

Welcome, brethren, to the Sabbath.

Have you ever been promised something and that promise never delivered? Today, often parents will promise their child something and not deliver it. Many a time in shopping centers you hear a mother or a father saying, "If you do this, if you behave yourself, I promise that you can have 'this' when you get home." Often those promises are never delivered. I know as a child growing up that often promises were made to me and they *weren't* kept. And even in the work environment sometimes employers will promise something and only to find that, "Oh no, situation has changed," and you no longer can receive what they said they would do. Today, politicians are the same; they promise certain things, they make statements, they swear that they will fix certain things or they will change certain things only to find out that later on when they come into government, the situation wasn't what they thought it was and therefore they break their promise, the promise that they made.

If you look at the Bible, God has made many promises since the creation of mankind some 6,000 years ago. His promises have covered both physical matters and also spiritual matters. When God made a promise it often had a double meaning, it would take on a physical level, i.e. the physical promised land, but more importantly it also had a spiritual connection, it was about a spiritual outcome.

The title of this sermon is *The Promise*.

The purpose of the sermon is to look at the spiritual promise of immortal life, or life everlasting. The first thing to do, of course, is to look at a basic fact about God. If you'd like to look at **Hebrews 6:10 - For God is not unjust to forget your work and labour of love**, so that word 'labour' there is 'intense labour united with trouble and toil', **which you have shown towards His name**, so the purpose of *why* we are labouring in overcoming ourselves is because it is about God, it is about supporting God's name, which we carry; **in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister/do serve**.

Verse 11 - And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope, that word 'full assurance' is 'most certain confidence', and the word 'hope' there, 'to anticipate usually with pleasure,' and then it goes on and says, **unto the end:** now, whenever that end may be for each and every one of us. The end for one person is different from the end of another. What the scripture is saying here, that we must continue in this hope, this full assurance, unto the end, because we have confidence of what God is working in the Church.

Verse 12 - That you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. So if we go back over that it's saying there that we do not become sluggish. That word 'sluggish' there is 'dull or slothful spiritually', in other words to be lukewarm. If you look at the word 'slothful' it comes from the word 'sloth' or 'slouth', which is the animal that moves very slowly. So when you see that animal you see how it moves *very slowly*. Well, here Paul is saying, **Don't become sluggish, don't become slow spiritually, but imitate or follow those who through faith, those who believed God, and patience**, they were patient, they were longsuffering, **inherit the promises**, the promises that God has made.

Well, one of those promises *is* life everlasting as a spirit being. Those people did not actually *inherit* the promise yet, they have it in the sense of they've gained it from God as a gift but they actually haven't *received* it yet, and we'll get to that scripture later.

Verse 13 - For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He, God, could swear by no one greater, that word 'swear' there is 'to affirm or promise', and of course no one greater, there *is* no one greater than Yahweh Elohim. ...**He swore by Himself**, because there wasn't anyone greater than God, so He swore by Himself.

There is normally a need for a witness to a promise. Now, today's society we would say a promise, or a pledge can be similar to a contract. We enter into contracts which are promises that we will deliver this and the other party will deliver that, and it always has a witness to that promise; and now, of course, people use lawyers to say what was said or what is in the contract. And of course, today's society, in man's natural carnal mind, there are employers that make promises that don't keep them, employment contracts. There are also promises made in legal terms where the lawyers, full-time, also do look at contracts trying to look at loop-holes, trying to get out of those things. No different than a tax department. There are tax lawyers where all they do is study contracts, which is the tax laws, looking for ways to bend it or manipulate it rather than to stick to the law, that they look at it to try to twist it to get out of it. So that's the reason that people would normally have a witness to a promise, because promises on the natural carnal mind are made and they're not kept.

Verse 14 - Saying, Assuredly, I, God, will bless you, I will show you favour and mercy, and multiplying I will multiply you. And so, after he, Abraham, had 'patiently endured', that word there is 'in longsuffering' **he obtained the promise.** Yes, he did; he actually obtained it and has died and it's reserved in heaven for him but he actually hasn't receive it yet - but he has inherited it in the sense that it's a guarantee and it is there, but it's not yet been given where he has been resurrected to receive it.

Verse 16 - For men, humans, indeed swear by the greater: and an oath, the word 'oath' there, 'that which has been pledged or promised with an oath', **for confirmation is for them an end of all disputes.** What it's saying there; you have to have a witness so that if anything comes up that needs to be resolved...so an oath with a witness could resolve the problems or strife or contradictions that could arise from the oath. It's a matter of, "Well, you said... When you said this, this is what you meant," and the other person says, "Well, no, I didn't say it that way, you've misunderstood me." The 'you said' attitude could be resolved by having a witness to it, and that's why witnesses were required to pledges or oaths.

Of course today God says in His word in the New Testament that we should *not* make an oath or take an oath, and there are reasons for that, and the main reason is that the natural carnal mind will always justify or twist or change what is said. And in reality many oaths that we would make we can't actually keep because of sin. The natural carnal mind is hostile against God, not subject to the law of God and indeed cannot be, therefore we have to be very careful what we say. God says simply let your yeses be yes and your noes be no. We need to be very careful of what we say because we can't always fulfill what we *think* we can fulfill.

Verse 17 - Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of the promise the 'immutability', that word is actually 'unalterable', **of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath:** So God here is saying that He has made an oath, He has confirmed something, He has guaranteed something by His own word.

Verse 18 - That by two immutable/unalterable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consultation/encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us: and that hope is life everlasting. So God is saying here that He has confirmed it by His *own word*, He has confirmed it by an oath, that's the first part. The second part is it is impossible for God to lie. So we can set our hope on this, on God's word, because He's sworn it as an oath and He cannot lie, therefore it is a guarantee that it cannot be changed, it's *unalterable*. So the two things; it's confirmed by an oath and God cannot lie.

Verse 19 - This hope we have, the word 'hope' has been added there; **This we have,** of the promises, as an anchor, something that holds down, **of the life, both 'sure'**, means 'firm', **and steadfast**, this is not going to move. This promise, this oath that God has made to us, and because He can't lie it is firm, it is steadfast, it's *unalterable*, it cannot change, **and which enters behind the veil;** and that's talking about, of course, into the last third of the temple, **where the forerunner has entered for us, being Jesus Christ, even Christ having become High Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.** And we had a sermon not long ago just covering that aspect of where the veil was torn. Jesus Christ has entered on our behalf and represents us as our High Priest.

What God has promised He will deliver because He has given it by oath and He cannot lie. Now, the promise that we have been given *is* life everlasting. We're not worthy of *anything* in that aspect, because the natural carnal mind is hostile, but if we look at what God is doing, God wants to *share* what He has with us so He has created us a certain way with this mind that is hostile to Him and when God decides to call an individual they then have the opportunity to work towards a relationship with God, and our focus would be to enter the promise. God has promised that He will work with us patiently, we have to choose and fight our own natural carnal mind, by choice, and God will fulfill the promise that He has made through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and that promise is life everlasting. So that is why we fight, we fight our own nature through the power of God's spirit so that we can take on the very mind of Christ so that at some point in time we will be given the promise, the one that Abraham is waiting to receive. Although he has inherited it he hasn't actually yet received it.

If you'd like to turn to 1 Kings 8:1. This period here is the temple has been built and it is finished, and now Solomon is instructing the movement of the ark to be brought to the temple that has been built, and in this area of scripture it's starting to go back and it reviews aspects of the promise that God made to David, and Solomon is covering this in what he is about to talk to the children of Israel at this point in time.

