

**GOD  
IS  
LOVING AND MERCIFUL**

**“On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity.” (Zechariah 13: 1)**

**GERALD ANUMBA**

**GOD**

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## **DEDICATION**

**This book is dedicated to the Holy Trinity who gave me the knowledge and the inspiration to write it and to my late father Sydney Anumba, for giving me the best gift ever (The Bible).**

## INTRODUCTION

Give thanks to the LORD for He is good, His Love and Mercy are everlasting.

Give thanks to the Uncreated Creator of all gods; His Love and Mercy are everlasting.

Give thanks to the Mightiest of all lords; His Love and Mercy are everlasting.

He alone performs great wonders; His Love and Mercy are everlasting.

Out of His deep knowledge He made the heavens; His Love and Mercy are everlasting.

He constructed the earth upon the deep waters; His Love and Mercy are everlasting.

He created the Sun, Moon and Stars; His Love and Mercy are everlasting.

He did not forsake us when we are down and in need of Him; His Love and Mercy are everlasting.

He freed us from our powerful enemies; His Love and Mercy are everlasting.

He provided all that is needed for every living creature; His Love and Mercy are everlasting.

Give praise to the Uncreated Creator of all things both visible and invisible; His Love and Mercy are everlasting.

Give thanks to the God of heaven and earth; His Love and Mercy are everlasting.

CHAPTER 1  
THE LOVE OF GOD

For God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not die but have eternal life. (John 3:16 TEV)

## WHAT IS LOVE?

Love means different things to different people. Love is an emotion of strong affection and personal attachment (Oxford illustrated American Dictionary 1998 & Merriam Webster Collegiate Dictionary)

In philosophical context, love is a virtue representing all human kindness, compassion and affection. Love is central to many religion as in the Christian phrase, “God is love” or Agape in the canonical gospel (Deus Caritas Est, Roman Catholic encyclical by Pope Benedict XVI).

Love may also be described as actions towards others (or oneself) based on Compassion. From Eric, “The Art of Loving”, Harper Perennial (1956), Original English Version, ISBN 978-0060958282.

The word “Love” can refer to a variety of different feelings, states, and attitudes, ranging from generic pleasure, for example (I loved that meal) to intense interpersonal attraction (I love my partner). Love can also refer specifically to the passionate desire and intimacy of romantic love, to the sexual love of Eros (cf. Greek words for love), to the emotional closeness of familial love, or to the platonic love that defines friendship, to the profound oneness or devotion of religious love.

## KINDS OF LOVE

Love could be divided into four types namely: Charitable Love, Friendship Love, Erotic Love and Unconditional Love.

### **Charitable Love:**

It is sometimes referred to as security love. This love is the love that everybody needs to survive. It is that feeling of being cared for and nurtured. We express this love when giving money, food, help, etc to people in need. It means showing kindness and sympathy towards others.

### **Friendship Love:**

Friendship love or brotherly love or platonic love is derived from the Greek word Philia which means love between you and someone who is totally honest, open and comfortable. It is affection free of sexual feelings.

### **Erotic Love:**

Erotic love is derived from the Greek word Eros which means sexual desire or feeling. It is when you see a person for the first time and he/she makes your knees go weak or gives you butterflies in your stomach i.e. “Love at first sight”. Many people don’t even love the person they think they are in love with. They fall in love with the idea of being in love. This is more of a lustful kind of love; it wears off after a while and sometimes leads to deep hatred.

## **Unconditional Love:**

This is the real, true or sincere love, the love that lasts forever. Nothing can destroy unconditional love. To love someone unconditionally means that you love the person exactly as he/she is, exactly as he/she was before and exactly as he/she will be in the future because people change all the time. If you love a person unconditionally, you will love them even if they become something you disagree with. Unconditional love is self-sacrificing, unconditional love is more of a spiritual thing. It's not bound by physical things, like blood relations and the desire to procreate. It has nothing whatsoever to do with sex.

Unconditional love could be called Agape, a Greek word which means Love, the love of God. Paulo Coelho defines it as "the love that consumes" i.e. the highest and purest form of love, one that surpasses all other types of affection.

## **GOD'S LOVE**

Agape is love which is of and from God, His very nature is love itself. Saint John the Apostle affirms this in 1John 4:8 thus:

***But if a person isn't loving and kind, it shows that he doesn't know God – for God is love.***

God does not only love, He is love itself. Everything God does flows from His love. But it is worthy to note that God's love is not a sappy, sentimental love such as we often hear portrayed. God loves because that is His very nature and the extreme expression of His being.

God loves us so much, even sinners, not because we deserve to be loved, but because it is His very nature to do so and He must be true to His nature and behavior. God's love is displayed most clearly on the cross at mount Calvary, where Jesus Christ the Son of God, a King and a Priest died for the unworthy creatures of the world who were dead spiritually and in sins. See Ephesians 2:1-10 and Romans 5:6-8.

The object of Agape love never does anything to merit His love. We are the undeserving recipients upon whom He generously gives that love. His love was demonstrated when He sent His Son into the world to "seek and save those who were lost" (Luke 19:10), and to provide eternal life to those He sought and saved. He paid the ultimate sacrifice for those He loves.

One may ask: "does God love everyone or just Christians?" The word of God gives the answer thus:

***For God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not die but have eternal life. (John 3:16 TEV)***

***He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. (1John 2:2 NIV)***

In the above sense, God loves everyone in the whole world. This love is not conditional – it is based only on the fact that God is a God of love, see 1John 4:8 and 16. God’s love for the whole world results in the fact that God shows His mercy by not immediately punishing mankind for their sins. Romans 3:23 and 6:23 explain thus:

***For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.***

***For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.***

God’s love for the whole world is manifested in the fact that He gives people the opportunity to repent:

***The Lord is not slow to do what He has promised, as some think. Instead, He is patient with you, because He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants all to turn away from their sins. (2Peter 3:9 TEV)***

However, God’s love for the whole world does not mean He will ignore sin. Mind you, God is also a God of justice. Sin can not go unpunished forever. 2Thessalonians 1:6 and Romans 3:25-26 explains better:

***While at the same time He is preparing judgment and punishment for those who are hurting you.***

***For God sent Christ Jesus to take the punishment for our sins and to end all God’s anger against us. He used Christ’s blood and our faith as the means of saving us from His wrath. In this way, He was being entirely fair, even though He did not punish those who sinned in former times. For He was looking forward to the time when Christ would come and take away those sins, and now in these days also He can receive sinners in this same way, because Jesus took away their sins.***

But isn’t this unfair for God to let criminals go unpunished and say that they are innocent? No, for He does it on the basis of their trust in Jesus who took away their sins.

The most loving act of eternity is described in Romans 5:8. Anyone who ignores God’s love, who rejects Christ Jesus as saviour, who denies the Saviour who bought him/her will be subject to God’s wrath for eternity. See 2Peter 2:1 and Romans 1:18-19 for further explanation.

## **GOD IS LOVING AND CARING**

What a loving and caring God we have. If only we knew how much He loves us and cares for us, we would rest in His love and cast all our cares on Him.

When God created the world, He made all that was required; there was nothing He didn’t create which should have been created.

God’s loving and caring plan for man before the fall was that He made man to live forever, He made us in His image and likeness meaning that we were made members of His family, a royal people i.e. princes and princesses and the Angels were to serve us and provide for our other needs. See Romans 8:17.

