itself the right to liquidate them. From this viewpoint, we also understand why pope Pius XII kept silent during World War II when millions of Jews were slaughtered. Only one city block away from the Vatican, a Jewish synagogue was burned down, and the pope did not say a single word. But the present pope was being celebrated when he visited the new synagogue and enjoyed listening as Psalm 150 being sung by the blinded Jewish congregation.

When the Lord met Abraham He gave him the promise, “*And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curses thee ...*” (Gen 12: 2-3). This utterance should have stood before them who pretended to believe God and His Word.

The strict monotheism which is originally and exclusively in the Jewish-faith stood in the way of those bishops who came out of heathenism. At first they wished to get rid of the Jews and then they also did not want to be identified with the God of the Jews. The Hebrew word “Mashiah” was transferred the Greek Christos — the anointed. The Hebrew “Yahshua” became the Greek Jesus. The formulations concerning the Godhead sprung up from Hellenistic thinking and were to the people and God of Israel totally strange. The New Testament does not know any hatred towards the Jews as some historians would try to say. What most of them

did not realise is found in the utterance of the Lord: "*Salvation cometh from the Jews*" (Jn. 4: 22).

The prophets in the Old Testament had already foretold that the gentile nations would participate in the salvation of God. "*I, the Lord (Yahweh), have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the nations*" (Isa. 42: 6). "... *I will also give thee for a light to the nations, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.*" (Isa. 49: 6b). The Lord commenced with the Jews when He said, "*But go rather, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*" (Mt. 10: 6). The apostle Peter first experienced how a Roman general by the name of Cornelius was saved with all his house (Acts 10). The apostle Paul was advised by the Lord, "*And he said unto me, Depart; for I will send thee far from here unto the gentiles*" (Acts 22: 21). In the great commission, the Lord clearly gave the commandment: "*Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations ...*" (Mt. 28: 19). The church of the living God consists of all nations and peoples.

The Roman empire was everywhere present and, therefore, the Roman state-church could use all the civil means for their own goal. In reality there was never a Christianisation but a Catholicisation of the nations. The people did not come to believe in Christ through the proclamation of the gospel, they were forced to accept the Catholic state religion. During the approximate 1,000 years of the reign of the Roman Catholic church, the earth was soaked with blood. The number of the martyrs is estimated differently and the highest spoken of is 68 million. All who believed differently had no chance to survive. Even the counter-reformation was a very bloody one and earthly means were used to combat which certainly had again nothing to do with the proclamation of the gospel. On the contrary, the church used the earthly power to establish itself again. All know about the Spanish Inquisition and the witch trials. In the name of Christianity, people were deprived of their human rights, were burned, were driven out and were persecuted all over Europe simply because they believed differently. In the St. Bartholomew's Eve, 23rd/24th August, 1572, at the wedding of Henry III of Navarre and Marguerite de Valois in Paris only 3,000 and in the whole of France, more than 20,000 Huguenots were slaughtered. "**Pope Gregory XIII celebrated the slaughter of the French Protestants with a «Te deum»**" (B. Harenberg, Chronik der Menschheit, pg. 437).

This church has never exhibited the nature of Christ nor has it ever represented the life of the early church. It is responsible for all doctrinal exchanges, so in reality, nothing concerning the faith is found within in its original form. The reading of the Holy Bible was forbidden and those who did were punished. It is shocking that especially Jews and Bible believing Christians were persecuted and burned by this church with their Bible. Why had this institution to fear the Bible in such a way?

Chapter 4

THE UNFOUNDED CLAIMS OF THE POPES

As already seen convincingly, the Catholic church indeed began about 1,600 years ago and not approximately 2,000 years ago. It is therefore not surprising that not one doctrine or practice in this church coincides with the original church. The same terminologies are being used like “baptism”, “Lord’s supper”, “repentance” etc., but they mean something else and they are being administered and practised in a totally different way to what they were in the early church.

Nowhere is a pope spoken of in the Holy Scriptures nor is therein mentioned of a successor of Peter, neither a vicar of Christ nor of any apostolic succession. Some scripture passages were used by force to justify the self-established aspiration, namely the Words of Jesus in Mt. 16:18, *“And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter (petros) and upon this rock (petra) I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”* The Lord did not say to Peter, “... upon thee I will build my church”, but instead, *“... upon this rock”*. The word “petros” means stone, but the church should be built consisting of many stones (I Pet. 2: 5) upon “petra”, the rock.

If somebody wishes to look this up in the Greek text of the Old and the New testament, there the “rock” is spoken of as “petra”. How could the Lord of heaven build His church upon a man, even if he were the greatest prophet or apostle? That is simply absurd. Peter was a movable stone “petros” and not the immovable rock “petra”. Just 5 verses after this statement the Lord turns to Peter and says the following words, *“... get thee behind me, Satan. Thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that are of God, but those that are of men”* (vs. 23).

Peter had just received the revelation who Christ is and upon **this revelation of Jesus Christ** the church was built. One must read verse 17 before speaking about verse 18. *“And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah; for flesh and blood has not revealed it unto thee, but my Father, who is in heaven.”* The connection here shows very clearly that Peter had received a heavenly revelation of who Jesus Christ is. The same he already uttered in verse 16: *“And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”* Just before that statement, the Lord had asked about the various other

opinions. But when He asked, "... *But who say ye that I am?*", the answer was a divine revelation, and upon this revelation of Jesus Christ the New testament church is founded.

Verse 19 is also misconstrued and falsely interpreted. "*And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.*" The concern are the keys of the kingdom of heaven. John the Baptist commenced his preaching, "... *saying, Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*" (Mt. 3: 2). Our Lord started His ministry with the same wording, "*From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*" (Mt. 4: 17). In Luke 16: 16 the connection is shown unto us, "*The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached ...*"

On the day of Pentecost, the first believers entered into the Kingdom of God and were more privileged than John the Baptist himself who had announced this Kingdom, therefore, our Lord said, "*Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force*" (Mt. 11: 11-12). The apostle Peter had received divine authority which he used as the keys of the Kingdom of heaven in the right way. He was the one who gave the ever valid ordinances for the New Testament church right at the very beginning.

The symbol of keys is very easy to understand. Whosoever has a key for a house may enter, who has one for a car can drive the same and whosoever is in possession of the keys of the Kingdom of heaven has the access to this kingdom and he could unlock things which were formerly locked up and could reveal what was hidden before. By the power of divine calling and of placing into the ministry, the New Testament doctrines binding for the whole period of grace were laid down for the church and can never be altered. The Lord accused the spiritual leaders of His day in regards to the keys as follows: "*Woe unto you, lawyers! For ye have taken away the key of knowledge; ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered*" (Lk. 11: 52). Could it be that we find ourselves today in the same spiritual condition?

It is also misunderstood and wrongly interpreted what Jesus spoke in this connection mentioned to Peter, "... *and whatsoever thou shalt bind*

on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Mt. 16: 19). What does this mean? Whatever the apostle Peter by the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit declared must be valid as long as the church is on the earth. Repentance, water baptism and baptism of the Holy Spirit, all this was done under God’s leading and, therefore, it is valid in heaven as it is valid on earth. This is the actual significance of the keys.

The divine authority was not restricted to Peter only who in the hour of the birth of the New Testament church spoke forth the things which must be taught and practised. But the same authority was also placed on the whole church. This fact is shown without doubt in Mt. 18: 18 where the text is used in the plural, *“Verily I say unto you, Whatever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”* It is seen very clearly that the same authority given to the man of the first hour to lay down the binding doctrines and practices was also given to the whole church because it must teach and practise what was laid down. As seen from the connection, it is also valid for the things personally pertaining to every believer. If someone did not take heed to what the church according to the Word decided, the same was considered to be an unbeliever. This divine authority is not bound to a single man but rather it is the authority of the Word Itself for the whole church. It, therefore, cannot be applied peradventure but must be used in precise agreement with the Holy Scriptures. The next verse shows exactly how the application is administered according to the prayer, *“Again I say unto you that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them by my Father, who is in heaven”* (Mt. 18: 19).

A clarification should also be given about John 20: 21-23. There the Lord spoke to the apostles, *“Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you; as my Father has sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and spake unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit. Whosoever’s sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever’s sins ye retain, they are retained.”* This passage is also totally misunderstood by the Roman Catholic church and is being applied unscriptural. There is no man on earth who has something to do with the forgiveness of sins. The sins are forgiven by God only. Through the preaching of the gospel those who believe in Christ and in the accomplished work of redemption receive the forgiveness of sins from God. It is clear that no one can forgive his own sins or the sins of someone else. The Scripture

says, “*And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations*” (Lk. 24: 47). “*And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, has he made alive together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses*” (Col. 2: 13).

What does the utterance which is in the plural actually signify “*Whosoever’s sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them...*”? To whom was it addressed and in what connection? After His resurrection, our Lord spoke to the apostles whom He had personally called to preach the gospel. In this connection, Jesus refers to the sin committed against someone directly ordained to preach the gospel. When our Lord ministered, there were those who sinned against Him, because they were ascribing the supernatural ministry to Beelzebub. He then made the following statement, “*Wherefore, I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age, neither in the age to come*” (Mt. 12: 31-32). Whosoever sins against those men of God who were called and authorised to minister according to the divine calling since the day of Pentecost, is in great danger.

If somebody blasphemes a man sent from God, persecutes and stones him then that man can forgive to the persecutor this sin. Jesus Himself gave us the best example of such forgiveness, “*Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do*” (Lk. 23: 34). When Stephen was stoned he followed his Master’s example, “*... calling upon God and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge...*” (Acts 7: 59-60). When someone does not sin against the man of God but against the working of the Holy Spirit through the gifts of the Spirit which are in operation and blasphemes, that is an unpardonable sin which is being retained. A man of God can only forgive those who sin against him and not those who sin against the Holy Spirit. In the Lord’s prayer we are clearly taught, “*And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*” (Mt. 6: 12). “*And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have anything against any, that your Father also, who is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses*” (Mk 11: 25). If somebody sins against his neighbour and if it were even until seventy times seven, we must forgive one another (Mt. 18: 21-35).

Therefore, if someone blasphemes against a servant of God, it can be

forgiven. In a case where the Holy Spirit is working through a man and somebody blasphemes whatever is done by the Holy Spirit, then the man is not concerned whom God uses as a vessel, but it is directed against the Holy Spirit Himself. In such a case a person is guilty before God of having committed the unpardonable sin against the Holy Spirit. This can never be forgiven and that is the sin unto death — the eternal separation from God. Generally every human being is guilty before God and receives the forgiveness of sins from Him who alone can forgive. *“Who forgives all thine iniquities, who healeth all thine diseases”* (Ps. 103: 3). *“Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin”* (Rom. 4: 7-8).

The practice of the Roman Catholic church, to express it mildly, is unscriptural. All through life sins are being forgiven and from birth until death salvation is administered, but after death the mourners are told that the deceased in spite of having received even the last sacrament did not go up but landed in purgatory. There he shall be further cleansed from his sins committed in his lifetime although having received forgiveness all the time. What a paradox! By the way there is no purgatory as such and it was invented as were many other doctrines and dogmas.

The Swiss reformer Huldrych Zwingli wrote like this, **“Therefore purgatory — such is called the deceptive fire-atonement, but can nowhere be verified in God’s Word. How is it possible that we can be so dumb to believe such fade, suspicious and foolish talk. We see the same person who defend purgatory teach us how one can quench the same. They themselves offer to be fire extinguishers. They say, ‘You must pay money, with it the fire will quickly diminish, if those who take the money bravely say Mass, pray and sing songs.’ They read Mass, at the same time stretch out their hand after money.”** (Zwingli, *Der Theologe*, II part, pp 193-194).

Since the coming into existence of this universal church, many new and strange things were invented, taught and proclaimed as dogmas which have absolutely nothing to do with the original Christendom. The believers of the early church did not know anything about candles, incense or holy water. The same applies to the beatification or canonisation of the deceased or their veneration. There was no daily Mass, no calling upon a mother of God and no convents. Before me is a list of the various proclamations right to the declaration of the infallibility of the pope in the year 1870 of which we shall mention later. Against this were strong protests among those present, 79 German theologians were against

and only 25 for it. In 1950 the dogma was proclaimed that Mary ascended bodily into heaven. All such things have no Biblical foundation. On the contrary they are directly against God's Word. It is written, "*And no man has ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven*" (Jn. 3: 13).

The proclamations of the popes must be classified as being antichrist, because they are directly contrary to Christ's own declarations. At the council of Ephesus (431 A.D.) Mary was declared Mother of God. From then on the different titles were added such as Queen of heaven, Mediator, Advocate, Mother of mercy, Mother of the Church and the one who bruised the serpent's head. The many descriptions which apply only to Christ were transferred and given to Mary. All this is antichrist. HE is the King, He is the Mediator, He is the Advocate and He is the One Who bruised the serpents head. If Mary is the one who has done all this where do we place Christ and what has He done?

The reformer Martin Luther has spoken up regarding church councils and the declarations made by the popes attending the Reichstag at Worms on the 18th of April, 1521. His statement is documented in the church history. "**Because I don't believe the pope nor the council as it is a fact that they often erred and caught themselves in contradictory statements. So am I, if not conquered by the testimony of the Scriptures and illuminating reasons, am I conquered by the testimonies of the Scriptures I referred to and I am taken a prisoner in God's Word. Retract I cannot and will not, because to act against the conscience is not safe and not beneficial. So help me God. Amen.**" (F. Haus, *Väter der Christenheit*, pg. 147). History proves how fallible the popes were. "**Until the end of the Thirty Years' War there were 245 popes; 24 antipopes, and a fable which was long believed to be a historical truth, one woman-pope. 19 popes had left Rome, 35 reigned outside Italy, 8 did not reign longer than one month, 40 than one year, 22 up to two years, 54 up to five years, 57 up to ten years, 51 up to fifteen years, 18 up to twenty years, and only 10 popes reigned longer than twenty years. From the 245 popes 31 were declared usurpers and heretics. Among the legitimate popes 64 died by force, 18 popes were poisoned, 4 were strangled and 13 died in peculiar manners.**" (E. Rosenow, *Wider die Pfaffenherrschaft*, vol. 1, pg. 42).

Rome or more precisely the Vatican has assumed universal authority which in no way is justified by God's Word. It is a worldly power under a clerical robe. The legend that Peter was in Rome and even being a bishop there for twenty years is a desperate effort to justify the invented

assertion by the universal church. Historians only record of a man Simon Magus who made a great impression on the Roman senate because of his sorcery tricks. Indeed the missionary trips of Paul and those of Peter are clearly described. There is no doubt about them. If Peter would have made a trip to Rome that would have been an outstanding event, a sensation, and most certainly it would have been recorded.

According to Galatians 2: 9 Peter, James and John gave the hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas and agreed that Paul and Barnabas would minister to the nations, whereas Peter, James and John would be working for the Jews. Paul has written letters to the church in Rome and at the end he greets 27 persons by name, but Peter is not found in this list. Also in the many letters Paul wrote being in Rome to churches and single brethren Peter is not mentioned even a single time.

If one considers the word of God and compares it with the religious developments it becomes quite evident that none of the doctrines the Roman church invented can stand the test of the Holy Scriptures. The self-established authority of the popes is totally unfounded. In the whole of church history, it is not recorded even a single time where a pope had received a divine call or had an experience with the Lord. On the contrary, it is commonly known that the popes are determined by the conclave — the college of cardinals.

Chapter 5

WHO IS MARY?

We wish to have a look at the virtuous Mary and see what God did through her and also on the other hand what men made of her. This Miriam, which was her name, was a virgin and through her the promise of God by the prophet Isaiah was fulfilled. *“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel”* (Isa. 7: 14).

In some new Bible translations, the word “virgin” is being replaced with “young woman”, but that is a distortion of the original meaning. At the time of this greatest event she was not a “young woman” but that she was later. She was a virgin when the Holy Ghost overshadowed her. A virgin is clean and untouched.

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was in this way: When as his mother, Mary, was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit” (Mt. 1: 18).

Joseph was so disappointed that he wanted to leave her. We can imagine the feelings he had. *“Then Joseph, her promised husband, being a just man, not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately.”* He wanted no scandal but was aggravated and therefore decided to leave her quietly. *“But while he thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit”* (Mt. 1: 19-20).

Here we find the first statement that Mary who was espoused to Joseph later became his wife. Those who read the context will find out that Joseph acted precisely according to the instruction given unto him. *“... did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife, and knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son; and he called his name Jesus”* (vs. 24-25). This is a very clear statement. Only after the birth of Jesus Christ had they family relations. From this marriage, four sons and daughters whose number is not given came forth. *“Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us?”* (Mt. 13: 55-56). This is the scriptural truth. All

other ideas which are meant to honour Mary are purposely formulated and invented.

Already in Mt. 1: 16, Joseph is mentioned as the husband of Mary in the genealogy. Also about this fact of the marriage from which came forth the children, we would like to have more witnesses. The evangelist Mark states the same fact in chapter 6, verse 3. Luke knew also this fact and records that His mother and His brethren came to see Him, *“Then came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come to him, because of the crowd ... and he answered, and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these who hear the word of God and do it”* (Lk. 8: 19-21).

Jesus did not come to establish an earthly relation, therefore, He could not treat His earthly mother and her sons with preference. He gave the needed correction to underline who the true children of God are, namely those who hear and do God's Word.

False inspirations were already there in those days. This is also not withheld from us. *“And it came to pass, as he spoke these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto them, Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the breasts which nursed thee. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it”* (Lk. 11: 27-28). What a typical adoration was uttered there, but the Lord gave a very quick and precise correction at that very moment.

To further even more the cult of Mary, Luke 1: 28 is being falsified and in some cases even wrongly translated. It should read like this, *“And he came to her and said, Hail, oh favoured one, endued with grace, the Lord is with you ...”* In the Catholic catechism, it reads like this, *“Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee”*. There is a tremendous difference between some one having found grace with God and to be full of the grace.

Mary grew up and lived like all other girls. Before the angel Gabriel spoke to her she was engaged to Joseph and of course was planning to get married. It was the espoused Mary to whom the angel spoke, *“... do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found grace with God”* (Lk. 1: 30). Most certainly she was surprised hearing this message from the heavenly messenger. This verse confirms once more that it was not Mary who was full of grace, but as it is written that she had found grace before God. Therefore, she could say, *“Behold, I am the handmaiden of the Lord;*

let it be done to me according to what you have said. And the angel left her” (vs. 38).

There is no place in the Holy Scriptures which speaks of the grace of Mary or of the favour of Joseph. On the contrary, the grace of God appeared to us when the Word was made flesh dwelling among us (Jn. 1). For ever the grace of God is only found in the Redeemer Himself. *“And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ”* (Jn. 1: 16-17). Also in this regard, the Scripture contains a very clear testimony.

The Son does not rest on Mary’s breast or in her arms as shown on innumerable pictures and statues, but rather as it is written, in the Father’s bosom. *“No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him”* (Jn. 1: 18). All pictures showing the mother with the child are of heathen origin, they detect fertility gods and goddesses. They were just adopted. This deception took people away from the true worship of God to a service of idolatry. Jesus is not the blessed fruit of Mary; but she was only the vessel to carry the divine substance — the Word which was made flesh.

In the following verses, we are told about the human failure of Mary. After the Passover in Jerusalem, the people went home. But Jesus being twelve years of age remained in the temple. The family did not even notice for several days that He was not with them. *“And it came to pass, that after three days, they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them and asking them questions”* (Lk. 2: 46). Of course, Mary was concerned and did not pay exact attention to what she said rebuking Him slightly in that moment when she found Him. *“And his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee, sorrowing”* (Lk. 2: 48).

The answer of the child Jesus was a definite correction, *“And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Knew ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?”* (vs. 49). He certainly did not refer to Joseph or his workshop, but rather to His heavenly Father. Then and there He corrected the statement Mary made who incorrectly in that moment called Joseph His Father.

Mary herself needed God’s grace and salvation. She was found among the hundred-and-twenty who had gathered in the upper room to receive the Holy Spirit after Jesus Christ was taken to heaven. *“These all*

continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren" (Acts 1: 14). The brethren found it difficult to believe at first (Jn. 7: 3-5), but as we are told later they were among the true believers.

Nothing was known about any veneration of Mary. She was found with those who prayed with supplication waiting to experience the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The personal receiving of the Holy Spirit is necessary for salvation to every child of God, and Mary was no exception.

It is said, "The Son fulfils every petition of Mary". Where is such written? False hopes are being nourished. At the wedding in Cana in Galilee, there was not sufficient beverage. *"And when they lacked wine, the mother of Jesus says unto him, They have no wine. Jesus says unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour has not yet come"* (Jn. 2: 3-4). It was a very sharp answer and shows very clearly that no one can influence Him, not even Mary.

The good advice she gave to those serving should be taken to heart, *"Whatever he says unto you do it"* (vs. 5). This is the great lesson for all humanity. The brethren of the Lord are not only mentioned in the gospels, Paul also refers to them, *"Have we no right to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?"* (I Cor. 9: 5). To the Galatians the apostle writes, *"But other of the apostles saw I none, except James, the Lord's brother"* (Gal. 1: 19). It is very strange but true, that Mary was never again mentioned in the New Testament except in Acts 2 when receiving the Holy Ghost. A Bible believing Christian is satisfied with the fact that she had served in the God ordained purpose. The early Christians had not the spirit of idolatry but the Holy Spirit and gave all adoration to God, the Creator, and not to any one of the creation.

"After the 7th century, a totally unbiblical veneration and deifying of Mary began. Since the 12th century the Ave Maria was being recited. The celebrating feasts were since the year 1140 enriched by the feast of the immaculate conception. In the 12th century the use of the rosary began. In the sign of Mary the Catholic church aims to win the world for itself. Therefore the cult with Mary was more strongly emphasised after World War II." (O. Markmann, Irrtümer der katholischen Kirche, pg. 48-50).

We must differentiate and discern between the things which are being

taught and practised to know whether it is the Holy Spirit or the antichrist spirit which is at work. It must be emphasised and clearly stated that the Mary presented in the Holy Scriptures is our example in regards to faith. It is said about her, *“And blessed is she that believed, for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord”* (Lk. 1:45). The same applies to all of us. We must believe all the promises which God gave to us. Only then we have the guarantee that they will be accomplished. All of us must say as she did, *“Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word”* (Lk. 1:38). The Mary of the Scriptures is totally different to the one who was deified in the year 431 at the council of Ephesus.

Chapter 6

WHAT IS THE CULT OF MARY?

According to the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, only God can be an object of faith and worship. If anyone or anything else is lifted up for such a purpose, it is superstition and idolatry. Protestant theologians have already written about it sufficiently and convincingly. For better understanding we shall refer to a few statements. There is no justification for the cult of Mary. Appearances of her were not promised in the Holy Scriptures. Approximately 1,500 years elapsed without such appearances. Strangely, such appearances are only recorded in Catholic countries like Poland, Portugal, Spain and France. In protestant, Moslem, Buddhist and other countries, where it would have been helpful, if salvation is depending on it, she never appeared. May everyone be assured that she can never appear same as Peter, Joseph or any others cannot appear. It only happens by imagination, because it is so desired. One can ask, who is being worshipped and honoured in all such places of pilgrimage, Jesus or Mary? What kind of spirit is it, which does not glorify Jesus but Mary? The Holy Spirit it is surely not. It is the spirit of deception. Rev. O. Markmann writes under the title "The demonology in the cult of Mary" as follows: **"The mystic cult around Mary is also marked by demonic influence. The veneration of Mary is being recorded from the first centuries. The antic heathen cult of mother-goddesses was being developed in the cult of Mary, already in the first centuries."** (O. Markmann, Irrtümer der katholischen Kirche, pg. 47).

Since when does God have a mother? Such a formulation is totally unscriptural. She was not the Mother of God but she only gave birth to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. It was in the city of Ephesus, where the multitude cried out, saying: *"Great is Diana of the Ephesians"* (Acts 19: 28). Now they sing in special meetings: "Great is Mary!" It was very easy to take one down and to put the other up.

Only from the 5th century, the cult of Mary really took its course. Arthur Drews writes, **"Under the aspect from the historical point, the veneration of Mary shows the picture of the misery of humanity. It is the story of a childlike superstition, of audacious falsifications, distortions, interpretations, imaginations and machinations, springing up from the human frailty and necessity, the Jesuit cunningness, woven together with the church might, a drama**

equally fit to weep and to laugh: the true Divine Comedy.” (K. Deschner, *Und abermals krächte der Hahn*, pg. 401).

From the “Hail Mary” to the dogma of her bodily ascension to heaven, all are unscriptural and, therefore, false inventions which were introduced during the approximately 1,600 years into the Roman church. Today all these are looked upon as belonging to the Christian faith, but in reality it is the doing of the antichrist, the enemy, who detracts humanity from the only faith of salvation in Jesus Christ to the unsaving superstition in Mary. Since the Reformation until our time, notable theologians have openly spoken and written about it.

The superstition in the appearances of Mary at various places of pilgrimage is an abomination in the sight of God by which even sincere people are misled. Rev. Markmann writes about the present pope: **“Is it not blasphemy when the pope at his Poland visit knelt at the feet of the black Madonna in Jasna Gora in Tchenstochow and put down a golden rose and in quiet ecstasy confessing before this idol: Totus tuum, totally yours? This prayer to Mary Totus tuus he chose as leading idea for his whole life as priest and for his pontificate. His prayer to the black Madonna there ended with the words, ‘To you I dedicate the whole church right unto the borders of the earth! To you I dedicate humanity, all men — my brothers — all people and all nations. To you I dedicate Rome and Poland, united in a new tie of love through your servant. Mother, receive us. Mother, forsake us not. Mother, guide us!’”** (O. Markmann, *Endzeit, Entrückung, Antichrist*, pg. 32-33). Mary was made the mother of the Roman Catholic church. She is not the Queen of heaven but she is the queen of the Roman Catholic empire.

According to the book “Fatima” from Joaquim Maria Alonso Mary is supposed to have appeared with glory on the 13th of May, 1917, to three shepherd children. The number 13 appears over and again. On the 13th July, 1917, the “holy virgin” asked the three children to return the next month. On the 13th September, 1917, at the fifth appearance she is supposed to have said, “I want that you return on the 13th of October to this place and pray the rosary.” Till the sixth appearance on the 13th of October, 1917, the crowd of those who made a pilgrimage to that place was estimated to be fifty-thousand. In the course of years, millions went there on pilgrimage to tell Mary their requests not being aware of the fact that Mary herself needed God’s help and that she cannot help a single person.

In Fatima, Mary is shown on many statues and pictures which are

being honoured. This pope John Paul II knelt down in the chapel of appearance in front of such a statue. This cult stands in direct contradiction to the commandment: *“Thou shalt not make unto thee any carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I, the LORD thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me”* (Ex. 20: 4-5). Those who appreciate such statues must permit to be classified as such who hate God. In reality its nothing but the dancing around the golden calf. One has his holy Christophorus, someone else other images and also a man-made Christ image is being carried around.

It reminds me of a conversation we had with some guests. We also spoke about the faith. I asked if anyone has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Spontaneously a lady answered, “I sold my Jesus.” We all were astonished for a moment. Then she explained, how she was dealing with antiques and sold a Jesus statue of 1,25 m to a church.

There are millions of such statues all over the earth and they are all an abomination before God. In His Holiness, He pronounces judgment upon those who worship such images. *“Cursed be the man who maketh any carved or melted image, an abomination unto the LORD, the works of the hands of the craftsman, and putteth it in a secret place. And all the people shall answer and say, Amen.”* (Dt. 27: 15). People do not seek their refuge with Him Who is able to help, but try to find help in such invented things. Thereby they offend and insult God to the utmost. When the Lord Jesus was asked about the first commandment, He replied: *“The first of all the commandments is: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.”* (Mk. 12: 29-30). Certainly there is no space here for Mary, for saints, for patrons, statues or icons.

Can Mary as a human being hear the millions of prayers made throughout the world without her being omniscient? Can Mary be in heaven, on earth and in purgatory without being omnipresent? Only God is omnipresent and omniscient. All places of pilgrimage, regardless in which country they may be, are an abomination before God and, therefore, condemnable. **THUS SAITH THE LORD:** *“Seek ye me, and ye shall live. But seek not Bethel, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to Beersheba; for*

Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Bethel shall come to nothing. Seek the LORD, and ye shall live.” (Am. 5: 4-6).

Today He would say, “Seek Me, saith the Lord, and you shall live. Do not go to Lourdes and Fatima, not to Tchenstochow and Altötting etc. etc., but come to Me all ye ends of the earth to receive eternal life.” Whoever seeks God will find Him just where they are, because God is omnipresent.

Vittorio Messori cited the German cardinal Joseph Ratzinger as follows, **“And the same John Paul II went after his injury on 13th May — the anniversary of the first appearance in the Portuguese village — on a pilgrimage to Fatima to thank Mary whose hand was led in a marvellous way to direct the bullet.”** (V. Messori, *Zur Lage des Glaubens*, pg. 112). The same cardinal Ratzinger announced that the church has proclaimed the dogmas in the following order, **“... first the perpetual virginity and the motherhood of God, and then after a long time of maturity and reflection the exclusion of the original sin and the bodily assumption of Mary into heavenly glory.”** After this we read the incredible sentence: **“These dogmas protect the original faith in Christ as true God and true man.”** (V. Messori, *Zur Lage des Glaubens*, pg. 108).

This cannot be left without clarification. The four dogmas have as all the others no Biblical foundation. The scriptural truths are not made up in a council, nor voted for and brought into existence, but rather they were to be believed and taught as proclaimed in the name of the Lord by those who were called by God. With all determination Mr. Ratzinger must be confronted with his own utterance: **“It is actually understood by itself that truth cannot be created by voting; and utterance is either true or it is not true. Truth can only be found, not created”** (pg. 62). If somebody does not appreciate the truth — the Word — he must look for a substitute; and if someone has no trust in God then he should ride as the pope does in a bullet proof automobile through the crowd of his followers.

In theology it went from the Christology to the Maryology. Special meetings are taking place openly glorifying Mary. In fact, all the things are surrounding her. Christ is only mentioned when it fits into the program. **“The pope requested a renewal to honour Mary in a Biblical manner, trinitarian and christologically oriented, without cuts in consideration to those of other beliefs, expressed according to time and culture.”** (Katholischer Erwachsenen Katechismus, pg. 173). What can a Bible believing Christian say to such unbiblical, misleading, blasphemous statements in regards to the honour of Mary?

What are those invented dogmas and traditions? Are they true or not true? Have they come up as cardinal Ratzinger himself said, after a long time of maturity and reflection, that is to say, they were not original truth, but were made up? The years which elapsed confirm that. Where is the truth that needs to be found? For sure it is only in God's Word and nowhere else. A Bible believing Christian belonging to the Church of the living God is "... *built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.*" (Eph. 2: 20). Nothing which the popes have invented in the course of years agrees with the Bible and, therefore, is not apostolic. Why did Peter, James, John and Paul not care about Mary, at that time when everything was so fresh?

