

LOOKING
FOR THAT
BLESSED
HOPE

Prisoners of Hope





Volume 5 of 7

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FOREWORD

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (essentially the Hebrew Tanakh and B'Rit Hadashah) reveal God's viewpoint regarding this world: namely, that all its peoples, the earth itself, and the whole Cosmos are all corrupted and fallen from the perfection that he originally intended as their Creator. And the cause of this fall was us – humanity! The Bible is clear that God created a first man and woman (Adam and Eve) to be the 'progenitors' of the human race. They were given charge over a creation that was 'very good' in God's eyes, and a simple command to show their love and obedience to their Maker – but they chose wilfully to rebel against God and disobey his clear instruction to 'not eat' one specific thing. As the LORD God warned, so it was: in the moment they rebelled, sin and death entered them (spiritual death instantly, then being followed by physical later). And the whole created order was handed over by them to a state of corruption and decay. The human race is descended from the loins of Adam, and thus we all have inherited his rebellious and disobedient nature. The Word of God declares bluntly, "There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one." [Romans 3: 10 – 12] It would be a very bleak prospect for humanity if that assessment of us was God's final word on the matter. We could have no hope at all. But there is good news! He chose instead to set in motion a 'rescue operation' for humanity. However, because he is absolutely holy and just, his plan of redemption could not contravene his own nature; it must fulfil his own standard of holiness, justice and righteousness. Therefore without any 'help' from fallen man, who could do no good works to merit God's salvation, the Most High commenced a step-by-step plan to provide a means of rescue for Man. It began with God calling out of the nations a people for himself, to set over them his anointed King.

We tend to like immediate solutions and instant gratification, but God's intricate plan of redemption stretches over millennia, much of it being built on one (righteous) person at a time carrying out the task given them through the power of God's Holy Spirit. The Canon of Scripture reveals this story of redemption that culminates in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, coming to this earth – first as Saviour then as Judge. Salvation was purchased by Christ at his first coming as Saviour of the world. But God's righteous anger against continued human rebellion will be meted out by the Son of God at his second coming as Judge of the whole earth. In between these two momentous events is the Church Age in which we live – the 'acceptable year of the LORD' – a time of grace in which God is 'not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.'

Throughout the Scriptures, God reveals to us his purpose and plan. The Law, the Prophets, the writings – and the New Testament written during the apostolic era – bring into focus the true meanings of the following:

Redemption – from the moment humanity fell into a state of sin and death, and even before Creation, God purposed to redeem a holy people – to buy them back out of bondage – through the substitutionary death of his Son on our behalf [see Genesis 3: 15].

Atonement – that since 'the wages of sin is death' and 'the life is in the blood' therefore death is the only appropriate judgment for sin. Thus, the shedding of innocent blood for sin, as pictured by God through the Jewish sacrificial system, could be made on behalf of sinners, in order for them to be forgiven by God and come into his holy presence without being instantly condemned. The only innocent man who could pay the price for (all) human sin was Jesus Christ.

Incarnation – that God the Son, the second person of the divine trinity, set aside his eternal glory and entered the world as a man, born of a virgin. Thus he was not corrupted by Adam's fall. Therefore God's divine nature and uncorrupted human nature were perfectly in harmony in Jesus of Nazareth, who was a perfect man.

Substitution – because he lived a perfect, sinless life as a man always in obedience to the will of God the Father, the Son of God was slain on behalf of humanity as the sacrificial Lamb of God. He bore the punishment for the sins of the whole world, in our place. His blood was shed and his life given on behalf of others. All the Old Testament sacrifices pointed to this once-for-all sacrifice.

Propitiation – that the death of his Son nailed to a Roman cross was sufficient to appease God's wrath and take the judgment due to all others. Everyone who looks to the Lord Jesus as their propitiation receives God's forgiveness.

Justification – that God the Father declares righteous (not guilty of their sins against God and man) everyone who trusts in the finished work of Jesus Christ on their behalf.

Imputation – that the perfect righteousness of the Lamb of God is imputed to everyone who put their faith in Jesus Christ. God the Father no longer imputes a believer's sins to him, but sees them clothed in his Son's spotless righteousness.

New Birth/Life in Christ – that everyone who believes that Jesus Christ has died and risen for them receives the free gift of eternal life – God’s very life inside them (the Holy Spirit).

Grace – We do nothing ourselves to earn, deserve or merit salvation. As the apostle Paul said, ‘For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.’ [Ephesians 2: 8, 9]. Jesus when asked, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” answered, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him who he sent.” [John 6: 28, 29]. Salvation is a free gift, given by God to those who do not deserve it.

Resurrection – as prophesied in The Scriptures, the Messiah could not be held down by death because he had no sin of his own. Therefore, he arose in a changed body after three days in the grave, and was seen by many reliable witnesses. Christ’s resurrection confirmed that his death on the cross on behalf of others was accepted by the Father as a sacrifice for their sins.

Repentance – turning to God and away from going our own way, by acknowledging Jesus Christ as Saviour and submitting to him as Lord of a believer’s life, in accordance with all the saints of all the ages.

Sanctification – that those who believe in Jesus Christ will be transformed more and more into Christ’s likeness each day by the Holy Spirit at work in them.

Hope – Scriptural ‘hope’ is without uncertainty, and is described by the apostle Paul in Romans, chapter 8, as follows; ‘Not only *that*, but we also who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for *it* with perseverance.'

Glorification – Everything pertaining to this fallen created order is corrupted by sin; all is temporal and will pass away when Christ dismisses it. God has prepared new glorified bodies for his people that will be immortal, incorruptible, no longer subject to sin and decay, suitable for everlasting life in the new heaven and new earth.