1 Kings 8:1 - Now Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes and the chief fathers of the children of Israel to king Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the Eternal from the city of David, which is Zion. Here it's covering where furnishings are going to be brought up *correctly* to this area where the temple has been built.

Therefore, all the men of Israel assembled with king Solomon at the Feast in the month of Ethanim/Tishrei/Tashritu, which is in the seventh month. So here we have it at the Feast of Tabernacles period. **So all the elders of Israel came and the priests took up the ark,** as it was done according to God's word. Because remember, previously David had tried to move the ark but he hadn't used what God had said through the scriptures about using priests, etcetera, and of course people died because of it and therefore Solomon was aware that God had given clear instructions about how it was to be moved with the priests.

Verse 4 - Then they brought up the ark of the LORD, the tabernacle of meeting, and all the holy furnishings that were in the tabernacle; the priest and the Levites bore them up. And that was according to the law because only the Levites could carry the furnishings out.

Verse 5 - Also, king Solomon and all the congregation of Israel who were assembled with him were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen that could not be counted or numbered for multitude. So here we have Solomon *and* the children of Israel doing sacrifices and worshipping God in the sense of doing those sacrifices before the ark.

Verse 6 - Then the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Eternal to its place, into the inner sanctuary of the temple, to the Most Holy Place, under the wings of the cherubim. Now, if we look at that aspect it's going into the last third of the temple behind the curtain. Well today, of course, we know that we are the Temple, we are the most holy place because God dwells in us, and this is a physical example of where God is dwelling in the sense of locating the ark of the covenant, but God says through scripture, and particularly in John 14 through John 17, that God's greatest desire was not a physical location, to dwell on the earth, because nothing can contain God - God created everything - but God's desire was to dwell *in* mankind. Somebody that God would draw out of the world to give them an aspect of His spirit so that they could begin to see and understand true spiritual intent to the point where they would be granted repentance, that they begin to see themselves for what they are, that they *are* hostile to God, that they *have* sinned, that they would repent, that they would turn to God, be baptized, in other words, sins would be covered by the burial of the old man so that the new person would arise, only to receive God's spirit so that they would then be impregnated *permanently* with God's spirit so that God could dwell *in* them.

So we are the Temple, and there are scriptures that say that, "Do you not know brethren, we are the Temple of God," we're the stones of the Temple, we, individually, those that have been baptized, received God's spirit and have God's spirit alive dwelling *in* a person make up the Church of God, the Body of Christ, the Temple of God. We are holy because God dwells in us.

So this is where the high priest was to enter once a year on the Day of Atonement. He would go into the Most Holy Place. The entrance was covered with a very heavy curtain; and this curtain, as was mentioned not long ago by Johnny, was torn from top to bottom when Christ died. That symbolically revealed that mankind now had access to God's throne through Jesus Christ, because it's through the death of Jesus Christ that we have access to God the Father, because now the access was made available, access to God the Father through prayer.

Drop down to **verse 9 - Nothing was in the ark except the two tablets of stone, which Moses put there at Mount Horeb**, which is Mount Sinai, **when the LORD/Eternal made a covenant/agreement with the children of Israel when they came out of the land of Egypt.** So this was the Day of Pentecost and God made an agreement, which was the foundation of, which was the 10 Commandments, **with the children of Israel**, and at that point in time, of course, they turned around and said, "All this we will do." Now, the natural carnal mind could look at the 10 Commandments and look at it and say, "Well, all this we will do. We won't have other gods, we won't kill anybody..." because it's all physical in nature, but behind that, the 10 Commandments, which are promises that God said there is a cause and effect, there is a law behind it. If you do this aspect there is a good outcome to it, but of course the natural carnal mind would say, "Yes, it's easy to keep," but Jesus Christ came and revealed the true spiritual intent of the law. Now, that's a lot different, that's a lot harder to do because it involves the mind, it involves the deep inner man, the intent of why we do what we do.

The children of Israel, of course, came out of the land of Egypt, they came out of captivity - well, that's what a calling is, we are called out of our old way, we're called out of the captivity of our thinking, our prejudices, our attitudes that hold us captive. We don't even know a lot of the things that we are held captive by, we just don't see them until God reveals them to us.

The law given on Mount Sinai was a promise, or an agreement, it was a covenant that was both physical in nature, and also spiritual; "If you do this," obedience, "I will do 'this,'" which was blessings. We can understand the agreement today, that it is spiritual in nature, it has a spiritual intent. "If you set your mind to obey Me, God, in spirit and truth, I, God, will bless you spiritually with My thinking, My Logos, My Word." God has given us His spirit so that we *can* obey Him. Without God's spirit we cannot do anything spiritual.

The children of Israel had this matter where when God provided the law to them they looked at it on a physical level, and although they said they would do it, deep down they hated it because it was *restrictive*. To their human mind it was restrictive. "What do you mean I can't desire something that belongs to somebody else?" That motive of get; because the natural carnal mind, that is its whole nature, it's about obtaining something for the self, pleasing the self.

So on the Day of Pentecost the law was given and there were promises connected within the law; if we were to submit ourselves in humility to the law, God says that He would bless us on a spiritual level. Well, that same principle applies today on a spiritual level. If we are to submit our willing desire today, in humility, and our intent to obey God, to submit to Him, God says He will pour out spiritual blessings on us, because one follows the other. It's a natural law that God has placed *in motion*, the law of blessings and cursings on a physical level and also on a spiritual level.

Verse 10 - And it came to pass when the priests came up out of the holy place that the cloud filled the house of the Eternal so that that priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the Eternal filled the house of the LORD. If you remember, this is exactly what happened on Mount Sinai where there was a cloud and the glory of the LORD appeared in the sense of a cloud and the children of Israel could only hear a voice, they couldn't see what was actually happening within the cloud.

Well today, brethren, we are that House, we are that Temple, we are the Temple where God dwells, and the glory of God is in His people and the glory is His nature, His character, His spirit. His power *in us* is the glory, because of and by ourselves we can do nothing, of and by ourselves there *is* no glory, because the natural carnal mind is hostile to God and it's something that takes often a long time in God's Church to fully comprehend how evil the natural carnal mind is and how it will manipulate, it justifies, it has prejudices, and all of these things that are hidden from it unless God reveals it by the power of His holy spirit. So the glory that can fill the house - us - as it happens here, 'for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the Eternal' - well, we are God's Temple and the glory that can fill us is only God's spirit. That is the *only* glory, that's our *only* value, because without God in us we're nothing, we are of no value to anybody and we are of no value to God unless God dwells in us, because it fulfills the promise.

The promise that God gave, which was life everlasting, can only be fulfilled *if* God dwells in us, because that is the purpose of life, to have God dwelling in us so that one day we can inherit life everlasting, or immortal life from that period forward. It's a process that we have to go through.

Verse 12 - Then Solomon spoke, The Eternal said He would dwell in the dark cloud - Reference to Exodus 19:19 - And the LORD said to Moses, behold, I, God, come to you in a thick cloud; Why?...that the people may hear when I speak with you and believe you forever. So God says that He came in a thick cloud for the people's benefit, because He was showing that He was working with Moses and that He would work with Moses and that Moses was God's chosen leader.