The apostle John addressed a very important message to the true believers which is valid for ever: "*I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.*" (I Jn 2: 21). Not one of the proclaimed dogmas originates from the Word of truth. They all sprang up from a different source.

Now the approximate year is given in which certain things were invented and which were not in existence in the early Christianity:

- 310 The Sign of the cross began.
- 320 Wax candles were introduced.
- 375 The veneration of angels and dead saints began.
- 394 The worship of Mary was invented.
- 500 Priests began to dress differently from the people.
- 600 The Latin language for prayer and worship in churches was imposed by Gregory I; prayers were directed to Mary or to dead saints.
- 650 Feast in honour of the Virgin Mary began.
- 709 Kissing of the Pope's feet began.
- 750 The temporal power of the Pope was invented.
- 788 Adoration of Mary and dead Saints began;
Worship of the Cross, of images and relics was invented.
- 850 Holy water, mixed with a pinch of salt and blessed by the priest with bell, book and candle was invented.

- 890 Veneration of St. Joseph, the husband of Mary, began.
- 965 Baptism of bells was instituted.
- 995 Canonisation of dead Saints was first invented by Pope John V.
- 998 Fasting on Fridays and during Lent were imposed.
- 1079 The celibacy of the priesthood was decreed.
- 1090 The Rosary was introduced.
- 1100 The Mass was developed gradually as a sacrifice, and attendance was made obligatory.
- 1184 The inquisition of heretics was instituted.
- 1190 The sale of indulgences began.
- 1200 The wafer was substituted for bread in the Lord's Supper.
- 1215 The dogma of Transubstantiation was invented and the confession of sins to the priest at least once a year was forced.
- 1220 Adoration of the wafer, (host), was invented.
- 1227 The Hand Bell the priest uses at the Mass as a signal to the people that the wafer is soon to be changed into the body of Christ was introduced.
- 1229 The Bible was forbidden to laymen.
- 1245 Cardinals were ordered to wear red hats.
- 1264 The Feast of Corpus Christ was introduced.
- 1414 The cup was forbidden to the people by instituting the communion of one kind.
- 1439 The Doctrine of Purgatory was proclaimed.
- 1478 The Inquisition was introduced into Spain.
- 1545 Tradition was declared as of equal authority with the Bible.
- 1546 The Apocryphal Books were added to the Bible.
- 1854 The Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary was invented
- 1870 Doctrine of Pope's Infallibility was invented.

1925 The Personal Corporal Presence of the Virgin Mary in Heaven was invented.

1950 The dogma of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary was proclaimed.

(L. J. King, *House of Death ...*, pg. 117-122).

Every thinking man may ask about the sense of all these inventions which were proclaimed after many years elapsed. The New Testament in itself is perfect and complete. Nobody has a right to add anything to that. *“Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man’s covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth to it.”* (Gal. 3: 15). If someone declares his last will in a testament, it cannot be changed. But with the expressed Will of God, the New Testament, men have tried to change it by adding articles of faith which are not in the original New Testament. Where is the due respect according to the following admonition: *“If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.”* (Rev. 22: 18).

Chapter 7

THE REFORMATION — A NEW BEGINNING

The divine intervention through the Reformation was overdue, but from the Biblical point of view it was not sufficient. The question arises whether the reformers who were all sons of the Roman church did fully comprehend that a new beginning was essential, because there was not much to be reformed in that worldly system. In one way, the Word of the prophet Jeremiah can be applied, *“Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns”* (4: 3), on the other hand also the prophecy: *“We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed; forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country ...”* It was an exodus, a breaking away and a coming out, as though the voice was heard from heaven: *“Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”* (Rev. 18: 4).

For example, Luther understood the words which were recorded by the apostle John, *“... for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.”* (Rev. 18: 23-24), also the utterance made by the prophet Jeremiah: *“Babylon hath been a golden cup in the LORD’s hand, that made all the earth drunk; the nations have drunk of her wine; therefore, the nations are mad.”* (51: 7). But the Reformation was not crowned by a break through to the early Christianity. In fact, certain things were reformed and others were changed or done away with.

The selling of indulgences, the role of the pope and the condition in general was in question. The most important was the testimony that man is saved and justified by grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ, the Redeemer. This message was the climax of the Reformation. It was the actual break through which caused the blowing up of the Babylonian prison house. On the other hand, certain doctrines were kept which were totally unscriptural and typically Catholic. The so-called sacraments were only reduced, the baptism of infants and other things were carried through.

Unfortunately, the concept of the trinity belief remained with the Protestants, and, therefore, they partly walked in the same footsteps.

Jews and those who believed differently, for instance the ones who practised baptism by immersion, were condemned by Luther, Schwenkfeld and such others. In Geneva, the Spanish physician Michel Servet was burned at stake on the 27th of October, 1553, with the consent of Calvin, just because he rejected the trinity teaching. The remarks Luther and Melancton made about those who rebaptised are documented in church history. The Catholic idea of it being the only saving church was not totally put away by the Reformers. Therefore, they did not tolerate those of other beliefs. Even up to this day, churches who exist for hundreds of years are still looked upon to be sects, although the word sect, according to Webster, denotes a portion from the whole, an organised religious fellowship. In view of this fact, all organised denominations are sects, namely a part from the whole. Because of the various cult-religions in recent time the word "sect" is seasoned with a bad flavour.

In the days of Reformation, the God set goal of the New Testament Church was not fully reached. But the first step in faith was certainly made which was the returning to the open preaching of God's word. We are, therefore, grateful to those before the Reformation who were burned at stakes and also for the actual reformers.

Henceforth, the Kingdom of God forced its way through. One revival followed the other. Ever more the light of the Gospel began to come forth evermore. From the first step of justification by faith followed the next of the experience of sanctification of heart by the same Word and the Spirit of God. Fiery revival preachers who made church history proclaimed the Bible truths which were experienced by the listeners. Like the servants of God in other times they were not officially respected because they were not dignitaries but they were just ministers of the Word who brought the people into connection with Christ by the preaching of the gospel. Regrettably some of those men stopped at a special doctrine revealed to them. Some were satisfied with justification, others with conversion and baptism and again others with sanctification. But God moved on by His Spirit.

Around the turn of this century, a spontaneous moving of the Spirit happened in the various protestant churches and among converted believers who were longing for God. Similar to the experience when Christianity originated, they also experienced God in a

supernatural way. So the Pentecostal movement of the 20th century had its beginning.

From the different movements since the Reformation and the revivals, various churches came into existence. Because of human failures and a mixed multitude, things went spiritually wrong, but this did not give the right to anyone to reject the infallible work of God. In each revival, the church was taken closer to original Christianity. The Spirit of God was moving until He was poured out again upon the justified, renewed and born again believers in the so-called Pentecostal revival.

John the Baptist proclaimed, *“I indeed baptise you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to loose; he shall baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire...”* (Lk. 3: 16). This announcement was first fulfilled on that notable day of Pentecost. The experience of the baptism in the Spirit gives the believer the assurance that God has received him. For the true children of God, it is the sealing with the Holy Ghost (Eph. 1: 13; Eph. 4: 30).

Of course, today we have the various Charismatic movements and also the Roman Catholic Pentecostal movement. An atmosphere is being created where people only have an experience, but they remain in their old traditions. They receive a certain anointing under the Spirit, but not the indwelling of Christ by the Spirit. Have they really experienced God in their soul? Are they truly renewed and born again and become partakers of the divine nature? This question can only be replied by each individual concerned. God’s true children who have received the infilling of the Holy Spirit will acknowledge the for ever valid redemption in Christ and make the everlasting Word of God their testimony and absolute.

They bear the fruits of the Spirit by which they are known. Gifts can be shown forth by many, but the fruits of the Spirit will only be seen with those who truly participate in the divine nature. This Word is still valid, *“Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father, who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out demons? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And*

then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Mt. 7: 20-23).

Right after World War II, in May, 1946, a mighty healing revival started in the U.S.A. A humble young minister ordained by Dr. Roy E. Davis in the Baptist church by the name of William Branham († 1965) of Jeffersonville, Indiana, had received a divine commission and spearheaded a mighty revival. Rev. Gordon Lindsay reports as an eye-witness and as one who accompanied this humble man for many years in his book «William Branham — a man sent from God» astounding things. He testifies having seen the same signs and wonders in his ministry as recorded in the days of Jesus Christ and the apostles. The blind received their sight, the lame walked and every kind of healing took place, even cancer cases in the last stage. In the second German edition of this book, the publishers of «Mehr Licht» in Hamburg reprinted the following note of Dr. Dibelius, the Bishop of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church on pg. 4: **“Many heartily thanks to you for the kind sending of the interesting book about the evangelist William Branham which was translated so fluently. For us this manner is a little strange as practised by the Americans. Perhaps it is good that an other spirit comes into our evangelisation practice. Therefore, I support your plan to invite Branham also to Germany.”**

This unique, powerful and divinely vindicated ministry gave reason for a great number of evangelists to start their own similar ministries. Many established their evangelistic associations, also the Full Gospel Businessmen, the Charismatic movements and a number of others had their beginning. If one looks very close at things, the religious mix-up is greater now than ever before. It is being said, “Christ is here; Christ is there”, but up till now no church has come into existence which could be compared with the original one at the beginning, having the same doctrines, practice and scriptural vindication. We need now at the end of the «New testament dispensation» a direct mighty move of God by the Holy Spirit in which all members of the Bride Church will grow and experience their completion in Christ. The divine goal is that Christ will have a church at the end which is exactly as the one in the beginning. What ever happened then, will repeat again.

Everything pertaining to the Church of the living God must be

brought back into its original state. A time of refreshing and a total restoration is promised before the return of Christ (Acts 3: 19-21 and others). Whoever is part of the Church of Jesus Christ will not be carried away by religious enthusiasm which often is combined with deceit, but will search the Holy Scriptures to find the promises given for this time and believe the same. Whatever God does, He will always do according to His Word. Before we can pray, "*Thy will be done ...*" the will of God must be revealed unto us from the Word Itself by the Spirit. This is not the time for special men, this is God's hour, the hour for God's Word — the truth. From this exposition, everyone has the possibility to prove whether the belief is according to the Scripture or whether the belief is according to a church doctrine. It is now important to find the connection to the last move of God before the return of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 8

THE GODHEAD

With the highest respect and in divine fear, we should approach this theme about the Godhead. We do have different religions and also various imaginations and teachings about God. In the following chapters, God will testify about Himself and make known of the Revelation of Himself.

Any formulation should be avoided, because it is not possible to comprehend what is incomprehensible, to explain what is unexplainable, and to understand what is far above our understanding. This great mystery will remain with us until we step from time into eternity. *“Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee”* (2 Chr. 6: 18). After we should be with God in Glory we shall know more about this great mystery of the Almighty.

Almost every Bible teacher has taken the train of thoughts about the Godhead which was discussed since the 4th century A.D. and was taught later. Why the Old Testament was not considered in this respect is hard to understand. No prophet or apostle ever formulated a trinity. In heathenism, there were many trinities in existence. The most renowned was the one in Hinduism: Brahma — the creator; Vishnu — the sustainer; Mahesh — the destroyer. Neither in the Old nor in the New Testament is it mentioned about different persons in the Godhead. Not once does the Lord introduce Himself in His Word as tri-une — three-person-God, but rather as the personal God. Whoever tries to divide God shall have no more the one true God but a self-made God with two or three faces or more gods.

In recent years, especially at Protestant Conventions, women theologians have raised their voice and criticised God and His Word. Sometimes in a very blasphemous way. One of their complaints was that God is male and not female. It was made mention of the **“masculine God of the Bible”** also of **“the ten commandments which were only written for men.”** It was declared, **“Because women do not have a male member which could be circumcised, they could not become a member of the Jewish assembly.”** (Idea-Spektrum 1st July 1987, pg. 17). It is shocking to experience how far people can go and even criticise God.

About 4,000 years ago, God made a covenant with Abraham and gave him the promise, "... *and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*" (Gen. 12: 3). Abraham is for Jews, Christians and Moslems a central figure. At the time of Moses, approximately 3,600 years ago, the Lord God came down upon Mount Sinai and gave the commandments. This incident is not disputed by the three named religions. From that time Israel was predestined to give testimony of the one true God amidst all the heathen nations.

Almost 2,000 years ago, the Messiah appeared being conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of Mary the virgin. The Christians are convinced of this fact. The Moslems respect Him as one of the greatest prophets, believe in His miracles, but do not see Him as the Redeemer. For the Jews the time to believe in Him is very near. As Joseph made himself known to his brethren at the second time, so Israel will recognise their Messiah when He will come to them the second time (Gen. 45; Acts 7: 13).

Approximately 1,400 years ago, Mohammed appeared on the scene. His task was to deliver the people from the heathen cults and turn them to believe in the one God, the Almighty, whom he called Allah. Mohammed believed to be the last prophet of Malachi 4: 5-6. After him the judgment should come upon the earth and Allah would decide who would go into paradise and who would be damned. Although all these years elapsed, this event has not yet taken place. But into existence came a religion which is very massive against Christians and Jews. This was not the original intention. Ever so often we find the admonition in the Koran: "Read the Scriptures". With this statement prophet Mohammed referred to the Bible which should be read and believed. Of course many of his followers, the Moslems, do not act accordingly.

The true understanding of God and His Self-revelation is very important and decisive. Only thereby we can participate in God's plan. In regard to the personal manifestation of God, one must sadly say the overwhelming majority of Jews did not recognise, the Christians quickly misinterpreted and the Moslems did not comprehend. This is a historical fact. If the same God who spoke to Abraham and Moses and revealed Himself through Christ also spoke to Mohammed, then whatever was said, written and believed must coincide from A to Z. As people of the 20th century we must be permitted to ask who understood God's Word and plan and who misunderstood. The original goal of God with humanity is no more known in the religions of today. Furthermore, the very reason

for the different manifestations of God right down to His Self-Revelation in Christ was not conceived by the majority.

For the English word «God» we find the Hebrew word *Elohim*. “*In the beginning Elohim created the heaven and the earth.*” The word God introduces us to the Almighty as an object of worship. In Genesis 1 we only find the word *Elohim*. From Gen. 2: 4, we find the combination, the LORD God, *Elohim-Yahweh*. Every time these names express the kind and significance of a particular revelation of God. We deal with the manifold attributes of Himself. The word *Elohim* includes both, the singular and the plural. The singular is in reference to Him as one God; the plural is to His attributes as He is Creator, Sustainer, Judge, King, etc, etc.

Every time the word *Elohim*, *Elah* or *El* are found in the original, only God is meant. Then it becomes very important to comprehend in what way He manifests the attributes of Himself. The following words are used of God: *El Elyon* = the highest God (Gen. 14: 18), *El Shaddai* = Almighty God (Gen. 17: 1), *El Olam* = everlasting God (Gen. 21: 33), *El Gibbor* = Mighty God (Isa. 9: 6). It is very sad that the Bible translators have not given the original names with their significance. Therefore, the knowledge about God and His specific manifestations appear difficult because in the original names the actual meaning was expressed.

From the days of the patriarchs until the giving of the law, it was God-*Elohim* speaking. Then He spoke to Moses, “*I am YAHWEH; And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob by the name of EL SHADDAI, but by my name ELOHIM YAHWEH was I not known to them.*” (Ex. 6: 2-3). It was just before making the covenant with Israel, God revealed His covenant name which is *Yahweh* and written in the Hebrew YHWH. Wherever we read in the Old Testament LORD God, the original text says *Elohim Yahweh*. *Yahweh* is the visible form or the appearance of *Elohim*.

In the same way as *Elohim* is found in the respective dealings with His people, expressed in the plurality of names, in the same way it also applies to the name of the Lord *Yahweh*. *Yahweh-Jireh* = the Lord provides (Gen. 22: 7-14), *Yahweh-Rapha* = the Lord heals (Ex. 15: 26), *Yahweh-Nissi* = the Lord my banner (Ex. 17: 8-15), *Yahweh-Shalom* = the Lord my peace (Jud. 6: 24), *Yahweh- Ra-ah* = the Lord my shepherd (Ps. 23), *Yahweh-Tsidkenu* = the Lord my righteousness (Jer. 23: 6), *Yahweh-Shammah* = the Lord is present (Ezek. 48: 35) and *Yahweh-*

Sabaoth = the Lord of hosts (1 Sam. 1: 3). From the very beginning, God revealed Himself as Lord according to the necessities of His plan and purpose with humanity.

Before the Lord God made known His name to Moses He said to him: "*I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you ... this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.*" (Ex. 3: 14-15). The expression *I AM* is embedded in the name *Yahweh* as the Eternal, and the Self-existing One. He always is the *I AM*, regardless of how and when He manifests Himself. Also when He stepped out from His spiritual body into the body of flesh and revealed the New Testament covenant name *Yahshua*, which means *Yahweh-Saviour*, He still is the same *I AM*. Hence we find this confirmed throughout until the last chapter in the New Testament: "*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.*" (vs. 13).

Only those who recognise the way God manifested Himself in the Old Testament will have the possibility to see His manifestation in the New. In fact, it is always the same Lord God with the difference that He made Himself known in the Old Testament in a spiritual body but in the New Testament He appeared visibly in the body of flesh.

As a being God is Spirit (Jn. 4: 24). As Spirit no man has ever seen Him (Jn. 1: 18; 1 Jn. 4: 2). Therefore He is called the invisible God (1 Tim.

1: 17; 1 Tim. 6: 16). Whoever saw God in the Old Testament had seen Him as Lord-*Yahweh*. Whoever sees God in the New Testament, must see Him as Lord-*Yahshua*, Immanuel — God with us. The Father revealed Himself in the Son and God Who is Spirit revealed as Lord in a human body. All those descriptions we find in reference to God, we also find in reference to the Lord, because the Lord is God.

In the Old Testament, there was no such thing as Father — Son relationship. It was predicted in prophecy. In a figurative sense, God was Adam's Father; He was Israel's Father. But no prophet ever addressed God as *Heavenly Father*. Not one spoke to or referred to a Son of God within the Old Testament period of 4,000 years. Also not one conversation between Father and Son is recorded in the Old Testament, simply because this fact was not in existence. It was always the Lord God to Whom the prophets and the people of Israel spoke and had relationship with.

In Gen 1: 27, we are confronted with the reality that the invisible God

is active in a twofold manner. The one and only true God expresses Himself right at the beginning of the creation in a visible form of man, therefore, it is written, "*So God created man in his own image ...*", and secondly "*... And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*" Because of this no one ever thought or spoke about different persons. If you so want, you could see directly at the beginning the way God revealed Himself in different manifestations as they became necessary. The many forms of appearance in the Old Testament are called by experts theophanies and in the New He took upon Himself the form of man.

Chapter 9

THE TESTIMONY OF GOD HIMSELF

In the Holy Scriptures, we are confronted first with the testimony of God Himself, secondly the testimony given by the prophets, and thirdly by the apostles. In the Old Testament God revealed Himself in a spiritual body and foretold His Self-Revelation in the body of flesh. In the New we find the realisation of that promise.

It is necessary that one looks at the Jewish way of thinking. Only then can we see God from the original point of view. It was only given to the children of Israel to give testimony about the one true God. The Lord revealed Himself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as the Almighty God. With Moses the Lord spoke face to face (Ex. 33: 11). Throughout the Old Testament period, God only chose the Hebrew prophets through whom He spoke.

Because God has the pre-eminence and comes first, He may introduce Himself with His own words:

“And God spoke all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” (Ex. 20: 1-3).

“Unto thee it was shown, that thou mightest know that the LORD, he is God; there is none else beside him.” (Dt. 4: 35).

“Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD, he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath; there is none else.” (Dt. 4: 39).

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD.” (Dt. 6: 4).

“See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me...” (Dt. 32: 39).

“Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen, that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he; before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the LORD, and beside me there is no saviour.” (Isa. 43: 10-11).

“That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west,

that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.” (Isa. 45: 6).

“Yet I am the LORD, thy God, from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me; for there is no saviour beside me.” (Hos. 13: 4).

Now we shall refer to a few Scriptures in the New Testament which confirm the ones in the Old.

“... Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord... Well, Master, thou hast said the truth; for there is one God, and there is no other but he.” (Mk. 12: 29+32).

“Seeing it is one God ...” (Rom. 3: 30).

“But to us there is but one God ... (1 Cor. 8: 6).

“Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.” (Gal. 3: 20).

“Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever.” (1 Tim. 1: 17).

“For there is one God ...” (1. Tim. 2: 5).

“Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well.” (Jas. 2: 19).

“To the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.” (Jude 25).

The prophetic scriptures in the Old Testament and the apostolic teachings in the New Testament testify of the same. Not once is a three or two person God anywhere mentioned and also the terminology eternal Son is not found anywhere. The many books about the holy trinity were not necessary at all, if the scriptural doctrine and knowledge would have been taken into consideration. The so-called holy trinity never existed, does not exist today and will not exist throughout eternity. God is always the final and whatever came forth from Him is brought only in relationship with Him: Son of God, Word of God, Spirit of God etc. Son, Word, Spirit etc. have God as the final point of derivation. But God has no such point of derivation because He is the final and the eternal One. He is the point from where all comes and to where all things merge into.

In the New Testament, we find the crowning and light giving statement *“But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we*

by him.” (1 Cor. 8: 6). Although two terminologies are mentioned in this Scripture there is always only reference made to the one Creator, even if He once is referred to as God, and then as the Lord.



Thus the three-person-God is being portrait as He since the 4th century exists in the imagination of man. What do you see on these pictures? One or three Persons? One or three beings?

One picture shows the Father with the sceptre, the Son with the cross and the Holy Spirit as a dove. The other portraits the Godhead as three equal persons. Both concepts are strange to the Old and the New Testament.

Chapter 10

THE THEOPHANY OF GOD

In the infinite eternity, God was alone. God is Spirit, God is light and God is life. In this eternal Spirit-light-fullness, He had not yet manifested Himself. In that stage, no one has ever seen Him. We must begin where God starts acting and manifesting Himself, that is to say at the very beginning of time. In that beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. From the New Testament point of view, we read: *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”* (Jn. 1: 1). With this declaration the One Who began to manifest Himself by stepping out of that eternal fullness of light and glory is described. The One Who began to create, God in His Selfmanifestation as *Logos* came forth — *Yahweh* — the One Who acted and created then later became flesh and appeared in the form of the Son. *Yahweh* was shown outside the fullness of light in which *Elohim* dwelt. Therefore we read, *“The same was in the beginning with God.”* (Jn. 1: 2), not in eternity, because eternity has no beginning. That all men may know *Yahweh* as Creator the reference here is, as we read in verse 3, to the *Logos*-Word: *“All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.”* In this connection, we must also read Col. 1: 16: *“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers — all things were created by him, and for him.”*

In the record of the creation process we are told, the earth was without form (*tohu*) and void (*bohu*). There was no shape yet and no life. Darkness covered the deep. In that moment God began His creative work and the Spirit of God was moving over the waters. The Word — *Logos* and the Spirit of God were working together in the very beginning and again working harmoniously together in the work of Redemption. The creation came into existence by the spoken word, but life could only come forth by the moving of the Spirit. God spoke and it was there. He spoke, *“Let there be light: and there was light.”* Whatever God said, happened.

There is creative power in His Word.

As already mentioned, in this beginning God came forth out of His eternal fullness and manifested Himself in a visible form of appearance. *“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him ...”* (Gen. 1: 27). The image of God is the appearance of a man. *“...and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness of the appearance of a man above upon it.”* (Ez. 1: 26; Rev. 4: 2).

God is a person. In this form He walked in the Garden of Eden and had fellowship with Adam and Eve. In Gen. 18, His visit to Abraham is recorded, *“And the LORD appeared unto him by the oaks of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; and he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him ...”* (vs. 1-2). There was a conversation between the Lord and Abraham. The two angels who accompanied the Lord went on to Sodom (Gen. 19). The fact that God revealed Himself in this spiritual body is recorded throughout the Old Testament. Jacob wrestled with Him, put his arms around Him and received a knock from the Lord after which he was a lame man (Gen. 32: 22-32; Hos. 12: 4-6). The Lord God was and is the same for all those on earth to whom He could reveal Himself and they speak of the greatest reality ever in existence.

The second point of importance in this record of the creation work is found in the fact, that angels also have the appearance of a man, as the Holy Scripture testifies. *“... then, behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. And I heard a man’s voice between the banks of the Ulai, who called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.”* (Dan. 8: 15-16). In chapter 9: 21, he testifies, *“Yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man, Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision ...”*

The Lord Himself and the angels have the form of a man. This is of great significance because thereby the infallible answer in God’s Word is given to Gen. 1: 26, where God said: *“Let us make man in our image ...”* From the very beginning, God was surrounded by angels who had the same form like Himself. To Job He said: *“Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? ... Whereupon are its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”* (Job 38: 4-7). Here we have God’s answer by His own Word confirming that the heavenly hosts were present when God created the earth. To them He spoke: *“Let us make man ...”* The

interpretation that God spoke to different persons in the Godhead is totally wrong and absurd. No prophet and no apostle has ever interpreted this passage in such a way. When the prophet Isaiah saw the Glory of God, he testifies of having seen the Lord sitting on the throne also surrounded by the heavenly hosts who sang, "Holy, holy, holy ..." Then he heard the Voice of the Lord, saying, "*Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?*" (Isa. 6: 8).

The prophet Micah had a similar experience. He testifies, "*I saw the LORD sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left.*" (2 Chr. 18: 18). When the Lord God decided to make an end to the erecting of the tower of Babel He again spoke to those surrounding Him, "*Come, let us go down, and there confound their language ...*" (Gen. 11: 7). He always spoke to those angels and heavenly beings around Him. The *us* and the *we* were never interpreted by the prophets in the Old Testament or by the apostles in the New Testament in reference to a trinity which for them did not even exist.

This great mystery which cannot be explained exists therein that the Lord God stepped out of His spiritual body into the body of flesh. He relinquished Himself and became man. At first Adam was made in a spiritual body in the likeness of the Lord God Himself (Gen. 1: 27). In Gen. 2, Adam was formed from the dust of the earth, and so he became a living soul. When still in the spiritual body Eve was already in him, but only after Adam was placed into a body of flesh, she was taken out of him. In the same way the Church of the living God was already in Him when He existed in the spiritual body, but she was taken out from Him only after He appeared in the body of flesh.

Man was not disobedient while he was in the spiritual body but the fall took place in the body of flesh. From this fallen condition he had to be redeemed and placed back into immortality. Therefore, the Lord had to come into this body of flesh and be like one of us in order to pay the price for our redemption, to die in our stead, to pull out the sting of death and make us sons and daughters of God. A new beginning of the creation of God commenced.

Chapter 11

THE GLORY OF THE LORD

The Lord God appeared to Moses in a flame of fire in the burning bush. On Sinai He came down in fire, accompanied by thunder, lightning and trumpet sound. All the people heard His mighty voice (Ex. 19 + 20). *“Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand; also they saw God, and did eat and drink.”* (Ex. 24: 9-11). A whole people experienced how the living God manifested Himself on earth. A few were privileged to appear in His direct presence. They saw Him in the bodily form and could describe the same precisely.

Moses again went up on the mountain to meet the Lord God. *“And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount. And the glory of the LORD abode upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days; and the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud. And the sight of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.”* (Ex. 24: 15-17). Whenever we read about the «Glory of the Lord» the Shekinah is meant and this denotes in the Hebrew language the visible, majestic light, which sometimes is in a form of a cloud. The Shekinah in itself is the supernatural way of the Lord to express His visible presence. In this manner He appeared to Israel during the forty years and came down upon the tabernacle of the congregation and there spoke to Moses. By day it was a pillar of cloud, by night a pillar of fire with a mighty light emitting.

Also other men of God saw this Shekinah Glory of the Lord. *“And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD. So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.”* (1 Ki. 8: 10-11).

The prophet Isaiah saw the Lord upon His throne and recorded his experience, *“And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.”* (Isa. 6: 3).

Also the prophet Ezekiel was permitted to see the Glory of the Lord

and recorded, "... I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the **glory of the LORD**..." (Ez. 1: 27b-28).

The transition from the Old to the New Testament is so perfect that only God was able to perform it. The moment the Lord of Glory appeared in flesh, it was the hour in which this Shekinah Glory came down. "*And, lo, an angel of the Lord came upon them, and the **glory of the Lord** shone round about them; and they were very much afraid.*" (Lk. 2: 9). On the Mount of Transfiguration the same Glory came down. "*While he yet spoke, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him ... And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man is raised again from the dead.*" (Mt. 17: 5+9).

In His prayer our Lord said in Jn. 17: 5, "*And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*" Before the world came into existence He has come forth from God as the *Logos* — *Yahweh* and with this supernatural glory He as *Yahshua* should be glorified. The same experience is waiting for the redeemed. "*And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.*" (Jn. 17: 22). The completion of the elect is described as follows, "*Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*" (vs. 24). The same applies to the ones He chose before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1: 4-5).

Chapter 12

... PROCEEDED FROM GOD

Christ proceeded from God. He is also spoken of as the beginning of the creation of God (Rev. 3: 14). Adam was a created son of God but Christ was the begotten Son of God. As a created being, Adam was in the image of God and Christ was the image of God Who came forth having the nature of God. Visibly, Adam had the same form in which the Lord God appeared being created in His image, of course, he did not come forth from God like the second Adam. But God wanted sons and daughters who would come forth of Himself, who would have His divine nature — His life. The only begotten Son proceeded from God, and by Him — the first-born — this divine race commenced.

Yahweh was God Himself, He is the I AM, the eternal in Himself existing one, the Logos — the one through Whom all things came into existence. Then, He finally became man. What almost every theologian has left aside is actually the very kernel, namely that Yahweh proceeded in the beginning out from the fullness of God. In the New Testament we use the terminology, the Son proceeded from the Father.

“... If God were your Father, ye would love me; for I proceeded forth and came from God.”

“For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.”

“For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.”

At the moment when this secret was revealed to the disciples, they cried out: *“Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee; by this we believe that thou comest forth from God.”* (Jn. 8: 42; Jn. 16, 27; Jn. 17. 8; Jn. 16: 30).

In the Old and the New Testaments it is always the same Lord acting, once in His spiritual body, and then in the body of flesh. It was not a Son of God Who existed besides God who became the Son of God — that would be a total paradox. Jesus did not exist as Son beside God, but as the Scripture clearly states He proceeded from God and being begotten by

the Holy Ghost He had a being equal in nature with God. Son means to come from, to originate from. He had God's life in Him as He was God Himself. From God only God could come forth and manifest after His own kind. Through Him all sons and daughters of God have received of God's nature (2 Pet. 1: 4).

In theology, the main emphasis is being put on the relation of Father towards Son, Son towards the Holy Ghost etc. etc. They are being placed opposite to each other. There can be no sense in such comparisons at all. If then philosophy joins theology the whole thing becomes like a magic circle. Whosoever is trapped in it will not easily escape. Biblical theology exists in the realisation of the eternal plan of God with humanity through Jesus Christ our Lord. We are not to discuss the various manifestations of God and their relations to one another but we are only to comprehend God's revelation towards us and acknowledge that He established the relation with us. The question now is what is our relationship towards Him. This is the main point. Indeed God has clarified and established His relationship with humanity.