We were created to always be in His presence, not bordering ourselves to work much because all had been provided for. When you feel hungry, you go to any tree of your choice and eat. The trees were



created to work out our food and serves as healing from aging. See 2Esdras 7:123, Revelation 22:2 and Ezekiel 47:12.

Do you know that God created vehicles for various means of transportation for man?

The vehicles God created for transportation was the horse, ox, donkey, camel, ostrich, etc. See Job 39:18-24; Numbers 22:22; Genesis 24:61; Exodus 4:20; Zechariah 9:9. They were created perfectly to the extent that you hardly have any accident and if at all there is an accident, you won't die.

For flight, we have the Angels, Chariots of fire, etc. See Psalm 91:11-12, 2King 2:11 and Acts 8:26-40. For Sailing, we could construct an Ark, Ship, etc, according to God's specifications. We could make the sea water to create a passage by forming a wall of water at the left and at the right and then ride through on dry grounds or better still walk or ride on the water. See Genesis 6:14-16, Exodus 14:21-22, 2Kings 2:8 and Matthew 14:25-31.

That was part of how God lovingly planned the world. He was to be our King and we are to be a royal member of His family. But man disobeyed and power and authority over the earth moved from man to satan. Initially, we had the power and authority to do the above; we were given control over the world until when we fell. Ever since then, it had been one problem to another. Read Genesis 1:28.

Today, satan is using science and technology in disguise as a means to further take us away from all that the good Lord had already provided for.

It is true that science and technology had some good, but let's tell ourselves the truth. Is science and technology perfect? The answer is obviously no because science and technology have in the course of trial and error; destroyed so many things in the world, knowingly and unknowingly. Remember, what seems good is not good but what is good is good.

Science and technology invented vehicles with engines, air plane, ship, guns, train, nuclear weapons, bombs, drugs, etc. But truly, at the long run have all these benefited man and the world at large? It has not because the carbon monoxide emitting from these engines is destroying the ozone layer and it is also poisonous to ones health when inhaled and which could lead to death. Some drugs have bad side effects that could lead to complications. We have even lost our loved ones to car crash, plane crash, train accidents, bomb explosions and so on and so forth.

Since we have found ourselves in this mess, the best we could do is to dedicate all we have unto the Lord for His blessings, for His blessing is perfect and causes no sorrow.

I was amazed when I discovered that a 15 years old girl in America does not know Jesus Christ. I was on yahoo messenger one faithful night, trying to chat with someone. I clicked on a particular name I saw in a chat room so we could chat but to my greatest surprise it was a 15 years old girl. I never expected it, I asked myself; "what will I discuss with this small girl?" Then, a thought came to me that I should discuss Jesus with her.

Could you believe that this girl from America (USA) does not know Jesus Christ? She asked me who He was; after telling her, she told me that science is what she believes in and that there is no God. She sees

Jesus Christ as just a man and not a God. We didn't chat for long though then she left. Imagine how many of her kind would there be in America today.

If science and technology claims to be all or feels she could challenge the wisdom of God, she should create man using the earth without cloning or making use of sperms. She should pay a visit to the sun and walk on it; she should give life back to a dead man, etc. Science and technology is not perfect but God is. Please read Job 38, 39, 40, 41 and 42:2-3.

Science and technology should be focused on the things that are of great favour and benefit to all the creatures and created things of the world and not on things that causes pains and sorrows.

God is so loving and caring to the extent that He knows you by your name. He knows you, He knows me, He knows everybody by name and He has good plans for us all. See Jeremiah 1:5 and 29:11-13, Isaiah 45:3-4, 49:1.

God never abandoned us despite our sins; He forgives, forgives and forgives even to the point of laying His life to redeem us. The only thing He wants from us in return is to give Him our hearts and do His will and by so doing, we will see His goodness.

***My son, give me your heart and let your eyes keep to my ways. (Proverbs 23:26 NIV)***

***Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him. (Psalm 34:8 NIV)***

Finally, God loves everyone unconditionally in that He shows mercy to everyone by not destroying us immediately because of sin. At the same time, God only has "covenant love" for those who place their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.

***Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever disobeys the Son will not have life, but will remain under God's punishment. (John 3:36 TEV)***

Only those who believe in Jesus Christ as their LORD and Saviour will experience God's love for eternity.

Does God love everyone? Yes.

Does God love Christians more than He loves non-Christians? No.

Does God love Christians to a different extent than He loves non-Christians? Yes.

God loves everyone equally in that He is merciful to all. God only loves Christians because Christians are the only ones that have His eternal grace and mercy and the promise of His forever love in heaven. The unconditional love God has for everyone should bring us to faith in Him, receiving in thankfulness the great conditional love He grants all those who receive Jesus Christ as Saviour.

## HOW WE SHOULD LOVE

***Israel, remember this! The LORD – and the LORD alone – is our God. Love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. (Deuteronomy 6:4-5 TEV)***

This is the first of the two greatest commandments which is to love the Lord with all our heart, with all our soul, with our entire mind and with all our strength. What does it mean to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind and strength?

The above bible quote is known as the shema, it is taken from the first word “Hear” in Hebrew. Modern Jews consider the recital of the shema both evening and morning to be one of their most sacred duties. It was cited by Jesus as the “greatest commandment in the law”. See Matthew 22:34-40.

This command seems to be impossible to obey. That is because in the natural state of man, it is impossible without the Spirit of God. There is no greater evidence of the inability of man to obey God’s law than this one commandment. No human being with a fallen nature can possibly love God with all his heart, soul and strength 24 hours a day. It’s humanly impossible. But to disobey any commandment of God is sin. Therefore, even without considering the sins we commit daily, we are all guilty by our inability to fulfill this one commandment. This is the reason Jesus continually reminded the Pharisees of their inability to keep the law of God. He was trying to get them to see their utter spiritual bankruptcy and their need for a saviour. Without the cleansing of sin that He provides, and the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit who lives in the hearts of the redeemed, loving God to any degree is impossible.

But as Christians, we have been cleansed from sin and we do have the Spirit of God. So how do we begin to love God the way we should? Just as the man in Mark 9:24 asked God to help him overcome his unbelief, so too we can ask God to help us in areas where we don’t love Him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. It is the power of God that we need to do the impossible and we begin by seeking and accepting that power.

In most cases, our love and affection for God grows more intense as time goes. Certainly, young Christians newly saved are very much aware of the love of God and their love for Him. But it is through the witnessing of God’s faithfulness during times of struggle and trial that a deep love for God grows and grows. Over time, we witness His compassion, mercy, grace and love for us, as well as His hatred for sin, His holiness and righteousness. We cannot love someone we don’t know, so knowing Him should be our first priority. Those who pursue God and His righteousness, who take seriously the command to love

Him above all else, are those who are consumed with the things of God. They are eager to study God’s word, eager to pray, eager to obey and honour God in all things, and eager to share Jesus Christ with others. It is through these spiritual disciplines that the love for God grows and matures to the glory of God.

***And now I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. (John 13:34 TEV)***

This is the second of the two greatest commandments given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ. He loved us sacrificially, even to the point of death, death on the cross at mount Calvary. There He paid our debt by sacrificing His life to enable us gain everlasting life through Him.

In the same way, we are to love others sacrificially. Jesus gave the parable of the Good Samaritan as an example of sacrifice for the sake of others, even for those who may care nothing at all for us or even hate us, as the Jews did the Samaritans. Sacrificial love is not based on a feeling, but a determined act of the will, a joyful resolve to put the welfare of others above our own. Paying tithe which is used to care for the priest, strangers, orphans and widows is another way of sacrificial love. See Deuteronomy 14:28-29. But this type of love does not come naturally to humans. Because of our fallen nature, we are incapable of producing such a love. If we are to love as Jesus loves; that love – that agape – can only come from its true source. This is the love which has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us when we become His children. See Romans 5:5.