1 Kings 8:13 - I have surely built You, God, an excellent house, and a place for You, God, to dwell in forever. Solomon is thinking here on a physical level, that this is where God would dwell forever. Now, God's desire is to dwell in us forever; that is the purpose of life. This is why God created mankind. This is the promise to us: life everlasting with God the Father dwelling *in us forever*. We can come to understand that and keep that as our focus, that this is God's promise that cannot be broken. We can inherit the very mind of God *forever!* What a wonderful promise if we understand what God is promising us. He's trying to give something that is worth nothing - us - something that He has, life everlasting, His way of thinking, the ability never to sin, never to lie. Isn't that incredible? That is what God has promised us.

Verse 14 - Then the king turned around and blessed the whole assembly of Israel while all the assembly of Israel was standing, and he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel who spoke with His mouth to My father David, and with His hand has fulfilled it saying, Since the day that I, GOD, brought My people, Israel, out of Egypt - similar to us, on that day that we've been drawn out, I, GOD, have chosen no city from any tribe of Israel in which to build a house: Well, God is not going to dwell in something physical in the sense of a temple, **GOD has chosen no city**, but He has chosen us. He has chosen that He wants to dwell in us.

Continuing on...**that My name might be there**, which it is, God's name is in His people, the Church of God, we carry His name, **but I chose David to be over My people, Israel**. God has chosen us, to dwell in us. God chose David here to be over the children of Israel on a physical level, but there is also a spiritual aspect to this because we know from scripture that God has promised David to be *king* over Israel in the Millennium. We're going to have Jesus Christ as King of kings. Now, we know God the Father is KING of all Kings/kings. Jesus Christ is a King, appointed to the role of King of kings. David will be a king in the Millennium and he will rule the children of Israel. We also know that the twelve apostles will be over the twelve tribes of Israel; so the title of Jesus Christ as King of kings makes sense because He is going to be over all other kings that have been appointed by God the Father and Jesus Christ.

God has chosen us. God has chosen to dwell *in us*. That's where He has placed His name. His name is in the Church of God; we are the Body of Christ, the Church of God. This is how the promise is achieved. God lives and dwells *in us* until He changes us to spirit at a resurrection.

Verse 17 - Now, it was in the heart of my father David to build a temple for the name of the LORD GOD of Israel, but the LORD said to my father, David, Whereas it was in your heart to build a temple for My name, you did well that it was in your heart. God is saying here, "Well, it is good that you had that intent, that you had this desire to God and the intent and motive was to build a dwelling place for God," even though it was a physical level. David, at that point, probably never understood that God's desire was to dwell *in* a person that was going to make up the Temple of God, the individual.

Verse 19 - Nevertheless, you shall not build the temple, but your son who will come from your body, he shall build the temple for My name. Solomon was actually a 'type' of Christ, he was a son that would build a temple. Well, Jesus Christ was a Son of God that is building a Temple today. We are that Temple

and Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church and it's through God's Church that He builds a spiritual Temple, because it's the only way that the promise can be fulfilled. It is through the Church, it is through the spiritual Temple. Jesus Christ is the Chief Cornerstone, so He is the foundational stone and then we are stones of that Temple.

Verse 20 - So the LORD has fulfilled His word, His promise, which He spoke, and I have filled the portion of my father, David, and sit on the throne of Israel as the LORD promised. So the promise was to David that there would be a son that would build a temple for God on the physical level. Well, here is Solomon saying that he is that portion of the promise and that God has promised that there would be somebody and here he was, that he had done it. **...and I have built a temple for the name of the LORD GOD of Israel.**

We carry God's name today as members of the Body of Christ, the Church of God. We need to be very careful with our responsibility, that we do not blaspheme God's name in word, thought or action. Now, a lot of that can be in the sense that people know who we are and we do carry God's name. We carry God's name, the Church of God, therefore people can blaspheme God through our words or thoughts or actions. It's mainly through actions and words, and that all boils back to relationships, how we conduct ourselves in our relationships, what do we say toward others, *how do we say it?*

People often can't see what we *think* toward them but that's still blaspheme because we have a responsibility to carry God's name with respect, and it's about *how* we put God first in our life. So people can mock us and ridicule us for what they see as fault in us, but if our intent and motive *is* correct in putting God first, keeping the Sabbath and the Holy Days and not behaving and running with the world, people can mock us - well, that's not blaspheming God's name. It's only when we do sin toward others where we would say something mean or vicious or cruel or derogatory or show prejudice by our thoughts or our words or our actions, that people would then blaspheme God and say, "Well, how can that person be of God - look at what they're doing! Look at the lies they are telling! Look how they've stolen! Look at this, look at what they say! Look how they treat other people." So that's how we blaspheme God's name.

Verse 21 - And there I have made a place for the ark in which is the covenant of the LORD, which He made with our fathers when He brought them out of the land of Egypt. Well, that's a 'type' of us. We carry God's name and we have been brought out of captivity. Only God can bring us out of spiritual captivity, out of bondage through a calling, and that is a process that takes time, because we can go through that process of being drawn out through the power of God's spirit that's not permanently dwelling with us, but we've been drawn out by God's power and given the gift of repentance, which is the foundation of the promise. Repentance and the promise are connected, because without repentance we can't fulfill the promise that God has made because we're not repenting, we're not desiring to change ourselves and not admitting what we are towards God.

Verse 22 - Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands towards heaven (verse 23) and he said, LORD GOD of Israel, there is no God in heaven above or on earth below like You, who keep Your covenant/agreement and mercy/favor and grace with your servants who walk before you with all their hearts. So if we look at that, there is only One True God, Yahweh Elohim, who dwells in heaven. He has appointed Jesus Christ to look after the Church. So He keeps His agreement with us, and that agreement, that promise, which is one of mercy, grace and favor towards us, which is life everlasting *IF* we walk before God with a sincere,

genuine, humble heart. So it does require a humble spirit to continue to admit we are wrong before God, which is repentance.

Verse 24 - You have kept what You have promised. So God has kept what He promised. ...**Your servant, David, my father. You have both spoken with Your mouth and fulfilled it with Your hand as it is today.** Solomon is saying God has fulfilled what He said, what He promised, in that God can't lie and He made it by an oath therefore it's been fulfilled.

Therefore, LORD GOD of Israel, now keep what You promised Your servant David, my father, saying, You shall not fail to have a man sit before Me on the throne of Israel, now there is a condition, **only if**, so this is the condition, **your sons take heed to their way, that they may walk before Me as you have walked before Me.** So the line was continued through David, which is Judah, which passed through and of course on a physical level continued, but on a spiritual level it is fulfilled through Jesus Christ. There *is* a spiritual promise as well here; Jesus Christ will be King of kings under God the Father and David will be king of Israel under Jesus Christ.

Verse 26 - And now, I pray, O LORD GOD of Israel, Let Your word come true which You have spoken to Your servant David, my father. But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and heaven above heavens cannot contain You, how much less this temple which I built? Solomon is acknowledging here that this is a physical thing, but there is nothing that can contain God, He is all powerful, He created everything. God's spiritual purpose was to dwell in those He called *into* the Temple of God, and that is a process of time that God is going to fulfill right up through a 7,100 year period.