The doctrine invented by the so-called Nicene creed is totally unscriptural. There one could find statements like these, "... **God's unique Son, born of the Father, before the world, God from God, light from light, true God from the true God, born not made ...**" (F. Hauss, *Väter der Christenheit*, pg. 40). How can the Father have a Son born in heaven? This is simply not comprehensible. Such thoughts are nowhere found in the Holy Scriptures. It is the biggest stumbling for Jews and Muslims.

The Father has begotten the Son by the Holy Ghost here on earth. And thereby made the beginning with all the sons and daughters of God. After the Spirit He was the Son of God but after the flesh He was a man, because of mankind in order to place us back into our divinely appointed order. He had to be man in order to die but He had to be God in order to conquer death, hell and Satan. The apostle did not explain this incomprehensible mystery but he simply declared, "*And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the nations, believed on in the world, received up into glory.*" (1 Tim. 3: 16).

The Son was not begotten somewhere in the unknown eternity, and also not during the period of the Old Testament, but rather as clearly recorded, at the beginning of the New Testament. The promise for this great event is therefore combined with the word *today*. The prophecies of

this event in the Old Testament were still pointing to the future. The New Testament records the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies.

The realisation of God's plan of salvation is announced as follows, "*I will declare the decree: The LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.*" (Ps. 2: 7). In Heb. 1: 5 this is confirmed, "*For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?...*"

The time space of grace is announced in the Scriptures as *today*. "*Again he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, Today ...*" (Heb. 4: 7). This *today* is the day of salvation. "*For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee; behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*" (2 Cor. 6: 2; Isa. 49: 8). The writer to the Hebrews gives a comparison to the Old Testament believers who did not believe and states a warning, "*Wherefore, as the Holy Spirit saith, Today if ye will hear his voice ... But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*" (Heb. 3: 7+13). During the whole span of grace from the first coming, the epiphany of Christ, until His return, the parousia of Christ, we are living in the day of salvation, which is the New Testament *today*.

In Rom. 1: 3-4, we read about the Son, "... *Concerning his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*" The resurrection is the triumphal proof that He was the promised Son. "*And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.*" (Acts 13: 32-33).

Mary said to the angel Gabriel who brought to her the special message for the promised Messiah, "*How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered, and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*" (Lk. 1: 34-35). According to the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, Mary gave birth to the Son here on earth and not God in heaven.

Mary is not being presented as an object of astonishment, but rather

as an example of what happened by faith and obedience, when God made the beginning of His creation to which she could add nothing. The Son of man, Jesus Christ, was totally and altogether of divine origin. Mary was the natural carrier of the divine substance. He was begotten totally and fully by a supernatural act.

No religious act can replace the Word of God. In Mt. 1: 20, we read, *"... for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit"* The Holy Ghost is not a separate person, but rather the Spirit of God. Therefore, Jesus was never called the Son of the Holy Ghost, although He was begotten by the Holy Ghost, but rather the Son of God. This happened to fulfil the promise given by the prophet Isaiah, *"... Behold, the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."* (7: 14).

In regards to the Son, it is said, *"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."* (Ps. 2: 8). He became our Redeemer only after the Father manifested Himself in the Son. Therefore, faith in the Son of God is the absolute and necessary condition for us to obtain salvation. Only where God reconciled Himself with humanity, that is in Christ, the wrath of God was quenched. Faith in the Son is therefore the only true faith in the Father. *"Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father; he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also."* (1 Jn. 2: 23). Whosoever denies the Deity of the Son cannot have God as his Father.

The psalmist speaks without interruption from Yahweh and the Son, *"Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they who put their trust in him."* (Ps. 2: 11-12).

Faith in the Son is necessary for salvation, because redemption did not happen through the Father in heaven, but by the Son on earth. Therefore, it is written, *"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."* (Jn. 3: 36).

God did not give us a teaching about Himself but He revealed Himself unto us. The dogmatic formulations which started in the 4th century about an eternal Son of God are fantasies. For some He was the eternally begotten Son, for others He was the created Son and again He was looked upon as being born of God, and this was supposed to have taken place in eternity. What good would it be for us with such a begotten, created or

born by God Son? Such a thing does not exist. The Son was begotten precisely as the Scripture declares. He originates totally from God, and, therefore, is never called Son of Mary but He is called the only begotten of the Father. Some theologians think because of modern genetics, that the egg came from Mary and the fertilisation was by the Holy Ghost. But in such a case the sinful nature which is in the chromosomes of the egg would have come into the divine gene structure. And thereby it would have been a mixture. That is totally impossible. The terminology of the Scriptures "*the only begotten*" denotes that all including the egg came from God.

In the prophetic character of the Old Testament through word, symbols and parables we find the predictive revelation which was yet to be realised. The main point was "... *for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after ...*" (Heb. 3: 5). God spoke through the prophets, and they looked into the future and to them was revealed that they were not serving themselves but rather us (1 Pet. 1: 12). Since the One Who spoke through them was made man, we do have the accomplished realisation and fulfilment in the personified Self-revelation of God in Christ. Prophets foretold what would happen and the apostles gave testimony of how it took place. The One Who announced Himself by His Word appeared "...*and in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.*" (Col. 2: 9).

It is hard to understand how it was possible to turn God's precious Word showing forth His Own revelation until the majestic manifestation in Christ into a trinitarian philosophy. Professor Emil Brunner writes about this theme as follows: "**The wording about the three persons is more than questionable. Already Augustine noticed this (De Trinitate, V, 9.). These doubts K. Barth seems to share (Kirchliche Dogmatik I., I, pg. 703). Even if you command your thinking, you have to view these three persons as one — it does not help, it remains an uncertain waving between tritheism and monotheism. Not only the substance but also the terminology regarding persons as such would have to show forth the mystery of oneness and to comprehend the revelation of Him Who revealed Himself. The three person idea has come up because man did not understand the plan of salvation. They occupied themselves with transcendent background of this revelation and made the trinitarian idea as main point of their reflection. That is the deeply unscriptural church teaching of the trinity.**" (E. Brunner, Dogmatik, Vol. 1, pg. 243-244).

Once again, it must be clearly stated that prophets and apostles did not

know anything about a trinity. Therefore, the formulation of a tri-une God is not found even a single time in the whole of the Bible. How can three persons who unite be one God? That is indeed a strange concept to the Bible and can only be described as a heathen doctrine. The only true eternal God has manifested Himself in a threefold manner: In heaven as Father, on earth in the Son, and to the believers by the Holy Spirit. That is the testimony of the Holy Scriptures. In this way prophets and apostles who had an experience with Him heard His Voice, knew Him and have proclaimed Him in the manner He had revealed Himself. Theologians have put God upside down and made a threefold figure out of Him. All admit that the Bible does not contain the trinity teaching, yet in spite of it they are defending the same. How is that possible?

Chapter 13

THE NAME OF THE LORD

After the Lord God gave the ten commandments, He made a very important statement, "... *in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.*" (Ex. 20: 24b). Only in the place where the Lord God makes known His name, one has the possibility of worshipping Him in Spirit and in truth. From the very beginning, the Lord revealed His name to His own who knew Him. "*And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the LORD.*" (Gen. 4: 26).

Ex. 33: 11-23 shows forth the importance of the revelation of the name of God. Wherever the Lord speaks and shows grace to someone He also reveals His name. The Lord spoke to Moses face to face. He had the longing to see the Glory of God. Then the Lord answered, "*And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee...*" God does not ever remain as the Unknown and the hiding One but He steps forward to make Himself known and reveals His name.

The revelation of the name of the Lord God cannot be overemphasised. To Moses the Lord gave the charge, "*Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, In this way ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The LORD bless thee, and keep thee; The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them.*" (Num. 6: 23-27).

God was never addressed with titles but He was spoken to in His name. Whether people called upon Him or acted for Him, they always did in His name. It happened the same way both in the Old and the New Testament periods.

It is the basic law of God, that He can only be met where He reveals Himself and makes known His name: "*But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and there thou shalt come.*" (Dt. 12: 5).

Solomon expressed the same truth in his inauguration prayer, "... *that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people*

Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have built, is called by thy name.” (1 Ki. 8: 43b).

“Therefore, my people shall know my name; therefore, they shall know in that day that I am he who doth speak; behold, it is I.” (Isa. 52: 6).

The same God of whom Moses said, “*I AM hath sent me unto you*”, introduces Himself to the children of Israel on Mount Sinai as follows, “*And God spoke all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*” (Ex. 20: 1-2). The prophet Isaiah emphasises the words the Lord spoke of Himself, “*...I, the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he.*” (41: 4). “*I am the LORD (YAHWEH): that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to carved images.*” (42: 8). “*I, even I, am the LORD, and beside me there is no saviour. ... ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I am God.*” (Isa. 43: 11-12). “*Thus saith the LORD, the King of Israel, and his redeemer, the LORD of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last, and beside me there is no God.*” (Isa. 44: 6). “*... I am the LORD who maketh all things*” (Isa. 44: 24). “*I AM the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me ... I am the LORD, and there is none else.*” (Isa 45: 5-6). “*...I am he; I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spread out the heavens ...*” (Isa. 48: 12-13).

All through the Old Testament, God’s people knew the name of the Lord and called upon the same. The transition to the New Testament is also clearly described, “*... thou shalt call his name JESUS (YAHSHUA)*” (Mt. 1: 21). He was born the saviour, Christ the Messiah, the Lord (Lk. 2: 11). The name connected with salvation was given to Him when being circumcised (Lk. 2: 21).

It is important to recognise the way God revealed Himself in the New Testament as Father in heaven, as Son on earth, and by His Holy Spirit in His Church. It is equally important to know the name in which our redemption lies and the name in which we should approach God. There is only one place on earth wherein God revealed Himself for our salvation, that is in Jesus Christ, the Lord. Whoever wishes to find God must look for Him in that place where He could be found. Whoever wants to see Him must look at the place where He could be seen. Whoever wants to hear Him must know where He could be heard. It will be only there where He reveals and places **His name**. The only personal meeting place with God and humanity is in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Why the scholars changed the name *Yahweh* to *Jehovah* and *Yahshua* to *Jesus* cannot be easily understood. The Hebrew letters for the name of the Lord YHWH must be the same in the Old and the New Testament. An arbitrary explanation cannot be permitted. The abbreviated form of *Yahweh* is *Yah* as *El* stands for *Elohim*. The word *Hallelu-Yah* means praise *Yahweh*; *Isa-Yah* means *Yahweh* is salvation; *Yahshua* means *Yahweh* Saviour; *Isra-El* means wrestling with God; *Isma-El* means God hears; *Immanu-El* means God with us, and so on. Wherever the Lord God reveals Himself there He also makes known His name and only in this name He can be worshipped.

The I AM found in the Old Testament is in reference to God. The same was used in the New Testament for our Lord. "*I AM the bread of life ...*" (Jn. 6: 48) "*I AM the light of the world*" (Jn. 8: 12). To believe that our Saviour is the I AM is very important for He Himself stated, "*I said, therefore, unto you, that ye shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins ... Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.*" (Jn. 8: 24+57-58). "*I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.*" (Jn. 10: 14). "*I am the resurrection, and the life ...*" (Jn. 11: 25). "*I am the true vine ...*" (Jn. 15: 1).

The expression I AM applies to our Lord in many ways as we have seen. If one compares the statements found in the prophet Isaiah with those in the New Testament then one could see how the same description of the Lord is being used both in the Old and the New Testament. It can be clearly identified that the same One is speaking always. "*Fear not; I am the first and the last ...*" (Rev. 1: 17). "*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.*" (Rev. 1: 8). Before Him was no one and after Him there shall be no one. There is only one Almighty.

The Son says, "*I am come in my Father's name ...*" (Jn. 5: 43). "*Father, glorify thy name ...*" (Jn. 12: 28). "*I have manifested thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world ...*" (Jn. 17: 6). As commonly practised, every one introduces himself to the person whom he meets by one's name. In the same way, the Lord also introduces Himself to those who meet Him with His name. The best example is the apostle Paul. "*And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest ...*" (Acts 9: 5).

“Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me ... And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it...” (Jn. 17: 11+26). He still does it today. The name of the Father and the Son is the same — Jesus, actually Yahshua — YAHWEH Saviour. Wherever this name is not revealed in its divine significance people are kept in their religious and unscriptural traditions.

“After this manner, therefore, pray ye: Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name ...” (Mt. 6: 9). *“... as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.”* (Heb. 1: 4).

Eternal life is promised to us in His name (Jn. 20: 31). Also the forgiveness of sins is found in His name (Acts 10: 43). Whatever we receive from God comes to us through the name of Jesus Christ. No servant of God has ever used titles or a formula but always His name. According to the Scripture all that the believers do is to be done in His name. *“And whatever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”* (Col. 3: 17).

The day will soon be, when every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord (Phil. 2: 10-11). When God will have accomplished His redemptive work it will be fulfilled what is written, *“Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”* (Rev. 21: 3-7).

Chapter 14

USEFUL COMPARISONS

The following Bible passages will show forth the Redeemer in His deity and also in His humanity as man. Whenever His coming was announced, it was later confirmed that He was sent. If He speaks of Himself and His coming we also find reports that He came. Both are right. Because the divine and the human part had to be justified.

Right after the Fall in the Garden of Eden, the Lord gave the promise of the coming seed, through the woman, who would bruise the serpent's head. Therefore, He said to the serpent, "*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*" (Gen. 3: 15). That Christ, the Messiah, was the predicted seed of the woman is known to every Bible reader. He, therefore, never called Mary His mother as others did but He called her woman (Jn. 2: 4, a. o.).

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine" (Gen. 49: 10-11). "*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass.*" (Zech. 9: 9). In Mt. 21; Mk. 11; Lk. 19 and Jn. 12, we find these promises fulfilled when Christ rode into Jerusalem on that notable day. In Rev. 5: 5, He is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." (Dt. 18: 18-19). In the four gospels, the Messiah is described in His prophetic ministry as Son of man. Peter refers to the passage in Acts 3: 22-23: "*For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord, your God, raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things, whatever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul, who will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.*" The Messiah was the God-Prophet. His word is obligatory for all who wish to appear before God. In Him God gave the

final answer on earth and fulfilled all the words predicted by the prophets.

“What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.” (Ps. 8: 4-6). The perfect harmony between the Old Testament prophecy and the New Testament fulfilment is overwhelming. *“Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth”* (Phil. 2: 6-10).

“He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth” (Ps. 89:26-27). *“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.”* (Rom. 8: 29). *“And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.”* (Heb. 1: 5). *“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation.”* (Col. 1: 14-15). *“Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”* (2. Cor. 5: 17). *“... who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead ...”* (Rev. 1: 5).

“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign, Behold, the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” (Isa. 7: 14). *“... Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the Prophet.”* (Mt. 1: 20-22).

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the

throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.” (Isa. 9: 6-7).

The child that was to be born unto us is spoken of as being the Mighty God and Everlasting Father. Both, the human and the divine aspects are clearly stated in the Scriptures. The prophet Isaiah gave the consolation *“Strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold your God will come ... he will come and save you.” (Isa. 35: 3-4).*

Never did God say that He has a Son next to Him Whom He would send. He came Himself and took on sonship. The sign for us to recognise is: *“Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing ...” (Isa. 35: 5-6).* All this was precisely fulfilled in the ministry of Jesus Christ our Lord. The blind could see, the deaf heard, the lame walked and the dumb could speak (Lk. 7: 22).

In Isaiah 40 we are told, *“The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD (YAHWEH), make straight in the desert a highway for our God (Elohim) ... O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the LORD GOD (ELOHIM-YAHWEH) will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him...”* Yahweh of the Old Testament is Yahshua of the New. God above us as Father, God with us in the Son, and God in us by the Holy Spirit. He manifested Himself in various ways to accomplish His Own plan of salvation with us.

Chapter 15

JESUS IS THE LORD

In revival meetings whenever a good atmosphere is reached, the emphasis is being made that Jesus Christ is Lord. But it is not clear what these people actually think when they make this statement. According to the Scripture if somebody says, Jesus Christ is the Lord, he must refer to Him as God, if not, true revelation is lacking. When Jesus is described in His humanity we do see Him beside God, namely as Prophet and Son of man who could do nothing of Himself. "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for whatever things he doeth, these also doeth the Son in the same manner ... I can of mine own self do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father who hath sent me.*" (Jn. 5: 19+30). Certainly we do not have here a nescient and an omniscient, an almighty and a helpless person within the Godhead, but rather the man Christ Jesus Who did not perform His Own will but the Will of God.

The Holy Scriptures also describe Him as Lord who could make the majestic statement, "*All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*" (Mt. 28: 18). In His humanity Jesus is referred to as Prophet, as Mediator, as Advocate, as Son of man etc., then He is shown beside God. Thus He was seen by Stephen, "*... looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.*" (Acts 7: 55). Stephen saw the supernatural glory, the Shekinah. In this glory the Son of man will come: "*When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.*" (Mt. 25: 31).

Again it is necessary to have the right knowledge. Jesus is not only Lord, He is the Lord. At His birth the shepherds heard the announcement, "*... a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.*" (Lk. 2: 11). This is what Paul meant when he wrote, "*... and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit.*" (1 Cor. 12: 3b). It is always the same Spirit (vs. 4), the same Lord (vs. 5), the same God right to the last book of the Bible. "*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.*" (Rev. 4: 8). "*Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy*

pleasure they are and were created.” (Rev. 4: 11).

Regardless of the many different expressions and descriptions, there is always the same God in action. “... *and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.*” (Rev. 11: 15).

“*And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ ...*” (Rev. 12: 10).

“*We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, who art, and wast, and art to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.*” (Rev. 11: 17). Finally, we are told Who the One is that will reign.

The overcomers at the sea of glass will sing the praises of the lamb with following words, “*Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.*” (Rev. 15: 3).

In the 16th chapter of Revelation a voice is heard from the altar, “*Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgements.*” (verse 7).

The great mystery of the Godhead will remain incomprehensible. It has to be that way and it is the will of God, that we cannot fully comprehend or search the deepest things of God. They can only be revealed by the Holy Spirit but never explained. He wants us to come into His presence with respect and give praise unto Him for all eternity.

Jesus Christ was born a man. As child He was presented and dedicated in the temple (Lk. 2: 22-24).

Simon took Him into his arms, “... *and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word.*” (Lk. 2: 28-29).

When the Son speaks as man, He says, “*The Father is greater than I*” (Jn. 14: 28). When He speaks as Lord, He says, “*I and the Father are one*” (Jn. 10: 30). The Father in heaven, the Son on earth, and yet, we are to come to the knowledge, “... *that the Father is in me, and I in him.*” (Jn. 10: 38). Whether beside or under or in the Father, all are correct right to the statement, “*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father...*” (Jn. 14: 9).

The apostle Peter described the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ as follows, “*Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by*

miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know; Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be held by it.” (Acts 2: 22-24). He was man, as man He died in His body of flesh. By His resurrection He overcame death and gave us also the possibility to be changed from this body of flesh into the likeness of His resurrection body.

The apostle Peter writes further, *“The LORD (YAHWEH) said unto my Lord (Yahshua), Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”* (Acts 2: 34-36).

The apostle Paul said, *“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the ages unto our glory; Which none of the princes of this age knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”* (1 Cor. 2: 7-8).

In chapter 6, he writes to the Corinthians, *“And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.”* (vs. 14).

Whoever is converted to Christ does not turn to an infant Jesus in a cradle or to the one who is in the arms of Mary, but rather to the One Who was crucified and died and rose again from the dead. The Lord is also spoken of as the Spirit in the same way as John 4: 24 declares God to be the Spirit. *“Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”* (2 Cor. 3: 17). The apostle then continues, *“But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”* (vs. 18).

For some this might be a puzzle which cannot be put together, for others it is altogether harmonious and perfect. In 2 Cor. 4, Paul writes about the Glory of Christ Who is the very image of God and then brings it to the climax: *“For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shone in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”* (vs. 5-6).

Chapter 16

WHOSOEVER CONFESSES JESUS CHRIST ... RIGHT OR WRONG CONFESSION?

In evangelistic campaigns, much emphasis is put upon the confession of Jesus Christ. The evangelist asks those who come forward to be converted to repeat such a confession of Jesus Christ. The speaker then assures them that they are now belonging to Jesus Christ. As with all other themes it is also necessary in this case to find out what the Biblical confession of Jesus Christ, the Son of God is, in order to be justified before God.

The personal confession of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is of great importance for our salvation. The enemy, the adversary of God, has also twisted this truth and brought deception using the same formulation. We shall only use three scripture references to show how the opposite side misuses the Word.

Those who were possessed by evil spirits cried out and made a confession: *“And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come here to torment us before the time?”* (Mt. 8: 29). Mark, the evangelist, records: *“And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.”* (Mk. 3: 11). Luke writes: *“Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee, who thou art: the Holy One of God ... And demons also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ, the Son of God ...”* (Lk. 4: 34+41).

A man of God speaks to a sick person, saying, *“In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.”* (Acts 3: 6). But as we have seen evil spirits are also using the name of Jesus with the correct wording “Jesus of Nazareth” or “Son of God”.

Without a personal experience with Jesus Christ and a relationship with Him, any kind of formulated confession is of no avail. First of all, one needs a revelation from heaven. Then confession and the following of Christ in obedience go together. We are further told in the Scripture: *“And he who believes on the Son has eternal life. But whoever disobeys the Son will never see life. But instead the wrath of God*

abides on him.” (Jn. 3: 36 — amplified version).

A faith-revelation must precede to confession. “... *The word is near thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach: That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*” (Rom. 10: 8-9). Paul summarises this fact, “*I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak*” (2 Cor. 4: 13b). A confession that is not made through faith in Jesus Christ the Lord believing God’s Word is meaningless.

The apostle John tells us, “*Who is he that overcometh the world; but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*” (1 Jn. 5: 5).

A mere confession was made by Satan when he tempted the Lord at the pinnacle of the temple, “*If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from here ...*” (Lk. 4: 9).

The confession of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, can be done in one way or other by God’s children and also by those of the enemy. Christians in all nominal denominations and even the antichrist himself use the same terminology. A confession is only valid if it happens in connection with the entire testimony of the Scriptures and the personal faith in Christ and in obedience to God and His Word. Every one needs to have a direct personal revelation of Jesus Christ.

Many apologists find it quite hard to place 1 Jn. 4 correctly. “*By this know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist, of which ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world.*” (1 Jn. 4: 2-3). In this passage more is expressed as one could see at the first glance. We are dealing with the true knowledge of the fact that Yahweh is Yahshua — Saviour, the Anointed One, Christ the Lord Who came into the flesh.

A confession done by lips or repeated because somebody has asked for it, does not hit the point at all. Every spirit which does not confess Jesus Christ in this Biblical way is simply not of God. That is the spirit of the antichrist with his own confession. Whoever proclaims Jesus in any other way reveals that he does not have the divine knowledge that Yahweh of the Old Testament is Jesus of the New Testament. Whoever denies the Word of God with all its divine authority

tells that the same is a victim of the antichrist spirit.

His coming into the bodily form was thoroughly dealt by the apostle Paul. *“God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”* (Rom. 8: 3b-4).

Because man fell in this body of flesh and therefore has to die, the Redeemer had to come into the likeness of sinful flesh. The teaching that Mary was born without sin is of the antichrist. Christ only was sinless and to Him alone applies the immaculate conception (1 Pet. 1: 19). He had to come into sinful flesh but was sinless Himself in order to redeem the fallen creation out of its sinful condition. He had to do justice to the requirements of the law and therefore had to take the curse upon Himself which was upon us (Gal. 3: 13).

There is no such a thing as an immaculate conception of Mary. She was part of the fallen creation and she was only used as a vessel to receive the sinless One Who could take us out of the sinful state. The holy substance was placed into an unholy vessel. Now those born in sin also receive Christ, the sinless One. They carry as well, being a part of the fallen creation, the heavenly treasure in earthly vessels. It is not the vessel that is important but the substance therein. *“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”* (2 Cor. 4: 7).

Whosoever just says, “Jesus Christ is the Son of God” and then thinks and believes as he wishes has not at all understood the matter in question. Also who lightly repeats, “I believe that Jesus has come into the flesh” has by far not expressed what the Holy Scriptures actually testify about. He was without blemish and without sin. Satan had no right with Him. But He had to become sin for all of us and to bear the punishment which God’s justice requires for sin. Therefore, He had to die for us in order to redeem us and deliver us from death. *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord.”* (Rom. 6: 23).

There is another aspect by which we can detect the antichrist teaching. In the second epistle of John, verse 7, the apostle states, *“For many deceivers have gone out into the world, men who will not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in bodily form; such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist”* (amplified version). It is very noticeable that in the so-called

apostolic creed nothing is being mentioned of the bodily return of Jesus Christ. Therein we find the expression, "... from hence He will come to judge the living and the dead ..." The final judgment has of course nothing to do with the physical return of Jesus Christ.

Immediately after the ascension of the Lord to heaven, we were told, "... *This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*" (Acts 1: 11). The resurrected Lord Jesus also had a resurrection body in which He could eat and drink, a body in which Thomas could place his hand (Jn. 20: 27). "*Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any food? ... Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise*" (Jn. 21: 5+13).

Whosoever spiritualises the return of Jesus Christ reveals by this fact that he is propagating the antichrist teaching. According to Jn. 14, the Lord went up to prepare the place and promised to return and take us into the heavenly mansions. At that moment 1 Cor. 15, from verse 51, and 1 Th. 4, from verse 13, and other Scripture passages will be fulfilled. The understanding of God's plan of salvation as was revealed to His prophets and apostles is more or less lost in the course of the church history during which neither true apostles nor prophets stood up with an apostolic and prophetic ministry.

The antichrist teaching is found in the fact that the bodily return of Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom, Who will return to take His beloved bride home, is being denied. About this great event nothing is mentioned in the creeds. But the Scripture declares the return of Christ, the resurrection of those who will participate in the rapture and also the changing of the mortal bodies of those who live at that moment into the resurrection body in which we are to be taken up to meet the Lord in the air. Also few know about the marriage supper of the lamb (Rev. 19) or the millennial reign (Rev. 20).

The same Jesus Christ Who was taken up into heaven will return in the same way to take His Own home, before the great tribulation and the judgements will come upon the earth. In any case, it is not sufficient to just confess something with our lips. We need the real revelation of Jesus Christ. Both the things must be Biblical, our testimony of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, that He is the Lord, and also the testimony that He, as the same Jesus will return bodily to take the bride to the marriage supper.

Chapter 17

THE MAN CHRIST JESUS

“Behold the man!” (Jn. 19: 5) said Pilate when he looked upon Jesus. From His birth to His death Jesus is very much described as man so that some find it hard to comprehend. Like all human beings He was born into this world, put into a cradle (Lk. 2: 7). He ate and drank, He was tired and slept, He wept and prayed etc. While dying He cried with a loud voice, *“Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit, and, having said this, he gave up the spirit.”* (Lk. 23: 46). All sons and daughters of God can say the same. He took our place in every respect, even the very separation from God as He cried out, *“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”* (Mt. 27: 46). We were forsaken of God. There He took our place and our guilt and sin was laid upon Him. God the Spirit withdrew in that moment.

In the next moment when the spear was placed into His side and the blood gushed forth, we were reconciled and the Scripture was fulfilled, *“... God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself ...”* (2 Cor. 5: 19). Both are true. First the separation and next the reconciliation.

This was necessary because of the sinful state of humanity. The manner in which God has sent His Son is also precisely recorded in the Scriptures. *“But, when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”* (Gal. 4: 4-5).

The Lord became a servant. *“But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”* (Phil. 2: 7-8). As servant He is spoken of in connection with doing the will of the Lord. In the book of the prophet Isaiah, the plan of redemption is dealt with in all details. Also the word servant is recorded in the respective connection. *“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth, I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth justice to the nation.”* (Isa. 42: 1). In the New Testament the fulfilment of this Scripture is recorded in Mt. 12: 17-21.

In Mt. 3, we are told how God’s pleasure came down upon the man Jesus Christ. *“And Jesus, when he was baptised, went up straightway out*

of the water; and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (16-17). The body was mortal, therefore, the Spirit had to come upon it to make the claim for the transformation of this body into immortality. At the same time, the placing as a Son into the ministry also happened.

In Mt. 17: 2-5, the transfiguration of the man Christ Jesus into His divine state happened before the eyes of the three disciples, Moses and Elijah. In chapter 3, 17, we are told, “... *in whom I am well pleased*”, in chapter 17, the charge is given: “*Hear ye him.*” True sons and daughters of God listen to His voice, believe His gospel and are ready to be biblically baptised. They receive the Holy Spirit in the same way as He, the first-born, did, through whom God Himself testifies to have found pleasure in him.

The man who was created in the image of God was made as a free moral agent. But with this freedom he made the wrong decision and was lost. Because God made man in a way that he could fall He had to take upon Himself the responsibility for his redemption. In the new creation through Christ, God’s pleasure returns upon all His sons and daughters. They are lifted out of the fall and placed back into their God ordained position. In the completion of all sons and daughters of God, it will be manifested that they also could freely decide themselves to do the will of God after the example of the first-born. “... *not my will, but thine, be done.*” (Lk. 22: 42) and also, “*I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.*” (Ps. 40: 8).

“*And you, that were once alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight.*” (Col. 1: 21-22).

“*Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*” (Heb. 2: 14-15). That is the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed Redeemer.

In the Old Testament, the plan of redemption was foreshadowed in

many kinds of sacrifices. Man who was separated from God could not come into His presence. A sacrifice of reconciliation, a mediator and an advocate were necessary. In Abraham we are given a good example who was ready to sacrifice his son Isaac (Gen. 22). It was already pointing to the Messiah Who would die as Son of God in our stead. Isaac carried the wood for the altar on which he was later placed. Christ carried the cross unto which He then was nailed. Until the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt, they were called the people and from the moment of their deliverance (Ex. 12: 3) Israel was called the church. Moses was a mediator and an advocate in the different situations. He was the one who received God's Word directly and spoke it to the people. "...*the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush ...*" (Acts 7: 35).

The Messiah had to be a prophet, mediator, advocate, high priest etc. Moses already acted in the Spirit of Christ when he prayed, "*Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin —; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.*" (Ex. 32: 32). God's people were upon his heart and, therefore, he interceded for them as Christ does for the New Testament believers.

Once a year, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies to reconcile the people in the presence of God. Of Christ we read, "*But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, ..., but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. ... How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*" (Heb. 9: 11-14). That is the eternal valid salvation in Jesus Christ.

The idea of an intercessor is being described with Job. Although he already cried out, "*For I know that my redeemer liveth...*" being convinced he said, "... *yet in my flesh shall I see God.*" (Job 19: 23-27). Job also recognised the necessity of a mediator, "*If there be a messenger (angel) with him, an interpreter (mediator), one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness, then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom. His flesh shall be fresher than a child's; he shall return to the days of his youth.*" (Job 33: 23-25). He does not only speak about a mediator, reconciliation and redemption for man but also expresses the fact that the redeemed will return to a state

they had in the days of their youth. Thereby he expresses the great truth that all who participate in the first resurrection will be changed and receive a resurrection body which will be like the one they had in the prime of their youth. They will appear in an absolute perfect and young body. Throughout eternity, there will be no trace of old age, sin, sickness or death. They will be young and well for ever and ever.