When we become children of God, He pours His love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Because that love is now in our hearts, we can obey Jesus who said in John 13:34-35 thus:

***A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.***

This commandment involves loving one another as He loved us sacrificially, even to the point of death. But again, it is clear that only God can generate within us this kind of self – sacrificing love which is the proof that we are His children.

***This is how we know what love is: Christ gave His life for us. We too, then, ought to give our lives for our brothers and sisters! (1John 3:16 TEV)***

From what we've had so far, we could deduce that: love is the fruit of the Holy Spirit, a supernatural gift from God which enables us to obey Him, trust in Him, hope in Him and to care over what He cared for as well as caring for one another even to the point of death.

The above definition shows that love which is from God is the fruit of the Holy Spirit that helps us to keep God's commandment which He gave to us through Moses and the prophets.

***All the other commandments and all the demands of the prophets stem from these two laws (love God with all your heart, with all your soul... and love your neighbour as you love yourself) and are fulfilled if you obey them. Keep only these and you will find that you are obeying all the others. (Matthew 22:40 TLB)***

Let's see how it works. The other commandments of God as was given to us through Moses are:

1. You shall worship no other gods except God the uncreated creator of all things
2. Do not make for yourself an idol in any form. You must not bow down to any idol or worship any idol
3. You shall not use the name of Jehovah your God irreverently, nor use it to swear to a falsehood. If you do, you will not escape punishment.

4. Keep the Sabbath day holy. Six days a week are for your daily duties and your regular work, but the seventh day is a day of Sabbath rests before the Lord your God.
5. Honour your father and your mother, that you may have a long good life on earth.
6. You must not kill.
7. You must not commit adultery.
8. You must not steal.
9. You must not lie against your neighbour.
10. Do not covet your neighbour's wife; do not covet your neighbour's properties. See Exodus 20:3-17.

We have all in one way or the other broken the above commandments of God either directly or indirectly, and the only way to overcome sin is to love the way our Lord Jesus Christ taught us. If we love God with all our heart, with our entire mind, with all our soul and with all our strength and also love our neighbour as we love ourselves then we will not hurt them or do those things that will get them offended. Relating it to the Ten Commandments, if we love God and our fellow man, we will not bow down or worship satan and his angels or make for ourselves any idol in the form of half man half beast, half man half fish or half man half bird.

When we love God with all our heart, with our entire mind, with all our soul and with all our strength and also love our neighbour as we love ourselves, then we will not use the name of the LORD in vain, instead, we will use it to bless one another. When we love God and man, we will always remember to keep the Sabbath holy and also remind others to do the same, by resting from work and going to church, where we gather in fellowship onto God, bringing with us our love offering, thanksgiving offering and paying our tithes.

Loving God and loving our neighbour as we love ourselves will enable us to please God by showing respect to our parents, not only to our parents but also our elders and young once. Also if we love God and love our neighbour, we will not kill or abuse anyone, we will not have sexual intercourse with someone's wife or lust after someone's wife or fornicate. We will not steal from others, we will not lie against anybody, we will not long for someone's wife to be ours and we will not long for someone's properties to be ours.

Let's reason the above this way: as much as you loved yourself, would you be pleased to disobey God and suffer in hell? Would you be happy if someone should do to you any or more of what God's Ten Commandments says we shouldn't do? Am very sure your answer would be "No" except if you hate yourself.

As you have answered no, it therefore means that you should tell others to obey God because you love them and would not want them to spend the rest of eternity in hell. Also since you won't be happy if someone commits any of the Ten Commandment against you, you should as well not commit any of the Ten Commandment against anyone too. Always remember the Golden rule which says thus:

***So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the prophets. (Matthew 7:12 NIV)***

For further reading: Romans 12:9-21, 13:8-10, 1Corinthians 13, 1John 3:11-24 and 4:7-21.

***The end of all things is near. You must be self – controlled and alert, to be able to pray. Above everything, love one another earnestly, because love covers over many sins. Open your homes to each other without complaining. Each one, as a good manager of God’s different gifts, must use for the good of others the special gift he has received from God. Whoever preaches must preach God’s messages; whoever serves must serve with the strength that God gives, so that in all things praise may be given to God through Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and power forever and ever. Amen. (1Peter 4:7-11 TEV)***

CHAPTER 2  
THE MERCY OF GOD

Not by works of righteousness which we have done,  
but according to His mercy He saved us, by the  
washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy  
Ghost; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus  
Christ our Saviour. (Titus 3:5-6 KJV)

## WHAT IS MERCY?

A common adage says that Grace gives what we do not deserve, i.e. Eternal life, while Mercy withholds what we do deserve, i.e. Eternal punishment, but mercy goes much deeper, in that it is the loving kindness of God. Mercy is not only the withholding of punishment, but it is also the act of giving help or having compassion on someone who is afflicted.

Mercy and grace are often confused. While the terms have similar meanings, mercy and grace are not the same. To explain the difference: Mercy is God not punishing us as our sins deserve and grace is God blessing us despite the fact that we do not deserve it. Mercy is deliverance from judgment, while grace is the extension of kindness to the unworthy.

We have all sinned and as a result of that sin, we all deserve death and eternal punishment in the lake of fire. With that in mind, every day we live is an act of God's mercy. If God gave us all what we deserve as a result of our sins, we would all be, right now condemned for eternity. David cried out to God in Psalm 51:1-2 thus:

***Be merciful to me, o God, because of your constant love. Because of your great mercy wipe away my sins! Wash away all my evil and make me clean from my sin!***

A plea to God for mercy is asking Him to withhold the punishment we deserve and instead grant to us the forgiveness we in no way have earned. God does not owe us anything. We don't deserve anything from Him. Anything good that we experience is a result of the grace of God. Ephesians 2:4-5 explains thus:

***But God's mercy is so abundant, and His love for us is so great, that while we were spiritually dead in our disobedience He brought us to life with Christ. It is by God's grace that you have been saved.***

Grace is simply defined as undeserved favour. God favours or gives us good things that we do not deserve and could never earn. Rescued from punishment by God's mercy, grace is anything and everything we receive beyond that mercy. See Romans 3:24.

There are two types of grace namely: common grace and saving grace.

Common grace refers to the sovereign grace which God gives to all mankind regardless of their spiritual level before Him.

Saving grace is that special dispensation of grace whereby God sovereignty gives undeserved divine assistance upon His elect for their regeneration and sanctification.

Mercy and grace are best illustrated in the salvation that is available through Jesus Christ. We deserve punishment, but if we receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, we receive mercy from God and we are delivered from punishment. Instead of punishment, we receive by grace salvation, forgiveness of sins, abundant life and an eternity in heaven. Our response now should be to fall on our knees in worship and thanksgiving offered to God for His Mercy and grace shown to us.

***Let us have confidence, then, and approach God's throne, where there is grace. There we will receive mercy and find grace to help us just when we need it. (Hebrews 4:16 TEV)***



## **GOD'S MERCY**

***Shall we say, then, that God is unjust? Not at all. For He said to Moses, "I will have mercy on anyone I wish; I will take pity on anyone I wish." So then, everything depends, not on what human beings want or do, but only on God's mercy. (Romans 9:14-16 TEV)***

The mercy of God has its spring in the divine goodness. The first issue of God's goodness is His kindness, by which He gives liberally to His creatures as creatures; thus has He given being and life to all things. The second issue of God's goodness is His mercy, which denotes the ready inclination of God to relieve the misery of fallen creatures. Thus, "Mercy" presupposed sin.