Judgment – All those who reject, ignore and dismiss the sacrifice of God's Beloved on their behalf will not, after they die, stand justified before God. They will be eternally punished because they are sinners and did not believe in the name of Jesus Christ – the one means of salvation prepared by God. They will experience eternal separation of their rebellious spirit from God (the second death). There is no need for anyone to undergo this indescribable punishment, for God 'takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked' [Ezekiel 33: 11] and is 'longsuffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.' [II Peter 3: 9].

God's glory – Everything that exists, including the plan that he is now unfolding in Creation, will ultimately be to God's glory. The consummation of everything will demonstrate God's absolute holiness, his ultimate power, his unsearchable wisdom, his unequalled creativity, his infinite love, his unfailing mercy, his unchanging determination to redeem humanity, his Son's right to rule over all, his spotless righteousness and his irrefutable justice as Judge of heaven and earth.

INTRODUCTION

The Hebrew Tanakh – re-ordered as the Christian Old Testament – promised that One would come from God to bring peace, righteousness and justice to the earth. It also described God bringing both salvation and judgment to its peoples. This Anointed and Chosen One is called Mashiach in Hebrew (which we translate as Messiah in English). According to the inspired Old Testament writers, Messiah would both suffer as God's Servant and rule over Israel and the nations as God's King – a duality that traditional Judaism was and is unable to accommodate. Messiah would come as a light to the Gentiles and restore Israel to a right relationship with God, living under his Kingship in the Promised Land. There were strong indications that Messiah would be God, the LORD himself, yet also a man!

The New Testament (B'Rit Hadashah in Hebrew) was written in Greek, with Messiah being translated as Christos (Christ in English). According to its inspired writers, Messiah (Christ) came into the world, as prophesied in the Tanakh, not clothed in power and glory to execute God's vengeance on his enemies and restore Israel to an exalted position immediately, but rather clothed in ordinary human flesh in the form of a servant. He was born into poverty and lowliness as Jesus (Heb. Yeshua, a form of Joshua) of Nazareth. His name means 'Saviour' or 'God is Salvation'. Jesus announced he had come to bring 'the acceptable year of the LORD', a time of Jubilee – freedom from slavery, and not the day of God's vengeance [Isaiah 61: 1 – 3]. This current era from his birth to the present day, is still a time of God's grace during which rebellious humanity has been given a way to receive everlasting life rather than judgment/condemnation, and come into the presence of a holy and just God.

The first believers in Jesus Christ – who witnessed his resurrection from the dead and ascension back to heaven – were all Jewish. The new believers during the next few years and decades were similarly Jewish. But soon the gospel of salvation by grace was sent to the non-Jewish peoples too.

Most people today deny that God entered the world as a man born of a woman, in order to redeem humanity and reconcile us to himself by his sacrificial death on our behalf. The world and its religions generally reject the fact that no amount of ‘good works’ can earn anyone a way into God’s heaven. While in the world as a man, Jesus of Nazareth always retained the divine nature of eternal God – even though he chose to set aside his glory. He became the propitiation for God’s righteous anger against human rebellion and sin. Israel wanted their Messiah to be a conquering King who would restore the land to them immediately and rule the nations with a rod of iron – not someone who would say, ‘My kingdom is not of this world’ and be brutally nailed on a Roman cross to die a ‘sinner’s death’.

The inspired writers of the New Testament unveil Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah who lived and died on the earth as a man, but who rose from the dead on the third day, according to The Scriptures. He will return again to the earth to reveal his almighty power and eternal glory.

When the ‘year’ of grace has ended, then the time of God’s judgment will be revealed – a time of God’s wrath for all who deny, reject or ignore his Holy One. The Scriptures reveal that the One who was pierced (crucified) for us will step back on to the earth at God’s appointed time, put down all unrighteousness and judge the Earth and Cosmos that he originally created, and then create a new heaven and a new earth characterised by righteousness.



For the grace of God that brings salvation has
appeared to all men,

teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly
lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and
godly in the present age,

looking for that blessed hope and glorious
appearing of our great God and Saviour
Jesus Christ,

who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us
from every lawless deed and purify for himself *his*
own special people,
zealous for good works.

Speak these things,
exhort, and rebuke with all authority.
Let no one despise you.

TITUS 2: 11 – 15



Preserve me, O God, for in you I put my trust. *O my soul, you* have said to the LORD, "You *are* my Lord, my goodness is nothing apart from you." As for the saints who *are* on the earth, "They are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight."

Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten *after another god*; their drink offerings of blood I will not offer, nor take up their names on my lips. O LORD, *you are* the portion of my inheritance and my cup; you maintain my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant *places*; yes, I have a good inheritance. I will bless the LORD who has given me counsel; my heart also instructs me in the night seasons.

I have set the LORD always before me; because *he is at my right* hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; my flesh also will rest in hope. For you will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will you allow your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life; in your presence *is* fullness of joy; at your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

PSALM 16: 1 – 11

Oh, how great *is your goodness, which you have laid up for those* who fear you, *which you have prepared for those who trust in* you In the presence of the sons of men! You shall hide them in the secret place of your presence from the plots of man; you shall keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues. Blessed *be* the LORD, for he has shown me his marvellous kindness in a strong city! For I said in my haste, "I am cut off from before your eyes"; nevertheless you heard the voice of my supplications when I cried out to you. Oh, love the LORD, all you his saints! *For* the LORD preserves the faithful, and fully repays the proud person. Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all you who hope in the LORD.