Job also speaks for those who turned to God and received the assurance of salvation, *“He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and shall see his face with joy; for he will render unto man his righteousness.”* He already saw the perfect righteousness of God which we have received through Jesus Christ our Lord. For such a redeemed person the following statement applies, *“He sings out to other men, I have sinned and perverted that which was right, and He did not requite me according to my iniquity! God has redeemed my life from going down to the pit, and my life shall see the light!”* (Job 33: 26-27 — amplified version). This text does include the total redemption for mankind, the forgiveness of sins, eternal life and well-being in a resurrection body. The whole man — soul, spirit and body is included in redemption. In the first resurrection, the redeemed will actually be placed into the original God ordained position and remain young for ever.

The necessity of the high priest is also expressed in the New Testament: *“For we have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”* (Heb. 4: 15).

Also the mediator is mentioned, *“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man, Christ Jesus, Who gave himself a ransom for all ...”* (1 Tim. 2: 5-6). *“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive”* (1 Cor. 15: 22). *“The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”* (1 Cor. 15: 47-49). A very clear statement. Now we are after the first Adam, then we shall be in the heavenly likeness of Jesus Christ, the second Adam.

Wherever Jesus Christ is shown besides God we do see Him as man in one of the necessary aspects pertaining to the plan of salvation. We do see Him as Son of God, Son of man, Son of David, as King, Prophet and Priest, as Mediator, Advocate, Lamb of God, Word of God, Way of God, Bread

of God, etc., etc. He had to be all these in order to give us perfect redemption. The Jesus-Only doctrine does not exist in the Holy Scriptures as also the trinity doctrine does not exist. Prophets and apostles gave testimony of the truth. God has placed His Own children back into the relationship as sons and daughters. Therefore, Jesus Christ had to be the first-born among many brethren (Rom. 8: 29). Immediately after the resurrection, Jesus said to Mary Magdalene, *"Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father. But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God."* (Jn. 20: 17).

As the Son of God was begotten by the Holy Spirit, so the new birth takes place by the same Holy Spirit. Therefore, Jesus requested the new birth and said, *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God... That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."* (Jn. 3: 3+6). *"For whatever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."* (1 Jn. 5: 4). All religious actions are in vain. God has to act. Otherwise nothing happens. He only can act in those who recognise His act of salvation in His Son Jesus Christ.

"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." (Heb. 2: 10-12). The Redeemer Who after His resurrection called His disciples "brethren" was in turn called by Thomas "my Lord and my God" (Jn. 20: 28).

Right to the moment, the redeemed will leave this earth they need an intercessor. *"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."* (1 Jn. 2: 1-2). *"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God; therefore, the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."* (1 Jn. 3: 1-2).

Of this completion, the apostle Paul writes, *"For he must reign, till he*

hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." (1 Cor. 15: 25-28; Ps. 110: 1-2; Ps. 8: 7). It could not have been said more clearly. The great task then is accomplished and all sons and daughters of God are changed and appear in the image of Christ, the Son of God. All enemies are done away with, even death exists no more, and everything is placed for all eternity into its rightful position, and God will be all in all. In past eternity, there was no mentioning of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and there will be no mentioning throughout future eternity. When time merges into eternity then the eternal purpose is accomplished through God's Own manifestations as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Then God will be all in all.

Chapter 18

BAPTISM

The Holy Scriptures give us a complete information about the Biblical baptism. Baptism is administered in all Christianity. But also therein a grave deviation has taken place. Our aim is to present the teaching and the practice of baptism as was administered at the beginning of the New Testament church and is recorded in the Holy Scriptures. Perhaps it is shocking for the reader to come to know that so many who function as servants of God are being themselves in deception. Actually it is commonly known that churches do not always follow the Bible instructions, but various denominations have their own conviction and practice which is valid for them.

Our Lord says, *“He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”* (Mk. 16: 16). The first condition the Lord Himself requires of the one to be baptised is to believe. As recorded in Rom. 10: 17, faith comes by hearing the preaching of the Word of God. For this reason in the great commission, the preaching of the Gospel was placed first and then baptism for those who believed. This fact was confirmed in the first sermon Peter held on the Day of Pentecost and became the apostolic practice valid for the duration of the New Testament church. *“Then they that gladly received his word were baptised ...”* (Acts 2: 41). It is important that the proclamation of the Gospel led to the personal decision for Jesus Christ.

In the following example, we shall see that the personal faith is the precondition for Biblical baptism. The evangelist Philip was led by the Spirit of God to meet the Ethiopian eunuch who was on his return journey from Jerusalem reading the prophet Isaiah. While sitting on his waggon, the man of God acquainted him with the Gospel. Then he spontaneously said to him, *“See, here is water. What doth hinder me to be baptised?”* The man of God knew of the necessity that faith should come first and therefore he answered, *“If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest, And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they both went down into the water, both Philip and eunuch; and he baptised him.”* (Acts 8: 36-38). At the time of John the Baptist and also in the days of our Lord and the apostles, baptism was administered in this Biblical way by immersion.

Both, the one to be baptised and the one who did the baptising, went into the water. Thus it also was at the baptism of Jesus Christ. *“And Jesus, when he was baptised, went up straightway out of the water ...”* (Mt. 3: 16a). A baptism whereby the candidate does not enter the water and is not being immersed and does not come out of the water, is not the kind of baptism administered with Christ and the apostles and, therefore, is not the scriptural way to baptise.

The disciples understood their Lord and the commission He gave very well, *“He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved ...”* In the Holy Scriptures and in the first centuries after Christ there is no trace of any infant baptism. The Holy Scripture does not state anything about god-parents nor the teaching that an infant is made free from the original sin. Such is not recorded in the Bible. Also, nothing is said that the new birth takes place through baptism. Whoever accepts God’s Word to be the truth will let himself be convicted by the Holy Scriptures which are the absolute in all questions of faith.

As can be seen, right from the first sermon of Peter and in all the other cases, repentance which leads to conversion to Christ, precedes baptism. An infant does not know at all what is going on, has no knowledge of sin and cannot be sorry and repent for the same. The sprinkling or the pouring on infants is actually no baptism at all. The creed “instead of circumcision, the sign of the first covenant, in the New Testament baptism is established” is not true. It is of no scriptural utterance.

There are theologians who seek to open backdoor’s to defend infant baptism. They refer to Acts 16: 42 and claim that the jailer in the city of Philippi was baptised with his whole house. Hypothetically they assert that perhaps also children were there. The report of course does not confirm this at all. Before baptism was administered, we are told, *“And they spoke unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.”* (Acts 16: 32). Apparently in this house were people able to hear the preaching of God’s Word, who then believed and were baptised.

Others who defend infant baptism use the special utterance of our Lord, *“Permit the little children to come unto me ...”*(Mk. 10: 14). Whoever continues to read on in the said Scripture would quickly notice that the Lord did not sprinkle water upon any infant, but rather *“... he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them and blessed them.”* (Mk. 10: 16).

Then there are those who do not put any emphasis on baptism at all. They refer to the statement Paul made, "*For Christ sent me not to baptise but to preach the gospel ...*" (1 Cor. 1: 17). This statement does not annul the great commission to preach the Gospel and to baptise. It only shows that Paul's ministry was primarily the preaching and teaching, and, therefore, he left the administration of baptism to the other brethren.

Church historians also found out that in early Christianity and during the first centuries the believers were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. The formula "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost" was introduced with the commencing of the Roman church (Dr. J. J. Herzog, *Abriß der gesamten Kirchengeschichte*, Vol. 1, pg. 29; K. D. Schmidt, *Grundriß der Kirchengeschichte*, pg. 73, a. o.). The commission found in Mt. 28: 19, "*Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*" was properly understood and correctly administered by the apostles and in the post apostolic times. Whoever reads the text reflecting about the same will quickly understand that the point therein is not to create a formula but rather to recognise the name used in baptism. "*baptising them in the name ...*" Therefore, they baptised according to this condition **in the name** of the Lord Jesus Christ.

God manifested Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This happened in the New Testament covenant name Yahshua — Jesus into which all the children of God in the New Testament are baptised. God is our Father, therefore we pray, "*Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name ...*" The concern is the name into which we are to be baptised.

The unique testimony from the days of the apostles is overwhelming and clear. After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the apostle Peter preached and his sermon is recorded. To those who believed and were touched by his sermon, he said, "*Repent, and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins ...*" (Acts 2: 38). At the inauguration day of the early church, those who came to believe were told what they must do and how they are to be baptised. Peter had the revelation of the name which was meant by the Lord Himself. Thereby the apostolic baptism practice from the beginning was documented.

Philip preached the Gospel in Samaria and baptised those who were saved. Therefore, we are told, "*... only they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus*" (Acts 8: 16). As every case must be established upon two or three witnesses, we shall see the way the apostle Paul was teaching

baptism. *“When they heard this, they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus.”* (Acts 19:5). Whether in Jerusalem, Samaria, or Ephesus, whether by Peter, Philip, or Paul, all who were baptised were baptised **in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ**. The Holy Ghost can for ever only reveal the same.

Just to understand the matter more clearly a very simple but practical comparison is worth showing. Whenever a teacher would give the problem and ask, “How much is three times three?”, the pupil would not answer, “Three times three is three times three”, he would have to give the answer — the result of the problem. It is not comprehensive how the majority of theologians repeat Mt. 28: 19 like a magic formula without knowing the result of the very commission we are to carry out. Peter, Paul and all the apostles and the men of God in the first centuries knew the solution — the name. They knew what that name was and used it.

The disciples carried out the commission one-hundred percent according to the expressed desire of their Master when they baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Whoever does not baptise that way has not recognised the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in which we are to be baptised into. The assumption that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are names as being taught and defended in a dogmatic way by the majority of theologians is wrong. They are major characteristics or attributes of the special manifestations of God in the New Testament. God is not called Father, He is Father; God is not called Son, God is not called Holy Spirit, He is Son; He is Holy Spirit. He not only manifested Himself, he revealed His New Testament covenant name.

As so often, the secret is hidden in the name; it has to be revealed. In no way is baptism unimportant, because the Lord requested it. It was administered even to Him by John and confirmed by God. But it has to be carried out properly. There is not one case recorded in the Holy Scriptures where someone was baptised in a threefold formula.

Why the traditional Catholic practice of baptism was adopted by the majority of the protestant churches will also remain a mystery. Those Christians who believe the Biblical truth must have before them the fact that all who are baptised into the formula “in the name of the Father, in the name of the Son, and in the name of the Holy Ghost” actually are baptised into the Roman Catholic Church. The Jesuit cardinal Augustine Bea expressed this thought of the long range which is set before us, **“According to Bea the Pope is father of all believers, also of all the evangelical**

Christians who are validly baptised, and it only requires a pleasant returning of them to the mother church.” (O. Markmann, *Irrtümer der katholischen Kirche*, pg. 22). Whatever is meant by the statement “valid baptism” does not need any further explanation. The Biblical, apostolic baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is being rejected by the Roman church as heresy.

Being spiritually ignorant, the protestant churches and practically all denominations, return to the mother church being represented through ecumenicism and the World Council of Churches. Some sprinkle, some pour, some immerse three times using the known formula. Of the apostle Paul, we read in connection with his conversion, “... *and he received sight, and arose, and was baptised.*” (Acts 9: 18). In the epistle to the Romans he informs us how it was done, “*Know ye not that, as many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death, that as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*” (Rom. 6: 3-4).

Those who observe matters a little closer will find out that things here are not just concerned with something shown as an action but rather that men are brought back into the proper relationship with God. This happens through repentance, conversion, the forgiveness of sins, believing in Jesus Christ as personal saviour, being baptised showing forth to have accepted Him, being crucified and buried with Him and raised with Him to walk in a new life. The renewing experience and the new birth does not happen through baptism. But as it is written, “*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit.*” (Tit. 3: 5). The right baptism has its place and is being administered to the renewed and born again Christians.

To the Colossians, Paul writes, “*Buried with him in baptism, in which also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.*” (Col. 2: 12). In the next chapter the apostle declares, “*If ye, then, be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, ... For ye are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*”

The apostle Peter describes baptism as to be a covenant of a good conscience with God. He compares the water into which the candidate is immersed with the ark of Noah. “*The like figure unto which even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the*

answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ ...” (1 Pet. 3: 21).

When Peter preached in the house of Cornelius he said in reference to Jesus Christ, *“To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins ...”* After this the question was presented, *“Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptised, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptised in the name of the Lord.”* (Acts 10: 43-48). The forgiveness of sins is received by believing in the accomplished work of redemption. Whoever has accepted Christ is being baptised in the name of the Lord. *“For ye are all the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ.”* (Gal. 3: 26-27).

To the church at Ephesus the apostle Paul writes, *“One Lord, one faith, one baptism ...”* (4: 5). Today we have various kinds of baptisms, of faiths, and different teachings about the Lord. The harmonious teaching of the Scriptures in reference to Biblical baptism cannot be easily overlooked. The teachings laid down in the beginning are the valid pattern as long as the church of the living God is on the earth. The trinitarian baptism practice which came into existence with the creation of the state church and was introduced when all were forced into Christianity is indeed unscriptural. There is only one original. Everything else is a falsification. Even if Mt. 28: 19 is being pulled into the argument, the apostles understood the commission correctly and carried out the same literally. The formula *“in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”* is being used all over Europe in a very suspicious way. For instance, spells are being put on man and cattle. For both the magic formula is being used and sickness of cattle and human beings vanishes. The entire practice of spiritism, even the entry into the free-mason lodge is practised in this trinitarian formula. Everyone dealing with soul consultations knows about the state people come into by all these occult practices. When asking the ones concerned they reply, *“Well, it happened in the name of God”* without comprehending that the whole thing is hocus-pocus under religious disguise. People come into Satan’s bondage without realising it. The ignorance in this regard cries high unto heaven. The result of the wrong comprehension of the Godhead—the trinity idea is connected with all thoughts of misunderstanding by the enemy.

The common baptism practice was also deeply rooted in the reformer

Martin Luther. In his Bible translation, he used the wording of the actual formula avoiding the original text, "... and baptise them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost", whereas in the amplified version it says properly, "*baptising them into the name ...*" For those who comprehend the matter it is a sky high difference. Someone can act in the name of a firm, in the name of a government etc., but in baptism we are as redeemed aware of the fact that we should be baptised into this name given for our redemption. We are children of the new covenant and acknowledge the covenant name Jesus. As the bride accepts the name of the bridegroom, so the Bride of Christ accepts the name of the Bridegroom and confirms thereby to be in the covenant relationship with Him.

The apostle Peter made the statement, "*... for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*" (Acts 4: 12). The importance of the name of the Lord in this connection is shown by the fact that Peter refers to in his first sermon on the Day of Pentecost reciting the promise found in the prophet Joel, "*... And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved*" (Acts 2: 21; Joel 2: 32). The prophet Joel meant Yahweh, everyone who would call upon Him, should be saved. Peter could have only meant the same Lord Yahweh Who then was manifested as Yahshua — Saviour. Baptism for all who truly believe is of greatest importance to be administered in the valid New Testament covenant name.

It does not say, "baptise them in the names" (plural) which would be grammatically right, if Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were different names. Thanks be to God that the text is clearly stated in the singular. "*... and baptised them into the name ...*" which is according to the testimony of the apostles, "Lord Jesus Christ". Regrettably the true Biblical knowledge in this regard was lost and almost the entire clergy is trapped into unscriptural tradition which they esteem highly and defend vigorously. One of the reasons could be that the original meaning of Yahshua which means Yahweh Saviour was lost by the using of the Greek version of Jesus. Later on tradition made its course using the so-called three "high" holy names without having the revelation of the one true name.

When people today are asking like on that notable Day of Pentecost, "What must we do to be saved", then they have to receive the same answer, "*Repent, and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*" (Acts 2: 38). No one has the right to change or argue away the

original Gospel of Jesus Christ and the apostolic practice.

Great Bible teachers view the scriptural baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ as heresy. Here the question must be permitted, "What is heresy? The right or the wrong?" The matured readers will judge for themselves, whether they will believe the Lord and His apostles or follow a tradition not found in the Scriptures, and, therefore, does not coincide with the original teaching and practice. "*Thus saith the LORD, Stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk in it, and ye shall find rest for your souls.*" (Jer. 6: 16).

Chapter 19

THE LORD'S SUPPER

First we must deal in short with the significance of the Passover instituted in the Old Testament. The last supper was celebrated by our Lord Himself during the Passover. He said, "*Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.*" (Mt. 26: 18). At this Passover, Judas dipped his hand into the same dish and therefore Jesus said, "*He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.*" (vs. 23).

The evangelist Mark records what happened in detail, "*And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them; and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.*" (14: 22-25). Hardly no other text in the whole Bible is being so much misunderstood and misinterpreted as this one concerning the Lord's supper. According to the above passage, the new covenant was about to come into existence. The blood of this new testament was not shed at this Passover or Lord's supper but rather on the cross of Calvary. At this meal, the godly blood was still pulsating in the Redeemer and it was not in the cup. We have to read this Scripture in the light of the significance of the institution of the Old Testament covenant to rightly comprehend the significance of the Lord's supper just before the inauguration of the new covenant.

The Lord God gave to Moses all the instructions. He in turn conveyed them to the people. "*And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people; and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.*" (Ex. 24: 7-8).

The children of Israel in the Old Testament had experienced redemption and deliverance and they were led out from bondage. This happened at the moment when the divine order was given to them to slay a lamb in every house, prepare the same, eat the flesh and put the blood on the lintel and the door posts for protection. It was a sign which the destructive angel had to respect. A home with the sign of this blood could not be touched and the first-born was spared.

In this connection, we have to read the following text, *“And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.”* (Ex. 12: 13). This was God’s decision, and therefore the first-born of the Israelites could not be touched. The blood was the security at the time of destruction. The covenant God made with His people was thereby valid. In the 14th verse, we read about the Passover, *“And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations ...”* A memorial of the saving — delivering and keeping of God’s people.

Two things are to be noticed here. Firstly, by the shed blood the covenant with Israel received its validity, and therefore the lives of the redeemed were saved. Secondly, the celebration of this feast was to be a memorial and reminder to the children of Israel of what God had done to them. These two facts are confirmed in the New Testament supper.

The redeemed were first to declare their willingness to obey and to do all of God’s Word. After Israel did that, Moses sprinkled the blood as a visible sign upon the redeemed church which stood henceforth under the protection of the blood. For a memorial of this great event experienced by Israel, the Passover was to be observed.

In Luke 22, our Lord says, *“... With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer ... And he took bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me.”* (vs. 15+19). While taking part in the Lord’s Supper, the New Testament believers are reminded of the redemption which happened through the blood of the new covenant that was shed for the people of the new covenant. In a symbolic way, the Lord showed forth the true significance. The bread He broke was prepared for the Passover, and therefore it was without leaven. The wine in the cup He gave to His disciples was from the vine. According to Matthew, the Lord said, *“But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”* (26: 29). As the bread was broken in the eyes of those present, the Body of Jesus Christ was delivered, beaten and crucified. As certain as wine was in the cup, the blood of the Lamb of God was shed for the forgiveness of our sins.

It was not the bread which was broken and eaten that suffered but rather our Lord suffered in His Body of flesh, when He took upon Himself

all that was laid upon humanity. The wine was not changed nor was it shed. Those present at the supper drank the same. The holy blood of the Redeemer was shed by which He Himself went into the Glory as a high priest. "... *but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.*" (Heb. 9: 12). Therefore, the following great truth could be said, "*How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*" (vs. 14). Nothing is said or written about the changing of the two elements, bread and wine. While the Lord held the bread in His hands, He said, "*This is my body ...*" Then it is no more necessary to change the same by a ceremony. When the Lord said, "*This is my blood ...*" there is no more need for anyone to change the element. He certainly did not give His literal flesh and blood to eat and to drink and this should be clearly understood. We only find it expressed in a symbolical way.

It is also being taught that Christ offers Himself every time afresh for the living and the dead as it is supposed to happen in the wafer which transforms to be God Himself Who then is eaten up by those participating. What a terrible thought! The holy Scriptures certainly do not teach such a thing. It is in direct contradiction to the teachings of Christ of Whom the Scripture says, "*But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever ... For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified ... This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days ... And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.*" (Heb. 10: 12-18). Whoever reads on in this chapter will find the thought pertaining to salvation expressed, that through the blood of Jesus Christ the new and living way was made free to enter the heavenly sanctuary. What happened at Calvary is valid once and for all for those, who through faith in Jesus Christ, have received the forgiveness of their sins and obtained the eternal life. The Bible says, "*And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*" (Heb. 9: 27-28). Christ does not offer Himself repeatedly and every day millions of times. That is impossible and totally unscriptural.

The Catholic terms "consecration" and "Sacrifice of the Mass" are expressed in a meaning that the substance of bread and wine is transferred into the actual Body and Blood of Christ. It is being assumed that He offers Himself always anew and is then being eaten. If that would indeed

happen, it would be terrible and not only for the vegetarians! But it does not happen. It is not promised, nor was there any such idea in the early Christianity and also the Christians of the first centuries did not know such a superstition. It is very peculiar because in the tabernacle only the wafer is placed. The priest puts it on the tongue of the participants and the wine he drinks himself for all. The altar bells and incense, the shouting “sanctus, sanctus, sanctus” as well as the kneeling down in front of the tabernacle and the prayer etc., all these were not known to the true Church of Jesus Christ. In fact, they are totally strange to real Gospel believers.

The early church celebrated the Lord’s Supper in a simple manner. It was called the breaking of bread and was practised here and there in houses. *“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers”* (Acts 2: 42). The exposition given by the apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 10 and 11 is of great importance. *“I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.”* (10: 15-17). What a clear testimony.

Even today Biblical churches administer the Lord’s Supper as it was done at the very beginning. They take one wheat bread, of course not being baked with leaven, according to the number of those who would participate. The shepherd of a local assembly takes the bread, gives thanks unto God and blesses the same in the name of the Lord. Then it is being broken in small pieces, and the elders hand it around to all, whereby everyone takes a piece of this broken bread. The whole assembly exists of many members making up the one Body of Christ. The bread denotes the oneness of the body, that is to say of the Church; and the breaking into small pieces speaks of the single members as is being expressed in verse 17. During the Lord’s Supper, the true believers who are part of the Body of Christ are assembled in the fear of God for special fellowship with the Lord — the Lamb of God Who died for us — and with one another. After the bread is served and the cup is being taken, thanks is being offered and the same is blessed in the name of the Lord. After this, all participate in drinking from the same cup. As the apostle has written, so it is — the cup of blessing. The fellowship of believers who participate therein, remembering the suffering of Christ and the shedding of His blood.

In the 11th chapter, the apostle Paul emphasised having received of the Lord what he gave unto us, *“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me ...”* In His Body He was resurrected and taken up to heaven. To receive the full light, we must use all Bible references which speak about this subject. The importance is with the divine life that was in this godly blood here on earth. *“In him was life; and the life was the light of men.”* (Jn. 1: 4). *“... God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”* (1 Jn. 5: 11-12).

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger who sojourneth among you eat blood.” (Lev. 17: 11-12). It is not the blood as a chemical substance but rather the life of God existing in this blood which should come into all the redeemed. It should be said that whosoever has a part in the shed blood receives the life which is therein into himself. In Christ was God’s life, therefore, here we are dealing with eternal life. That is the main thought which the Holy Scripture expresses through the proclamation of the Gospel and also is transmitted through the Lord’s Supper.

The eating of blood was prohibited as later confirmed in Acts 15: 29. If the wine in the cup would be truly changed into blood, then the believers would act against God’s expressed order. We need spiritual understanding also in this case. At the Lord’s Supper, the question is not about changing the substances which are only visible symbols to express the divine sense, but rather we are clearly told that we must receive the life of Christ and be reconciled with God.

The Redeemer said, *“I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. ... As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.”* (Jn. 6: 51+57).

In reference to the so called “consecration”, it would be good if all would read about the first miracle Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee where He changed water into wine. The excellent quality astonished the

chief steward at the wedding. The wine which was changed from the substance of water was even better than the original. The people did not drink water and deceived themselves, saying, "We are drinking wine". On the contrary, they were drinking real wine. Up to this day, not one person eating the wafer has had the impression that it was changed into flesh, also no one while drinking wine have had the taste of blood. It is nothing but a mystery cult.

The bread symbolises firstly the Body of Christ which was offered and secondly the body of believers — the church, as referred in 1 Cor. 10: 15-17. The emphasis with the bread was laid in the statement, "... *this do in remembrance of me.*" "*After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*" (1 Cor. 11: 25). Whoever partakes of bread has the taste of bread, whoever drinks the wine, has the taste of wine. That is the plain truth. The Lord rose bodily and ascended into heaven. No one can change any kind of bread on earth into His body. As already spoken of in this exposition, that's not even in question. We are only dealing with God's life that was in Christ and now within us. "*But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name.*" (Jn. 1: 12).

The cup shows forth that the blood of the new covenant was shed. The bread and wine need not to be changed to become Christ, but rather the old man in us must be changed by receiving the new life of Christ within by believing in the full redemption through His blood. Whoever experienced God in a Biblical way can participate correctly in the Lord's Supper. This memorial is meant to be kept in remembrance of what happened on Calvary, right to the end of the time of grace. "*For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.*" (1 Cor. 11: 26). It is noteworthy to pay attention to the precise wording. It does not say, "as often as you eat this flesh", but rather, "*For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup ...*" Only what is placed before us can be eaten, and what is in the cup can we drink. The practice of the Roman Church is outside the will and Word of God. The fuss about the terminologies "it means" or "it is" was not even necessary. No philosophy has any place here. Also this theme must be viewed in the light of God's revealed Word.

Chapter 20

THE FALL

In the Holy Scriptures, some of the events are described in parables without the actual thing coming up openly on to the surface. God ordained it in that way to leave the deeper secrets hidden which can only be revealed and brought to light by the Holy Spirit. So is the first fall of man. Only if we come to understand wherein the fall actually lies will we be able to comprehend the significance of why it was necessary to take humanity out of the fall by redemption. Already the terminology “falling in sin” insinuates what actually happened.

God had ordained man to rule over the earth. Through the fall, this high position was lost. Only through the fall have we the explanation of how mankind has come under the power of Satan. It also explains why the Prince of this world from that moment onwards dominates the whole earth. The enemy came through the serpent directly into the human race. Nobody can tell how long Adam and Eve remained in serene fellowship with God. They knew no pain, no sufferings, no tears, no sickness and no death. They rejoiced in the presence of the Lord God in paradise being in blessed harmony with Him. In the cool of the evening, He visited them. It was heaven on earth. Thus it will be again in the completion. *“Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.”* (Rev. 21: 3).

The mighty angel Lucifer who lifted himself up in heaven was cast down, and he continued his work of destruction on earth as the declared enemy of God. His task was also to cut off the human beings from their fellowship with God and separate them from Him throwing them into destruction and death. According to Ez. 28: 12-17, he already was in the Garden of Eden before the fall. In the mentioned text, God spoke through the prophet directly to Satan who possessed the king of Tyre. The Holy Scriptures declare that Satan can possess men and beasts alike. Our Lord cast the evil spirits out of many who were demon possessed (Mt. 4: 24). In Mark 5: 9, we see that the evil one could directly speak through the one he possessed. *“And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion; for we are many.”* This man was not only possessed by Satan but by many evil spirits.

In the garden of Eden, there were many trees, also the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the fall of man, there was certainly more involved than the eating of a natural fruit — this was permitted. About the eating of an apple, nothing is recorded in Gen. 3, but we read only about the partaking of a fruit from the tree of knowledge. Therefore, it is important to know who and what the tree of knowledge was. In Gen. 3: 7, we read, *“And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.”* Something terrible had happened after which they had to cover the shame of their body. They did not bandage their eyes nor did they cover their mouths, but rather they veiled the lower parts of their bodies with self-made aprons.

In the record given in Gen. 3, we read about the lust of the eye and of being beguiled, etc. Every man and woman know wherein the temptation of the senses, the lust of the eye and the flesh consists of. Also the terminology **“THE SERPENT BEGUILED ME”** must be considered. The wife of Potiphar, the officer of Pharaoh, saw that Joseph was handsome and had a nice countenance. *“And it came to pass after these things, that his master’s wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me.”* Later she said to deny him, *“...he came in unto me to lie with me”* (Gen. 39: 7+14). If a girl or a boy are trapped and beguiled, everyone knows that they did not eat an ice-cream or had a milk-shake.

In Exodus 22:16, the word “beguiled” is more closely elaborated. *“And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her...”* The apostle Paul certainly knew what happened in the garden of Eden. Otherwise he could not have written to the Corinthian church the following admonition, *“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent **beguiled** Eve through his craftiness, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”* (2 Cor. 11: 3). In view of the fall, the apostle writes further, *“And Adam was not deceived, but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression.”* (1 Tim. 2: 14).

After the fall, just directly after it happened, the Lord God said to Eve, *“I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children...”* (Gen. 3: 16). This statement in itself tells us what really happened. Eve was not supposed to have sorrow and pain when she eats, as it would have been logical if the transgression would have to be by sinning with the mouth. Up to this day, no woman has ever given birth to a child after eating a fruit. God knew exactly what had taken place and

where upon the punishment should be pronounced. Therefore, all women on earth, in remembrance to that original sin and transgression in the fall, under normal circumstances give birth with sorrow and pain, as the Lord had said.

Whoever needs clarification for the statements, “*The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.*” (Gen. 3: 13) needs to read in order to obtain an answer Prov. 30: 20, “*Such is the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness.*”

The Lord God pronounced judgment upon the serpent for doing it and said, “*Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.*” (Gen. 3: 14). Up to that time, the serpent walked upright. Otherwise the statement, “*upon thy belly shalt thou go*” would make no sense. Most important is the following verse, “*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between **thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.***” According to the testimony the Lord God had given here, we are to deal with two different seeds. He spoke of the seed of the serpent and also of the seed which would come through the woman. In the whole Scripture, “seed” speaks of offspring.

Satan cannot beget nor can he create. He is a sexless, fallen spirit-being. Therefore, he had to make use of a beast which was closest to man who could even speak. In Gen. 3, one finds the whole conversation which took place between the serpent and Eve. Both, the questions and answers and all the arguments are recorded. Only after the curse, the serpent lost its shape and became a reptile.

The conversation in the garden of Eden began with the well-known question, “*Yea, hath God said?*” The devil uses the same method all the time. He plants doubts towards God’s Word into the minds of man. He entangled Eve into arguments concerning God’s Word and misconstrued it masterly, after which the big lie followed, “*Ye shall not surely die ... Your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil.*” That sounded good, and Eve fell for it. What good was therein, that their eyes were opened and they had the knowledge of good and evil in a state separated from God, thrown into death? Since then, every human can judge and know what good and evil are: What is a lie and what is truth. Therefore, all men are responsible before God for their deeds and will be judged accordingly at the White Throne judgment.