***O, give thanks unto the LORD; for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever. (Psalm 136:1 KJV)***

For this perfection of the divine character, God is greatly to be praised. Three times over in as many verses does the Psalmist call upon the saints to give thanks unto the Lord for this adorable attribute. And surely this is the least that can be asked for from those who have generously gained by it. When we contemplate the characteristics of this divine Excellency, we cannot do otherwise than worship and thank God for it. God's mercy is "great" (1Kings 3:6) "abounding" (Psalm 86:5) "tender" (Luke 1:78), "abundant" (1Peter 1:3 KJV); it is "from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him." (Psalm 103:17 KJV)

In endeavoring to study the mercy of God as it is set forth in the word, a threefold distinction needs to be made, if the word of truth is to be "rightly divided" there on.

1. There is a general mercy of God, which is extended not only to all men, believers and unbelievers alike, but also to the entire creation:

***The LORD is good to all and His tender mercies are over all His works. (Psalm 145:9 KJV)***

2. There is a special mercy of God, which is exercised towards the children of men, helping and succoring them, notwithstanding their sins. To them also He communicates all the necessities of life:

***... For He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. (Matthew 5:45 KJV)***

3. There is a sovereign mercy which is reserved for the heirs of salvation, which is communicated to them in a covenant way, through the Mediator (Jesus Christ)

***... "This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds."***

***Then He adds:***

***"Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more." (Hebrews 10:16-17 NIV)***

Explaining further the difference between the second and the third distinctions pointed out above, it is necessary to note that the mercies which God gives to the wicked are solely of a temporal nature, that is to say, they are confined strictly to this present life. There will be no mercy given to them beyond the

grave. But at this point, a difficulty may suggest itself to some people who may reason thus: does not the scripture affirm that “His mercy endures forever? (Psalm 136:1)” Two things are involved here:

1. God can never cease to be merciful, for it is of His divine essence (Psalm 116:5)
2. The exercise of His mercy is regulated by His sovereign will.

This is absolutely true, for there is nothing outside Himself which obliges Him to act, if there were, that “something” would be supreme, and God would cease to be God.

It is pure sovereign grace which alone determines the exercise of divine mercy. God reaffirmed this fact in Romans 9:15. It is not the wretchedness of the creature which causes Him to show mercy, God is not influenced by things outside of Himself as we are.

It is because of the tender mercy of our God that Christ was sent to the world (Luke 1:78). The merits of Christ made it possible for God to righteously bestow spiritual mercies on His elect, justice having been fully satisfied by the Saviour!

Let us note how vain is the presumptuous hope of the wicked, who notwithstanding their continued defiance of God nevertheless count upon His being merciful to them. How many are they who say, I do not believe that God will ever cast me into hell; He is too merciful. Such a hope is a viper, which if cherished in their bosoms will sting them to death. God is God of justice as well as mercy, and He has expressly declared that He will by no means clear the guilty. See Exodus 34:6-7.

The fact is that those who neglect the laws of health are carried away by disease, not withstanding God’s mercy. Equally true is it that those who neglect the laws of spiritual health shall forever suffer the second death.

Unspeakably solemn it is to see people abusing this divine perfection. They continue to despise God’s authority, trample upon His laws in sin, and yet presume upon His mercy. But God will not be unjust to Himself. God shows mercy to the truly penitent, but not to the impenitent (Luke 13:3). Christ is the Spiritual Mercy-Seat, and it is wise to accept Him lest He be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for His wrath can flare up in a moment. But blessed are all who take refuge in the LORD (Psalm 2:12).

Therefore, let our thoughts be of God’s Spiritual mercies unto His own people.

***For great is your mercy, reaching to the heavens, your faithfulness reaches to the skies (Psalm 57:10 NIV)***

The riches thereof transcend our inner most thoughts.

***For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy towards them that fear Him (Psalm 103:11 KJV)***

No one can measure it. The elect are designated “vessels of mercy” (Romans 9:23 KJV). It is mercy that quickened them when they were dead in sins (Ephesians 2:4-5 KJV); it is the mercy of God that saves

them (Titus 3:5). It is His abundant mercy which begat them unto an eternal inheritance (1Peter 1:3 KJV). Unto His own, God is “the Father of mercies” (2Corinthians 1:3 KJV).

Let’s read about the Divine Mercy of God the Father as revealed to Saint Faustina by our Lord Jesus Christ.

## **THE DEPTH OF GOD’S MERCY AS REVEALED BY JESUS TO SAINT FAUSTINA**

I had to include this because the Spirit of God prompted me to do so. It is taken from the leaflet of the Marian Awareness Apostolate.

In Heaven Jesus still carries the scar of that wound in His Sacred Heart, pierced by the spear of Longinus, which speaks eloquently of the greatest love the world will ever know.

Between 1930 and 1938 Christ appeared to saint Faustina, a sister of mercy in Poland, to re-teach us the story of His love even unto death, and His disappointment in us because of distrust in His mercy and goodness. Sister Faustina’s life was a routine of everyday chores – tending the door, cooking, sweeping, and gardening. Even the closest of her nun companions never guessed God’s predilection for her or knew the wonderful secrets He whispered to her at prayer.

### **SUBSEQUENT HISTORY**

One day in the same year, 1935, saint Faustina wrote for her spiritual director:

“The time will come when this work, which God so commends, will be as though in complete ruin, and suddenly the action of God will come upon the scene with great power which will bear witness to the truth. It will be as a new splendor for the church, though it has been dormant in it from long ago.”

This indeed came to pass. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of March, 1959, the Holy See, acting on information that was inaccurately presented, prohibited “the spreading of images and writings advocating devotion to the Divine Mercy, in the form proposed by sister Faustina,” As a result, there followed almost twenty years of total silence. Then on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April, 1978, the Holy See after a thorough examination of original documents previously unavailable to it, completely reversed its decision and again permitted the devotion. The one man primarily responsible for the reversal of decision was Karol Cardinal Wojtyla, the Archbishop of saint Faustina’s home diocese of Cracow. On October 16, 1978 he was elevated to the see of Peter as Pope John Paul II. God is indeed mysterious and wondrous in his ways!

### **THE HUMBLE INSTRUMENT**

On October 5, 1938, a young religious by the name of sister Faustina (Helen Kowalska) died in a convent of the congregation of sister of our Lady of Mercy in Cracow, Poland. She came from a very poor family that had struggled hard on their little farm during the terrible years of World War I; sister had only three

years of very simple education. Hers were the humblest tasks in the convent, usually in the kitchen or the vegetable garden, or as porter.

### THE APPARITIONS

On February 22, 1931 as saint Faustina relates the experience: "I saw Jesus dressed in a white garment. He held one hand raised in blessing and with the other, He was touching the garment at the breast. From under the garment came two rays of light, one red, and the other pale."

As she knelt motionless, immersed in cross current of joy and fear, our Lord spoke: "Paint a picture according to the vision you see and with the inscription: "Jesus, I Trust in Thee." I desire that this picture be venerated first in your chapel and then throughout the whole world."