Verse 28 - Yet regard the prayer of your servant, and his supplication, O LORD my God, and listen to the cry and the prayer with your servant is praying before you today. That Your eyes may be open toward this temple day and night, well, God's eyes are open, they never closed. In other words, God is looking toward His Temple, His people, the Church of God today, and all the trials and tribulations that we're going through God is fully aware of everything. ...**toward the place which You said, My name shall dwell there:** God's name dwells in *us*, we carry God's name. God is fully aware of every situation in our lives and the trials we're going through. ...**and you may hear the prayer which your servant makes toward this place.** God is aware of our prayers, God is aware of what we cry out about, that we cry out for the relief for this world, from Satan and his demons, and we cry out on behalf of the world because we see the subjection and the bondage they are in, the captivity, and we look forward to relief for mankind, all of mankind, that we look for a new government. We want this current world system to change, we want Satan and his rulership removed from the world and we want man's way of thinking and governing changed, because it's only one of oppression and control.

This covers all people God will call into a relationship with Him in the future, God's name will be there. God *hears* the prayers of His called out ones; His eyes are opened spiritually toward His Church.

Verse 30 - And You may hear the supplication of Your servant and Your people, Israel, when they pray toward this place: hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and when You hear, forgive. And this is a key to our spiritual life - repentance. God has promised to forgive; that's another promise of God, but it's based on something, it's based on acknowledging sin, it's based on repentance. Forgiveness of sin is a great blessing and a promise that God gave us in and through the death of His Son Jesus Christ. We have the ability, through the power of God's spirit, to repent, but we still have to choose it.

Often in our life we can see something wrong in our life but we're reluctant to admit it before God because of our own pride, but God has promised to forgive *IF* - there are conditions attached, of course, to forgive us. He has promised to forgive us *IF* we repent, *IF* it's a genuine, sincere repentance, and the act of forgiveness is something that God requires *us* to do, because God says that if we are willing to forgive others He will forgive us. So there is a condition, a condition to the promise; the promise is that we can be forgiven of our sins but it is on a condition, that condition is as long as we are willing to forgive others.

So if we go to God with sin and ask for forgiveness; if we hold a grudge or ill will toward another person and refuse to forgive another person we are not forgiven, we carry that sin, God cannot forgive us because we are not willing to forgive others - and there are parables that cover that.

If you drop down to **verse 46 - When they sin against you, (for there is no one who does not sin,**) which is true, there is nobody that doesn't sin; everybody sins... **and you become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and they take them captive to the land of the enemy far and near;** because it is sin that actually takes us captive on a spiritual level, we're held captive.

Verse 47 - Yet when they come to themselves, which in other words, we come to repentance, **in the land where they are carried captive, and repent, and make supplication to You**, which is what is required on a spiritual level today, to repent and make supplication towards God, **in the land of those who took them captive, saying, We have sinned and done wrong and we have committed wickedness.**

Verse 48 - And when they turn to You, in other words they repent and they think differently, which is what is required of us - we have to come to see our sin, because by the power of God's spirit we can, God has given us that gift - **with all their heart and with all their life, in the land of their enemies, who led them away captive, and pray to You toward their land which You gave to their fathers, the city which you have chosen, and the temple which I have built for Your name: Then hear in heaven, Your dwelling place, their prayer and supplication and maintain their cause, and forgive your people:** Well, that's the same today, brethren, we as God's people *can* be forgiven as long as we follow the process that Solomon has outlined here, is that we come to ourselves to see the sin, to acknowledge the sin and turn to God in repentance. **...who have sinned against You, and all their transgressions which they have transgressed against You, and grant them compassion,** grant them forgiveness, be merciful, **before those who took them captive, that they may have compassion on them:** and of course this is talking about a physical captivity where they're held captive and they're being oppressed.

Verse 51 - For they are Your people, and Your inheritance, whom You brought out of Egypt, out of the iron furnace: Well, we are God's people and we are God's inheritance. That is God's deep desire, that is what the promise is about. God has promised us an inheritance, and that is the promise, that we will inherit eternal life.

Verse 52 - That Your eyes may be open to the supplication of Your servant, and the supplication of Your people Israel, to listen to them whenever they call to You. For You separated them from among all the peoples of the earth to be Your inheritance, that is what God has done to us. God separated us, we did not choose God, God chose us first, He separated us from among all the peoples of the earth. There is nothing we did to earn it, it's not something that you can earn, it's not something that you can just choose. God has to do it! God by the power of the holy spirit must draw us, to separate us out from among the people of the earth. Why? To be His inheritance! ...so that He can dwell in us so that one day

we can inherit the promise. That's the reason for our calling! ...as You spoke to Your servant Moses when You brought our fathers out of Egypt, O LORD GOD.

Verse 54 - And it was so, when Solomon had finished praying all of this prayer and supplication to the LORD, he rose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven. Then he stood and blessed all the assembly of Israel with a loud voice, saying, Blessed be the LORD who has given rest to His people Israel: Today we have rest in a spiritual way through the Sabbath, but also we have rest in the truth, if we believe God, the 57 Truths that He has placed in the Church, if we believe those we have rest, **according to all that He promised: there shall not fail one word of all His good promise which He promised through His servant Moses.** So not one word of what God has promised is going to fail, because He cannot lie, and we know that He has promised His Church salvation. We understand that's the purpose of life, to inherit life everlasting.

Verse 57 - May the LORD our God be with us as He was with our fathers: may He not leave us or forsake us: Now, we know that God has not left us and He will not forsake us as long as we continue to fight the fight. The worst thing that can happen to us is if we cut ourselves off from God through unrepented sin, because God can no longer dwell in us, God can no longer live in us, the Temple, because of unrepented sin.

Verse 58 - That He may incline our hearts to Himself, to walk in all His ways, to keep all His commandments, His statutes and His judgments which He commanded our fathers. It is God that lives in us. We are required to live by every word of God. The 10 Commandments are required, His statutes, the way we have relationships with others, we are required to love others, to have no ill will toward others. Through the power of God's spirit it can be achieved.

Now, there is a promise of eternal life that has been given to us, but it's been given as a promise to others in the Old Testament and they haven't yet received it - but they've actually inherited it because it's guaranteed, because God cannot lie.

If you'd like to turn to **Daniel 12:8** - and here we see where Daniel was given a certain level of understanding, but he didn't understand all that God has said through the writings that he had written down. **Although I heard, I did not understand,** so he heard these things and he had thoughts in his mind that he wrote down, but he didn't understand them: **then I said, My LORD, what shall be the end of these things?** So he desired to know the outcome. No different today, we'd like to know more detail about certain things that are going on, but God says, well, He'll reveal them in His time.

Verse 9 - And then He said, Go your way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. So they were sealed to this time. We're in the time of the end and God has revealed *much* of those words to us; they have been unsealed and they've been opened up to us, to understand aspects of those words.

Verse 10 - Many shall be purified and made white, so that's the process of salvation; it's from the time of a calling, a drawing, through to the time we die - people will be purified, made white, putting on the very righteousness, or God living and dwelling in them, **and refined; but the wicked shall do wickedly:** the carnal mind will just continue on, mankind will continue to sin and it will just intensify and get worse because of selfishness; **and none of the wicked shall understand;** nobody understands what God is doing, His plan of salvation for mankind through the Sabbath and Holy Days. They don't understand it, **but the wise will understand.** Well, the only way you're wise is if you have God's spirit. Only God is truly

wise, and it's only through the power of God's spirit that wisdom can dwell in a person. So we're only wise if we have God's spirit actively living and dwelling in us - then we can understand aspects of God's plan.