In the Greek Bible as in practically all the others, the serpent is spoken of as masculine "...ho Ophis" - "he said unto the woman". In the French translation, we read, "il dit à la femme", in the Russian, "i skasal smej shene". According to the old Hebrew tradition, the fall in the garden of Eden was understood to have taken place through a sex-act. A commentator writes, "**...the angel, the one riding the serpent, went in with Eve, and she conceived and bore Cain.**" (F. Braun, Blicke ins Wort, pg. 67).

The human nature, character and attributes are found in the genes which actually lie in the chromosomes. They are inherited through the begetting in the sex act. In this way, the sinful nature of the serpent - of Satan, which is against God, came into the human race. Satan himself, who through disobedience and transgression pulled the first couple into death, had the power of death. Therefore, the Redeemer had to come into human flesh to deliver us from the same. "... *That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage*" (Heb. 2: 14-15). After the Lord conquered Satan and death and rose on the third day, he could victoriously announce, "*I have the keys of death and hell*" (Rev. 1: 18).

God's commandment was, "*Be fruitful, and multiply*" (Gen. 1: 28). He instituted marriage and joined the first pair together. The tragedy lies in the breaking of the first marriage through the catastrophical and deadly mixture. Every species was supposed to bring forth after his own kind. But here a creature came into existence, a cross-breed for whom not God but Satan through the serpent was responsible — not being in the original creation. This one charmed and beguiled Eve, and then she gave herself to Adam. God could not accept this, because it did not comply with His original will. Whatever does not derive and come into existence by His original will can never be able to submit to the will of God.

Certainly Adam was confronted with the fact that his beloved Eve who was a part of him was no more a virgin. She had given herself to the serpent and then had her first relation with Adam. Thus, the fall actually took place. From both unions which happened shortly after one another children were born: Cain and Abel.

Right up to our time, twins are born who originate from two different fathers. The two best-known cases happened in Sweden and France. In Stockholm, Mrs. Bjoerlen gave birth on the same day to a black and a blond, blue-eyed baby. Her husband refused to take financial responsibil-

ity for the child which apparently was not his. In the trial Mrs. Bjoerlen admitted to have had a black lover. On the same day, she had the family act with both men. In Marseille, France, Mrs. Duval also gave birth to a white and a black child.

Whoever reads Gen. 3: 15 carefully will notice that the Lord God had spoken of the two seeds — offsprings right after the fall. From the very beginning, there were these two lineages: one the natural and one the spiritual.

Strange but true, not one time is Cain mentioned in the genealogies of the Old or the New Testament as son of Adam. Not one time is Adam referred to as being the father of Cain. Here we find the reason why: Eve was pronounced “*the mother of all living*” (Gen. 3:20) but never Adam to be the father of all living. If Cain actually would have been the first-born son of Adam, he would have received special attention and a special place in God’s records.

After Eve gave birth to the first son, she said, “*I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord*” (Gen. 4: 1). This must be understood correctly. It was the first birth on the earth. There was no midwife, no physician and none who had any knowledge of this event. The pain was great. Adam certainly had no solution. In no way could he assist. So Eve cried in birth-pains unto the Lord. That is quite understandable, and also her statement afterward confirms it. No other act with Adam is recorded between the birth of Cain and Abel. In fact, the Holy Scripture gives light to this, because in verse 2 we are simply told, “... *And she again bore his brother, Abel.*”

The apostle John also apparently must have known what happened in the garden of Eden, because he writes, “... *not as Cain, who was of that wicked one*” (I Jn. 3: 12). With this statement Adam could never have been meant. Adam certainly was not the evil one, nor the wicked one whose son Cain was according to the written Word of God. The same apostle John writes of the believers, “...*because ye have overcome the wicked one*” (I Jn. 2: 13 + 14). Again Satan is meant in this place as in many other places in the Scripture with this description. In Rev. 20: 2, he is called “*the dragon, that old serpent, who is the Devil and Satan*”. The Holy Scriptures mention in many places where the opponent of God is called “*the wicked one*”. God is altogether good and Satan is just the contrary. In the Lord’s prayer we recite, “*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one*” (Mt. 6: 13). We now know who “*the evil one*” is whose son Cain was — the origin of all ungodly things.

Cain was full of envy and jealousy. He was the first killer and murderer, and Satan is the murderer from the very beginning (Jn. 8: 44). He did not murder in heaven but on earth. It is absolutely impossible for Cain to have come forth from Adam who was created in the direct image of the holy God. From God no evil can come. Satan was misusing the serpent for entering into the human race in this cunning way and throwing the same into destruction and death. Because of this fact it was necessary for God to come into the flesh to redeem us back from the power of Satan under which we were. As soon as the redeemed could receive their inheritance, they will be placed back into their original position, ordained by God and rule with Him over all the earth.

Enoch was the seventh from Adam (Jude, 14). There, Cain certainly was not counted. Abel was killed and had no offsprings. Therefore, the record of the genealogy goes over to Seth. In this respect, the Word of God is also perfect and enlightening. Adam, Seth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch (Gen. 5: 6-18).

Just as the birth-pains remind the woman of the original sin, so does circumcision remind the man thereof. When God made a covenant with Abraham and his seed, He required circumcision, *"This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee: Every male child among you shall be circumcised"* (Gen. 17: 10). Circumcision was declared to be the eternal covenant sign (vs. 13). Whoever refused to be circumcised, his soul was to be cut off from his people (vs. 14), because in his part he did not comprehend wherein the covenant was broken. When Moses had neglected to circumcise his own son, the Lord was about to kill him. *"Then Zipporah took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me"* (Ex. 4: 25).

In Matthew 13, the Lord speaks very clearly about two different spiritual seeds, *"He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one"* (vs. 37 + 38). Those who were possessed of the wicked one and hardened their hearts, to them Jesus said, *"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him"* (Jn. 8: 44).

The seed of the serpent was just as much reality as the seed of the woman. The seed of the serpent was Cain, the seed of the woman was

Christ. Paul emphasised this thought when he referred to the promised seed, "...and to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal. 3: 16). He is the seed for whom the promise was given (vs. 19). In the Old Testament, we read, "*When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed*" (Isa. 53: 10). It is God's law for every seed to bring forth after its own kind. We also must remember the word enmity which was put between the two seeds, "*And I will put enmity between ... thy seed and her seed*" (Gen. 3: 15). With the help of the serpent, Satan came into the human race to destroy God's order. For this reason, God had to come down by begetting into humanity in order to take away the enmity, sin and death (Eph. 2: 13-16). In His body of flesh, our Lord accomplished the redemption to live again in the redeemed. He had taken them away from Satan's influence and placed them into His own Kingdom, "*And, having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it*" (Col. 2: 15).

Because Satan came into human flesh and blood, God had to do the same and appear in the form of His Son. He was concerned about our life, about the redemption of our soul and about our reconciliation with Him which only became possible through the redemption by the shedding of the blood of the lamb of God. In the Redeemer no Jewish blood was pulsating but it was a godly, pure and holy blood in which God's life was.

There was also no evolution as science asserts, because of the various forms of skeleton. There were only different species which differed also in the outward appearance. Jude records in verse 7 about "*strange flesh*". Paul writes, "*All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fish, and another of birds*" (I Cor. 15: 39). There was indeed a race of strange flesh.

Here we have the missing link in human history after which science is searching for so long. Based upon the different skeleton forms they know that there was another species in existence. But of course such answers and revelations are not found in any scientific book. They are only found in the mysterious book called the Bible which contains all the mysteries of God.

One species came forth from the joining of serpent and Eve and that was the lineage of Cain who married a daughter of Adam. The other was the descendant of Adam and Eve through Seth who married his own sister. As generally known, Adam and Eve had many sons and daughters, "*And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred*

years: and he begat sons and daughters” (Gen. 5: 4). Later came into existence another species, when the two lineages got mixed. The descendants of Cain in the Bible were called “the children of men”. They still had a little attraction of Lucifer. The descendants of Seth were called “sons of God”. “...that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives ...” (Gen. 6: 2). Because of this cross-breeding, God decided to make an end of all the human race. The Messiah was to come forth after the flesh from a pure line. Since the flood, there is only one kind in existence which goes back to Adam. “And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem and Ham, and Japheth... and of them was the whole earth overspread.” (Gen. 9: 18-19, Acts 17: 26).

Spiritually, also there will be the two lines right to the end (Mt. 13: 38). The judgment thereof stands with God alone. He knows His own. Everyone of course has the possibility for self-examination. Whoever believes the Word of God as it came forth from His mouth and acts accordingly confirms to be the Word-seed child, begotten by the Spirit of God. Whoever is repellent and stands against the Word testifies of not having something in common with the Lord. Actually everyone can know of himself to which category he belongs. Now we are still in the time of grace. Whosoever wants can come and turn unto the Lord, believe and follow Him.

When our Lord was on earth Satan showed Him all the kingdoms and their glory from a high mountain and said, “*All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me*” (Mt. 4: 9). Our Redeemer knew that He first had to shed His blood on this earth for the total redemption to buy back those ordained for eternal life. He, the original Owner, told Satan to go behind Him. Already the psalmist said, “*Arise, O God, judge the earth; for thou shalt inherit all nations*” (Ps. 82: 8). The apostle Paul expresses this thought as follows, “*And if children, then heirs — heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ — if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together*” (Rom. 8: 17). At the end of this age, this will be fulfilled. We have the privilege to live in a time when all the mysteries contained in the Holy Scriptures are being revealed. This includes also what happened in the garden of Eden.

Chapter 21

JUSTIFICATION

The condemnation upon man makes his justification necessary. Justification is not to be compared with a verdict of not guilty but justification implies that the one accused is not guilty at all and the accusation against him is not founded. It is as if the one appearing in judgment has actually done nothing worthy of condemnation. There was simply an accuser who then had to give up because there was actually no guilt. The case is closed.

In one way, man is guilty before God, and, therefore, he needs His forgiveness. But justification as viewed in the eyes of God must be experienced by him. God sees man through the act of atonement and forgiveness in Christ as though he never sinned. The saying, "forgive, but not forget" applies to us only. Even if we forgive one another from all our hearts, we are still reminded about the things which once happened. But it is different with God. He forgave the sins and remembers them no more. No one has the right to dig things out of somebody's life, if God has justified him. Whoever does this, becomes guilty himself, because he has denied the power of the justification of God through the total forgiveness of sins.

Because man is born once into this sinful state without having another chance, God had to take the judgment and punishment upon Himself according to His law in order to justify man. In the form of the Son, He, therefore, made the atonement and thereby He had given back total justification to man. *"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."* (Isa. 53: 5).

In his epistle to the church in Rome, Paul taught the Biblical justification very clearly, and showed how the same is to be experienced. In view of the gospel of Jesus Christ and justification, he writes, *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For in it is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith."* (Rom. 1: 16-17).

God did not only save man from destruction and death but He also justified man completely and gave him back the divine righteousness.

Self-justification through works leads only to self-righteousness. If God's righteousness is given unto us, self-righteousness is no more needed, because it has no value before God, on the contrary it can be a great hindrance unto us. It is written, *"Therefore, by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin."* (Rom. 3: 20).

Through the sovereign act of God, man was lifted out from his lost and condemned state and placed back into his original place. That is the essence of the gospel of Jesus Christ. God not only forgave us but He justified us and gave unto us His Own righteousness. *"... Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus ..."* (Rom. 3: 22-24).

We must only heed to the divine message — the gospel of Jesus Christ, and give it the proper place. It is indeed the glorious message of salvation which is being proclaimed unto the ends of the earth. Mankind is reconciled with God. *"To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."* (Rom. 3: 26). It is not faith in a founder of religion or in any denomination that causes this divine justification, but rather a true faith in Jesus Christ in Whom God met humanity and reconciled the same here on earth with Himself. *"Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law."* (Rom. 3: 28).

It is very clear that the apostle Paul was totally taken up by the truth of justification. Therefore, he wrote in a number of chapters about this theme. In chapters 3 to 8, he gave the complete introduction to the plan of salvation. Everyone needs to receive by faith what God has already given, and be thankful for it. Whoever tries to achieve it by his own works, will never recognise the accomplished Work of God in its true significance. Whatever we try to do ourselves only hinders us to see what God has actually done. *"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."* (Rom. 4: 5).

In Abraham we have a very important lesson that someone who is spoken to by God and receives His promise should not look upon himself or upon the surrounding circumstances, but rather believe from his heart what God had said. Such a person will see the things as though they were already in existence and could give praises unto God, living in the

assurance of faith and being steadfastly convinced that God will do and accomplish what He has promised.

In Rom. 5, the apostle further writes, *“Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...”* (vs. 1). He shows that we have access to the throne of grace by faith and can rejoice in the glorious hope in whatever situation we might be found. He emphasises over again the great truth of justification. *“Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.”* (Rom. 5: 9). Time and again he emphasised upon the true faith in Jesus Christ, the Crucified and the justification through His holy and precious blood.

The apostle summarises this great truth with the following statement, *“Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”* (Rom. 5: 18-19). Experience shows that judgment of condemnation had come upon all since Adam. But we also can believe that this judgment was taken away and by being pardoned by God we have received total justification.

In the 6th chapter, the apostle tells us that we are crucified with Christ, buried with Him, and also resurrected to newness of life.

Romans 7 shows man in all his helplessness, betrayed and deceived by sin and facing the hardness of the divine judgment. Only where there is a law can be a transgression. Without the giving of the law with all its commandments, humanity would have never known what righteous doing is. The law was given for the purpose that men could be caught in their transgressions. The righteous judge using His Own law and pronouncing condemnation has brought redemption and made grace available to all who are willing to receive it. *“... and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.”* (Jas. 2: 13).

Man recognises first that he is in bondage and is a slave of many habits and passions, etc. Then he cries out, *“For that which I do I understand not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I... For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not... Oh, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”* (Rom.

7: 15-24). Everyone who would experience a conversion to the Lord will have to go through this inner process. Without it no real turning to God is possible.

In chapter 8 follows the divine reality experienced by those justified through Christ. The one who is justified through the accomplished work of redemption then cries out, *"There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."* (vs. 1). Those who found peace with God are entering into His rest.

Satan, the accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12: 10), and those who are in his service will always raise accusations against the justified. Paul apparently knew of this state and wrote on our behalf, *"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth? Who is he that condemneth? ..."* (Rom. 8: 33-34).

True justification is not only a doctrine but it is an experience. Justification is the second part of the forgiveness. God had to condemn man, because he was guilty. Through the power of the blood and through the redemption, the guilt was paid. Any further accusation is not possible, even though Satan constantly tries so hard. He did this also with Martin Luther who then received the assurance of faith and having had the experience of justification, he cried out, *"The just shall live by faith."* Divine righteousness comes by faith in the finished work of redemption through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

At conversion, man turns to God when his self life ends, and he experiences a new birth. The new life starts after forgiveness. As certain as Christ rose from the dead after His suffering, we are justified and brought back into true fellowship with God. *"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."* (Rom. 4: 25). As certain as Jesus Christ died, our sins are forgiven and as certain as He rose from the dead, we are justified.

The apostle James shows how the faith of those who are justified is applied. They do whatever God said and prove their obedience by their works. *"Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect. And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and he was called the friend of God."* (Jas. 2: 22-23).

Works do not justify a man. They are simply done in obedience by

those justified. Whoever believes God acts according to whatever He hath commanded. Abraham believed that God would raise his son Isaac from the dead and, therefore, he was ready to sacrifice him as he was commanded. Because he believed, he acted in obedience. James does not refer to works someone does according to his own imagination, but rather refers to the obedient action towards God and His Word. Whoever truly believes will prove that by doing what God said. *“Ye are my friends, if ye do whatever I command you.”* (Jn. 15: 14). That is the breath of a living faith.

The one justified through faith in Jesus Christ stands before God as though he had never sinned. He is placed back into his eternal destination and now only waiting for the changing of this body. Whoever truly believes will underline this by his own life being obedient to God as Abraham was. In the letter to the Hebrews, the redeemed and the justified are shown in the following description, *“But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, who are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect ...”* (12: 22-23).

Chapter 22

REGENERATION AND NEW BIRTH

The justification experience puts an end to the self-life which was lived without God and starts the renewing process. Although it is the one redemption work, the various acts of grace had to take place in our lives. Therefore, different terminologies are being used for the various experiences.

First it starts with revival. The man separated from God is spiritually dead. There must come an awakening to him. This happens only through the Spirit of God under the preaching of the gospel. Until that moment, everyone is spiritually dead, without knowing it. For most of the people, everything seems to be alright and they do not even notice that something is missing.

The religious man tends to put off any thought about the future and also the truth that everyone will be personally responsible before God at the final judgment. Also there are those who think about this, but say to themselves, "I have killed nobody; I have not done this or that, and therefore, it should not be altogether so bad." But we are told that this is very serious. All should, therefore, know that God is not an old grandpa or nice uncle to whom we then can speak a few nice words. At that moment, God will not be the loving Saviour, He will be the Supreme Judge. He is bound to His Word, and, therefore, will judge accordingly.

He is bound to His Word now, and all those who believe receive grace and forgiveness, and they are totally made free and justified. Those who withstand and contradict Him and reject His plan of salvation for themselves, will be judged righteously. Those who try to make it in their own way without lining up with God's Word, will be disappointed. The question is not only to believe, but to believe God and to believe in His Word according to the plan He laid out for humanity. Whoever does not believe God, makes Him a liar (1 Jn. 5: 10).

It is generally understood that the natural man does not receive spiritual things, although he might be religious. It starts with reviving — which is the awakening of the conscience and the recognising of his spiritually dead condition. At the first sermon Peter gave on the Day of Pentecost, the listeners were moved, they experienced the inner revival

and then cried out, “*Men and brethren, what shall we do?*” (Acts 2: 37b).

Under the preaching of the gospel, the listeners do have various experiences with God. When Peter was preaching in the house of Cornelius, those who were gathered there experienced, during the sermon itself, every thing from conversion to the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 10: 37-48). It all depends on the attitude of the listeners and their expectation in faith. Wherever the Word is preached, the Spirit of God moves accordingly. It is good to know that there is no particular set pattern. True faith which is valid before God originates from the preaching of the message of salvation. After this all, experiences which are necessary can be received by the listeners. At first, the Spirit of God lets everyone examine himself, and then the repentance sets in. Man then feels sorry about the things which were not done right, and prays to God for forgiveness.

The knowledge of sin penetrates so deep that man recognises his unworthiness in the presence of the Holy God, and prays, “Lord, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee.” Restitutions are then made. Whoever stole, steals no more; the liar lies no more, etc. A real conversion to Christ and renewing within takes place which brings forth the new birth. Those who are thus convinced by the Holy Spirit ask the Lord to forgive and take the whole load of sin from them. While in prayer, something extraordinary happens. It is a sovereign act of God. Then one receives the assurance of salvation, having found peace with God in his heart. Someone who repents reaches the moment of the break-through believing that Christ alone saves. It is a real experience, something you know, because it happens through the direct moving of the Spirit of God. His Spirit then testifies to our spirit that we have become the children of God (Rom. 8: 16). This salvation in Christ can be obtained and experienced even today.

Whoever turns in faith to God and opens his heart will receive whatever He has promised. We must come to the Lord in the right humble attitude, hear His Word and experience salvation as in the original Christian Church. God is trustworthy, He is utterly reliable and faithful.

Today the picture that God gave in His Word has been distorted. This is because of the many different religious denominations. It is regretted that the way of the Lord is no longer clearly shown.

Those who seek to speak with God must do it like children — as if you

would answer a letter. He wrote to us in His holy Word, by which He still speaks, and in prayer we are talking to Him. He makes known unto us all that is prepared for us and also His perfect will. In prayer we give thanks to Him for all that He has done. Thus man comes into a personal fellowship with God.

We can experience that God's Word suddenly speaks very personally to us like when Jesus spoke to Nicodemus, "*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*" (Jn. 3: 3). The experience of the new birth is a must. Without it no one can enter into the kingdom of God. "*Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*" (Jn. 3: 7). The experience of the new birth has nothing to do with the philosophy of reincarnation which sometimes is being termed as being born again. In the experience of the new birth as taught in the Holy Scriptures, man does not appear in another form, but rather as he lives, believes and receives God's Word, the Holy Ghost performs the begetting of the soul, and so a new life comes forth. "*But after that the kindness and love of God, our Saviour, toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, that, being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*" (Ti. 3: 4-7).

Already in chapter 2: 11, the apostle touched the subject, "*For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men...*" Whoever finds grace in the sight of God will recognise the things necessary for his salvation. In the epistles, the experiences of those who had been in the ministry of Jesus Christ are recorded. He remains the same yesterday, today, and for ever (Heb. 13: 8). Therefore, He does the same with all who come to Him. Whoever receives the Word of Truth will experience whatever is promised therein. "*Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.*" (Jas. 1: 18).

The apostle Peter expresses the same thought, and writes, "*Seeing that ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently, being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever ...*" (1 Pet. 1: 22-23). Whoever experiences what God has promised in His Word, becomes a part of God's Word, submits to His will, and is properly placed according

to the plan of salvation. In turn such people can also place all things properly within the frame work of the Scriptures. The redeemed must become one with the Redeemer, so that we can see as He sees, and desire what He desires.

With the experience of conversion, renewing, and new birth the whole man is included and we begin to follow Jesus Christ. What it means to follow Him is recorded in many places of the Scripture. The Lord suddenly has the pre-eminence. If necessary possessions must be forfeited. It can also mean to leave behind wife or husband, brothers or sisters, parents or children, or friends for the sake of God's Kingdom (Lk. 8: 29). In such cases where this becomes necessary, apparently, the rest of the family does not believe and so they are left behind. To follow Christ does not mean to enter a convent or to join a certain order, but to remain in the daily life only recognising and doing the will of God. The broad way is being left bearing all the consequences. No one can serve two masters or walk on two different ways at the same time. The decision must be taken. Our life itself should testify about the way we have chosen.

The renewing experience concerns the heart of man, according to the Scripture, "*A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.*" (Ez. 36: 26). After the renewing of the inner man, the great task lies before us which is to put away the old man. In fact, everyone more or less lives a double life. We are not what we would have others to believe that we are. Everyone has two faces. Once he appears like this, and then in a different way as he would like to be. In this we are clearly told what we must do. "*That ye put off concerning the former manner of life the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*" (Eph. 4: 22-24). In the following verses, many things are listed which cannot be taken over into the new life.

After the conscience of man is revived and taken out from spiritual death, the Spirit of God brings into remembrance the things which are right in His sight. The one who believes will conform with the following text, "*And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*" (Rom. 12: 2). Whoever starts following Jesus Christ will not carry the cross with a necklace, but rather the

reproach of Christ, the crucified One, and walk on the narrow way which leads into eternal life (Mt. 16: 26).

Paul ends his letter to the Galatians like this, *“But God forbid that I should glory, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”* (Gal. 6: 14). Only those who die to themselves and to this world can live with Jesus Christ. All other things are just good intentions which will fail every time. The redeemed are numbered amongst those who please God.

But in this respect, things also have gone wrong. The Biblical terms are being used, but the true Biblical experiences do not follow. In early Christianity, in the first centuries and also with the true believers in all ages, even in this twentieth century, it is possible to experience Jesus Christ right where you are. There is no need to pull back into a monastery to show a deep religious conviction, meditate and be in the prison of self-righteousness. At the beginning, the apostles and believers lived totally in a normal life in every respect with Jesus Christ whether in their work place, in the family, in the village or in the city. They had fellowship with Jesus Christ and were a living testimony of the experienced grace. Through the power of God, the redeemed man has the possibility to live a totally normal life within the set limits of God's Word. This includes marriage, occupations and all the natural spheres. The question is not whether we should be taken out from this world, but rather that all the worldly things are to be taken out from us.

Chapter 23

SANCTIFICATION

As did the apostle Paul so will every true servant of Christ be careful to proclaim all the Bible truths in such a way that believers will lead a well pleasing life unto the Lord, *“That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit”* (Rom. 15: 16).

The experience of sanctification is a part of the proclamation of the full gospel. The following text certainly cannot be misunderstood, *“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord ...”* (Heb. 12: 14). The text is to be taken very seriously. Those who believed and are justified and had experienced the renewing and the new birth, are told that they will not see the Lord without holiness. That is to say, they cannot have part in the first resurrection, the transformation, and the rapture, and, therefore, they will not participate at the wedding supper of the Lamb. But this is our great aim and the highest goal. Those who believe would like to see Him, being transformed into His image (1 Jn. 3: 2-3). At that time only, it will be fulfilled what our Lord had said in the sermon on the Mountain, *“Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.”* (Mt. 5: 8).

The redeemed are purified and sanctified through the Spirit in God’s holy Word. They believe the promises God made and see them fulfilled accordingly. *“Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”* (2 Cor. 7: 1). In the previous chapter, we are told who this group is: they heed to God’s warning, they come out from all unscriptural teachings and walk with God. They are truly His people. They are called out, and therefore, reject everything which does not originate in God. They also observe the admonition, *“... and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”* (2 Cor. 6: 16-18).

In the first verse, two spheres are spoken of. The one concerns transgressions of the body and the other transgressions of the spirit which stain the soul. Holiness includes the whole man. Christ who loves His

church dearly and has given Himself a ransom has also said what the purpose is, "*That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*" (Eph. 5: 26-27).

In such a state, the redeemed will have to meet their Redeemer. In this holiness, we are told about the "washing of water by the Word". The wording can be easily understood. Not only a sprinkling of a few words here and there, but a total immersion into the fullness of God's Word which is Spirit and Life. The whole man with soul, spirit, and body, is brought under subjection to the Word, and therefore, the will of God is being done by the believer, not as a must, but freely and wilfully. This washing of water by the Word cleans us from all unscriptural traditions, from all habits, and delivers us from all bondages. Our Lord says, "*Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.*" (Jn. 15: 3). By comparing our lives with the Word, we realise whatever is not according to the will of God and then adjust our lives accordingly.

Cleansing by the Word and Spirit can only be possible when someone totally submits to the Word. Jesus, our Lord, is not only made for our redemption but, He is also our righteousness and holiness (1 Cor. 1: 30). Right after this text we read as follows, "*That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*" (vs. 31). Those who have experienced God in such deepness have no place for self-exaltation because they know it was not their doing but His. Therefore, He alone is to be praised, and all honour goes only to Him. "*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*" (Eph. 5: 10). God cared for everything and He prepared even those things which we later should do. We only need to walk therein.

Jesus sets before us the truth of what holiness really means and shows how He already took care of it. "*Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth ... And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.*" (Jn. 17: 17-19). A valid sanctification before God can only be in the Word of truth which is holy in itself. All our own efforts without obedience to the Word are in vain.

In the Holy Scriptures the term "holy" is presented first in reference to God alone. He is the holy One. Then all things which come forth from

Him are holy. Also such things He uses are holy. His people are a holy people (Ex. 19: 6). His priests are holy, because of their calling and dedication (Lev. 21). The high priest had engraved "Holiness to the Lord" (Ex. 28: 36). Only in connection with Him can things and people be holy and separated unto Him for special service.

The prophet Isaiah had a tremendous experience when he saw the Lord upon His throne and heard the heavenly beings cry: "*Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.*" (Isa. 6: 3). The apostle John records a similar experience when he saw the Lord on the throne, "... *and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.*" (Rev. 4: 8). The holy and perfect God makes perfectly holy. He separates, He calls out, and He makes the redeemed participate in Himself. "*For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren ...*" (Heb. 2: 11).

Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, is also called the holy One of God, because He proceeded from the holy God. The new life which one receives from God is indeed the life of Jesus Christ with all His holy attributes. Therefore, true holiness comes through the Word of God. "*Be ye holy; for I am holy.*" (1 Pet. 1: 16).

Over and again the apostle Paul writes to the believing churches consisting of the holy and beloved.

"... *to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints ...*" (1 Cor. 1: 2).

"... *to the saints who are at Ephesus ...*" (Eph. 1: 1).

"... *to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi ...*" (Phil. 1: 1).

"*Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, tender mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.*" (Col. 3: 12).

With God all things are possible. He already sees the redeemed as called out, purified, sanctified and as His special possession. We are holy because we have taken the holy Word of God into our hearts and lives. His presence sanctifies His people. The apostle Paul writes of sanctification in connection with faith and truth (2 Th. 2: 13).

Whoever did not experience Jesus Christ in the same way as the believers did at the beginning of Christianity, is without God's life

even though he may withdraw and separate himself from all earthly pleasures and try to be holy. Only after we have experienced the grace of God, been called out and separated from worldly things, having received the new birth and are made God's property, then we are sanctified by His holy presence. Those who totally dedicate themselves and are obedient to Him, respecting His Word can only be sanctified in the truth. Those who experience conversion and are called with this high calling for a specific purpose will not participate in any worldly pleasures, because it is written, "*And the world passeth away, and the lust of it; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*" (1 Jn. 2: 17). This does not only include the things found in the ten commandments and other ordinances but it also includes the personal life preached in the sermon on the Mount, in the gospels and in the epistles. Those sanctified by God carry His Word in their hearts. They are ready to comply with the same and do all that He requires.

The apostle Paul addresses such believers with the following statement, "*And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.*" (1 Th. 5: 23-24).

The Holy Scripture does not know anything about the Catholic practice of the beatification and canonisation. It also knows not about the calling upon those who died that are supposed to be holy ones and the patrons. This practice is just calming down and misleading. Millions of people call upon such saint patrons who actually are not in existence. We are told to call directly upon God and not upon some people who passed away. Whoever is told about this practice will come to know that it is connected to the superstitious belief of the far eastern religions who claim to be in contact with their ancestors. True blessings and holiness come only from the blessed and holy God. Whoever is not blessed and holy in his lifetime here will certainly not be after death. Prayers for the deceased are also unscriptural and of no avail.

The apostle Peter admonishes the believers in view of the great and glorious day which will come, "*Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God ...*" (2 Pet. 3: 11-12).

It must be emphasised that our own efforts will not be sufficient.

Sanctification is God's gracious work in us. We say "yes" to Him and receive all His Word and live accordingly. Holiness is possible because of the redemption when Christ so willingly offered Himself. *"By which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."* (Heb. 10: 10).

Chapter 24

THE BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD

Those who have truly experienced salvation confirm their conversion by being baptised in water by immersion Biblically in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. In this way, one confirms and acknowledges the New Testament covenant towards God. Then the answer which God gives to the one who believes is by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is a supernatural experience received by the true believers since the Day of Pentecost. Volumes could be written on this theme. In this exposition, we can only touch briefly a few important points. First of all, we must acknowledge the promises which were given ahead of time about receiving the Holy Spirit. For instance, Peter on the day of Pentecost, by the Holy Spirit stated that the prophecy of Joel was being fulfilled.

No one can produce or influence this experience. It is a totally supernatural act received by those who find grace in the sight of God. The apostle Peter stated, *“But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams”* (Acts 2: 16-17). The terminology, “in the last days” refers to the last two thousands years as one day with the Lord is like a thousand years (2 Pet. 3: 8). This corresponds to the Gentile Dispensation.