This apparition of Jesus King of mercy repeated itself several times. Her confessor advised her to ask for an explanation of the red and white rays. She did and was instructed.

"The rays on the picture represent the blood and water which gushed forth the depths of my mercy when My agonizing Heart was opened on the cross. The pale rays symbolize the water, which justifies the soul; the red rays represent the blood, which is the life of the soul. These rays shield the soul before the wrath of My Father. Fortunate is he who lives in their shelter, for the just hand of God will never reach him."

He then gave her a short prayer and told her to recite it often: "O Blood and Water, which has gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fount of Mercy for us, I trust in Thee."

St. Faustina looked deep into Merciful pierced Heart of Christ and wrote in her diary: "The Lord permitted me to see the immensity and greatness of His Mercy. If only souls could realize how much God loves them! All comparison, no matter how strong and touching is only a pale shadow of the reality."

Jesus confirmed her statement many times, and pleaded for the return of sinners – great sinners. He told sister: "Write, the greater the misery the stronger the right to mercy. Summon all souls to confidence in the incomprehensible abyss of My Mercy for I desire to save all. The well of Mercy was opened wide with a lance on the cross for all souls. I do not exclude anyone."

Again and again and again our Lord came to saint Faustina and repeated His invitation to sinners, assuring them of His open arms. "Know, My daughter, that My Heart is Mercy itself. From this sea of Mercy graces pour out upon the whole world. No souls that come to Me departs without being comforted. All misery vanishes in My Mercy; and every grace, redemptive and sanctifying, stems from this source."

On another occasion Christ complained of our own weak, cold love and trust in Him. “Distrust of souls tears at My bosom. The lack of confidence in chosen souls hurts Me most. Despite My inexhaustible love, they do not trust Me!”

It seems our Lord had a word, too, for our times. As peace, hopes fade, floods rampage, strikes threaten and the whole world continues to be unsettled, His words to saint Faustina take on a deeper meaning. “Tell ailing mankind to draw close to My Merciful Heart and I will fill it with peace... Mankind will not find solace until it turns with confidence to My Mercy.”

In order to bring about this all out conversion to the Mercy of God, our Saviour offered some aids to the end. Four were specifically mentioned: the Picture, the Feast of Mercy, the Chaplet and the Novena.

### **THE PICTURE**

At the first apparition our Lord instructed St. Faustina to paint a picture with the words: “JESUS I TRUST IN THEE.” At first she tried to sketch it herself. She was no artist and failed. After many trials, someone was found who could and did paint it. Saint Faustina was disappointed for it did not show our Lord as He appeared to her – so full of goodness and kindness. But what artist could ever paint such a picture? She complained to Christ, but He said it would do. Bernadette of Lourdes and Lucia of Fatima had the same disappointment when the sculptor tried to portray our Lady. Our Lord desired the picture to be venerated and attached a promise to it: “I promise that the soul that will venerate this picture will not perish. I further promise to that soul victory over its enemies already here on earth and especially in the hour of death. I Myself, shall defend that soul as My own glory... I SHALL PRESERVE THE CITIES AND HOMES IN WHICH THIS PICTURE SHALL BE FOUND”

Concerning these promises of protection, both spiritual and physical, the important thing is not the picture, but the trust of the soul in God’s promise attached to it. The picture only serves as an instrument to remind the soul to place all its confidence in God and His Mercy – not in itself.

### **Two Polish Cities Saved**

A most unusual aspect of the Mercy message is the promise of physical protection, contained in the words: “I shall preserve the cities and homes in which this picture shall be found.” One of the main reasons we are able to spread this message today, is because of the indisputable proof God gave to this remarkable promise.

He told saint Faustina there was coming a new and more terrible war for the world (the second world war), and that Poland would suffer much for its sins. But He also told her He would spare those cities where His picture of mercy would be publicly venerated. Only in Cracow and Vilno was official ecclesiastical approval granted to spread the message, and to display a copy of the picture for public veneration – before Poland was invaded by the Nazis in September 1939.

Saint Faustina died October 5, 1938. The following year, the Second World War began. Both Cracow (population 650,000) and Vilno (population 400,000) should have been destroyed or at least badly damaged, like Warsaw and practically every other major Polish city. Yet, many eye-witnesses, who later came to America, testify that although both the Germans and the Russians invaded Poland and caused frightful destruction everywhere, particularly in Warsaw and the larger cities, these two were spared and suffered little or no damage. There was no logical or natural reason for this. But God had promised to spare those cities, where His picture of Mercy was publicly venerated. Since this was done, the message spread in both these cities. God kept His promise and spared Cracow and Vilno.

However, since God wants His mercy to be spread to everyone, it would seem obvious that He did not make the promises of protection for Poland alone. Perhaps He gave this proof as a sign of the protection He will provide for you and me in the days of His wrath, which He says will one day come upon the world. This does not mean that each home with the Mercy picture will necessarily be spared physical destruction. But it does mean that God will provide whatever protection is necessary – spiritual or material, as the case may be – according to His Holy will, for those who trust in His Mercy in their homes.

#### **THE CHAPLET OF MERCY**

On September 13, 1935, Saint Faustina saw an angel, depicted to her as the executor of God's wrath. In his hands were lightning bolts and thunder. She understood the angel was about to visit a certain place on earth and mete out punishment to its inhabitants. Our Divine Saviour had made sister Faustina's heart after His own merciful one and she was sorrowful and begged the angel for mercy. But somehow she realized that her poor prayers were without power to appease the wrath of God. Then suddenly the Holy Trinity was manifested, and at the same time the sister heard these words:

***“Eternal Father, I offer Thee the body and blood, soul and divinity of Thy most beloved Son and our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and sins of the whole world. Through His most sorrowful passion have mercy on us and on the whole world.”***

Wonder of wonders, as she repeated the worlds over and over; the angel was powerless to mete out the punishment. The next day while going into the chapel she heard once again: “As many times as you enter the chapel, immediately recite the prayer I taught you yesterday.” She recited it at once and the voice spoke again: “This prayer is given to appease the wrath of God. You will recite it for nine days on the usual part of the Rosary (five decades) in the following manner.”

The following day an inner voice taught her to say this prayer on ordinary rosary beads:

“First say one ‘OUR FATHER’, ‘HAIL MARY’ and ‘I BELIEVE.’

Then on the large beads say the following words:

‘ETERNAL FATHER, I OFFER YOU THE BODY AND BLOOD, SOUL AND DIVINITY OF YOUR DEARLY BELOVED SON, OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, IN ATONEMENT FOR OUR SINS AND THOSE OF THE WHOLE WORLD.’

On the smaller beads you are to say the following words:

‘FOR THE SAKE OF HIS SORROWFUL PASSION HAVE MERCY ON US AND ON THE WHOLE WORLD.’

In conclusion you are to say these words three times:

‘HOLY GOD, HOLY MIGHTY ONE, HOLY IMMORTAL ONE, HAVE MERCY ON US AND ON THE WHOLE WORLD.’”

Jesus said later to saint Faustina: “SAY UNCEASINGLY THIS CHAPLET THAT I HAVE TAUGHT YOU. ANYONE WHO SAYS IT WILL RECEIVE GREAT MERCY AT THE HOUR OF DEATH. PRIESTS WILL RECOMMEND IT TO SINNERS AS THE LAST HOPE. EVEN THE MOST HARDENED SINNER, IF HE RECITES THIS CHAPLET EVEN ONCE, WILL RECEIVE GRACE FROM MY INFINITE MERCY. I WANT THE WHOLE WORLD TO KNOW MY INFINITE MERCY. I WANT TO GIVE UNIMAGINABLE GRACES TO THOSE WHO TRUST IN MY MERCY.”