PSALM 31: 19 – 24



By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; he lays up the deep in storehouses.

Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spoke, and it was *done*; he commanded, and it stood fast. The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; he makes the plans of the peoples of no effect. The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations. Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the LORD, the people he has chosen as his own inheritance.

The LORD looks from heaven; he sees all the sons of men. From the place of his dwelling he looks on all the inhabitants of the earth; he fashions their hearts individually; he considers all their works. No king *is* saved by the multitude of an army; a mighty man is not delivered by great strength. A horse *is* a vain hope for safety; neither shall it deliver *any* by its great strength. Behold, the eye of the LORD *is* on those who fear him, on those who hope in his mercy, to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waits for the LORD; he *is* our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name. Let your mercy, O LORD, be upon us, just as we hope in you.

PSALM 33: 6 – 22

Surely every man walks about like a shadow; surely they busy themselves in vain; he heaps up *riches*, and does not know who will gather them. "And now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope *is* in you. Deliver me from all my transgressions; do not make me the reproach of the foolish. I was mute, I did not open my mouth, because it was you who did *it*. Remove your plague from me; I am consumed by the blow of your hand. When with rebukes you correct man for iniquity, you make his beauty melt away like a moth; surely every man *is* vapour. Selah"

PSALM 39: 6 – 11



In you, O LORD, I put my trust; let me never be put to shame.

Deliver me in your righteousness, and cause me to escape;
incline your ear to me, and save me. Be my strong refuge, to
which I may resort continually; you have given the
commandment to save me, for you *are* my rock and my fortress.
Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the
hand of the unrighteous and cruel man. For you are my hope, O
Lord GOD; *you are* my trust from my youth. By you I have been
upheld from birth; you are he who took me out of my mother's
womb.

My praise *shall be continually of you. I have become as a wonder*
to many, but you *are* my strong refuge. Let my mouth be filled
with your praise and with your glory all the day. Do not cast me
off in the time of old age; do not forsake me when my strength
fails. For my enemies speak against me; and those who lie in
wait for my life take counsel together, saying, "God has forsaken
him; pursue and take him, for *there is none to deliver him.*" O
God, do not be far from me; O my God, make haste to help me!
Let them be confounded *and* consumed who are adversaries of
my life; let them be covered *with* reproach and dishonour who
seek my hurt.

But I will hope continually, and will praise you yet more and
more. My mouth shall tell of your righteousness *and* your
salvation all the day, for I do not know *their* limits. I will go in
the strength of the Lord GOD; I will make mention of your
righteousness, of yours only. O God, you have taught me from
my youth; and to this *day* I declare your wondrous works.

Now also when *I am old and grey-headed*, O God, do not forsake
me, until I declare your strength to *this* generation, your power
to everyone *who* is to come.



KAPH*

My soul faints for your salvation, but I hope in your word. My eyes fail from searching your word, saying, "When will you comfort me?" For I have become like a wineskin in smoke, yet I do not forget your statutes. How many *are* the days of your servant? When will you execute judgement on those who persecute me? The proud have dug pits for me, which *is* not according to your law. All your commandments *are* faithful; they persecute me wrongfully; help me! They almost made an end of me on earth, but I did not forsake your precepts. Revive me according to your loving-kindness, so that I may keep the testimony of your mouth.

LAMED*

Forever, O LORD, your word is settled in heaven. Your faithfulness *endures* to all generations; you established the earth, and it abides. They continue this day according to your ordinances, for all *are* your servants. Unless your law *had been* my delight, I would then have perished in my affliction. I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have given me life. I *am* yours, save me; for I have sought your precepts. The wicked wait for me to destroy me, *but* I will consider your testimonies. I have seen the consummation of all perfection, *but* your commandment *is* exceedingly broad.

PSALM 119: 81 – 96

* 11th & 12th letters of the Hebrew alphabet



NUN*

Your word *is* a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. I have sworn and confirmed that I will keep your righteous judgements. I am afflicted very much; revive me, O LORD, according to your word. Accept, I pray, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and teach me your judgements. My life *is* continually in my hand, yet I do not forget your law. The wicked have laid a snare for me, yet I have not strayed from your precepts. Your testimonies I have taken as a heritage forever, for they *are* the rejoicing of my heart. I have inclined my heart to perform your statutes forever, to the very end.

SAMEK*

Ihate the double-minded, but I love your law. You *are* my hiding place and my shield; I hope in your word. Depart from me, you evildoers, for I will keep the commandments of my God! Uphold me according to your word, that I may live; and do not let me be ashamed of my hope. Hold me up, and I shall be safe, and I shall observe your statutes continually. You reject all those who stray from your statutes, for their deceit *is* falsehood. You put away all the wicked of the earth *like* dross; therefore I love your testimonies. My flesh trembles for fear of you, and I am afraid of your judgements.

PSALM 119: 105 – 120

* 14th & 15th letters of the Hebrew alphabet



Out of the depths I have cried to you, O LORD; Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. If you, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But *there is* forgiveness with you, that you may be feared. I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I do hope. My soul *waits* for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning—*yes, more than* those who watch for the morning. O Israel, hope in the LORD; for with the LORD *there is* mercy, and with him *is* abundant redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

PSALM 130: 1 – 8

Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul! While I live I will praise the LORD; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. Do not put your trust in princes, *nor* in a son of man, in whom *there is* no help. His spirit departs, he returns to his earth; in that very day his plans perish.