This experience is supernatural and therefore is accompanied by the supernatural which is in no way connected to any ability, gifts, or natural talents. Through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the nine spiritual gifts are placed into the Body of Christ as shown in 1 Cor. 12: 4-11. The same Holy Spirit working within the church also brings forth the nine fruits of the Spirit in the life of those who have received that experience (Gal. 5: 22-23). Where the Spirit of God truly is, there will also be the gifts and the fruits of the Spirit by which the life and being of Jesus Christ is manifested through the believer. We cannot go into detail about the using of the gifts. However as with the fivefold ministry they are also placed into the church for the building up of the Body of Christ.

In the Old Testament, God promised to pour out His Spirit and in the New Testament we are told that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the One

Who baptises with the Holy Ghost and fire (Mt. 3: 11). Luke records this announcement given by John the Baptist with the following words, *“I indeed baptise you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to loose; he shall baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.”* (Lk. 3: 16). The terminology “baptise” was used for both baptisms, one in water and one in the Spirit. We are baptised into the Body of Christ and sealed by the same Holy Spirit. As John baptised by immersion in water, so the believers were to be immersed into the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

All pertaining to the plan of salvation is centred in Christ. He is the main point in the plan of salvation and in Him God made the new beginning. He is the first-born, upon Whom the Spirit came in order that the same Spirit can come upon all who are in the same category of the first-born. *“Now when all the people were baptised, it came to pass, that Jesus, also, being baptised, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape of a dove upon him ...”* (Lk. 3: 21-22). Jesus, the Son of Man, as He prayed, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit came down visibly in the shape of a dove. The Spirit of God moved over the face of the water at the very beginning (Gen. 1). The Spirit of God has actually no shape but can manifest Himself and appear in any form He chooses.

The symbol of the dove is easily understood as well as the symbol of the lamb. The Son of God has not the shape of a lamb, but He walked upright like all human beings. By this symbol, the divine significance was shown forth in view of the redemption. The sacrificial lamb is the meekest among all the animals and the dove has no gall and it purifies itself from within. Long ago Noah let out the dove from the ark to find a place of rest. The Spirit of God is symbolised in a dove as He came down upon the Lamb of God to rest upon Him. God can manifest Himself in various forms and still remain the same, for ever the same.

God is not an old man with a long beard as many would imagine. The prophet Daniel saw Him like this as the Ancient of days in connection with judgment (7: 9-14). Because He is not subjected to the timely process, He cannot grow older. Only when He shows Himself as Judge with His authority and dignity is He revealed as Daniel saw Him. One can read the same description in Revelation, chapter 1, when John saw the Son of Man in the same appearance as the prophet Daniel had seen the Ancient of days. *“His head and his hair were*

white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were like a flame of fire” (Rev. 1: 14).

It is overwhelming to see the various ways that God has revealed Himself. The Spirit of God came down upon the prophets in the Old Testament, anointing and inspiring them. Of John the Baptist it is recorded that he was filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother’s womb (Lk. 1: 15). Of Simeon we are told that the Holy Spirit was upon him (Lk. 2: 25-26). About Zacharias we read, “... *he was filled with the Holy Spirit.*” (Lk. 1: 67). Already before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus had given to the apostles commandments through the Holy Spirit (Acts. 1: 2).

The Holy Spirit works in many ways. He speaks, He reveals, He predicts, He teaches, and so on. The Son of God Who was begotten by the Holy Spirit was also Son of Man. At the beginning of His ministry, He received the Holy Spirit. Therefore, all the redeemed who are born of the same Spirit do receive the Holy Spirit as they are placed to be the sons and daughters of God. There the Son of God was set forth into His ministry but here the sons and daughters of God are positionally placed.

The prophets of old were anointed and inspired, but they were born into this world like all the rest of the people. The new divine generation which originates with Jesus Christ is of a heavenly origin (1 Cor. 15: 47). On earth we are just guests and pilgrims, our citizenship is on high. In many places the prophets foretold the coming of the Holy Spirit. Also the Lord Jesus Christ spoke of the coming of the Comforter. “*But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father ...*” (Jn. 15: 26).

In the Nicene creed, it is stated, “... **the One Who proceeds from the Father and the Son ...**” (F. Hauss, *Väter der Christenheit*, pg. 40). The Word of God gives a very clear testimony about this. As the Son was the visible manifestation of God in the flesh coming forth from God as Immanuel, so the Holy Spirit proceedeth from God. In both cases, reference is made to proceeding from the same being, because God is the source — the origin. The terminology, “Honour be to God the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ...” is invented later as it is not found in the Holy Scriptures.

Not one time do we find recorded in God’s holy Word that the Holy Spirit is being worshipped. Even the Son did not accept any glory. He said,

“I receive not honour from men.” (Jn. 5: 41). When He was spoken to, *“Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”* Jesus said unto him: *“Why callest thou me good? None is good, except one, that is, God.”* (Lk. 18: 18-19). In the last verse of the last chapter to the Romans, the apostle Paul set forth the right way of worship. *“To God, only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.”* (Rom. 16: 27).

When the Spirit of God begins to deal with a person, three main things would take place as recorded in John 16: 7-11. *“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.”*

These three things are not left to our discretion. If the Spirit comes, He first will open the eyes of the sinner to know what sin is, *“... of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.”* It was the unbelief of our first parents which led to their disobedience and the transgression. It is the sin of unbelief — not the many sins which result because of unbelief, but the one sin of unbelief — that keeps us separated from God. Two Bible references will make this plain. The Lord said, *“I said, therefore, unto you, that ye shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins ...”* and also, *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life.”* (Jn. 8: 24; Jn. 5: 24).

As soon as the Spirit of God deals with a person, He starts with the original root of evil — unbelief towards God and His Word. The apostle John writes, *“... he that believeth not God hath made him a liar ...”* (1 Jn. 5: 10b). If someone does not believe God and so does not receive what He did in Jesus Christ, it makes Him a liar. In such a case, that person stands on the territory of the adversary, agrees with him and exchanges the lie for the truth. This cannot be tolerated by God.

Firstly, the Holy Spirit convinces the sinner of the sin of unbelief and leads him to repentance. Then the second step of justification follows which leads him into God’s righteousness. Thirdly, the knowledge that the prince of this world is judged — that God has pronounced the verdict upon Satan, is given by the same Holy Spirit. According to John 12, when judgment was executed over Satan, the Voice of God was heard like a

mighty thunder. *“The people, therefore, that stood by and heard it, said that it thundered; others said, An angel spoke to him. Jesus answered, and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out ...”* (Jn. 12:29-31). Satan from whom all sin originates is already judged. The head of the Serpent is bruised.

On the day of Pentecost, the believers who were cleansed and sanctified in the truth were filled with the Holy Spirit. Everyone can read what happened there. It was the climax of the divine plan of salvation — after the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension to heaven, the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit took place that all who were there might not forget but remember the impact of this event. It just happened in the God ordained way. *“And suddenly there came a sound from heaven like a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.”* (Acts 2: 2). Not that which was heard and commonly recognised but that which later repeated itself with the true believers is the most important thing: *“And there appeared unto them cloven tongues as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.”* (vs. 3). At no other time was it recorded that a mighty sound like a storm came from heaven, but every time when the believers were baptised with the Holy Ghost and fire, the results were similar to that on the Day of Pentecost, *“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”* (vs. 4).

On the Day of Pentecost, a twofold supernatural miracle took place. One was that the believers spoke in other languages by the Spirit while the other was that those of many nations who had come to Jerusalem understood what was being said in their own language. *“And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these who speak Galilæans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? ...”* (vs. 7-8). On the Day of Pentecost, the gift of interpretation was not needed. The Spirit did the translation work. Those who spoke and those who listened were under the same anointing. Later the gift of interpretation is mentioned amongst the nine spiritual gifts. Normally it is like this, two or at the most three, would speak in whatever language the Spirit chooses, and one would then give the interpretation (1 Cor. 14: 27-28).

Through the prophet Isaiah, the Lord had already predicted this great event, *“For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this*

people. To whom he said, This is the rest by which ye may cause the weary to rest, and this is the refreshing; yet they would not hear.” (Isa. 28: 11-12). Even when the Holy Spirit speaks through human lips in a supernatural way, it is sometimes not received. On that notable day, there were two groups in the congregation: “And they were all amazed, and were perplexed, saying one to another, What meaneth this? Others, mocking, said, These men are full of new wine.” (Acts 2: 12).

Peter was not discouraged by this. He acted according to the commission and presented the things concerning the plan of salvation. In his speech he reached the climax and testified, *“This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.” (Acts 2: 32-33).* The same Spirit of God Who descended upon the Son of God also came down upon all the redeemed sons and daughters of God. Since that notable day, the same experience is being shared with all of God’s people. God always has His plan which never changes.

From the countless promises in the Scriptures, only one is called the promise of the Father. At the end of the forty days after His resurrection, our Lord taught His disciples the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God and what He gave them was a commandment and not just a good suggestion: *“And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard from me. For John truly baptised with water; but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” (Acts 1: 4-5).*

At that moment, even the apostles had not fully understood that God was not only concerned with Israel but also with all nations. *“... they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.” (vs. 6-7).* After these words, the resurrected Lord completed His commission, *“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (vs. 8).*

The receiving of the Holy Spirit is also essential as the equipment for the ministry — for the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the world. True witnesses of Jesus Christ have to experience Him

in His resurrection power and they are also to be endued with the authority of the Holy Spirit. During the times of the apostles and also later, those who believed had the same experience. This experience belongs to those who believe. When Paul met a group of disciples in Ephesus, he straightway asked them, *“Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed?”* (Acts 19: 2).

Some teach that one automatically receives the Holy Spirit when being converted without really having had this experience. Paul was asking very plainly, if those disciples had received the Holy Spirit after they had believed. The answer was, *“No. We have not so much as heard whether there is any Holy Spirit. And he said unto them, Unto what, then, were ye baptised? And they said, Unto John’s baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptised with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him who should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke with tongues, and prophesied.”* (Acts 19: 3-6). Those who believed were baptised in water and with the Holy Spirit.

Philip experienced a mighty revival in Samaria and then came there the apostles Peter and John, *“who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit.”* (Acts 8: 15). Evangelists of the 20th century have big crusades, stir the masses, take a big offering, and depart. They do not preach about the Biblical baptism, and what they describe as the move of the Spirit is only emotional and lasts only a short while. They just create a certain atmosphere and, sadly, that is as far as they can go.

God worked with Peter and Cornelius in a supernatural way at the same time, and brought the man of God into a house of a God fearing centurion. When Peter had reached the climax in his sermon, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who were present. *“And they of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit.”* (Acts 10: 45). The baptism in water and in the Spirit is well documented in the early church and the successive order can be different.

It is noteworthy what Peter said referring to this event when speaking to the assembly in Jerusalem, *“And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning.”* (Acts 11: 15). In all the points

concerning our spiritual life, we must go back to the beginning, to the original blue print. Today things are not as clear as they were then. The same or similar formulations are being used, but the same experiences do not always follow.

It is a special evidence which accompanies the working of the Holy Spirit. He is a Comforter, a Teacher, Who leads into all the truth, etc. The Lord said, *“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Nevertheless, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.”* (Jn. 16: 12-15).

Whatever belongs to God, Christ has already redeemed, and therefore, it belongs to Him. And all who are His receive His Spirit, therefore, it is written, *“... Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”* (Rom. 8: 9). The Spirit of truth teaches us all the things contained in God’s Word. He reveals all the connections and grants the understanding of the will and plan of God. All of God’s children are submitting to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, *“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”* (Rom 8: 14). The Spirit of God always leads according to the Word of God.

Also in view of the first resurrection — the changing of our mortal bodies, we need the power of the Holy Spirit, without which no transformation is possible. *“But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also give life to your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”* (Rom 8: 11). The word “if” is commonly used. If ... then, if not ...? Here the significance of that word is plainly shown. **If** the Spirit dwells in us, it **will** happen. **If** He does **not** dwell in us, it **cannot** happen — the mortal bodies will not be changed. The apostle Paul emphasised this thought as follows, *“For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. ... Because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. ... And not only they, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, that is, the redemption of our body.”* (Rom. 8: 19-23).

The multitude of the first-born have the first fruits of the Spirit — the

Seal of God and the assurance, that not only their soul is redeemed, but also their mortal bodies will be changed at the return of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is also described as a seal and also as the anointing. *“Now he who establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”* (2 Cor. 1: 21-22). Jesus is the Christ, the Anointed One (Acts 3: 19-21; Acts 10: 38). The word “Christ” in itself means the “anointed”, therefore, all believers who are anointed with the Holy Spirit were called “Christians”. Whosoever has not received the Holy Spirit in this Biblical way, is not anointed and sealed by the same and will find it hard to convince someone to be a real Christian.

In all the realms, there are two different seeds, and therefore one can always find the imitation and the real. Our Lord did not warn about false Jesuses, but of false Christs who are falsely anointed ones and are referred to as false prophets who would appear in the last days. That is to say, that the anointing is also found amongst those who are part of the antichrist system, as they are against the Word in certain main points, and therefore, in reality against Christ. *“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”* (Mt. 24: 24). God pours out His Spirit like a mighty rain upon all flesh. The emphasis in this case is not put on the rain, but rather on the seed which is placed in the ground of the heart. *“... for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”* (Mt. 5: 45). There are anointed ones in the end time who do not compare with God’s Word. Such were already at the end of the first Christian century. *“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”* (1 Jn. 2: 19).

In Matthew 7: 21-23, our Lord describes this group which used His name to do great things, but never submitted themselves and never became part of God’s plan, and therefore, they are not recognised by Him. Whether He thought of the great TV preachers, Charismatic movements, the miracle working evangelists and the various movements of this day, who do not submit themselves under the Word and respect Christ as the head, God alone knows. They use His name wherever necessary, but that is all.

“For the earth, which drinketh in the rain that cometh often upon it, and

bringeth forth herbs first for them by whom it is tilled, receiveth blessing from God; but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is near unto cursing, whose end is to be burned." (Heb. 6: 7-8). Just claiming a pentecostal experience is not sufficient. It must be the same seed of God's Word upon which the Holy Spirit can fall and bring forth the true fruit of the Spirit as in the believers at the beginning. Jesus, our Lord, never said, "You will know them by their gifts", but, "... *by their fruits ye shall know them.*" Experiences and gifts can be in both the groups, they can be real or they can be imitated, but the true fruits of the Spirit will only be found in the real godly seed which is sealed by His Spirit. The anointing is upon many but the sealing is only with the first-born and chosen ones. They are always comparing with the Word of God.

In his letter to the church at Ephesus, the apostle Paul writes, "*In whom ye also trusted, after ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, Who is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*" (Eph. 1: 13-14). This certainly is not a religious ceremony done by a clergyman, but rather a supernatural experience coming from God. We are admonished with these words, "*And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by whom ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*" (Eph. 4: 30).

Chapter 25

CHOOSING — PREDESTINATION

To be chosen by God can mean to be predestined for a ministry or a task. Election is shown in the person of Abraham and later with Israel. *“But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham, my friend; Thou, whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away. Fear thou not; for I am with thee. Be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”* (Isa. 41: 8-10).

As it was common with the prophets, Jeremiah also could testify of his ministry and commission, *“Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the womb, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.”* (Jer. 1: 4-5).

Out of the twelve tribes of Israel, God chose the tribe of Levi for the priesthood. *“For the Lord thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the Lord, him and his sons forever.”* (Dt. 18: 5).

From all the sons of Jesse, God chose David and ordained him to be king over His people (I Sam. 16: 5-13).

Jesus also chose the apostles for special service. *“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit ...”* (Jn. 15: 16).

The Lord spoke to Ananias in connection with the conversion of Saul, *“Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel”* (Acts 9: 15). Although the conversion was experienced later in life, Paul was separated and chosen from his mother's womb as were the prophets of old. *“But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me ...”* (Gal. 1: 15-16). Generally, it applies what Paul wrote to the Corinthian church, *“For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God*

hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world ... that no flesh should glory in his presence.” (I Cor. 1: 26-29).

For better understanding, we need some more Scriptural background, because to be called and to be chosen are two different things and refer to two different groups. The chosen ones are also called, but the called ones are not all chosen. In the parable of the wedding supper, our Lord said, *“For many are called, but few are chosen.”* (Mt. 22: 14). The chosen ones from each church age make up the overcomers who will inherit everything promised in the seven messages to the seven church ages (Rev. 2 + 3).

The called ones believe in Jesus Christ as their personal saviour, but don't permit themselves to be led into all the truth, and, therefore, they cannot fully coincide with the Word of God. Their names are, of course, written in the book of life and they will enter into eternal life at the White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20: 11-15). In Rev. 17, we are told about the Lamb fighting and conquering and we are also told about the multitude of the overcomers who will reach the highest goal. All the three terms apply to this group: called, chosen and faithful. *“... for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings, and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful”* (vs. 14).

Both, the Redeemer and the redeemed are being spoken of as being chosen of God. *“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth ...”* (Isa. 42: 1). *“Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen ...”* (Isa. 43: 10; Mt. 12: 18). God's pleasure and delight first came upon His Chosen One, and through Him upon all the chosen ones (Mt. 3:17; Mt. 17: 5). Thus it is coming to pass what was announced at the birth of our Redeemer, *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”* (Lk. 2: 14). There are people on earth having God's pleasure by His grace.

To be chosen goes hand in hand with predestination. There is only one kind of choosing, namely the one for redemption, and there is only one predestination for the same purpose. The Son who was born about 2,000 years ago was chosen before the foundation of the world. Therefore, looking back He could speak of the glory of God which He possessed before the world ever was. *“And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”* (Jn. 17: 5). The formulation “before

the foundation of the world” is being frequently used in reference to the plan of salvation. The term “before the foundation of the world” speaks of the very first beginning, when the Logos came out from the eternal fullness of God and, therefore, was “with God” (Jn. 1: 1). At that moment, all sons and daughters of God were chosen in Christ. They are, therefore, glorified with the same glory He has until the redeemed appear in His very image. *“Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.”* (Jn. 17: 24).

Of the redeemed the same is said as of the Redeemer. They were also chosen before the foundation of the world. *“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him, in love having predestinated us unto the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will”* (Eph. 1: 4-5). God, who is eternal, has set forth His plan before the world was and He accomplishes the same in the course of time until time merges into eternity.

The apostle Peter speaks of the spotless Lamb of God, *“... who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you”* (I Pet. 1: 20). The redeemed were also foreordained in Him. Therefore, their names could already be written in the Lamb’s book of life before the foundation of the world. *“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him (the antichrist), whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”* (Rev. 13: 8).

In the Old Testament, God had chosen Israel to be His special property. *“For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth”* (Dt. 14: 2). From the view point of the New Testament church which is composed of all nations, the apostle writes, *“As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes.”* (Rom. 11: 28).

Predestination leads to dedication and to sanctification by the Holy Spirit. Israel did not call and separate herself. It was a divine act and, therefore, they were a holy people dedicated unto the Lord. *“... then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is*

mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation” (Ex. 19: 5-6). Addressing the believers of the New Testament, the apostle Peter writes, *“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people ...”* (I Pet. 2: 9).

In the following verses, the apostle Paul thoroughly deals with this subject, *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified”* (Rom. 8: 28-30).

God certainly did not see anything good in man whereupon He could start. There was absolutely nothing. Salvation comes totally from God and God alone. He saw humanity in Christ. In Him the Yes — the acceptance towards the redeemed was given. In Him also the Amen was given and the placing into the sonship (2 Cor. 1: 20). The testimony of the Scriptures is very clear and overwhelming. He foresaw His own and ordained them to eternal life. The Omniscient could both choose and predestinate at the same time. *“And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.”* (Acts 13: 48).

Choosing is not arbitrariness. God declares His will, but forces nobody to do it. His declared intention is this: *“Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”* (II Tim. 2: 4). Because God is omniscient, He also knew who would accept salvation and who would reject. Whosoever does not come to God remains distant from Him. Whosoever refuses to be saved remains lost. Therefore, He could foresee those who would believe in Him and predestinate them to salvation before the foundation of the world.

Many times the statement of Paul which he took from the Old Testament as found in Romans 9 is misunderstood, *“... I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. ... Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.”* (Rom. 9: 15-18). Those who come to Him will find mercy. They are the ones who receive His grace and love. With them the statement is fulfilled, *“So, then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that*

showeth mercy." (vs. 16). God cannot be merciful to those who do not come to Him. Those who remain afar off harden their hearts and do not permit God to deal with them. God never changed His original intention. On the contrary, He brings it to pass with those who believe Him. Further on we read about vessels of wrath which are prepared for destruction. They are the ones who remain in unbelief. They simply do not want to have anything to do with God. Upon such, the wrath of God remains, although it was actually taken away in Christ. There are people who do not receive the statement to be free and reject the same, and, therefore, remain under condemnation. Whosoever does not come to Christ, upon him the wrath of God remains, because the finished work of redemption is not being accepted or applied.

Lucifer used his free will to revolt against God. He and his followers will never be able to submit to the will of God. There are people who will never submit to the plan of God. God can only bring about grace, forgiveness and the total redemption to those who receive them as a gift by faith. They should accept the substitutional reconciliation through Christ.

We are told, *"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."* (Tit. 2: 11). The call of the Lord is addressed to all, *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* (Mt. 11: 28). But all do not come to Him. They do not listen to His call. Even among those who search His Word, there are some who have different motives and do not reach the personal fellowship with their Lord and Saviour. *"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."* (Jn. 5: 39-40). All the searching in the Scriptures and the whole theological study is in vain, if the individual could not come to the Lord and receive eternal life. The Lord saith, *"If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."* (Jn. 7: 37). Most people do not come because they do not thirst.

The statement, *"... whom he will he hardeneth"* (Rom. 9: 18) is determined by force. God cannot act against the will of man. He did not want man to be lost, because it is His expressed will that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of truth, but if man does not want what God wants, God will permit what man want. God made man a free moral agency right at the beginning. He never forced mankind and cer-

tainly did not make mankind as an automatic device or machine. Man could decide between obedience and disobedience, between life and death, etc.

Man separated from God, insists on his self-determination, until he recognises and accepts the divine determination for himself. He wishes to project himself, until he permits God's plan to be projected with him. He wishes to be independent and does not want to submit and in searching for his own liberty he falls into bondage and destruction. Whosoever is detached from God is attached to the adversary. Therefore deliverance is very much necessary. The Redeemer came to preach this deliverance to the captives (Lk. 4: 18).

Abraham, the father of faith, is given unto us for an example. As it was with him, it is with all who would hear and believe and do according to the Word of God. They acknowledge God in His dealings and take sides with Him and thereby confirm the covenant which He made with us. The chosen ones believe God in all things. Whatever He said, they would do. What He commanded, they would act in obedience to it. With them word, faith and works agree. Those who are predestinated have no more their self-will but they submit to the will of God and pray honestly, *"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."* (Mt. 6:10). They have no intentions of their own but they are just part of God's will and purpose. As the Son of God was the direct accomplishment of the Word made flesh, so they are also. Because of the new birth they are part of God. To such people the apostle Peter addressed his admonition, *"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall."* (II Pet. 1: 10).

As the apostle also writes, Christ is the precious and elected stone. He is the chief cornerstone. But for some He is the rock of offence and a stone of stumbling. To the ones who make up the chosen generation, the kingly priesthood, Christ is both, the cornerstone and the headstone. Whosoever is offended with Him is still in disobedience against the Word of God (I Pet. 2: 3-10).

Spiritual experience teaches that everyone would find the place ordained for him. Whosoever cannot believe in predestination, certainly is not predestinated. It starts with conversion, renewing, new birth and every other experience we can have with God. Everyone can only experience and receive what he believes. *"But we are bound to give thanks*

always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” (II Th. 2: 13).

“Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself; That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will” (Eph. 1: 9-11).

Chapter 26

ONE DAY WITH GOD — ONE-THOUSAND YEARS

This disclosure will acquaint us with God's timetable concerning the history of mankind. In Psalm 90, 4, we read, "*For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past ...*" The same thought is being expressed by the apostle Peter in the New Testament, "*But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*" (II Pet. 3: 8). When we read in the Scriptures about the last days, we have to discern, whether the last days are spoken of in the prophetic sense or whether the last generation is meant.

God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh day. If one reads the creation account precisely, it is stated like this, "*And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.*" (Gen. 2: 2). This has a great significance for the course of the seven-thousand years of the human history. The number seven speaks of divine completion. The eighth day would be again the first day of week.

The Biblical course can be divided as follows: approximately 2,000 years — two days with God elapsed from Adam to Abraham, the next two from Abraham to Christ. Now we are close to the completion of the 2,000 years span again. The seventh is the rest day of the Lord — the Millennial reign. Prophets and apostles spoke and wrote of this "Day of the Lord". John records an experience he had on the Isle of Patmos when he said, "*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day ...*" (Rev. 1: 10).

This last day starts with the great battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16: 14-16), and ends with the great battle of Gog and Magog after the Millennial reign, when Satan will be loosed and for the last time he will deceive the nations (Rev. 20: 7-10).

In between these battles is the Millennial reign, where the wolf and the lamb, ... the leopard with the kid ... the calf and the young lion ... the cow and the bear shall feed together (Isa. 11: 6-11). "*... and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*" (Isa. 2: 4; Mic. 4: 3).

“And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, who shall stand for an ensign of the people; to him shall the nations seek, and his rest shall be glorious. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, who shall be left ...” (Isa. 11: 10-11).

Prophetically viewed, we live in the last two days since the beginning of the New covenant, also termed as the “last times”. The apostle Peter wrote of Christ, *“Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you”* (I Pet. 1: 20). This span of time is now nearing its end. Because some count Biblical 360 days and others 365 days, it is not possible to calculate the time exactly. Thanks be to God for that. We do have of course an orientation given in the Scriptures. From the predictions and the events — the signs of the time — we can detect and understand that we are now living at the end of time. The great event and change in the history of mankind is within reach.

On the Day of Pentecost, Peter visualised the two prophetic days when he established the event of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the scriptural foundation of Joel 2, *“But this is that which was spoken through the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh ...”* (Acts 2: 16-17). At the end of these last days — the two-thousand years — he places with all accuracy the day of the Lord which can only come after the day of salvation has ended. *“The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come”* (Acts 2: 20). According to Malachi 4: 5, it will be the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

Certain events will happen at the end of this two-thousand years period and others will fall in the beginning of the seventh day — the day of the Lord. There is not one place in the Scriptures stating that the Sabbath or the Sunday is the “Day of the Lord”. For the believers, this day will be glorious (Phil. 1: 6; Phil 2: 16). For the ungodly it will be terrible (Isa 13: 6-12). As God completed His work of creation on the seventh day and then rested, so will it be at the completion of the work of redemption.

The time of grace is also called the “day of salvation”, the “acceptable time” (Isa. 49: 8; II Cor. 6: 2) and also as the “acceptable year of the Lord” (Isa. 61: 2; Lk. 4: 19). Originally the term the “acceptable year” meant the year of jubilee. In the Old Testament, this special year came after seven times seven years, in the fiftieth year. All who were indebted or slaves, who had lost their possessions could reclaim everything and return to

their possessions in the year of jubilee (Lev. 25). At the great day of atonement, the trumpets were sounded and all were freed on one day in the year of jubilee. After that great day when reconciliation with God and humanity took place, the trumpet sound of the gospel is heard. Whosoever believes now can go free. The whole span of the time of grace is for every one, regardless where and when one lives. It is the divine jubilee year which our Lord described as the “acceptable year”. Everyone who believes God during this time and accepts the finished work of redemption may go out free. Our Lord proclaimed then, *“This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears”*. (Lk. 4: 21). This “today” is the God given day of grace (Heb. 4: 7).

About the two last days, the apostle Peter made this statement, *“Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those who follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.”* (Acts 3: 24). It is quite astounding to see the precision with which the men of God in the New Testament could describe by revelation, the things pertaining to the plan of salvation. *“... Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah ...”* This covenant God made in Christ on Calvary and gave the promise to Israel, *“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.”* (Heb. 8: 8+10).

With reference to the time span of the Old Testament which is also described as days in the prophetic sense, we read in Hebrews 1: *“God, who at sundry times and in diverse manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, ...”* The end of the days of the fathers merged into the days in which God spoke through His Son and gave the answer. We are dealing with the approximate 2,000 years allotted for the church which will reach her completion at the end of this age. After this, there will be the realisation of God’s plan with Israel. This of course will fall into the beginning of the seventh day, directly before the commencement of the Millennial reign.

In Hosea 6, reference is made to these prophetic days, *“Come, and let us return unto the LORD; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us; in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.”* (Hos. 6: 1-2).

In the year 70 A.D., the temple was destroyed by the Roman army

under Titus and Israel was dispersed among the nations as Moses and the prophets had foretold. Moses also spoke of their return (Dt. 4: 27-28). And through the prophet Jeremiah, the Lord gave the promise, "... *He who scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth flock ... Therefore, they shall come and sing in the height of Zion ... for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow.*" (Jer. 31: 10-13). The prophet Ezekiel also wrote about this subject in chapters 36-38. In chapter 37, verse 21, we find the following statement, "... *Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, to which they are gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land.*" In chapter 38, the time in which this will happen is being closely described, "... *in the latter years ... it shall be in the latter days ...*" (vs. 8+16).

We are told by the prophet Hosea that the return and the healing of Israel will take place after two days, that is to say, after 2,000 years. On the third day, the Lord will heal Israel and He will give them life. The hope for the Messiah is left vivid in all the believing Jews until this day. In general, a prayer at the Wailing wall ends with the petition that the Messiah should come and the temple be rebuilt. It will then be fulfilled what the prophet stated, "*Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD; his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.*" (Hos. 6: 3).

By a miracle of God, as this cannot be misinterpreted, we do have the country of Israel again since 1948. Viewed from God's plan of salvation, God deals with Israel as a nation in their own country. From all the other nations, He calls out individuals. In regard to the completion of the church from the nations and the deliverance of Israel, the apostle Paul writes, "... *blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written ...*" (Rom. 11: 25-26).

James had already expressed this thought in the special gathering at Jerusalem, "*Simeon hath declared how God first did visit the nations, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written: After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David ...*" (Acts 15: 14-16). The prophet Amos stated it like this, "*In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, ...*" (9: 11). Concerning the people of Israel, the prophet Zephaniah wrote, "*In that day shalt thou not be ashamed ...*" (3: 11). "*And in that day will I*

make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people; ... And it shall come to pass, in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." (Zech. 12: 3+9).

The fact of the return of Israel into their homeland is a proof that the time of grace for the Gentiles is nearing its end. Within a short time, God will turn to Israel again. Before that last day commences, the work of God with the church must be completed. Thus saith the Lord, "*Behold, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD.*" (Mal. 4: 5). Could it be that this promise has already been fulfilled without the established clergy taking notice of it? Or as it was at the beginning of the time of grace with John the Baptist who was turned down by the Jewish clergy of his day.

Because John the Baptist fulfilled the first part of the prophetic statement, "*... to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children ...*" (Lk. 1: 17), he was also called Elijah. Since then almost 2,000 years elapsed, but the day of the Lord has not yet come. John was the messenger according to Mal. 3: 1 who prepared the way of the Lord (Mt. 11: 10; Mk. 1: 1-3).