### **THE NOVENA**

Our blessed Lord also gave saint Faustina a Novena to His mercy. She was to start it on Good Friday, that wonderful day when Christ first revealed how merciful and loving He was by dying for us. Sister Faustina wrote in her diary that she began the novena for “the conversion of the whole world that they may recognize God’s mercy and that all souls may sing of His Goodness.” Jesus said: “I desire the confidence of My creatures... Let not even the weak and sinful fear to approach Me, even though their sins be numerous as the sands of the earth all will vanish in the fathomless pit of My mercy.”

She received definite instruction on how to make this novena. “During these nine days I want you to lead souls to the fount of My mercy, in order that they may draw from it strength, refreshment, and all the graces they need in the trials of their lives, especially in the hour of death. Each day you will lead a different group of souls and immerse them in the sea of My mercy. Each day you will beseech the Father through My bitter passion for graces for these souls.”

Saint Faustina, however, did not know how to make the novena, or what souls to lead first to the Sacred Heart.

He taught her:

“On the first day bring especially sinners; on the second day, the souls of priests and nuns; on the third day, the faithful and the pious; on the fourth, the pagans and those who do not know Him; on the fifth, the separated brethren; on the sixth, the humble and weak, as well as the souls of children; on the seventh, those who especially adore and honour His mercy; on the eighth, the souls in Purgatory; on the ninth, the lukewarm and indifferent.”

Our Lord had something to say about these last souls, the lukewarm and indifferent. “The sight of these caused My soul untold grief and anguish in the Garden... the last hope of salvation for them is to seek refuge in My mercy.”

## THE FEAST

This novena can be made at any time, but our Lord especially wished that it be made beginning Good Friday in a preparation for a Feast He was to tell her about: the feast of His mercy, which should be celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter.

“My daughter, speak to the world of My inexhaustible mercy. I desire that the feast be a refuge and a shelter for all souls, especially for poor sinners. The very depths of My mercy will be opened on that day. I will pour out a sea of graces upon those souls that will approach the fount of My mercy.

THE SOULS THAT WILL GO TO CONFESSION AND COMMUNION (ON THAT DAY) WILL OBTAIN A COMPLETE REMISSION OF SIN AND PUNISHMENT. Let no soul fear to come to Me, even if its sins be as scarlet. This feast emerged from the bosom of My mercy and is found in the depths of My mercies. I desire that it be celebrated with great solemnity on the first Sunday after Easter”

According to this great promise, Jesus is offering all souls a chance for a new “baptism” each year, giving everyone an opportunity to “wipe the slate clean.” Such a soul, taking advantage of this great offer in all sincerity and with proper contrition, dying after receiving Holy Communion, and before committing another sin, would go immediately to Heaven, without any stop in Purgatory – regardless of past life. There seems to be no other meaning to this promise of our Lord. Such is the unbelievable and little understood tender love and mercy of God for poor sinners.

It will probably be some time before the church will publicly institute such a feast, for as an ever wise and cautious mother, the church must study those things from all angles, in order that in the end God’s glory may be even more manifest. However, in the meantime, we may observe this feast privately.

Exhorting them to hasten to Him before it is too late He says: “Write, before I come as the just one, I first open wide the gates of My mercy. He who does not want to pass through the gates of mercy will have to pass through the gates of justice.” Then He permitted her to see the enormity of man’s sins. She was frightened at their hideousness, and asked God how He could suffer such terrible insults.

“I have eternity for the punishment of these. Now I prolong the time of My mercy. But woe to him who does not recognize the time of My visitation. You are obliged not only to write and proclaim My mercy, but also to implore graces for sinners, that they, too may praise My mercy.”

Another time He said: “My daughter, the flames of mercy burn Me. I desire to pour it out on human souls. O what pain they cause Me when they will not accept it!”

## PROCLAIM HIS MERCY

Our Blessed Mother and Queen appeared to saint Faustina too. On the Feast of the Annunciation in 1936 Mary said to her: “I gave the world a Saviour. You must proclaim His mercy to it and prepare the world for His second coming. He will then come not as a Merciful Saviour, but as a Just Judge. It will be a



day of horror, resolved to be the day of Justice – the day of the wrath of God. Angels tremble before it... Speak to souls of this great Mercy, while there is still time. If you remain silent now, you will have to account for a great number of souls on that final day. Fear nothing. Be faithful to the end.”

From the warnings, and those given at Fatima, it would seem there are two different punishments in store for humanity:

1. War, physical suffering, bloodshed and persecution. How much of this takes place will depend on the prayers, sacrifices and reparation we give our Lady while we are still able to do so in these days ahead. We can prevent this type of catastrophe completely if only we would.
2. An individual punishment from Heaven for the forces of evil. This would seem to precede the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary – for there can be no triumph so long as these forces of evil are free to continue their efforts to destroy God’s church and souls.

Saint Faustina died on October 5, 1938. Her time to work for God’s Mercy on earth came to an end. Now it is up to us to tell sinners about the love and mercy of the Sacred Heart. Our Saviour left us a promise, too, if we would. He said to sister Faustina, “I protect, as a mother does a child, the souls that promote the devotion to My Mercy during their entire lifetime, and in the hour of their death I will not be their judge, but their Saviour. In that final hour the soul does not have anything in its defense save My Mercy. Fortunate is the soul that during life immersed itself in the fountain of My Mercy, for justice will not reach it there.”

Concerning the many sins being committed in the world these days, Jesus told her, “I have eternity for the punishment of these. Now I prolong the time of My Mercy. But, woe to him who does not recognize the time of My visitation.”

“Speak to the whole world of My Mercy. Let it know how incomprehensible it is. It is a sign of the approaching last days, after which the day of justice will come. While there is still time; let them take refuge in the fount of My Mercy.”

There are some who feel that stressing the mercy, rather than the justice of God, is practically an invitation to sin and presumption. This is not true, for always it must be understood that the soul taking advantage of God’s Mercy must be sincere in acknowledging its sins, in its sorrow for them, in doing penance and reparation, and have firm intention to amend life. For such a soul, there is no limit to God’s Mercy, regardless of what anyone may say to the contrary.

God’s Mercy is not an invitation to sin, but rather an invitation for sinners to amend their lives and come to the great wedding Feast of eternal happiness, while there is still time.

Before His justice strikes, be it through the madness of men in an atomic war, or through some other means, Jesus is giving every soul an opportunity to take advantage of His Mercy. Should there come a third world war, or some other great catastrophe (especially the ozone layer depletion see Revelation 16:8), it is conceivable people may die in great numbers and suddenly. God may see this coming and, in His tender mercy, wants to prepare us for any eventuality. He does not want us to fear, but to trust in Him. He is concerned primarily about the souls that may die. He does not want them to be lost for all

eternity by not being prepared for death. So, He comes and offers mercy as never before, so there will be no excuse for anyone being lost. See John 15:21-25.

God offers His Mercy, but He cannot – and will not – force it, because He will not interfere with free will. His Mercy is for us to accept or reject. If we refuse it, we will have no one but ourselves to blame for what may happen to us, for God will have done His part by giving us every possible chance to be saved. If we accept it, we will have nothing to fear, for God will protect us come what may.