Happy is *he who has* the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that *is* in them; who keeps truth forever, who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry. The LORD gives freedom to the prisoners. The LORD opens *the eyes of* the blind; the LORD raises those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous. The LORD watches over the strangers; he relieves the fatherless and widow; but the way of the wicked he turns upside down. The LORD shall reign forever—your God, O Zion, to all generations. Praise the LORD!

PSALM 146: 1 – 10



“Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, and whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes; but its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit. The heart is deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I, the LORD, search the heart, *I* test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings. As a partridge that broods but does not hatch, *so is* he who gets riches, but not by right; it will leave him in the midst of his days, and at his end he will be a fool." A glorious high throne from the beginning *is* the place of our sanctuary. O LORD, the hope of Israel, all who forsake you shall be ashamed. "Those who depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters." Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, for you *are* my praise. Indeed they say to me, "Where *is* the word of the LORD? Let it come now!" As for me, I have not hurried away from *being* a shepherd *who* follows you, nor have I desired the woeful day; you know what came out of my lips; it was right there before you. Do not be a terror to me; you *are* my hope in the day of doom.

JEREMIAH 17: 7 – 17

Y**ou have moved my soul far from peace; I have forgotten** prosperity. And I said, "My strength and my hope have perished from the LORD." Remember my affliction and roaming, the wormwood and the gall. My soul still remembers and sinks within me. This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope. *Through* the LORD'S mercies we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. *They are* new every morning; great *is* your faithfulness. "The LORD *is* my portion," says my soul, "therefore I hope in him!"

LAMENTATIONS 3: 17 – 24



“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; he is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem; the battle bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations; his dominion *shall be* ‘from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.’ As for you also, because of the blood of your covenant, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit. Return to the stronghold, you prisoners of hope. Even today I declare *that* I will restore double to you. For I have bent Judah, my *bow*, fitted the bow with Ephraim, and raised up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece [Gentile nations who come against Jerusalem], and made you like the sword of a mighty man.”

Then the LORD will be seen over them, and his arrow will go forth like lightning. The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet, and go with whirlwinds from the south. The LORD of hosts will defend them; they shall devour and subdue with sling-stones. They shall drink *and* roar as if with wine; they shall be filled *with blood* like basins, like the corners of the altar. The LORD their God will save them in that day, as the flock of his people. For they *shall be like* the jewels of a crown, lifted like a banner over his land—for how great is its goodness and how great its beauty! Grain shall make the young men thrive, and new wine the young women.

Ask the LORD for rain in the time of the latter rain. The LORD will make flashing clouds; he will give them showers of rain, grass in the field for everyone. For the idols speak delusion; the diviners envision lies, and tell false dreams; they comfort in vain. Therefore *the people* wend their way like sheep; they are in trouble because *there is* no shepherd.

ZECHARIAH 9: 9 – 10: 3



For we know that the whole creation groans and labours with birth pangs together until now. Not only *that*, but we also who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for *it* with perseverance. Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now he who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit *is*, because he makes intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*. And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *his purpose*. For whom he foreknew, he also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he predestined, these he also called; whom he called, these he also justified; and whom he justified, these he also glorified.



What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies. Who *is* he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ROMANS 8: 22 – 39



Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified [declared not guilty of sin] by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only *that*, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

ROMANS 5: 1 – 11

Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision [Jews] for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy, as it is written: "For this reason I will confess to you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name." And again he says: "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people!" And again: "Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles! Laud him, all you peoples!" And again, Isaiah says: "There shall be a root of Jesse [Jesse was King David's father]; and he [Christ] who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him the Gentiles shall hope." Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

ROMANS 15: 8 – 13



Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised [attach redundant rituals of Judaism to Christianity], Christ will profit you nothing. And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. You have become estranged from Christ, you who *attempt to* be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

GALATIANS 5: 2 – 6

In him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of his glory. In him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of his glory. Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated *him* at his right hand in the heavenly *places*, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And he put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* head over all *things* to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