John was also asked, "*Art thou Elijah?*" He boldly answered, "*I am not.*" (Jn. 1: 21). Just at the end of the day of grace, before the judgements and the wrath of God are poured out, God promised to send a man like the prophet Elijah. This man has the task to turn the hearts of God's children back to the faith of the apostolic fathers. Elijah gathered Israel on Mount Carmel and rebuilt the altar of the Lord. He took the twelve stones according to the twelve tribes, and God gave the decision and the answer from heaven. The Elijah of this day must bring the hearts of the children back to the original doctrine of the twelve apostles upon which the New Testament church was established. Then only the living God will confirm His Word by a supernatural act and manifest His power within His church. This man of God will not represent a certain denomination. He will have to be one sent by God with a direct commission and with the timely message to God's people.

In Matthew 17: 11, Jesus Christ confirms this ministry as to be in the future. "*And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elijah truly shall first come, and restore all things.*" Dr. Scofield, the famous Bible translator, gives in his footnote this fitting statement, "**Christ confirms the specific and still unfulfilled prophecy of Mal. 4: 5-6: 'Elijah shall truly first come and restore all things.'** Here, as in Malachi, the prediction fulfilled in John the Baptist, and

that yet to be fulfilled in Elijah, are kept distinct. But John the Baptist had come already, and with a ministry so completely in the spirit and power of Elijah's future ministry (Lk. 1: 17) that in a typical sense, it could be said, 'Elijah has come already.'"

The one who prepared the way at the first coming of Christ came in the spirit and power of Elijah. The man of God before the second coming of Christ must establish God's order to the original pattern of the early church. This must happen before the return of Christ, because in reference to His coming we read, "*Whom the heaven must receive **until** the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the age began.*" (Acts 3: 21).

In view to the day of the Lord, the apostle Paul writes, "*For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night ...*" (I Th. 5: 2). That is to say, without special warning and it will be a surprise. The apostle further states in reference to this day, "*For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.*" (vs. 3). At no other time, the terminology "peace" and "safety" has been so much emphasised as right now. The politicians yearn to bring peace and with peace also safety to the nations. At that time, when these two words "peace" and "safety" will receive world-wide significance, sudden destruction will happen. That time is now. In both, East and West, only one thought prevails and that is to destroy the terrible weapons and secure a world-wide peace. For those who know the Scriptures, they will not be taken by surprise, because they know that according to the signs of the time these developments take place. "*But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.*" (I Th. 5: 4).

The apostle Paul picks up this theme of the return of Christ and our uniting with Him and tells us to remain calm and not to be "*soon shaken mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of the Lord is present.*" (II Th. 2: 2). In this chapter as well as in other places, the spiritual marks and the general situation of the end time are clearly shown by the Scripture. "*... there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts ...*" (Jude 18).

The apostle Peter almost used the same wording, "*Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts.*" (II Pet. 3: 3).

In the following verse, the apostle not only describes the mocking in general, but specifies, what they will finally mock, and that is the promised return of Jesus Christ Himself, as they will ask, *“Where is the promise of his coming? ...”*

The general situation of the end time is described in II Tim. 3: 1-9. *“This know, also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power of it; from such turn away ...”* The Lord also described the moral and spiritual condition of the end time when He compared it to the days of Noah and to the days of Sodom (Lk. 17). In the times of Noah, the mixing of the two lines (Seth and Cain) took place. And because of this, God set an end to all flesh (Gen. 6). Now the greatest religious mixing and joining of all times takes place.

In II Tim. 4: 1-5, we are warned of the proclamation which deviates from the truth. *“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine ... And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”* Certainly it was not the apostle who was speaking in I Tim 4: 1-3, but rather the Spirit of God Who foresaw the spiritual developments. *“... the Spirit speaketh expressly that, in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons, ... forbidding to marry (encouraging celibacy), and commanding to abstain from foods (Not eating meat on Friday), which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving by them who believe and know the truth.”* What people look upon to be especially holy, not to marry, etc., the Holy Scripture declares as doctrines of demons.

The apostle Peter also spoke of the day of the Lord. He uses the terminology “day of God”. *“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are in it, shall be burned up ... looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God,”* (II Pet. 3: 10-12).

The prophet Daniel repeatedly spoke of the end time. In chapter 2, verse 28, we read, *“But there is a God in heaven who revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king, Nebuchadnezzar, what shall be in the latter*

days." In chapter 8, verse 17, 19, and 26, he was told, "... *Understand, O son of man; for at the time of the end shall be the vision. ... Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation; for at the time appointed the end shall be. ... wherefore, shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days.*" In his last chapter, the prophet Daniel was given a summary, "*But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end ... Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.*" (12: 4+9).

Up till now, it was not possible to place the prophetic part of history as shown in the Scriptures. But now it is possible based upon the political and spiritual developments. The present establishing of the religious and political Europe is the coming forth of the old Roman empire and is based upon the Roman Treaty of March 25th, 1957. The irreversible developments in Central Europe and the world condition in general show unto us that the return of Jesus Christ is very near and also the day of the Lord which would follow. The time is not only at hand but the time is here. Today it is not necessary to explain Biblical prophecies. We see them becoming a reality. The time of grace, the day of salvation is ending and the countdown is on. One epoch will come to its consummation, and then the last day will begin. After the seventh day, the last thousand years, time will merge into eternity.

Chapter 27
THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND
ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN THE END TIME

The Roman empire cannot be separated from the Roman church. In the days of Constantine, this imperial church began. It was first made the church of the people, and finally it became the state-church. The religious developments merged into state recognition and from a religious institution came forth a combination of state and church, namely the Papal state, which existed over hundreds of years. No other church has such a structure as this. Neither the church of the East nor the world wide Anglican church has as a religious institution a state character. The Roman church is officially a self-governed state within another state (Rev. 17: 11). It is also the most important political power on earth. The Vatican has diplomatic relations with over a hundred countries by the exchange of ambassadors who are called from the Holy See nuntius. Why does no other church have such diplomatic relations? Why only the church of Rome? Because it is also a state which rules over all who belong to it even in all other countries. It is, however, not the original church which Christ brought into existence.

Whenever the pope visits a country, he comes as a head of state and is received as such with all honours. Did Christ mean the Roman empire which the popes have established before the eyes of all the world when He spoke of the Kingdom of God? Can this political, economical, and religious world power be the church of Jesus Christ? Was this the will of God? Was this the intention of Jesus Christ when He brought salvation through the cross of Calvary?

In order to understand better the parallel and intertwined history of spiritual and worldly powers, a few things need to be mentioned. According to what the prophet Daniel saw in visions, there are to be four world empires right to the end of this present civilisation. The last one is the Roman empire (Dan. 2 + 7). The course of these world empires is historically documented. The Babylonian empire lasted from 606 to 538 BC, the empire of the Medes and Persians from 538 to 330 BC and then followed the Greek empire under Alexander the Great which lasted from 330 to 30 BC. From the year 30 BC the Roman empire commenced and will last right to the end of this age. These four kingdoms were symboli-

cally shown as four beasts in Daniel chapter 7. In Bible prophecy, a beast signifies power — a kingdom or a ruler who executes power (Dan. 7: 17+23).

It is important to know in which way these totalitarian powers reigned. It started with the well known man, Nebuchadnezzar, who suddenly being influenced by fanatics ordered that everyone who will turn to another god except to those recognised in his kingdom will be killed. Everyone has heard of the three men in the fiery furnace where they were thrown only because they called upon the one true God Whom they served. The same accusation was brought forth against the prophet Daniel who was thrown into the lion's den. Then suddenly there was the handwriting on the wall, "mene mene tekel upharsim", and the ruler received it in writing from the heavens itself that his kingdom is weighed and his days are numbered. Thus it will be at the end of this generation.

In the last two-thousand years, the ruling power from Rome was being exercised. At first, it was political-heathen but it became then political-"Christian". With the Caesars or later the popes, the aim was always to enlarge, to defend and to rebuild this kingdom. This happened because of the possibilities and the means given. All other kingdoms right down to the British Empire fell and had to submit and become part of the current developments. Now even the Soviet Empire does not exist any more. The whole Eastern Block is shaken and the countries receive their independence. All this happens in order that this one important world empire according to end time prophecy could take its shape.

In the Roman empire, the Roman Catholic trinity-belief was proclaimed in the 4th century to be the only valid faith. Emperors, popes, princes, and all who had influence felt duty-bound to use all their powers to reach this goal. Whoever turned to the only true God, for instance Jews and those believing differently, were terribly persecuted. There were the many crusades and the so-called holy and righteous wars because the so called holy and righteous church was standing behind it.

It is not possible for us to fully understand what actually had happened. Whoever sees the instruments of torture that were used in the holy inquisition will faint. The intolerance to those who had different beliefs and the blind fanatical and deadly hatredness was without measure. Authors were rather hesitant to deal with this dark chapter in history. It needs to be clearly stated that all these cruel measures were taken and

they were justified because of the understanding that in this Roman empire only one faith had the right to exist — the one represented by the Roman church.

Popes and Emperors shared their powers which today would be called “joint venture” or “power sharing”. They ruled in their kingdom with untold brutality. This so-called Holy Roman Empire is in fact neither holy nor the Kingdom of God. It is so called falsely. Whether intentionally or by ignorance, it is looked upon to be so. No apostle or any man of God has ever mingled with politics or executed earthly power. True servants of God have at all times preached the Kingdom of God and left politics to the politicians.

The Roman empire consisting of political, economical, and religious power is coming up again exercising its power before our very eyes. An united Europe has always been the dream of the popes and it plays the most important role now according to the end time prophecy.

Regardless of the form of the governments in the countries which once belonged to and also now belong to the Roman empire, the Roman Church survived and remained throughout even though the countries and their structures came and went. To impress the world, the Vatican will also include the other religions but will hold the patronage. Today the others are not cursed and banned but rather the arms of welcome are opened to all. The pope receives in the same week politicians from Israel and the chief of the PLO. To him come all the political and religious heads from all countries irrespective of their structure and ideology. All seem to comprehend that no headway and recognition could be achieved in their own country without the publicity of a papal visit. The president of the United States, Mr. George Bush, certainly followed his advisers while making his trip to Europe as president in May, 1989, when he first had his audience with the pope. Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev did the same. When the German unification was determined, and the same commenced, in November, 1989, the German chancellor, Mr. Helmut Kohl, thanked the pope publicly and directly via TV from Berlin. That is the way world politics is moving.

According to Bible prophecy, peace will be proclaimed after all the wars. Historical enemies are becoming friends that it might be fulfilled as it is written, “*For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them...*” (II Th. 5: 3). In all of Europe’s experiences, the changing process in East and West, the concern is only “peace”

for which people demonstrated with slogans, “swords into ploughshares” and “peace without weapons”. Lately, tremendous headway is being made in disarmament talks. This political peace will not be proclaimed by any politician but rather by the then officiating antichrist who will present himself as peacemaker and mediator. But the true and lasting peace will only come through Christ Who is the true Prince of Peace.

Reverend Markmann gives in view of the end time the following statement about the prediction made by a Russian seer, **“Shortly before his death in the year 1900, the Russian seer Vladimir Solowjow published his short talk about the antichrist. In it he presents the ‘man of the future’ who will speak before the World Congress of People saying these words, ‘Peoples of the earth, my peace I give unto you.’ He ends as follows, ‘Peoples on the earth, the promises are fulfilled. The eternal world peace is secured ... For from now on there is only one central power on earth which is stronger than all the rest of the powers as single or together ... From now on no power will dare to say ‘War’, because I say, ‘Peace’. Peoples of the earth, peace be with you.”** (O. Markmann, Endzeit, Entrückung, Antichrist, pg. 67).

Such words will only come from a religious head who substantially determines politics. When Christians apologetically speak of the superman of the end time and search for him in Judaism and Islam, then that only testifies of their ignorance. This man will not be an atheist, a Jew, a Muslim, a Buddhist, or a Hindu but he will be the crowned man who would usurp the rulership for the whole world. The same man who appears to be lovely will at that hour X when Satan would enter into him, as into Judas, fill up the cup of sin and iniquity.

Bible prophecy of the end time is not primarily concerned with China or the United States, but rather with the United Europe. Reverend Markmann again states, **“After the last war, the Vatican has strongly pledged for a new united Europe. Pope Paul VI has continuously underlined the thought of an united Europe. Already his predecessors, Pius XII and John XXIII, requested an European Union of a supernational character. Paul VI emphasised that it was the Catholic faith which once made Europe. The same can in an uncomparated way do its part now to breathe new spiritual vitality into this fundamental common culture which a socially and politically United Europe should have. The necessity that Europe joins up becomes more urgent from day to day, he declared in 1963.”** (O. Markmann, Endzeit, Entrückung, Antichrist, pg. 70).

The Vatican was the driving force in the success of the Roman Treaty.

Already in 1970, he established diplomatic relations with the E.C.-Commission in Brussels. There will be an United Europe composed of East and West. Mr. Gorbachev who is highly esteemed throughout the world brought up afresh the thought of the building of the European house. This term was already used in 1957 when the Roman Treaty was signed. Politicians and clergymen are using the same vocabulary. All voices having weight express the thought of an united whole Europe with decisiveness.

“The pope calls for an Europe without boundaries. For a construction of an Europe without boundaries which does not deny its Christian roots the pope called for. This project of an Europe without boundaries he entrusted for intercession of Mary, the Mother of God. This he said on Monday before 6,000 people in Covadonga in Asturia, the last station of his three-day Spain visit.” (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 22nd August, 1989).

Again it is the pope who had the right thought to bridge the gulf between East and West. The following citation clarifies more about the matter, **“The forcing interest of the pope concerning the United Europe on the Catholic religious foundation is expressed also by the proclamation of the European patrons. Already pope Paul VI declared Benedict of Norcia to be patron of Europe. Now pope John Paul II has announced to the Catholic world church the saint brethren Cyrillos and Methodios who in the 9th century were apostles and teachers and worked among the Slavs to be the two patrons of Europe.”**

“John Paul II intends with his solemn proclamation of the saint Cyrillos and Methodios as patrons of Europe to emphasise in one way their decisive part of the formation of Europe. On the other hand he likes to emphasise that the spiritual and cultural profile of Europe not only carries the imprint of the Latin Roman civilisation and the Occidental spiritual traditions but also of the classical Greek culture of the Byzantine and the Byzantine-Slavic tradition.”

“The dean of the German Bishop’s Conference, cardinal Joseph Höffner, declared in Cologne the working of the new patrons as apostles of the Slavs can be compared to what the Saint Benedict in West and Middle Europe achieved. All three saints therefore are the spiritual constructors of Europe — of the whole Europe.”

“The decision of the pope is a demand to all to commit the whole of Europe into the frame work on its way to achieve a total unity between the Catholic and the orthodox church — as already decisive steps are made — for the intercession

of these three saints.” (O. Markmann, *Endzeit, Entrückung, Antichrist*, pg. 72-73).

By its organisations, the Vatican plays the main role in the uniting of Europe both politically and religiously. Without it the end time prophecy is unthinkable. Its strategy has fundamentally changed after World War II to act now without force. The goal of course remains the same. World War II is being judged by insiders as an effort to try to establish a Catholic Europe by military force.

The atheistic bolshevism was viewed by the Vatican, the whole curia, and the Western governments as the great threat for the Christian Occidental world. In 1929 Mussolini surrendered his service to the church when he acknowledged the Vatican state to pope Pius XI to be sovereign national territory. From that time the Vatican is de facto again a sovereign state.

The historians have investigated the connection of the church to fascism and Nazism till 1945. The following citations are taken from the book “*Abermals krähte der Hahn*” by Dr. Karlheinz Deschner, chapter 67 and 68. He stated these historical facts unreserved.

“The first service the ex-socialist (Mussolini) rendered to the Holy See was a financial one. He saved the Banco di Roma from bankruptcy to which the curia and other dignitaries had entrusted high sums when at the cost of the Italian government he gave approximately 1.5 billions of lira ... The cardinal Vannutelli, dean of the so-called Holy College, declared already then of him, ‘He is chosen to save the nation and to restore its fortune.’

Pope Pius XI saw himself once again compelled on the 13th of February, 1929, to call Mussolini the man providence has sent unto us ... In parenthesis it is to be remarked that after the signing of the Lateran Treaty also the then mayor of Cologne, Konrad Adenauer, assured Mussolini in a special telegram that his name will be written in golden letters into the history of the Catholic church.

While almost the whole world condemned the fascist aggression (Abyssinia), the Catholic church stood behind it, especially the high Italian clergy was on the side of Mussolini. On August 27th, 1935, when the war preparation in Italy was running high, the pope proclaimed a defence war for the purpose of expansion for the growing population could be just and right. Only a few days after, four weeks before the invasion, 19 archbishops and 57 bishops sent a telegram to Mussolini published in the *Osservatore Romano* in which was stated, ‘The Catholic Italy prays for the growing extension of its beloved fatherland which is more united

through Your government than ever before ... The archbishop of Taranto called the aggression after he celebrated mass on a submarine, 'a holy war, a crusade' ... The archbishop of Milan, cardinal Schuster, who blessed the outgoing troops in the autumn of 1935, compared Mussolini with Caesar, Augustus, and Constantine, and advised the Italian school youth, 'through the work of Duce God has answered from heaven' ... On the 12th of January, 1938, Mussolini received 72 bishops and 2,340 clergymen in the Palazzo Venezia where the archbishop Nogara in a speech asked God to assist Duce in all his battles for the success of the Christian Italy ... 'With religious enthusiasm, with the voice and the heart of the people, we cried out, hail Duce!'

Already in 1933, the Spanish bishops ordered in a pastoral letter and the pope did in an encyclica of June, 3rd, 'a holy crusade for the total restoration of church rights.' ... Franco's brother in law, Serrano Suñer, secretary of the Catholic youth organisation, later Spanish Interior and Foreign minister, was a friend of Mussolini and Hitler. At the end of June, 1942, he was honoured from the pope with Grand cross of the order Pius IX. Two weeks before, Suñer declared to a correspondent of a Danish newspaper that already 15,000 Spanish soldiers were fighting at the East front, and there, their number could be increased if Germany sees it fit up to a million ... The German bishops published on the 30th of August, 1936 a pastoral letter at the direct advice of the cardinal secretary Pacelli wherein with view of Spain it said, 'The task for our people and fatherland allotted is understood in itself. May our Führer have success with the help of God to accomplish this enormous work of defence (!) in unshakeable steadfastness and most faithful co-operation of all the people. Already on the 3rd of January, 1937, the German bishops persuaded again with view on Spain their believers afresh, 'Beloved diocesans, the Führer and Reich-chancellor, Adolf Hitler, has viewed the influx of bolshevism from a far off. His intention and concern is focused on it to turn away this enormous danger from our German people and the Occidental countries.'"

"In the same year, 1933, the Catholic von Papen signed the concordat with Nazi-Germany and the Vatican ... In the years 1934 till 1938, von Papen, being the German ambassador in Vienna, prepared the Nazis's seizure of power in Austria."

"Never did the German bishops speak up against the thousands of judicial murders of their opponents nor against the persecution of liberals, democrats, and communists, because they desired the same ... They never protested against the horrible pogroms of the Jews, against the destruction of more than 200 synagogues, against the humiliation, deportation, and gasing of the Jews whom

their own church had already persecuted and killed through the period of 1,500 years. They never protested against the Nazi-system as such. In the contrary, the high clergy declared, for instance cardinal Faulhaber, Munich, cardinal Schulte, Cologne, bishop Matthias Ehrenfried, Würzburg, a. o., in the year 1935 the full readiness and co-operation with Nazism and regretted their non-participation.”

“On the 11th of March, 1938, Hitler’s army occupied Austria. Cardinal Innitzer of Vienna who with consent of the Vatican suggested to Schuschnigg, the surrender, declared, ‘The annexation is unpreventable.’ He celebrated the coming in of the army with the ringing of church bells and the raising of swastika flags on church buildings and requested his clergy to do the same. On the 12th of March he obliged them to arrange thanksgiving services. When Hitler received the cardinal on March, the 15th, for an audience, he assured him that the church rights would be protected. Then all Austrian bishops except the bishop of Linz demanded the people to vote for Hitler and ended their appeal with the salutation, ‘Hail Hitler!’”

In view of the fact that the political goal of this world church remains the same, we must take the things of the past as a warning for the future. The so-called “Holy Roman Empire of the German nation” consisted of political and religious powers. The Vatican has used Germany for its own goals in a special manner. Even today in the uniting process of Europe, Germany plays the main role. It is the engine of the whole train and the turn-table of East and West. Many historians did not deal with this dark religious chapter. Perhaps they were clever enough to avoid it or they feared the church.

Before World War II, the Vatican concentrated on Germany which became ever stronger. It started in the Catholic Bavaria, especially in Munich, where Hitler did not succeed with his coup in 1923. In the year 1924, the Vatican signed the concordat with Bavaria. It is significant to note that during these years, the later pope Pius XII was nuncio in Munich and then in Berlin.

Already in 1938, approximately 40,000 political opponents were held in German concentration camps without any dignitary raising his voice for those who were deprived of all dignity. Franz von Papen, a devout Catholic, declared, “**Nazism is a Christian reaction against the spirit of 1789**”. (E. Paris, *The Secret History of the Jesuits*, pg. 130). With this statement he referred to the French revolution which led to the separation of state and church and also to the end of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation. As voices were heard in neighbouring countries of the happenings

in Germany, the editor of the “Stürmer”, Julius Streicher, defensively said, “... that is the Anglo-Saxon propaganda of the Protestants against us.” Who ever secured the O.K. of the pope felt very strong.

Insiders did know that the Vatican also viewed bolshevism as its political opponent. Also the separated East church was looked at as a religious rival and, therefore, had to be conquered. Only those who know that Hitler’s SS was composed especially of Jesuits in uniform to whom also Goebbels counted will comprehend how things were organised and done when the German troops marched into Russia. In the Roman Catholic Ukraine, no religious buildings were destroyed whereas it happened in the rest of the country. Again a few citations from the book of Dr. Karlheinz Deschner, “Abermals kräfte der Hahn”, chapter 67 and 68.

“After the German invasion into the Soviet Union in the year 1941, the Catholic military bishop (Franz Justus Rarkowski) — of whom even Catholics admitted that his pastoral letters contain the support of the national socialistic war — addressed in a pastoral letter the Catholic members of the Wehrmacht as follows, ‘As so often in the history, Germany is presently the saviour and protagonist of Europe ... Many European states know that the war against Russia is a European crusade ... This strong and obliged experience of your mission in the East will let you know how unspeakable great and fortunate that we are Germans.’”

“In a memorandum of all Catholic bishops in Germany of December, 10th, 1941, the church dignitaries confessed, ‘With satisfaction we follow the battle against the power of bolshevism of which we, the German bishops, have warned the German Catholics in many pastoral letters since 1921 till 1936, to be alert as it is known to the Reichsregierung.’”

“The great peace pope kept quiet, he also kept quiet while almost 2,000 churches and 500 synagogues were destroyed and many of the clergy were murdered during the war in the East. The Vatican intended as in the other territories occupied by Hitler’s armies also to spread Catholicism in the orthodox Russia. About a co-operation between the Jesuits, the SS and Gestapo, talks with the deputies of Hitler’s secret service were underway since 1940 by the Jesuit general Graf Ledochowski (1866-1942) — (order general since 1915). Since 1919, so the document states, the Vatican has tried to topple the communistic regime ... The intention of the Vatican was to send as many priests as possible into the occupied Russian territories to prepare the ground for further plans of the Vatican and the politics towards Russia. On November, the 8th, 1941, the high

command of the Wehrmacht advised all chief commanders of the German armies in the East to assist the missionary activities of the Catholic priest in the occupied territories out of consideration of the treaty with the Vatican. ... The leading German secret service man, SS Oberführer Schellenberg, reported in a five page account to the foreign office about his conversation with the pope, 'The pope will do his utmost to assure the German victory. His goal is the destroying of Russia.'"

"Dr. Adenauer 20 years later said, 'Therefore, we stand with greatest watchfulness against this (Eastern) world which actually is our deadly enemy. ... The concern is not only the Soviet Zone, but rather the deliverance of all Eastern Europe from behind the iron curtain ... Germany will not be the prey of atheistic communism, but rather will topple it.'"

While the German troops marched into Yugoslavia in April, 1941, the Roman Catholic Croats were spared and the orthodox Serbs were murdered in mass. The fascist Catholic movement of Croatia, the Ustasis, co-operated with the Catholic dominated high command of the occupying power. It is known that archbishop Stepinac co-ordinated things. He could report to the pope that 250,000 Serbs were converted by force to Roman Catholicism. Of the 2 million orthodox inhabitants of Croatia according to official statements, 600,000 were murdered but others estimate the number to be 800,000. Not only Jews and other ethnic groups were slaughtered, but also those belonging to the same people who were of different faith.

When the German troops marched into Poland, a massacre of the German Protestants took place. The bloodbath of Bromberg is very significant. Then it was said that 40,000, mainly men, were killed in the territories under Polish rule. The call for this seems to have come from the pulpits. Today (1990) the number of those killed there is being estimated much lower.

It is not hard to guess what Hitler meant with his statement, **"To build up a great political movement, I need the Catholics of Bavaria as well as the protestants of Prussia. The next comes later."** (K. Deschner, *Ein Jahrhundert der Heilsgeschichte*, Vol. 1, pg. 360). Also leading evangelical theologians co-operated in comparison to the Confessional Church. Instead of remaining with the eternal blessings of God, they took the timely curse. What would have come later, after a victory of Hitler, they had experienced. The action against Jews and other ethnic minorities and political opponents would have been soon followed also against Protestants.

One month before the end of the war, on April, the 9th, 1945, the Lutheran pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer was executed in Flössenberg after two years of imprisonment at the direct order of the Catholic Himmler. All protestant youth organisations were prohibited during the war. First those who spoke up against the national socialistic dictatorship in the Confessional Church had been dealt with and then the believers of various free churches had followed. The self understanding of the Roman church and those in power submitting to her — the conviction that no other faith has the right to exist — is deadly for the rest.

With respect it must be mentioned that also voices were heard from Catholics whose conscience did not agree with the unrighteous deeds.

Knowing these facts, it could be asked, if there would be a protestant church and all the other free churches in existence in case of a Hitler German reign of Europe. Especially the dedicated Jesuits and their organisations would have liked to present to the pope since the time of reformation the one holy Catholic apostolic church. As is formulated in their own creed, **“Pope Benedict XV designated in 1915, in the midst of truce, the confessors of the evangelical sect as ‘envoys of Satan, as pest pulpits, their spiritual office bearers are robbers and thieves.’”** (O. Markmann, Irrtümer der katholischen Kirche, pg. 22). Incomprehensible for all is the following statement, **“The Jesuit Mayrhofer of Ingolstadt taught in his ‘Preacher’s mirror’: ‘We will not be judged if we demand the killing of Protestants, any more than we would by asking for the death penalty on thieves, murderers, counterfeiters and revolutionaries.’”** (E. Paris, The Secret History of the Jesuits, pg. 35).

The actual role of the Catholic church in World War II is documented in many volumes. The following citation speaks out. On May, the 3rd, 1945, the Vatican asked general Franco to give the declaration in the Spanish press in Madrid after Hitler’s death, **“Adolf Hitler, son of the Catholic Church, died while defending Christianity. It is therefore understandable that words cannot be found to lament over his death, when so many were found to exalt his life. Over his mortal remains stands his victorious moral figure. With the palm of the martyr, God gives Hitler the laurels of Victory.”** (E. Paris, The Secret History of the Jesuits, pg. 163).

Many who shouted, “Hail Hitler!” did not know what they were doing, but the dignitaries should have known. They stretched forth their arm and greeted with “Hail Hitler!” as though salvation now should have come from Hitler instead of from God. Being born in 1933, I have experienced

this vividly. How many times did I watch the military parade. It sounded so mighty when so many voices were shouting, "Victory Hail! Victory Hail!"

After the collapse of the Hitler dictatorship, many realised that they belonged to a terribly deceived war generation. After the things which were done during the war were brought to public attention including the holocaust, many were speechless. Even today, there are those who deny what happened, simply because they cannot comprehend that such cruelty including the gasing of innocent men, women and children could happen. In the name of God and the German people, the most cruel crimes of the 20th Century were committed. In many ears, the propaganda words of the Nazi time still ring. Some even remember the proclamation, "... and one faith to the whole world!" On the buckle of the soldiers, the words were written, "God with us". What a blasphemy!

More than 55 million people lost their lives in World War II. But those who actually initiated this were spared. **"Cardinal Frings of Cologne announced already on the 16th of December, 1945, in a radio speech, he desires an Occident only shaped by Christendom, that of course means, by Roman Catholicism. He was the first one who requested publicly on the 23rd of June, 1950 at general meeting of the Catholics in Bonn that Germany be armed again, founded on God's order, resting in peace ... Bishop Muench asked as Pius XII in 1945 in a pastoral letter to show forbearance towards the German war criminals. In 1951 he was honoured by the German president with the Great Federal Service Cross and was promoted to be cardinal by pope John XXIII."** (K. Deschner, *Abermals krächte der Hahn*, pg. 647-650).

Very enlightening is also the following citation, **"After the collapse of the Catholic regiment, the mass murderers fled significantly into Franciscan monasteries in foreign countries, Klagenfurt in Austria, Modena in Italy, and also in France."** (K. Deschner, *Abermals krächte der Hahn*, pg. 625). Apparently they knew their way around. They did not only find open doors, but also open arms. Even the French helper of mass murder, Klaus Barbie, the butcher of Lyon, Paul Tourvier was arrested in a Catholic monastery in the south of France in May 1989 where he enjoyed many pleasant years.

After the defeat of the German army at Stalingrad, the pope tried to pull the United States on his side to fight against bolshevism. The only condition, president Roosevelt set forth was that Hitler must step down. The pope pleaded with him for the known cause, but this time the power possessed dictator was dumb. The Catholic bishops who assured Hitler of

their solidarity in March 1933 said something totally different in 1945 and introduced another strategy to achieve the goal of a religious and political united Europe.

What could not be achieved with war and force will now become a reality through diplomatic channels. While still millions of people, refugees, prisoners of war, deported in work camps suffered the consequences of the war, the clergy turned around and set the flag according to the new wind. The innocents had to suffer but those guilty were secure and played their roles with pride further on.

Since the II Vatican Council (1962-1965), a new development was initiated. The protestant churches are no longer cursed but being received with open arms as the separated brethren. The counter reformation is over. It is only strange that not one of the many curses upon the Protestants, mainly pronounced at the Council of Trent, was taken back. Up to this day, not one word of excuse to Jews, Protestants or other faiths was uttered by the pope or by the church.

Never was the life of others valued by those in Rome. Whoever was in their way, whether grown ups or children, political or religious foes, they were just liquidated. Nero, Diokletian, Constantine and others had already done it. This trend was later taken up by the Roman popes. Whoever did not submit was persecuted and murdered, regardless, whether Heathen, Jews, Moslems or Christians of other faith. Their only crime was that they did not confess faith in the Roman Catholic church.