In view of the seriousness of the world situation, but more particularly in view of God's great love for us, we should hasten to accept the kind invitation of Jesus to trust in His Mercy. We should make God's Mercy a part of our daily lives, by sincerely trying to amend our lives if necessary, offering penance and reparation for sin, and by taking advantage of the graces received through the great sacraments of mercy and love, confession and communion. In this will we find true peace.

Jesus is inviting all sinners, great and small, to let Him wash away their sins and even the memory of them, in the Blood of His Mercy. He is inviting us to don the protective cloak of His Divine Mercy that we may not be found without a "wedding garment" in the days of justice – and perhaps be cast into everlasting darkness.

For some, there may be personal difficulties involved in making their peace with God. They may feel they are too well known in their home towns. They may find it hard to confess past sins to their pastors. This is understandable. If such a difficulty of confessing presents itself, it can be solved very easily by going to confession in a different parish.

There usually is a Catholic church where confessions are heard most hours of the day, or upon request. If necessary, souls should take advantage of such golden opportunities to rid themselves of their sins, and find peace in God's Mercy.

Let no obstacle stand in the way. The devil is clever. He knows that souls will be taken away from him through the Mercy of God, rather than through the fear of God. After a while, we become immune to fear, and develop a sort of indifference. We see proof of this in the incredible apathy to the dangers of communism and another war.

The devil will try to raise all kinds of doubts, as well as obstacles that will make it difficult to come back to God. He will try to get souls to keep "putting off" their return to God. Souls should let nothing keep them from accepting the kind invitation of our merciful Saviour to share in His Mercy.

Daily, it becomes more obvious from all indications, that "now is the acceptable time" to put away iniquity and be at peace with our Heavenly Father.

We read in the Bible of the prodigal son, who with a mind of his own, refused to heed his father's counsels, went off to a far city, squandered all his possessions, and led a life of sin and vice. At home, meanwhile, the father grieved for his boy, and there was little happiness. Finally, the son, weary of his sins, decided to return home, though we can imagine his feelings, and his fear of the reception he would get.

However, we are told the father daily kept watching the distant horizon, hoping against hope for the return of his son. Finally, when his lonely vigil was rewarded he ran out to meet his son. "Running to him, he fell upon his neck and kissed him." The son, probably feeling very ashamed and uncomfortable, was bewildered by such a welcome and protested, "I am not worthy to be called thy son."

But the father, with tears of joy in his eyes and heart, would hear none of this, and said to his servants: "Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry – my son has come home!

***In the same way, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety – nine respectable people who do not need to repent. (Luke 15:7 TEV)***

They feel; "why be good?" But, as our Lord explained, these who are good, He always has with Him, sharing in His treasures and blessings and spared the humiliation of wallowing in the mire of sin. Rather than feel jealous, they should rejoice with the Good Shepherd that those who have blindly strayed away, have now returned to the fold. Or, would they wish to deprive Jesus of this great joy of welcoming back His lost sheep?

Jesus, then humbling Himself for our sake, stoops to conquer. He invites ALL HIS "PRODIGAL SONS," ALL HIS BLACK SHEEP – no matter what they have done, nor how many times they have sinned, to "come home" and accept His Mercy.

Can't you just hear Him pleading? "Please come home. It's not the same without you. All will be forgiven. Do not be afraid. I understand your temptations; your frame, that you are dust. Please come home so we can sit down and talk things over. There is nothing to fear from me. We miss you. Your Mother's heart is breaking. Please come home and make Her happy. "Though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow: though they be as numberless as the sand of the sea, I will wash them all away – in the Blood of My Mercy, I love you because you are My child, and I will FORGIVE YOU A MILLION, MILLION TIMES IF NECESSARY." See Isaiah 1:18.

## **GOD THE FATHER'S PROMISE**

This is God's promise to saint Faustina:

At the hour of their death, I defend as My own glory every soul that will say this chaplet; or when others say it for a dying person, the indulgence is the same. When this chaplet is said by the bedside of a dying person, My anger is placated and unfathomable Mercy envelops the soul, and the very depths of My tender Mercy will be moved for the sake of the sorrowful passion of My Son.

## **THE NOVENA TO THE MERCY OF GOD**

### **FIRST DAY**

Let us pray that God may deign to show His mercy to all mankind, especially to sinners.

Most Merciful Jesus, Whose attribute it is to have compassion on us and to forgive us, look not upon our sins but upon the trust which we have in Thy infinite Goodness. Receive us all into the abode of Thy most compassionate Heart and let no one ever depart from it. We implore this of Thee through the love which unites Thee to the Father and the Holy Ghost in the unity of the Blessed and Incomprehensible Trinity.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory be...

ETERNAL FATHER, look with eyes of mercy upon all mankind, especially upon poor sinners, whose only hope is the most compassionate Heart of Thy Son and our Lord Jesus Christ. Through His sorrowful passion show us Thy Mercy so that we may glorify Thy omnipotence for all eternity. Amen.

### **SECOND DAY**

Let us pray for all the clergy and religious through whom God's Mercy flows on mankind.

Most Merciful Jesus, from Whom all good proceeds, increase the gifts of Thy grace in the souls of priests, religious and nuns, so that they may worthily and fruitfully fulfill their duties in Thy vineyard, and by word and example inspire all to ardent veneration of the Mercy of God.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory be...

ETERNAL FATHER, look with eyes of Mercy upon the labourers in Thy vineyard – on the souls of priests, religious and nuns who are the subject of the special predilection of Thy Son and our Lord Jesus Christ. Strengthen them through Thy blessing and grant them special enlightenment to lead others along the path of salvation and to draw them to Thy Mercy. Amen.

### **THIRD DAY**

Let us pray for all faithful Christians

Most Compassionate Jesus, Who does bestow Thy graces upon all abundantly from the treasures of Thy Mercy, receive all faithful Christians into the abode of Thy Most Merciful Heart. Never allow us to depart from it. We implore this of Thee through the love which unites Thee to the Father and the Holy Ghost in the unity of the Blessed and Incomprehensible Trinity.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory be...

ETERNAL FATHER, look with eyes of Mercy upon the souls of the faithful as upon the beloved inheritance of Thy Son. Through His sorrowful passion grant them Thy blessings and encompass them with Thy unceasing care so that they may never lose their love or the treasure of holy faith, but with the entire host of Angels and saints may they glorify Thy boundless Mercy for all eternity. Amen.

#### **FOURTH DAY**

Let us pray for the pagans and infidels who are still ignorant of the Mercy of God.

Most Merciful Jesus, Who art the light of the world, receive into the abode of Thy Compassionate Heart the souls of pagans and infidels who are still ignorant of Thee. May the rays of Thy grace enlighten them, that they together with us may glorify the wonders of Thy Mercy for all eternity.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory be...

ETERNAL FATHER, look with eyes of Mercy upon the souls of pagans and infidels who are still ignorant of the Most Compassionate Heart of Thy Son and our Lord Jesus Christ. Draw them to the light of Thy Gospel that they may understand how great a happiness it is to love Thee and to glorify Thy Mercy for all eternity. Amen.

#### **FIFTH DAY**

Let us pray for those erring in faith

Most Merciful Jesus, Who art Goodness itself and does not refuse light to those who humbly implore it, receive into the abode of Thy Most Compassionate Heart those souls who err in faith, draw them by Thy light to unity with Thy church that they may together with us, adore the generosity of Thy Mercy for all eternity.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory be...