EPHESIANS 1: 11 – 23

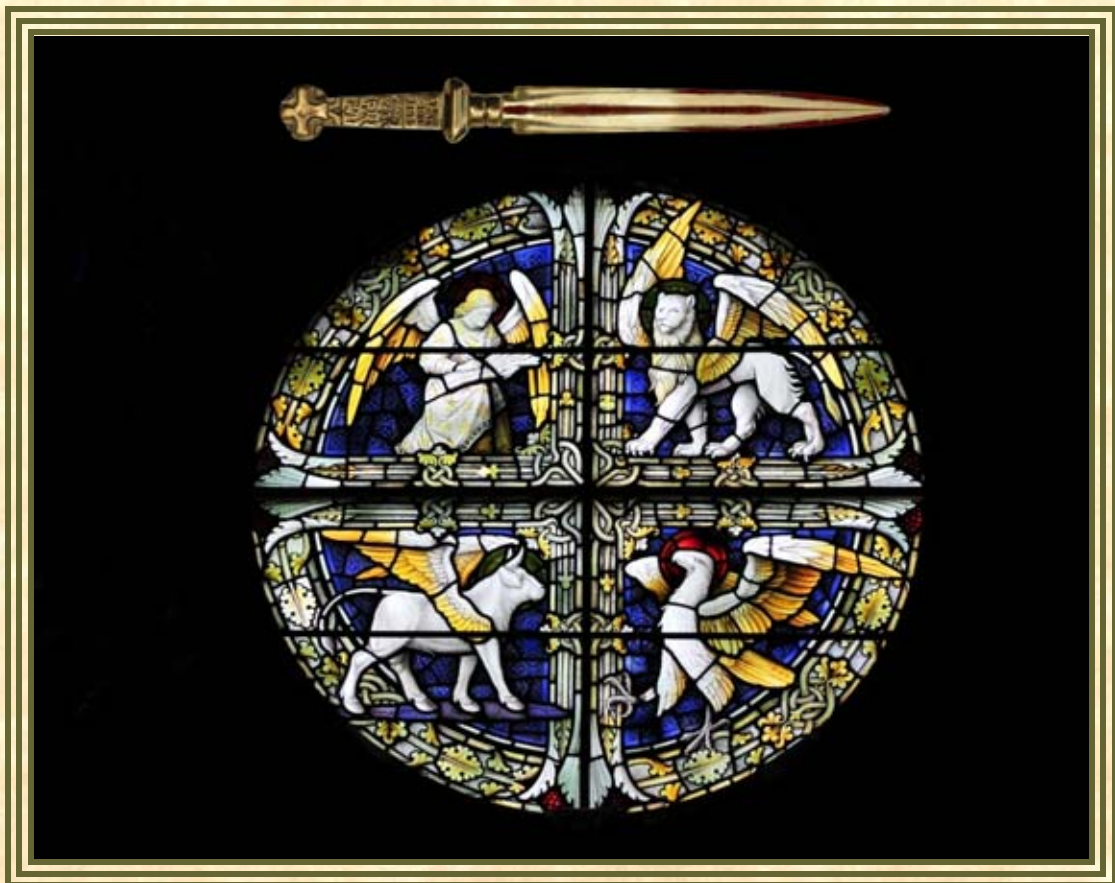
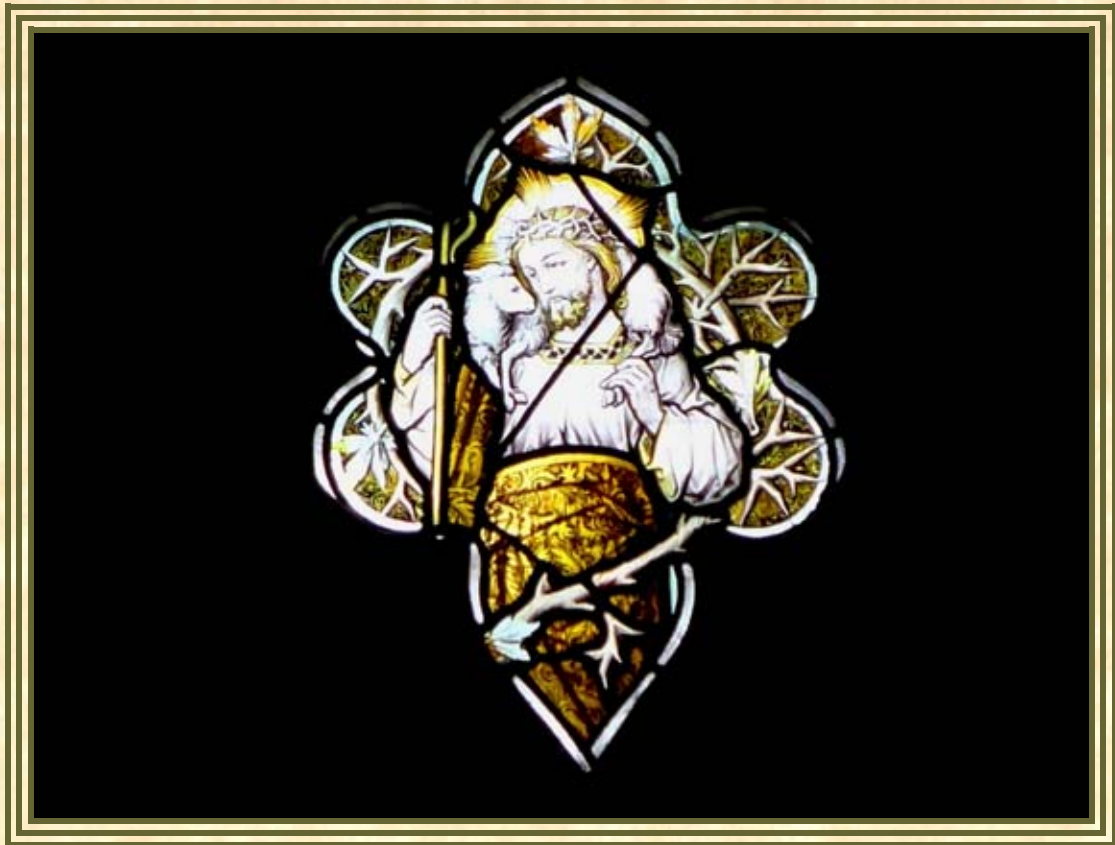


And you *he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in* which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision [Jews] made in the flesh by hands—that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

For he himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation [in the Temple of God], having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in himself one new man *from* the two [Jews and Gentiles], *thus* making peace, and that he might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

EPHESIANS 2: 1 – 16



Now to him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. *There is* one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all. But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

EPHESIANS 3: 20 – 4: 7

We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints; because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, which has come to you, as *it has* also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as *it is* also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth; as you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, who also declared to us your love in the Spirit. For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *him*, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

COLOSSIANS 1: 3 – 12



He [God the Father] has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed *us* into the kingdom of the Son of his love, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. He [Jesus Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he may have the pre-eminence. For it pleased *the Father* that in him all the fullness should dwell, and by him to reconcile all things to himself, by him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of his cross.

And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now he has reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in his sight—if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Inow rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of his body, which is the church, of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God, the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to his saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

COLOSSIANS 1: 13 – 27

A



“This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. *I am the living bread which came down from heaven.* If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.”