Constantine was the actual founder of the Roman state church and its brutal power exercise. He claims to have seen a fiery cross in heaven with the inscription, "In this sign you will conquer." This murderer who killed in his own family his two brothers in law, Licinius and Basanium, his nephew, the son of Licinius, his father in law, Maximilian, his son Crispus and his wife Fausta was at the same time a very shrewd politician. To him the church was a power factor to which he availed himself. At first he did not act against the Heathens. There came into existence the Heathen-Christian-state church which began to persecute and murder. Augustine, a prominent man in the church history, praised this church 70 years later as the God state as for him Satan was now bound, but in reality it was the contrary, he was just totally loosened.

The birthday of the Sun god was declared to be the birthday of the Son of God. Jupiter, Diana, and other gods and goddesses were taken down;

Peter, Mary and others were declared as saints and put up in their stead. Actually during the time of making this type of Christendom, all the Greek and Roman cults of gods were embraced and the same things continued. The Heathen gods were only replaced by saints and patrons. With force, the inhabitants were subdued under this political and religious power. Whoever did not want or could not accept because of his conscience was liquidated. The co-operation of state and church gave those of other faith no chance. Whether in business life or in trades, everywhere boycott and persecution was on the agenda.

Only after the pope and the Roman church have repented and show the fruits of repentance for the death of the millions who through their influence had to die, they will have the right to speak about the protection of the unborn life. Unborn life should be protected, but the already born life meant nothing to them. Did not the popes call for the crusades? Did not they bless those who went for them, whose lives they did not respect at all? Did those crusaders and mercenaries consider those with child and children in general or human life? Certainly not. How fatal it is when near the convents so many child skeletons are found.

In the Catholic catechism for adults, pg. 256, the church is declared to be a sacrament. It is generally known that the Roman church has seven sacraments. That now the church itself is a sacrament could be new. **“The church as sacrament of the Spirit. Difficulties with the church. On the question after the place of the Holy Spirit, the creed of the church answers with the statement, ‘I believe in the one holy Catholic and apostolic church.’ The church confesses also that in it and through it the Spirit of Jesus Christ was working in history. It believes that it is the place, yes, the sacrament that means, the sign and the tool of the working of the Holy Spirit.”** Between the confession of lips and the reality is a distance so far as heaven from earth. It was not the Spirit of Christ Who so cruelly worked in the history of the church. But because this church also knows about all the things which happened by its influence, it had to be stated on the same page in the Catholic catechism for adults in the following declaration, **“No other expression of faith has caused so much incomprehensibility, contradiction, and animosity as this. Also many practising Catholic Christians have difficulties with the church. Not few say, ‘Jesus, yes — church, no!’ The main objection against the church is that it has in its history betrayed the original message of Jesus. Because Jesus — so they argue — was poor and spoke up for the poor, the church on the contrary is rich, pacts with the rich and mighty, and failed in social respect. Jesus preached love and even the love of enemies, the church on the contrary is intolerant and persecutes as**

before all as the inquisition shows its opponents with brutal cruelty ... What must a Catholic Christian say to such a list of sins? He does not need to dress or to cover up. The church which proclaims the forgiveness of sins can in confidence towards God confess its guilt and trust in God's forgiveness, as pope Hadrian VI said at the Imperial Diet in Nuremberg, 1522-1523, also pope Paul VI during the II Vatican Council. The Christian does not need to deny such drawback in the church history."

With God it certainly will not go as smoothly as found written in the Catholic Catechism. Forgiveness can only come where true repentance sets in. He will not forgive the cruel deeds, but rather will avenge the blood of the innocents (Rev. 6: 9-10; 18: 7-8), because it was done intentional. If there would not come a brief persecution of Bible believing Christians, this chapter could be closed. But according to Bible prophecy, there will come a boycott and persecution after the religious and political uniting, "*that no man might buy or sell.*" (Rev. 13: 17). As was done with the Jews right up to World War II and in other times, so the Bible believing Christians might have to go through a short time of persecution. Their crime will be that they do not belong to a recognised Christian denomination which joined the World Council of Churches or to the Roman church. They will be treated as heretics, as those not fit for society. If somebody seeks a job being asked about his religious affiliation then it could be decided whether the job will be granted. Will the politicians then be able to protect the dignity of the lives of those of different faith?

The Scripture confirms that the kingdom called "beast" received a deadly wound by the sword (Rev. 13: 14). The Sword of the Spirit is God's Word. With the Word of God, this deadly wound came about through the reformation. Therefore, the reformers were all branded as servants of Satan because they brought disturbance and even a threat to this world power. As predicted in Bible prophecy, this deadly wound heals again and all the world will be astonished (Rev. 13: 12). This healing process is now almost complete.

All the protestant churches and movements at their beginnings put the proclamation of the gospel into the centre. Today indeed with most of them there is only tradition left. The leaders of the denominations are near-sighted and do not even recognise the wrong direction they have taken. Even those who claim to be fundamentalists have no clear view. They do not recognise the happenings in the light of the revealed prophetic Word. Some became a prey to the theory of demythologisation

and others to the liberation idea. Also among Protestants, we have the state and national churches as nominal Christians. Only very few have had a real experience with Christ and can be classified as Bible believers.

Right before the Council Vaticanum Secundum, the Secretariat for ecumenical Questions was opened by pope John XXIII in 1960 under the leadership of cardinal Augustine Bea. A good job was done. The formulations are so good towards the separated churches that without fail they hear their own language and walk across all the differences. In the Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche, Vol. 13, pg. 12-26, the Herder publishing house writes about the Second Vatican Council about the theme of ecumenical unity. It is very enlightening for all who wish to take heed.

“The secretariat is a channel created by papal authority for communication and a means which assists in all thinkable forms of co-operation to achieve the full unity.... From such an understanding also Paul VI went out, when he spoke as cardinal at the funeral service for John XXIII in the Dome of Milan on June, 7th, 1963 of the ‘universality of the Catholic faith’ and of the ‘ecumenism of the Roman church’. ... For him ‘inner ecumenism of the Catholicism’ signifies the unity in the plurality with great possibilities to develop a new phase in church history.”

“In view to the other Christian fellowships here, the concern is the real acknowledgement of the Christian inheritance of the separated brethren. That means the real consideration of all ‘traces’ or ‘elements’ of the church which by the grace of God exist with the separated brethren are alive. Thereby it happens that these — even in different degrees — already real, although incomplete and imperfect belong to the church.”

“In the following (§ 7), it is spoken of the separations and dividings. Because of ‘human frailty’ fights, ignorance of each other, estrangement within the flock of Jesus Christ arose, so that parts of the church separated and established themselves as independent groups. Thereby the church of Jesus Christ is cruelly mutilated. Because the church can only be one, there is ‘no other church which could confess to be the true and only one’ besides the one church reigned by the successor of Peter. No church separated from the seat of Peter belongs in the same way to the same visible and heavenly church. In (§ 8) it is emphasised that the necessary unity with the head does not exclude the manifoldness within the body. An even great conformity would diminish the beauty of the body. Therefore the significance of their own tradition, especially with the honourable churches of the orient. The more space is given to plurality, the more one sole authority is required.”

“Whoever lives in good faith in one of the separated churches will not be looked upon from the true church as foreigner (§ 9). But he is missing a many means of salvation, especially the leading through the teaching ministry, which assists to protect faith and customs completely. Separation brings damage for the inner and the outward increase of the family of Christ. Therefore it is the desire of the council that all ‘dissidents’ are concerned with the complete unity of the flock of Christ and come together in one flock (§ 10). Thereby however the common inheritance always has to be watched and also the still existing spiritual bondage: ‘We have remained brethren.’”

“Because of errors in the past, which were done by both sides, the brethren of the one Christian people drifted apart to different sides, their ways separated. In the spirit of repentance and reconciliation on the part of all Christians it will happen that all will unite again in the one father house (§ 31).”

“The Christians shall make a mutual front against the incoming of atheism and communism (§ 35).”

“All equal parts of the church shall grow together under the one head, that is neither oriental nor occidental, but the father of all (§ 47).”

“In the following, concrete conditions for the unification are named, and the way to it is being described. The orientals shall know: When they want to join and to take again their place, so nothing more than what is necessary to become a member of the church shall be required of those who return home (§ 48). They shall recite the creed wherein the confession to the unity of the church is contained in a simple manner without renouncing the heresies. To the orientals the right is granted to keep their own discipline (§ 50). Their consecrations are valid and can be practised further on (§ 51).”

“Therefore, we have to speak with our brethren this evangelical language which they understand and touches them. We must tell them that the primate of Peter at first is a diaconate, a pastoral task, a ministry, which the leader of the apostles has received from Christ, not to exercise power nor to rule, but rather to feed the flock of Christ. After all the juridical authority of Peter is directed to his pastoral task. ... This is the real picture of the sovereign shepherd in the church, which has a peculiar attraction upon the separated brethren who are led only by love and with a strong hand to the unique refuge of Christ which is the Catholic church.”

“To the God inspired desire of today for unity in all separated fellowships of Christians must be shown the real goal: the church as the only healing institution for all. ”

“In the next paragraph (§ 50), the appeal is given to every single Christian to follow the invitation of the Mother church. The existence of elements of the church with them is understood as an appeal to return to the unity of the Catholic church. That applies especially to the Holy Scripture and the sacraments which belong to the church of Christ and are means of unity. The Christians are therein not seen as individuals but rather ‘united in their fellowships’.”

“It is a must for those ‘who wish to obey the will of Christ with all the heart and grow in the degree of ecumenicism under the leadership of the Spirit of Christ to step more and more near that church which is the one house of God with many mansions in the oneness of faith, the leading and the fellowship under the vicar of Christ, the Roman pope.”

“All who are baptised constitute already now one fellowship in Christ. Also the Catholics should confess their guilt concerning the splits and ask God that He in His Own way leads His divided people back to the perfect unity.”

“The necessity to belong to the one true church is shown forth in the I chapter about the Catholic ecumenicism as basic principle and exposed in a way to overcome the difficulties and concerns of the separated brethren.”

“The ecumenical movement has only to do with the ‘preparation’ of ways which finally leads to the restoration of the unity of all Christians in the flock of Christ.”

It is very interesting to read the documents and the declarations of the whole Second Vatican Council in the already mentioned work of Herder. On page 747 at the end, the following statement is found, **“Rome, by St. Peter, on 7th December, 1965. I Paul Bishop of the Catholic church.”** Everything is so perfectly cut and designed that to the separated churches the doors and the arms of the Mother-Church towards them are stretched forth. All who are baptised with the trinitarian formula are recognised by the church as Christians whose baptism is valid. This was not the case a few years ago. Those who converted were baptised again.

The hour of decision is here, the moment is near and from henceforth there will be no return. The last warning from heaven is, *“Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues”* (Rev. 18: 4). Whoever at the time of the total uniting belongs to the great one church cannot belong to the church of Jesus Christ. This also concerns the members in all the protestant churches, fellowships and denominations who through the World Council of Churches return to the Roman church. Every denomination bears automatically the mark — the

recognition sign of the Mother Church. Whoever recognises the Roman Catholic trinitarian teaching and is baptised with the trinitarian formula belongs actually to that church and there is no need to join it.

The modern thought of unity is based on a misunderstanding. In the special prayer, our Lord and Redeemer prayed for the unity of the redeemed. Of course, He spoke of His Own, not of a variety of different faiths joining with the pope in the church of Rome. Those are the words of His prayer, "*... that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*" (Jn. 17: 22-23). Only those who are truly born again can experience this divine oneness. On one hand we view the oneness with Christ and His church, on the other hand we do see the unbiblical world-wide oneness in the church of Rome. Everyone must decide for himself what he would like to belong to.

Chapter 28
FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND
THE MYSTERIOUS NUMBER 666

One cannot easily understand how it is possible for the majority of the clergy to ignore the historical developments and simply bypass them. Whether they close their eyes intentionally or whether they are not interested in finding the truth, God only knows. The developments especially since the time of Constantine and, therefore, since the beginning of the Roman state church are thoroughly dealt with in the church history books. From the 5th to the 11th century, the Caesars and the emperors designated the popes. From then onward the so-called clergy took the matter into their hands.

“To push back the influence of the Roman–German emperors and the Roman town nobility in regards to the choosing of popes, the pope Nicolaus II issued a pope election decree at the Easter synod in 1059 which places exclusively the election into the hands of the cardinal’s college.” (B. Harenberg, *Chronik der Menschheit*, pg. 287). The popes had then become supreme to the worldly potentates, because they had the masses behind them in fear for hell. This was not enough. Now the things were decided to the better of the church. Finally, the Caesars and the emperors did not designate the popes, but rather the popes designated the emperors.

“Rome, March 1075. Papal dictate. In the so-called Dictatus Papae, during the Roman lent-synod, pope Gregory VII declared the bishop of Rome to be the unlimited ruler of the universal church. The pope alone is entitled to wear the imperial insignias and can dethrone the emperors and set free from the oath of allegiance the subjects of an unrighteous ruler and must not be judged by anyone.” (B. Harenberg, *Chronik der Menschheit*, pg. 288). What do such worldly, politically and religious power positions have in common with the Church of Jesus Christ or the proclamation of His Gospel and the Kingdom of God? All the rulers whether in civilian or clerical clothes, have only built their own kingdoms.

The popes are elected into the high office which they have invented themselves. Then they are placed on the gestatorial chair (*Sedia gestatoria*) and are carried about. Now the whole world looks up to them and seeks their benevolence, favour, and mediation. If it is established and

infallibly proved that in this universal church nothing, absolutely nothing coincides with the Holy Scriptures, can this be kept back from the public and thereby become guilty before God? Here we do not reprehend the many people who belong to this universal church, nor a kind pope as a human being, but rather the institution and the system in itself. It must be permitted to prove whether we have in fact gone into the greatest deception and forgery in the human history, maybe unintentionally.

According to the Biblical timetable, we are now just before the greatest spiritual battle. At all times there were those who dealt with this chapter in the church history. Dr. Martin Luther has in his day spoken out very harshly against the papal system. His choosing of words does not fit into our time now, and we, therefore, apologise on his behalf. In him, the two worlds decisively battled, the Protestant and the Catholic. He did not take things lightly and obviously he was called by God to raise his voice after the pattern of the Old Testament prophets.

In his preface to the prophet Daniel, in the Second Improved Bible Edition, he writes, **“Here is clearly the pope pictured who in his decrees impudently roars that all churches and thrones are judged by him but he cannot be judged by anyone. And Cap. Solite: As the sun is above the moon, so is the pope above the emperor. Where ever there is authority, there is power to command, the others are obliged to be obedient ... When the pope deceives innumerable souls into hell, nobody is to say, ‘What are you doing?’ All this is not only taught, but also done and practised: because the emperor is not emperor, but the pope, to whom he must submit as servant and must with all his rights kiss his feet. Such St. Peter pronounced in II Peter 3: 3, that there should come in the last days, walking and living after their own lusts. In this he explained the words of Daniel 11, v. 36,**

‘He shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished.’

Therefore the pope paints himself, because in his decrees he boasts to be above the Holy Scripture, and this must be confirmed by his chair to receive its value. But much stronger he exercises such in deed, because all who ever spoke against him from the Scriptures he has cursed, damned and burned as heretics and devil’s children and still does it daily. And his own cry now and always that the church (the pope) is above the Scripture. That is to say what Daniel meant, he would speak astonishing things against the God of gods. ...

Other tyrants who persecuted God’s Word did so unknowingly. This one does

it knowingly and calls the Holy Scriptures and God's Word about which he wants to be sovereign and condemns as devil's teachings where and when he will. Therefore, he lets himself to be called an earthly god, even God of gods, Lord of lords, King of kings, not only a pure human but mingled with God or god-man, as Christ himself is God and man, whose vicar he would like to be and exalts himself above him.

Also St. Paul in II Th. 2: 3-4 referred to Daniel's text: The man of sin will be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, and sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Because nothing can exalt itself above God and His majestic being, but rather above the called, preached and honoured God that is above God's Word and service...

The man of sin and child of perdition here not only means that he is a sinner for himself and lost, private, a personal sinner, but publicly, that means who pulls others along with him into sin and perdition.. ... Such sin-office the pope has exercised in a two-fold manner.

Firstly, that he introduced many new things into the service, as later follows in his mausim: indulgence, holy water, veneration of saints, pilgrimages, orders and monasteries, mass, fast, festivities, etc. Besides that he destroys and desecrates the service, the Word of God, faith and sacraments, etc.

Secondly, he subdues the Christians with uncounted laws and thereby creates sin, where God does not want sin, summarising he has smeared sin on almost all of God's creature, namely where and when he wished. So the eating of butter, eggs, cheese, milk, meat had to be sin which God gave freely onto us, clean, without sin, that we should enjoy. He also smeared sin on times and days, where and when he wished, one had to fast and celebrate. At the same time different meals, even the eating of bread and drinking had to be sin.

Also the place and the tools he smeared with sin: the churches and consecrated places he sanctified that one could not even touch stone or wood, especially not the altar and the tools of the altar. It was terrible if a layman with his hand touched the cup, patens, Corporal. When it had to be washed, it was not even permitted to be done by a holy nun, the priest had to wash it before: so full of law and sin was the cup ... Also marriage, instituted freely by God, had to be sin, when it took place in a prohibited time. Also the matrimonial bed had to be bound in sin at whatever time he wished.

... And that he leaves out nothing from devastating, he also will tear apart the third hierarchy of God, namely marriage, which he not only forbade to the clergy,

but also blasphemed, ridiculed, despised and ruined, insomuch as he declares it to be an unclean, fleshly, ungodly thing, wherein one cannot serve God. Not considering that God blessed marriage, calls it covenant and pleasure, and through the forgiveness of sin declares the matrimonial bed clean and honest, and therein the bad lust of the flesh does not count. Therefore, the end-christ must curse what God blessed, tear apart what God joined together, desecrate what God praises: summa, to do everything above and against God, devastate and destroy. To prohibit marriage he will not do out of love for chastity, only because of appearance and that he can do free and unhindered what he likes and is under nobody or obliged to anyone. (M. Luther, Bibel, II. Ausgabe, pg. 836). This exposition of Martin Luther is not new and does not originate in the time of reformation but rather it more or less was always known to Bible scholars.

“In Büchner’s Handkonkordanz, the following is said in regards to this subject, «The interpretation of the antichrist to be the pope was the predominant one in the oldest protestant churches and was taken into their creed by the reformed church in France, ... should not be put so highly on to the account of Protestants because this view was long in existence before the reformation in the 9th century ... and through all centuries until it was repeated through Luther.»” (O. Markmann, Endzeit, Entrückung, Antichrist, pg. 62).

After a close comparison with the Holy Scriptures, it is obvious that practically everything was altered — the whole service was exchanged. From the original faith, “*once for all delivered to the saints*” (Jude 3) is no more trace. Every time a dogma was invented, the Word had to be put aside first. Before inventing a new doctrine, the original, Biblical teaching had to be invalidated. For this we have the proof while comparing the Scriptures with the self-invented proclamations. For instance, as already mentioned, “*And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man ...*” (Jn. 3: 13). In spite of this clear statement found in God’s Word in recent time, the dogma of the bodily ascension of Mary was proclaimed in contrary to God’s Word. Should not one agree with God and reject all the proclamations of the popes and view them as antichrist, because they are in reality anti to the teachings of Christ?

The declaration, “Whosoever does not have the church as mother cannot have God as Father!” has brought fear upon men, as man is created to have fellowship with God. When it is taught that this church was founded by Christ and that all were Catholic, even Mary, then this is

simply wrong. The whole church history confirms the actual developments. In the first Christian centuries, there was no organised Roman Catholic church and not another one as already shown forth in this book. The post apostolic time only knows the different directions of faith but not a united church as it came into existence since the days of Constantine. There were no popes, no cardinals etc. Regrettably even the Protestant research of the first centuries was not careful and detailed enough. It seems that this subject was always more or less avoided. Perhaps because of the thought of unity, the actual developments were not faithfully considered. Sadly the Protestants who came out of the Roman Catholic church were to a great deal of the opinion that she was the church of Jesus Christ and, therefore, did not take the pains to illuminate the first Christian centuries. This is being spoken of as deviations and grievances in the past.

The overbearing popes are now presenting themselves as successors of Peter and the bishops as successors of the apostles, but what are they in reality? There was never a so-called Seat of Peter, not in Jerusalem and certainly not in Rome. Also there was never a primate of Peter. In the apostle council at the meeting in Jerusalem, it is quite clear that James had presided. After Peter, Barnabas and Paul had spoken, James summarised everything under the leading of the Holy Spirit according to the prophetic Word (Acts 15, from verse 13). In verse 28, we read, "*For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us ...*" God always took whomsoever He chose, once it was this man and in other time it was another. There were situations in which Peter or Paul or others were used by the Lord. One thing, that was not known, is a pre-eminence or a primate. This thought only came up to underline the self-invented idea, but has no Biblical foundation.

The popes declare themselves to be the vicars of Christ, although in the Holy Scriptures such a thing is not even indicated. They declare themselves to be universal bishops, but such does also not exist in God's Kingdom. The apostle Peter meant Christ and not a pope, when he wrote, "*For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.*" (I Pet. 2: 25). The popes claim to be the Supreme Shepherd. How could this be imagined? Of Christ we read that He is the Good Shepherd Who gave His Life for His sheep (Jn. 10), also that He is the Supreme Head of His church (Eph. 1: 22). Where would there be room for another head? Perhaps in his own church but certainly not in the Church of Jesus Christ.

The popes are addressed by all the world in homage with “Holy Father”. The Scripture declares, *“And call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father, who is in heaven.”* (Mt. 23: 9). Millions of people blaspheme God daily as they are using the only title applying to Him for a man. Where is the Holy Father, is He in heaven or in Rome? The Father of all the children of God is in heaven. Blessed be His holy name!

The church dignitaries take everywhere the seats of honour and are being celebrated. One should not envy them, because according to the Scripture they will soon call to the rocks and mountains, *“Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.”* (Rev. 6: 16).

The Roman Catholic church has succeeded in making the world believe, that it is a godly institution on earth, namely the church which Christ brought into existence, wherein alone is salvation. That is not true. History disproves that claim convincingly while dealing with the first three Christian centuries. Also no other church institution was founded by Christ nor can offer salvation. The doctrinal schools which were existent in the first centuries were united by force into the one church institution. Since the time of reformation, these various teachings came forth again through the many different religious streams. Now the emphasis is not put upon coinciding and uniting with the original doctrine and practice but rather uniting all who regardless of their teachings wish to unite. Amidst these developments, Jesus Christ is still building His Church. He calls out from all nations and languages through the proclamation of His everlasting Gospel. Those who listen to His voice will come out and they would be brought in line and step with His Word to experience the completion within the church of Christ unto the glorious day of His return.

The Church of Jesus Christ is not rich in earthly goods. It does not possess gold and silver as Peter stated then, but rather is richly and spiritually blessed. Satan offered Jesus the riches of this earth. He rejected, because He knew that according to the promise, He will be the ruler over all the kingdoms of the world. This position the papacy is claiming, to become the ruler over the whole world. Also in this, the contradiction in reference to Christ is obvious. The history of mankind would have been totally different without the popes. There

would not have been the crusaders, the many wars, the persecutions and the millions of martyrs. Also slavery goes back into their account. The so-called missionaries prepared the way for the dealers.

Even the financial experts cannot estimate the riches of the Vatican. Whosoever sees the treasury in St. Peter's is spellbound when he sees all the gold, the precious stones, the pearls (Rev. 17: 4) and other valuables. To the outside world Rome is a pious city. Whoever arrives at the international airport meets straightways the "Banco di Santo Spirito" (Bank of the Holy Spirit). The untold riches is not in the homes of the Catholic inhabitants but rather in the dioceses and in the Vatican.

The Roman Catholic church is a political and religious world power working on every level and taking influence especially through the totally submissive order of the Jesuits. The members already have all the key positions under control. They are found in governments, in different offices, in universities, in the social realm, in hospitals, in kindergartens, in schools etc. They fight diligently to further the Roman Catholic religion. All the governmental channels are also being used. They are advisers and writers of manuscripts for politicians in East and West. "Opus Dei" is everywhere. Also with Protestants and communists. As ever before so it applies now: The cause sanctifies the means.

Although the Catholic church claims that salvation comes through it alone, the members still land in purgatory after death — inspite of partaking in all the sacraments through their life, they have not received salvation. How much salvation does this church then offer? Even for the dead the mass is read. In the Bible nothing is found about this. At the cemetery the mourners are told, "It pleased the Lord to take our brother or our sister into glory." The inscriptions on tombstones express that, "Here rests in peace ...", or, "Resting in God ...". But in the mass for the dead it is said that it did not please the Lord to take the deceased into His glory but he must first go through the purgatory. Whosoever ponders upon this thought must recognise that something cannot be right.

Jesus Christ asked then, "*The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?*" (Lk. 20: 4). Today He would ask, "Were the reformation and all the following revivals from heaven or from men?" Then the scribes had no answer for this question. What about the scribes in this day? What

answer will they give? None! The blood of all the martyrs who gave their lives that this Bible can be read and the truths contained therein are illuminated on the candlestick, will speak on the Day of Judgment against the religious leaders of this generation who pull back the protestant churches into the Roman mother church. The great historical churches and also the more recent ones were masterfully deceived. A few years back, the so-called Nicene creed contained the wording, "... holy, general, apostolic church" but now they recite, "... holy, Catholic and apostolic church".

Who is this man from the scriptural point of view to whom the world looks up to, the one who speaks to 85,000 Moslems in the football stadium in Casablanca, who blesses the fetishmen in Abidjan, who speaks at the UN in New York or at World Council of Churches in Geneva and in the European parliament at Strasbourg, who is recognised throughout the world and who visits the Scandinavian countries even though he is not welcomed?

This office and the connected power with it is being described in the Holy Scripture, especially in the book of Revelation. The description is infallible and is being expressed in the number 666 (Rev. 13:17-18). There we are told very plainly, "... for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six." This number fits perfectly with the Latin title of this man which cannot be applied to another one on earth, "Vicar of the Son of God".

V I C A R I V S F I L I I D E I

$$5 + 1 + 100 \dots + 1 + 5 \dots + 1 + 50 + 1 + 1 + 500 \dots + 1 = 666$$

It certainly is no accident that the Roman emperors used the designation "LATINUS REX SACERDOS" which means, "Latin priest king". The heathen Rome changed and became the papal Rome. This designation also has the same letter value 666.

L A T I N V S R E X S A C E R D O S

$$50 \dots + 1 \dots + 5 \dots \dots + 10 \dots + 100 \dots + 500 \dots = 666$$

In Revelation 17, this world institution is described properly as mother. Because the whole world was deceived, bewitched and misled and came under a spell and the Lord Himself pronounced judgment over its seat. In Revelation 18, we are told a few times that in one hour this so-called eternal city will be destroyed. *“How much she hath glorified herself, and lived luxuriously, so much torment and sorrow give her; for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.”* (Rev. 18: 7-8). Until now every word of God was fulfilled at the appointed time and this again will be no exception.

Upon the only valid and binding authority of God’s Word, all who are honest are challenged to come back to the Word of God and to believe as the Scriptures say.

This is not meant in a polemical way. The final judgment always remains with God alone Who of course will judge upon the basis of His Word. We are concerned with approximately 800 million Catholics world-wide who all believe what they are taught without knowing that this world institution does not originate with Christ and at no time it was the Church of Jesus Christ. There are also equally as many Protestants. Many are seeking salvation honestly. Men are trusting in religious teachings and their membership in a church for salvation. They do not know that they are being deceived and are cheated for all eternity. If such a deception happens in a religion without referring to Christ, then it is serious. But if it all happens in the name of Christ, then it cannot be pardoned. For ever what God said on the inauguration day of the New Testament church through the chosen mouth is valid, *“And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”* (Acts 2: 21; Joel 3: 5). Apparently salvation which is connected only to the Lord Who brought the same, is taken away and placed upon an institution and other religious acts. Perhaps the clergy is not even aware of this.

The big protestant churches claim to have taken only the Holy Scriptures. If that is true, what about the fact that they have also adopted a great deal of tradition not found in the Bible? The Catholics take both, so they say, the Scripture and tradition. At close observation, only a decorated tradition with Bible verses can be seen. In reference to such traditions our Lord addressed the worshippers with the term

“in vain”, “... *in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men ... And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.*” (Mk. 7: 7+9). Based upon this Scripture and others, it must be said that all religious doings are in vain if they are not done according to the Will and Word of God. In vain is the praying of all the rosaries, in vain are all “Hail Mary”, in vain are all pilgrimages, in vain are all religious exercises, all in vain! The will of God was not set forth by popes, but rather by the prophets and the apostles which is found once and for all in the Holy Scriptures.

What now? Is it possible to remain neutral and indifferent after the truth is brought to the surface and the deception has become obvious in the light of the revealed Word of God? From the moment of this revelation all are personally responsible before God. “*And the times of this ignorance God overlooked, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.*” (Acts 17: 30). Whoever reads this exposition will have no excuse on the Day of Judgment. Only by those to whom God has revealed Himself can He be worshipped. They are the ones to whom He reveals His Word, His name and His will. They are those who by His grace had a personal experience of salvation.

The likelihood that the pope and the clergy will have the courage to at least enter a dialogue with the truth is estimated to be very little. But not one of those in the spiritual office, from the priests in a village to the highest rank who have read this exposition will be able to continue on with a good conscience from this moment. Those who are religiously subdued and cheated have the right to receive back their dignity and the possibility to personally decide themselves for Christ and acknowledge the truth. Infants who are automatically baptised into a confession cannot be asked whether they wish to belong to a church or not. Without them knowing it or being able to give their consent they are made members. Such are the human rights and the human dignity in the 20th century! This is in opposition to religious freedom and is only a continuation of the so-called Christianising which began approximately 1,500 years ago. The other big churches have also adopted this unscriptural method. They are also guilty before God. This is the hour of decision which needs to be taken by everyone personally before God.

The aim of this writing is to give the reader the necessary informations.

Nobody needs to believe these comments blindly but all should search the Holy Scriptures and also the church history and then come to their own conclusion.

They are declared the wise

Who journey through error to the truth

Those who remain in error

They will be the fools

EPILOGUE

Often political and spiritual developments run parallel. The awakening of many nations in recent times is significant. Men desire freedom, they wish to decide for themselves and be no longer under any subjection. Alterations are made everywhere. Freedom of speech and the right of codetermination are demanded everywhere.

It is to be desired that the same could be applied to the spiritual realm, that all would search for themselves the Biblical truths regardless in which church or denomination they are. Perhaps this uneasy book can be used to start such a process.

Knowing of my responsibility, I did my best to share the plain truth of God's Word with my fellow citizens. Maybe through this publication, the last call of God is going forth at this end of the time of grace. Whoever has an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. The rest is left with the Lord Who through His Spirit can work in all, give them faith and accomplish everything. May He give His special blessing to every reader. Amen.

“Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near; Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God; for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not there, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” (Isa. 55: 6-11).

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