Verse 11 - And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away and the abomination of desolation is set up there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. And we've seen that period and we understand aspects of that period.

Verse 12 - Blessed is he who waits and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days, which is the sealing of the 144,000, where the number had been fulfilled: **But you, go your way until the end: for you shall rest**, you will die, you will have no consciousness, **and will rise to your inheritance at the end of days.** So here it is, the promise that God had made, He made it to Daniel. He said, "Well, you're going to die, but you will arise," this is the promise, "to your inheritance." It's something that God is going to give. It's something a Father gives to a son, and we are begotten sons of God. We've been begotten by God and therefore we are begotten sons, we are inheritors yet to inherit, we're heirs of a promise that has been made.

Now, Pentecost is the start of the fulfillment of God's promise, the promise of eternal life. The 144,000 will inherit and receive the promise! *That* is an incredible understanding to have that the world just doesn't understand! They have no idea that Pentecost is the beginning of the fulfillment of a promise that God made to mankind, starting with Abraham through to this day and to the children's children, as it says in scripture, to our children; there is a promise. So it's to all mankind this promise has been made and it will be fulfilled in the final fulfillment; it takes 7,100 years to be completed.

If you'd like to turn to **Hebrews 10:35 - Therefore, do not cast away your confidence/your boldness** in what we believe, **which has great reward.** What's that reward? What's the reward for this confidence or this boldness in what we believe? Well, the reward is life everlasting, God is going to give us the promise.

Verse 36 - For you have need of assurance, patience, so that after you have done the will of God you may receive the promise. The promise from God is eternal life with Him *in His Family*, with Jesus Christ.

Verse 37 - For yet a little while and He who is coming will come and will not delay. For the just shall live by faith; but if someone draws back My life has no pleasure in him. Now, what God is saying here is we might think that Jesus Christ is delaying His coming but it's not delayed...**but the just will live by faith;** that's what's required. We have to live by faith in what God has placed in the Church. We believe God, we live by faith. Faith is living what you believe. ...**but if anybody draws back...**now, that's the danger, that we become slothful spiritually because we draw back, we start to use our own natural logic, which is a very dangerous thing because it will lead us out of God's Church, because we draw back from believing God. Now, isn't that an incredible thing? ...to think that we have that capacity, that we think we know better than God? That's what we're saying! We draw back and think, "Oh no! This isn't right, therefore this cannot be true..." therefore we draw back and start to lean on our *own understanding*. Well, I know the end result of that, it *will* take us out of the Church. Anybody that starts that process of drawing back from believing God, God says He has no pleasure in Him. How can God be pleased with somebody that doesn't believe Him?

We believe what God places in the Church. God places truth into the Church *into* our minds. Faith is *living* what we believe. We believe what God has placed in the Church for us to believe at that time, the present truth.

Verse 39 - But we are not of those who draw back to perdition/to destruction; because that's the end result, spiritual destruction, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul/the saving of the life. We do not stop fighting against the selfishness that's in us, because God through His power helps us to continue to stay in the faith, to fight the self.

Let's have a look at **Hebrews 11:1 - Now, faith is the substance/confidence of things hoped for**, trust, that's what we hope for things, we have confidence in that hope, **the evidence/the proof of things not seen**. Because you see, faith is you can't see a lot of these things. You can't actually *see* aspects of a lot of the scriptures. You believe them and you have hope in them but they haven't been fulfilled so you can't see them because they haven't been fulfilled yet, but we have hope and faith in them, we believe God.

For by it, by faith, by believing God, the elders obtained a good testimony/a witness/a good report. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, that God did it, God the Father created it all and then He refashioned the earth to place man on it over a seven day period, six days of creation and the seventh day was a rest day. We believe that! ...**so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.** In other words, God did it by the power of His holy spirit. We can't see that He did it but He did it.

Now the scripture continues where God lists those that believed Him and lived by that belief, they had faith. **By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness/testimony/evidence that he was righteous**, in other words, God was with him; **God testifying of His gifts: and through it he being dead still speaks.** In other words, we can still see the works of Abel compared to the works of Cain, and therefore Abel still speaks because of what he did and we talk of it today. So it is about attitudes in the end, because it was a difference between Abel's attitude and Cain's attitude.

By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death; in other words, he was moved to another location, **and was not found because God had taken him**, removed him to another location on the earth: **for before he was taken he had this testimony**, the witness or the evidence of the way that he lived, **that he pleased God.** Now, he believed God and he obeyed Him, and we can see in verse 13 that all have died - we'll get to that - all have died but they didn't receive the promise. They are all heirs of God and will inherit the promise of a resurrection to spirit life.

Verse 6 - But without faith it is impossible to please God: so if we're not willing to believe God, if we want to draw back, it's impossible to please Him if we're drawing back from what we believe. **But without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he who comes to God, ever who comes to God must believe that God is, that God exists, that He is God and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.** So we have to believe that God is the rewarder, that God has promised by an oath and that He can't lie, that He will reward this obedience, this diligent fighting, that we seek Him on a regular basis, every day, every hour, that we seek to please God by trying to bring the carnal natural mind in subjection to God.

We seek to please God in our relationships with Him and our relationship with others. So we adjust the way that we talk, we adjust the way that we think. We adjust our actions because we want to please God, because we know what God has promised - life everlasting - He will give it. We are heirs of the promise but we're not going to receive it until a resurrection, if we endure to the end.

Verse 7 - By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, in other words, there is going to come a flood, **moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household; by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.** So we also, brethren, we can see and we're preparing for the return of Jesus Christ, and because of that the world is condemned because of our actions, because we believe what God has said and we become heirs of righteousness because it's God living and dwelling in us that makes us righteous, and we do it according to faith, we believe what God is saying, that it *is* coming, that Jesus Christ is returning and that there *is* going to be destruction and God is going to draw people into a Millennial period. So we live by faith, that's what drives our motives, that's what our actions are driven by. We believe God.

Verse 8 - By faith Abraham obeyed, which is what we seek to do, we obey God, we keep the 10 Commandments, we keep the Sabbath and Holy Days, we obey God in the spirit of the law, the spiritual intent of the law, **when he was called to go to a place which he would receive as an inheritance,** and this, of course, was a physical promise, but it was also a spiritual one that Abraham was aware of, **and he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt/sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:** So this promise has been passed on as inheritors, father to son, heirs of the promise. We're the same, brethren. We are sojourners in this world. We are sojourners, we are in a land of promise, in the sense of in Israel today, the promised land which God has fulfilled within the nations of Israel, but we dwell in this land, but we're sojourners, we're moving through, we're in a process - we are heirs of a promise but we haven't inherited. The promise of course is everlasting peace, the promise is a spiritual city, it is life everlasting in the Kingdom of God.

Verse 10 - For he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Are we any different, brethren? We wait **for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.** The foundation, of course, is Jesus Christ; we wait for Jesus Christ to return, a spiritual Temple, the Kingdom of God.

You can hold your place there....**Galatians 3:18 - For if the inheritance was of the law,** in other words the sacrificial system or the sacrificial law, **it is no longer the promise,** because, you see, you could earn it, whereas this way it was a promise by inheritance, of something that God had promised, **but God gave it to Abraham by promise.** So you can't actually earn it, it's something that God is going to give because He said He's going to give it, and you can't *earn* it by works, through a sacrificial system.

We are also heirs of that very same promise.