JOHN 6: 50 & 51

Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. I must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; *the night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*" When he had said these things, he spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And he said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

JOHN 9: 3 – 7

Then Jesus said to them again, "*Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.* All who *ever* came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. *I am the door.* If anyone enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture."

JOHN 10: 7 – 9

“I am the good shepherd; and I know my *sheep*, and am known by my own. As the Father knows me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear my voice; and there will be one flock *and* one shepherd.”

JOHN 10: 14 – 16

Then Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." **Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life.** He who believes in me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

JOHN 11: 21 – 27

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going, and how can we know the way?" **Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.** If you had known me, you would have known my Father also; and from now on you know him and have seen him."

JOHN 14: 1 – 7

“Iam the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. **I am the vine, you are the branches.** He who abides in me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without me you can do nothing."

JOHN 14: 1 – 5



Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father, knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God. For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything. For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

I THESSALONIANS 1: 1 – 10

But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

I THESSALONIANS 4: 13 – 18



But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labour pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and *as* a helmet the hope of salvation.

For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

I THESSALONIANS 5: 1 – 10

But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which he called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.

II THESSALONIANS 2: 13 – 17



Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Saviour and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope, to Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, *from* a good conscience, and *from* sincere faith, from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm. But we know that the law *is* good if one uses it lawfully, knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for *the* lawless and insubordinate, for *the* ungodly and for sinners, for *the* unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for men-slayers, for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.

And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because he counted me faithful, putting *me* into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. This *is* a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on him for everlasting life.

I TIMOTHY 1: 1 – 16



Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgement of the truth which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, but has in due time manifested his word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Saviour; to Titus, a true son in *our* common faith: Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

TITUS 1: 1 – 4

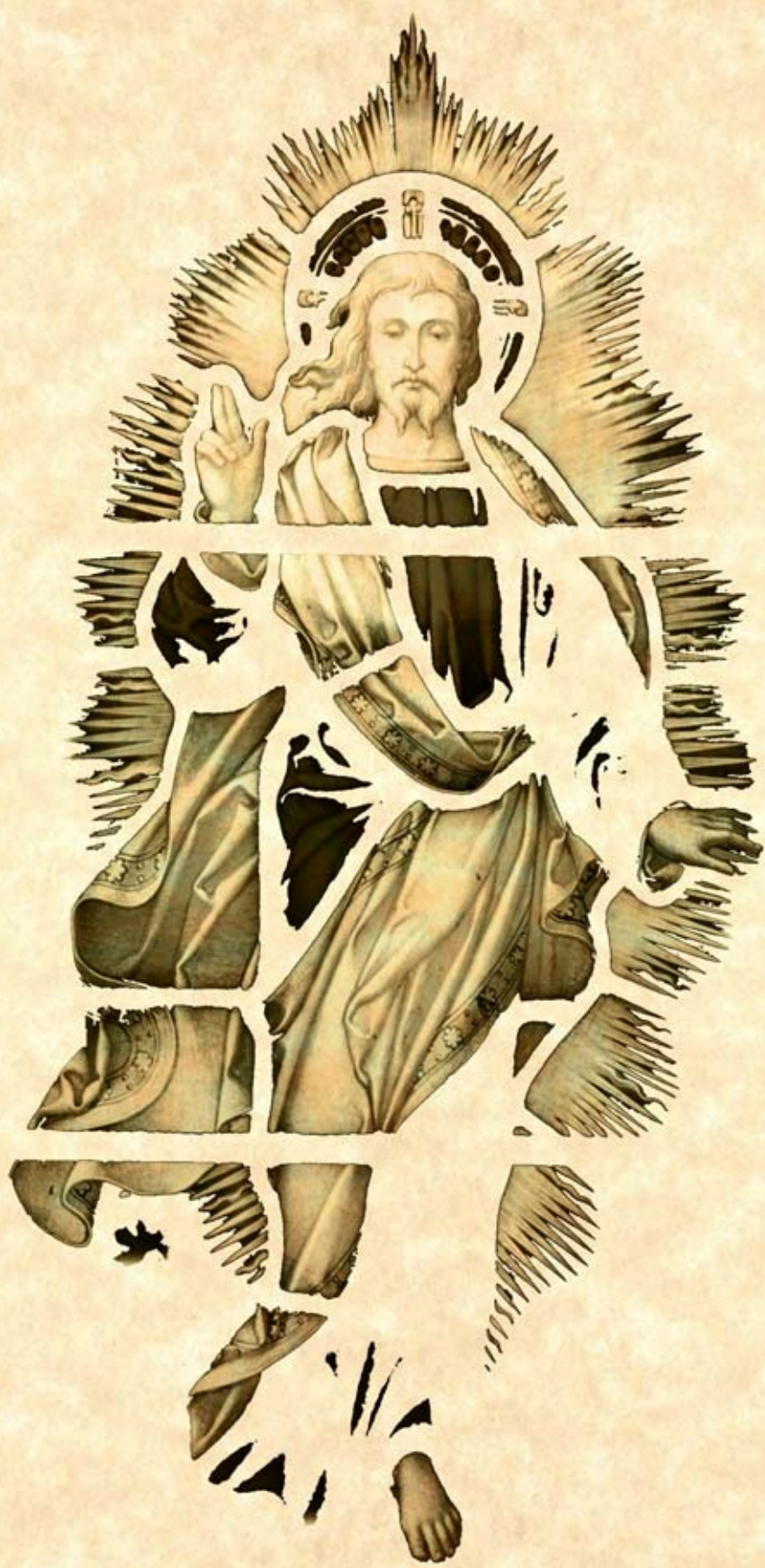
For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for himself *his* own special people, zealous for good works.

TITUS 2: 11 – 14

But when the kindness and the 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, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that having been justified by his grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.

TITUS 3: 4 – 8





Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, he himself [Jesus Christ] likewise shared in the same, that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For indeed he does not give aid to angels, but he does give aid to the seed of Abraham. [Humanity] Therefore, in all things he had to be made like *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself has suffered, being tempted, he is able to aid those who are tempted.

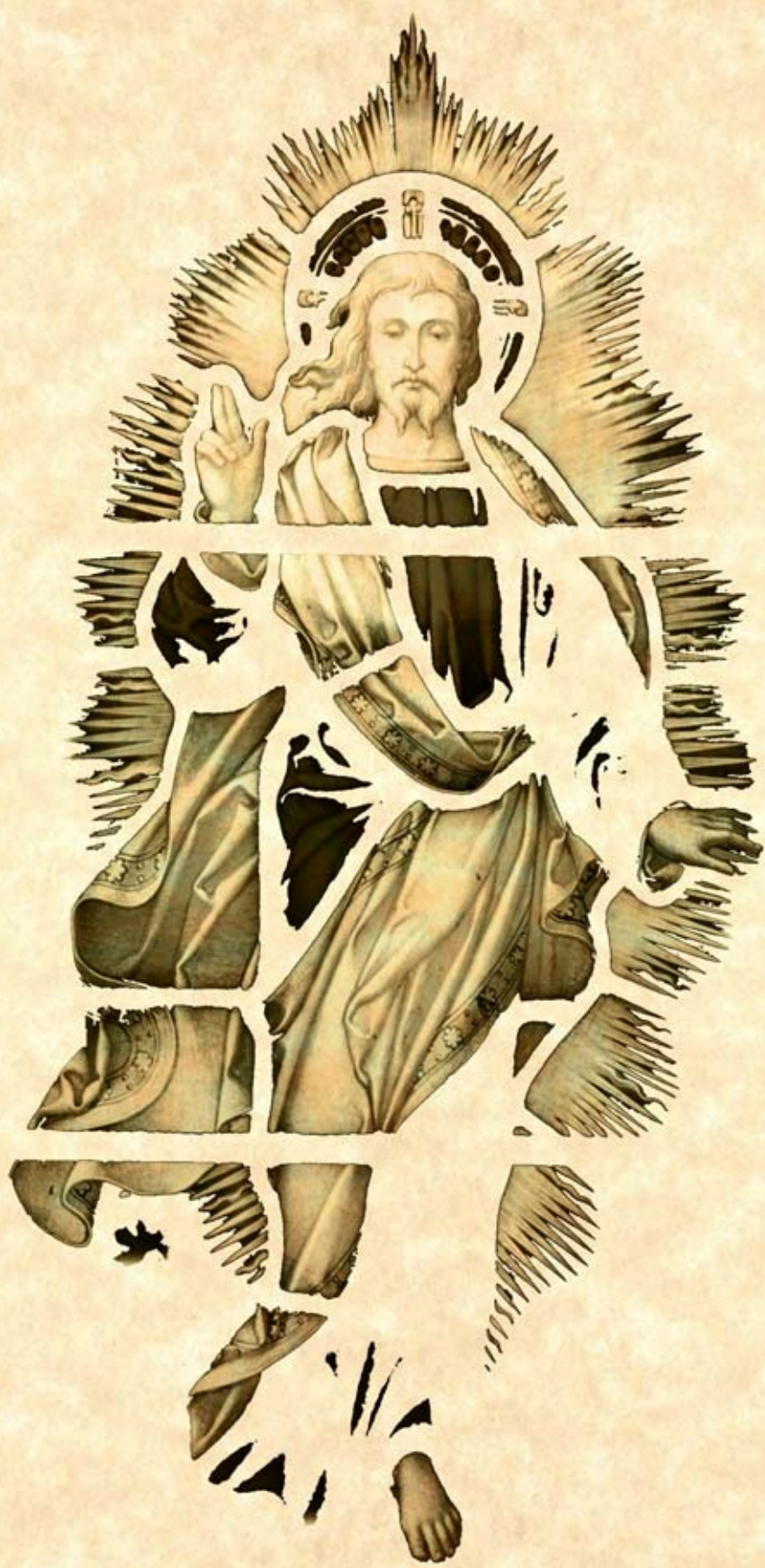
Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to him who appointed him, as Moses also *was faithful* in all his house. For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who built the house has more honour than the house. For every house is built by someone, but he who built all things *is* God. And Moses indeed *was* faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken *afterward*, but Christ as a Son over his own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

HEBREWS 2: 14 – 3: 6

And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. For when God made a promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no one greater, he swore by himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation *is* for them an end of all dispute. Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it *is* impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before *us*. This *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the *Presence* behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, *even* Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated "king of righteousness," and then also king of Salem, meaning "king of peace," without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.

HEBREWS 6: 11 – 7: 3



For *it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe* Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. For he testifies: "You *are* a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, *there is the* bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God. And inasmuch as *he was* not *made* priest without an oath (for they have become priests without an oath, but he with an oath by him who said to him: "The LORD has sworn and will not relent, 'You *are* a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek' "), by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.

Also *there were many priests, because they were prevented by* death from continuing. But he, because he continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore he is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. For such a High Priest was fitting for us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins and then for the people's, for this he did once for all when he offered up himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, *appoints* the Son who has been perfected forever.