Go back to **Hebrews 11:11 - By faith Sara, herself also received strength to conceive seed and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him, God, faithful who had promised.** What God has promised. Well, God's promised us this very same promise as Abraham - life everlasting.

Verse 12 - Therefore from one man, Abram, and him as good as dead, being an old man, **were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude, innumerable as the sands which is by the seashore.** So in other words, this is millions and millions because of this one promise to Abraham.

Verse 13 - These all died in faith, so everybody that is listed here has died in faith, **not having received the promise;** they were aware of the promise and the promises that have been given to them but they all died in faith believing; **but having seen them afar off were assured of them; they embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.** Well, just like us! Just like us! We embrace them, we embrace what God has given us. We are subject to God's government in our life, we believe God. Now, is God governing our life? Well, that's a question only each individual can answer. Are we fighting the fight in our thoughts and our thinking? Is God governing our lives by the power of the holy spirit? Because if it is we will be subject to government, which is the government in the Church, but if God's spirit is not governing our lives we cannot be subject to the government in God's Church, it's impossible because we're operating in the natural carnal mind.

We reject the ways, the thinking of man and we reject the thinking and the ways of Satan in this world; this system, we reject it. We embrace God's way. We embrace and confess that we are sojourners and pilgrims just passing through waiting to receive the promise.

Verse 14 - For those who say such things, say they are strangers and pilgrims, **declare plainly**, in other words, this is the evidence, **that they seek a homeland.** That homeland is in the Kingdom of God.

Verse 15 - And truly, if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return; Well, we don't look back, brethren, because when we look back surely we could see what we are, surely we can see our natural carnal mind and what it's like and what it would turn into and how we could regress and go back, 'like a dog to its vomit', because that's what it is. The natural carnal mind stinks, it really does, so we focus on the future, we fight the fight because we believe God, we believe this promise that He has given.

Verse 16 - But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country; therefore/because of this God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He has prepared a city for them. It's God that's doing the work, it's God that's prepared the city and it's God that's going to give us this promise.

Verse 17 - By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac: and he who had received the promise offered up his only begotten son. Of whom it was said, In Isaac your seed shall be called: Concluding/considering that God was able to raise him up even from the dead; from which he also received him in the figurative sense. Abraham knew that the promise that had been given him would continue and be handed on to Isaac and that it would be fulfilled *in* Isaac's seed, because it had to come from Abraham's seed, which was Isaac, which was going to be Jacob. So Abraham knew this, so when he went to sacrifice Isaac, his only begotten son, he knew that God would fulfill the promise by...well, considering that God would raise up Isaac back to life so the promise could be fulfilled. And so he believed God and therefore he was willing to go through and sacrifice his only son, which was the inheritor of the promise, because he knew that that's what would happen. We know that God stopped Abraham from sacrificing Isaac and that the promise of inheritance would continue on.

Continue on in **verse 20 - By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning on the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel and gave instructions concerning his bones.** And we covered that not long ago.

Verse 23 - By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents because they saw he was a beautiful child and they were not afraid of the king's command. By faith Moses, when

he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; in other words, he rejected the world's ways, he rejected the world's way of governing, the world's way of thinking.

Verse 25 - Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing/temporary pleasure of sin. Because there is a temporary pleasure in sin.

If you want to drop down to **verse 39 - And all these, having obtained a good testimony/a good witness through faith**, so that's how it's obtained, it's by living what we believe, what God says and gives us to believe, **did not receive the promise:** so all of them died, everyone that's mentioned all through Hebrews, they all died. Mr. Armstrong is another one... Daniel also did not receive the promise. They actually haven't received it but they have inherited it because they were heirs of the promise and now that they've died they just need to be resurrected. **God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect/changed to spirit apart from us.** They will be resurrected at the return of Jesus Christ, at the very start of the Day of Pentecost. They will receive, they will inherit the promise.

Hebrews 12:1 - Therefore/because of this, we also since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin, so we're to lay aside all the dramas of life and the sin **which so easily ensnare us**, we are to continue to fight and to repent because God has promised to forgive if we repent, **and let us run with endurance**, let's continue on, because the battle is not over, we're just going to keep battling until the end, whatever that end may be for each and every one of us. It's all different for every person. **...so let us run with endurance**, let's keep going, **the race that is set before us**, because we have a race, we're in it, let's keep going, let's *fight for the promise*.

Verse 2 - Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; because we, when we're resurrected, the faith that we have is finished...it's finished. So if we die our faith is finished because we've become then heirs of the promise. **...who for the joy of what God had promised Him, that was set before Him endured the impaling on the pole, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.** So Jesus has inherited the *promise*. Jesus Christ has inherited the promise that was given to Him for He is the first of the firstfruits. Jesus Christ is working with God the Father to develop and finalize the 144,000 that will be kings and priests with Him ruling this earth. But God is also working through Jesus Christ in the Church for those that will live on into the Millennium, because they are also heirs of the promise and they will inherit at some point in time, at a resurrection.

Verse 3 - For consider Him, Jesus Christ, who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself lest you become weary and discouraged in your life. In other words, don't turn inwards, don't hold your own pity-party, because that's the tendency, "Woe is me! Look at *my* trials! I'm going through such a difficult time!" Well, if we understand a trial, if we understand it on the spiritual level, it is the *best thing* that can happen to us. Nothing happens to us that is actually bad. Anything that is happening to us gives us an opportunity of growth, it's how God works. God works through trials! Nothing is bad in the sense that it's just how we handle it; so no matter what is said or done to us, no matter what our life is turning into and how things are working out, if we use it the right way God says that He will work with us and He will grant us more spiritual fruit. So it's how we repent, it's how we respond, it's what *we* do with the trial, and if we don't turn inward that God can use it to our benefit. Nothing works against us, it is all for the good of those who love God.

Verse 4 - You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, we haven't fought our selfish nature, we haven't fought our mind, our wrong thinking towards others to the point of bloodshed, where we've sweated

blood, **striving against sin**, striving against our own selfishness, striving against the inner man, those thoughts that we have and the words and the actions that we do. We haven't strived against it, we haven't strived and fought against our pride where we've sweated blood - we haven't resisted that much because often we've given into the natural carnal mind.

Verse 5 - And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons; My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, so when we're in a trial use it to the benefit that God is going to use it to grow spiritual character so that He can fulfill the promise that He gave, eternal life. ...**nor be discouraged**, in other words, don't turn inward **when you are rebuked of Him**; so if the trial is allowed to continue on, don't turn on God and say, "God, what are you doing?" Ask God to help us to see what needs to change in us, because *every situation, every trial that we go into there is a great opportunity to live godly to the benefit of others.*

Verse 6 - For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son who He receives. So let's not take correction on a personal level. Let's not take the trial personally. Let's not hold our own pity-party. Correction is and should be our way of life; it's what God uses to grow Elohim so that we can inherit a promise. Repentance is admitting we are wrong in the way that we respond, the way that we think and in our actions towards others, which means we accept correction. Repentance is the acceptance of correction, because when we see sin we admit it, we repent before God and say, "God, we are sorry for what we are, what we have done," and we accept the correction, we accept the adjustment in our thinking. Because every time we repent we acknowledge to God that we are wrong and He is right, His way is perfect. *He is right, we're not.*

That is how God moulds and fashions us, He corrects our thinking. Now, if we can only just accept that and agree to that principle, life is going to become easier for us. Because no matter what all the physical things go on, we know that it's an opportunity for us to learn to think like God, "How would God think in this situation?" How *should* we be thinking towards others in our relationships?

Verse 7 - If you endure/remain under chastening, God dwells with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chastens? So it should be done in love. Correction should be done in love. Now, God loves us therefore He will correct us because He loves us, because He knows who we are, He created us this way, so we have to have correction because we are wrong, we are dwelling in sin - that's the way we were made - so God loves us so much that He will chasten us to correct us so that we can inherit Elohim.

I know in life that parents do not correct their children when they should. Often if you go into the spiritual intent of that, what is it? Well, it's actually spiritual laziness on behalf of the parents because it's *easier* not to correct them. They say that they won't correct their children or adjust the child's behaviour because they love them and they're showing mercy. No, they're not. They actually are not demonstrating true Godly love toward the child that is misbehaving or doing whatever. They don't correct the child because they are *lazy*, they don't *want* to have to handle the test and the trial of the individual in yourself of having to deal with it. It's *easier not* to do the discipline, it's actually harder, because what we're really saying is we love ourselves more than we love the child. That's what we're really saying deep down on a spiritual level. Now that takes a spiritual mind to comprehend, but God says here that He loves us so much that He will correct us.

A father should correct a son. A mother or a father should correct their children and they shouldn't be lazy, they should demonstrate love so that the child can learn discipline, that the child can understand

that it is wrong and that the parent is trying to *help* the child. The child won't see it - of course they'll look at the parents as being ogres and mean, but the reality is that it is up to the parents to demonstrate love to the child by correcting the child if the child is doing something wrong.

Verse 8 - But if you were without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. So everyone *has* to be corrected by God, because if God doesn't correct us we have no chance of inheriting the promise. That is the purpose of life. The purpose of life is to take correction, to adjust our thinking over a process of time; to correct the way of human thinking, the carnal mind, is what God's purpose is, so that He can give us what He has promised us.

Verse 9 - Furthermore we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect: shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live?

Verse 10 - For they indeed, on the physical level...**For they indeed, for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them; but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.** So the human father would do the correction, what seemed best to them, to the natural carnal mind. But *God* is for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness, His character, so that we can inherit the promise.

Now, **verse 11 - Now, no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful: nevertheless afterwards it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness,** God's character, **to those who have been trained by it.** So being trained takes time; training takes time, it's not just a one-off, it's a continual process to develop strength, Godly character.

1 Corinthians 15:1 - Now, we had a sermon about how Jesus Christ had revealed Himself to many people as proof of a resurrection, a proof that a promise could be inherited. **Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel/the good news of the Kingdom of God which I preached to you, which also you received, and in which you stand;** well, we stand today in the good news, the good news of the Kingdom of God, the good news of a *spiritual Kingdom*, a homeland, a promised land, spiritual in nature, the Kingdom of God.

Verse 2 - By which also you are saved, so it's a process, believing the truth, believing God...**IF you hold that word/that promise,** the Kingdom of God, the spiritual word of God, **which I preached to you,** unless you believe in vain. You have to believe God.

Verse 3 - For I delivered to you first of all that which I received, from God and Jesus Christ, **that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;** He delivered that Jesus Christ died - Passover, the understanding of Passover - that Christ died for our sins, that from this point our sins could be passed over through baptism and accepting Jesus Christ as our High Priest and soon coming King.

Verse 4 - And that He was buried, and that He rose the third day according to the scriptures: so it's according to the scriptures of Matthew 12:40, three days and three nights.

Verse 5 - And that He was seen by Peter, then by the twelve: After that, He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain to the present, now, that is talking both on a possibly on a physical level but could be talking on a spiritual level, **but some have fallen asleep.** After that, **He was seen of James, then by all the apostles.**

Verse 8 - Then last of all He was seen by me also, as one born out of due season. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle because I persecuted the Church of God.

Now, we've covered that in scripture recently also, that Paul was in charge of a group of people that persecuted God's Church, that hunted down the called out ones by God, those that had been seeking the promise that had come through Jesus Christ, and yet here was Paul killing them. So he felt that he was not worthy and that he was born out of season, really, because he was the odd one out compared to the twelve apostles, that he was the odd one out and now God was going to use him to go to the Gentiles.

Verse 10 - But by grace/By mercy/By the grace of God, because all the glory does go to God because it is God that has to do the calling, it is only by God's mercy toward us that we are in the Body of Christ. **But by the grace of God I am what I am;** and it was all for a purpose, but God allowed this to happen. He was highly educated and he went through this process so that he would be strong when he was called because he could look back and see what he really was, the natural carnal mind and what it was capable of - now he would be so determined. So he was a very zealous and determined person before with the natural carnal mind, now that very determination could be applied to overcoming the self and serving God, so it was all for a purpose. ...**and His grace which was favoured towards me was not in vain; but I labor more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace/favour of God which was with me,** because it's God that does it, it's God that does the works and God will achieve what God has set out to achieve.

Verse 11 - Therefore whether it was I or they, so we preach, and so you believed. So through this preaching that God uses to call people to believe, to believe God.

Verse 12 - Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? Paul is saying that's what the apostles and that's what he is doing, that there is a resurrection and they have proof because they had seen Him. So if there is no resurrection what's the point, because everyone will have died for no reason, they can't receive the promise.

Verse 13 - But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen: And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is empty. In other words, it is worthless.

Verse 15 - Yes, and we were found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up, so in other words, they're liars because God raised Him up, that's what they believe and that's what they saw, but if they're running around and it didn't actually happen, they're just liars; **if in fact the dead do not rise.** If there is no resurrection we have been lied to, that's what Paul is saying, you've all been lied to.

Verse 16 - For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen: And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile, you are still in your sins. So that would apply to us today.

Verse 18 - Then also, those who have fallen asleep, those who have died **in Christ**, in faith, **have perished.** It was all just a waste of time. All those men and women of faith listed in Hebrews 11 wasted their time in seeking to obey God, in seeking to please God, because if Christ is not resurrected there is no hope.

Verse 19 - If in this life we only have hope in Christ, on a physical level, that He actually just existed and there was no resurrection, **we are of all men most pitiful.** If life is only about the physical there is no point to it; what's the point because it's just a mess, might as well just go out and get whatever you can out of life and fulfill it as quickly as you can and turn inward and fulfill all your natural carnal mind's desires - go for it - because there is no hope, there is no hope of life everlasting, there is no hope of receiving the promise that God gave to Abraham.

Verse 20 - But now Christ is risen from the dead and has become the firstfruits, or the first **of those who have** fallen asleep, those who have **died in the faith.** Christ is the first and He *is* risen, and they have proof. Paul had proof because he witnessed it with his very eyes as did the others that were mentioned before.

Verse 21 - For since by man, our nature, **came death,** because that's what it earns, **by man, Christ, also came the resurrection of the dead.**

Verse 22 - For as in Adam humans all die, because of sin. We all die because of sin, **even so in Christ all shall be made alive,** on a spiritual level.

Verse 23 - But each one in his own order: Christ the first, afterwards those that are Christ's at His coming, the 144,000. So there is an order of resurrections and everyone can inherit the promise if they are willing to seek it once they are called by God.

Verse 24 - Then comes the end, the end of 7,100 years, **when He delivers the Kingdom to God the Father; when He puts an end to all rule,** everything that resists Him, everything that resists Jesus Christ, **and all authority and all power.** All physical resistance and all spiritual resistance will be put down, will come to an end, will be destroyed.