HEBREWS 7: 14 – 28

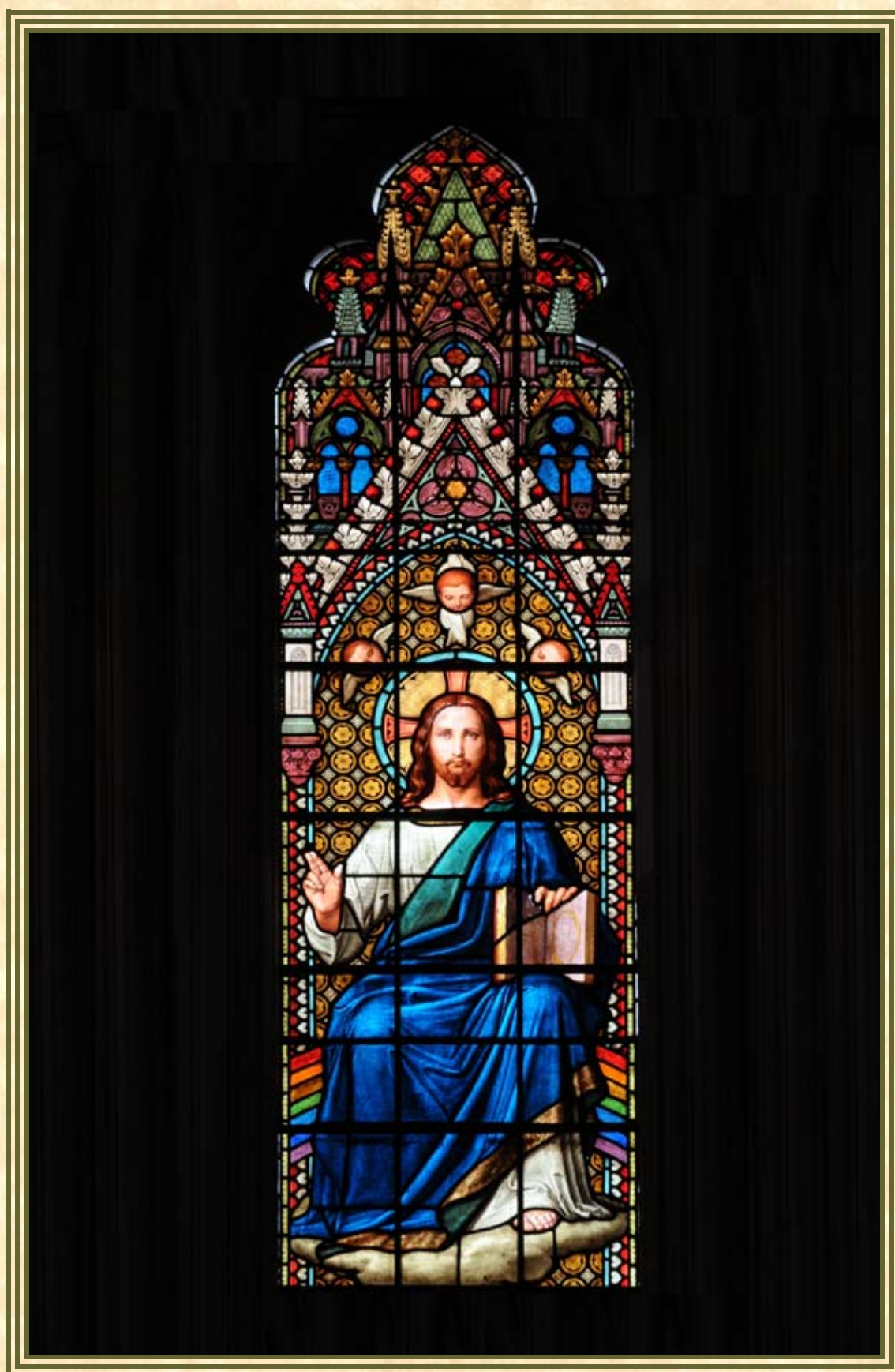


Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honour, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of *your* souls. Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when he testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into. Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest *your* hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as* in your ignorance; but as he who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear; knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

I PETER 1: 3 – 19



Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when he is revealed, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure. Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. And you know that he was manifested to take away our sins, and in him there is no sin. Whoever abides in him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen him nor known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practises righteousness is righteous, just as he is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for his seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God. In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: whoever does not practise righteousness is not of God, nor *is* he who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain *who* was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love *his* brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. By this we know love, because he laid down his life for us. And we also ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.





Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people. God himself will be with them *and be* their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." Then he who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And he said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be my son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.

REVELATION 21: 1 – 11a



And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, *was* the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each *tree* yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him. They shall see his face, and his name *shall be* on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever. Then he said to me, "These words *are* faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show his servants the things which must shortly take place. "Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed *is* he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, "See *that you do not do that*. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God." And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still." "And behold, I am coming quickly, and my reward *is* with me, to give to every one according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.*"

REVELATION 22: 1 – 13

"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you
these things in the churches.
I am the Root and the Offspring of David,
the Bright and Morning Star."

And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!"
And let him who hears say, "Come!"
And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires,
let him take the water of life freely.

For I testify to everyone who hears the words of
the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these
things, God will add to him the plagues that are
written in this book; and if anyone takes away
from the words of the book of this prophecy, God
shall take away his part from the Book of Life,
from the holy city, and *from* the things which are
written in this book.

He who testifies to these things says,
"Surely I am coming quickly." Amen.
Even so, come, Lord Jesus!
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
be with you all. Amen.





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