Verse 25 - For He must reign, Jesus Christ must reign, **until He, Christ, has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed/abolished is death.** The wages of sin is death, so there will be no more sin. There will never be sin ever again because it's going to be destroyed, because death is going to be destroyed.

Verse 27 - For He, God, has put all things under His, Christ's, feet. But when He, God, says all things are put under Him, under Christ, it is evident that He, God, who put all things under Him, Christ, is outside of this. In other words, it's separate. God the Father is always first. All except God the Father are put under Christ. Jesus Christ only existed because God the Father created Him and placed Him into the position of Messiah for a purpose, to be our Passover.

Verse 28 - Now, when all things are made subject to Him, to Christ, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him, to God, who put all things under Him, under Christ, that God may be all in all. And that is the end result, that it is God all in all, all that have received the promise.

Drop down to **verse 35 - But someone will say, How are the dead raised up?** It's a question ...**and with what body do they come?**

Then Paul says in **verse 36 - Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies:** so there is a principle there. What is physical must die first so it becomes and can become spiritual.

Verse 37 - And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be but mere grain, perhaps wheat or some other grain: But gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body. All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of man, another flesh of animals, and another of fish, and another of birds. There are also celestial/heavenly bodies and terrestrial/earthly bodies. But the glory of the celestial is one and the glory of the terrestrial is another. They're different, in other words.

Verse 41 - There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and there is another glory of the stars: for one star differs from another star in glory. In other words, it is God that has created the variety for a purpose.

Verse 42 - So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, in other words, it's perishable, and it is raised incorruption, not perishable: it is sown in dishonor, it's sown with selfish human nature, and it is raised in glory, it is raised with the mind of God, it is sown in weakness, human; it is raised in power, in spirit...

Verse 44 - It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam became a living being; the last Adam, Christ, became a life-giving spirit. True life comes in and through Jesus Christ. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; and afterwards the spiritual. The first man was of the earth, made of the dust: the second man is of the Lord from heaven. Life came from God the Father in and through Jesus Christ. It was God the Father dwelling *in* Jesus Christ. Life came from God the Father *in* and through Jesus Christ, it dwelt in Him, the very Logos dwelt in a human being.

Verse 48 - As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of the dust, they are physical, we are physical; natural carnal mind with a spirit in man; and as is the heavenly man so also are those who are heavenly, spiritual.

Verse 49 - And as we have borne the image of the man, of the dust, as we have borne this image, we also shall bear the image of the heavenly man, same as Jesus Christ. So we've borne this image of a man in the likeness of God in appearance, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly man, Jesus Christ. We will bear that image, glory - we will be made Elohim like Jesus Christ. He is our elder brother, we are begotten sons of God.

Verse 50 - Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood, as we are now, cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; something spiritual, we can't do it on a physical level, we won't remain as flesh and blood, nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery; something spiritual. We, the called out ones, shall not all sleep, we shall not all die, we shall be changed, (verse 52) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last Trump: So when that 7th Trumpet sounds, just at the end of the Sabbath, the beginning of the Day of Pentecost, there is going to be the 7th Trumpet sound and the dead in Christ will rise, for the Trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised incorruptible, so they're no longer going to be mortal, they're going to be spirit, and we shall be changed. We're going to be changed from physical to spirit. That is the promise that God has given, that is the promise. It's by an oath and it is God that cannot lie who has said it therefore it's going to happen, something we can hold onto and that we can look forward to. No matter what is happening in our life, we can believe God and the promise He's given.

Verse 53 - For this corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. This is the promise that God has given.

Verse 54 - So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, which is sin, where is your sting? ...where is your power? O grave, where is your victory? In other words, the grave cannot hold you because it's by the power of God that He will raise us up to spirit. **The sting/power of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law**, because the law reveals to us what sin is. Without the law of God we cannot know what sin is. So when God gave the 10 Commandments it really pointed to what sin is, it pointed to what is contrary to what God is. It's the opposite to what God is. So when God says, 'You shall not kill,' well, God is the opposite of that, God doesn't think that way, God doesn't act that way, God is *not* that way because He does things differently. But the natural carnal mind is revealed through the 10 Commandments.

Verse 57 - But thanks be to God who gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labor is not in vain in the Lord. So the work of the Lord is: Jesus Christ is working to change our thinking. God the Father is working to change our thinking. That is the work. And our labor, of fighting the self, of overcoming, of disciplining the self, disciplining the thoughts is not in vain in God. It is not in vain, there is an outcome, there is a promise.

So concluding, brethren, we are at a point in time when the 144,000 will receive the promise that God planned and desired to give to mankind. It is a gift. We know that the gift of God is eternal life. We know that! It's a gift! It's something we can't earn! It's from a promise, it's not something that we can do on a physical level, that we think, "Oh, we'll do all these physical rituals and therefore God *has* to give us something." No, God said it was just by a promise that He did it. He's given it to us by His promise, it's a *free gift* to us. If we seek it, to desire it, God wants to give it to us.

We in the Body of Christ, the Church of God, must push on *in faith*, believing what God has given through Jesus Christ to His Church. The 57 Truths is an aspect of that but we must believe God! We must believe that God is and we must believe the *promise* that God has promised to us. We must continue to live by faith, to ensure we can inherit the promise of God, life everlasting in the Kingdom of God.

Just like Daniel has died and is waiting to receive his inheritance - he has received it in the sense that it's being held for him, it's a guarantee, but he actually hasn't received it yet...but that day is coming.

So if we look back at **verse 57 - Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast**, let's hold fast, let's stay focused, let's look forward to the promise, **immovable**, let's not be moved around by every wind of doctrine, of strange thinking, let's stay close to God, let's stay close to His Church and the truth, let's continue to believe God. Really, if you look at it, if you really believe that this is God's *true* Church, that this is where God is, this is where God's spirit is - God's spirit is in God's people - we should be **immovable**, we really should, we should be steadfast. We should **always be abounding in the work of the Lord**, we should be always working to overcome this natural carnal mind. We should be fighting! We should be staying in the spiritual fight in our lives. We are the problem in life; we are the problem.

I know from various experiences in giving some counsel to people that I've said no matter what happens to you or what is said to you, you're the problem because it's the *way you respond*, it's *what you say back*, it's the *way you think*. Because people can do things to you, people can say things to you in thoughts, words and actions...*it does not matter* if we're close to God. It does not matter, because it's how we handle it, maybe it's the criticism or the correction, it's the way we then think. We have to fight against our carnal natural mind that is hostile to God and that *does not love God*. We've got to fight

against it, we've got to correct our thinking, to bring it into subjection to God because *we're the problem*. It's the problem, we're the problem because it's the way we respond, it's the way we treat others, it's the way we think toward others.

So it's going on here, **always abounding in the work of the Lord**, staying in the spiritual fight for our lives, that's what we're doing, **knowing that our labour**, our fight, **is not in vain in the Lord**. It's not in vain!

We look forward to receiving God's promise according to His will, timing and purpose. So, let's look forward. Let's be immovable. Let's stay in the faith, looking to the promise that God started by giving it to Abraham, the promise of a new foundation and city that's *spiritual*. We look forward to the return of Jesus Christ so that some can inherit life everlasting, the promise. And the rest of us that have to live through, we still have that same promise, we still look forward to inheriting a city whose builder and maker and foundation is all based on God.

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