ETERNAL FATHER, look with eyes of Mercy upon those souls who err in faith or who, having abused and squandered Thy graces, stubbornly persist in their errors. Look not upon their wickedness but upon the love and the bitter passion of Thy Son, Who, on the eve of His death, ardently implored Thee "that all may be one"; and grant that they may soon return to that unity, and may glorify together with us, Thy Mercy for all eternity. Amen.

#### **SIXTH DAY**

Let us pray for little children and for those whose souls have become like unto them

Most Merciful Jesus, Who hast said: "Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart," receive into the abode of Thy Most Merciful Heart the souls of little children, and of those who, like little children, have become meek and humble, there by gracing Heaven with delight and being like fragrant flowers before the throne of Thy Heavenly Father. Grant that they may constantly dwell within Thy Sacred Heart and may continually venerate the Mercy of God.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory be...

ETERNAL FATHER, look with eyes of Mercy upon the souls of little children and upon the souls of all, who being meek and humble, have become most like unto Thy Son, and ascend in the fragrance of their virtue to Thy Throne, O Father of Mercy. We implore Thee, through the love and delight which Thou have in these souls, to bless us and the entire world that we may unite in rendering eternal praise to Thy Mercy. Amen.

### **SEVENTH DAY**

Let us pray for those who venerate the Mercy of God and spread confidence in it – who thus become a living image of the most compassionate Heart of Jesus

O Most Merciful Jesus, Whose Heart is Love itself, receive into the abode of Thy Most Compassionate Heart those souls who especially venerate and glorify the greatness of the Divine Mercy, those souls whose true strength comes from God Himself, and who desire to share with Thee the Cross of Thy suffering for mankind through every trial and adversity. Enfold them with Thy ever increasing Mercy and grant them the virtues of perseverance, fortitude and patience.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory be...

ETERNAL FATHER, look with eyes of Mercy upon those souls who with particular tenderness glorify and venerate Thy unfathomable Mercy, who by word and deed glorify Thee and show Mercy to their fellowmen in imitation of Thee. We implore Thee to show them even greater Mercy according to the trust they have in Thee in Thy promises, to defend them as Thy glory and especially at the hour of death. Amen.

### **EIGHTH DAY**

Let us pray for souls in Purgatory, who are fulfilling the Divine Justice; that the Merciful streams of Christ's Blood may diminish and shorten their sufferings.

Most Merciful Jesus, Who has said: "Be merciful as your Father is merciful," receive into the abode of Thy Most Compassionate Heart the souls suffering in Purgatory to pay their debt to the Justice of God. May the streams of Blood and Water, which gushed forth from Thy Divine Heart, extinguish the flames of Purgatorial fire, so that there too the power of Thy Mercy may be glorified.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory be...

ETERNAL FATHER, look with eyes of Mercy upon the suffering souls in Purgatory. Through the sorrowful passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and the bitterness with which His Most Sacred Heart was filled, show compassion to those who are now suffering under Thy Justice. We implore Thee to behold them through the wounds of Thy Most Beloved Son and our Lord Jesus Christ, Whose Mercy exalts itself above Justice. Amen.

## NINTH DAY

Let us pray for those lukewarm souls who were the cause of dreadful suffering to Christ in the Garden of Olives.

Most Merciful Jesus, Who art Goodness itself, lead into the abode of Thy Most Compassionate Heart all lukewarm souls, who, like the decay of death, filled Thee with painful feelings of aversion and loathing in the Garden of Olives. Plunge them into the fire of Thy most pure love, and overcome their tepidity that they may be inflamed with an ever increasing fire of love and may praise continually Thy boundless Mercy.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory be...

ETERNAL FATHER, look with eyes of Mercy upon the lukewarm souls. We implore Thee through the bitter Passion of Thy Beloved Son, and our Lord, Jesus Christ, and through His six hours agony on the cross, to inflame these souls with a new zeal for Thy glory. Fill their hearts with true love so that, thus quickened, they may perform deeds of mercy on earth and praise Thy Mercy for all eternity. Amen.

### **HOW WE SHOULD BE MERCIFUL**

***Be ye therefore Merciful, as your Father also is Merciful. (Luke 6:36 KJV)***

Jesus taught us to be merciful just like how our heavenly Father God is. If we are to be merciful the way our heavenly Father is, means that we should be ready at all times to forgive our brothers and sisters no matter how often we are being offended by them (see Matthew 18:21-22). Also our heavenly Father is merciful to all including the ungrateful and wicked (see Luke 6:35). This means therefore that to be as merciful as our Father, we too must be ready to love and show mercy to our enemies (those who persecute us) from our hearts, for by so doing, our heavenly Father will also forgive us our sins (see Matthew 5:7, 6:12 and 14). But if we fail to be merciful to others just like our heavenly Father, our sins won't be forgiven (Matthew 6:15).

Let us not be like the unmerciful servant who after having been forgiven by his master for debts owed, failed to reciprocate such forgiving act by showing mercy to a fellow servant who owe him. When his master knew that he had been wicked to his fellow servant on the same issue, his master in anger turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. See Matthew 18:23-35.

Saint Paul went further to tell us why it is important to be merciful when he said:

***If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you, to some extent – not to put it too severely. The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient for him. Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him. The reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven – if there was anything to forgive – I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your***

***sake, in order that satan might not outwit us; for we are not unaware of his schemes. (2Corinthians 2:5-11 NIV)***

Yes we are not unaware of his schemes. We ought to stand up to the test at anytime, to forgive our fellow man so that the devil who prowls around like a roaring lion will not take advantage of the situation. Be quick to forgive and forget else the devil may win.

## **WAYS TO BE MERCIFUL**

There are various ways in which we could be merciful to others as taught by Jesus and the church. It is in two folds namely:

1. The Corporal works of Mercy and
2. The Spiritual works of Mercy.

### **The Corporal Works of Mercy**

The Corporal works of mercy concerns the material needs of others; they include:

1. To feed the hungry
2. To give drink to the thirsty
3. To clothe the naked
4. To shelter the homeless
5. To comfort the imprisoned
6. To visit the sick and
7. To bury the dead (Matthew 25:34-45, Tobit 1:18)

### **The Spiritual Works of Mercy**

The Spiritual works of mercy concerns the spiritual needs of others; they include:

1. To admonish sinners
2. To instruct the uninformed
3. To counsel the doubtful
4. To comfort the sorrowful
5. To be patient with those in error
6. To forgive offenses and
7. To pray for the living and the dead

### **NOTE:**

Not everyone is considered capable or obligated to perform the first three Spiritual works of mercy if they do not have proper tact, knowledge or training to do so. The last four are considered to be the obligation of all people without condition.



Finally, being merciful to others is a means of obtaining grace from God and it aids in sanctification. Be loving and merciful, for they are part of the heavenly character and the most important character required. If you don't have them in you, then you are not the true son/daughter of your Father the Uncreated Creator of all things both visible and invisible. Read James 2:12-13.

***“Souls who spread the honour of My Mercy I shield through their entire life as a tender mother her infant, and at the hour of death I will not be a judge for them, but the Merciful Saviour.”***

## CHAPTER 3

### PURGATORY

It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who disobeyed long ago... (1Peter 3:17-20 NIV)

## WHAT IS PURGATORY?

Purgatory being a derivative of the word “Purge” is a spiritual place (a prison) in the spirit realm where souls who died in a state of grace are being purified and made perfect by fire before entry into heaven is granted.

It is a place for the FINAL stage of “Purification” or “Sanctification” that began here on earth. This final stage of purification (sanctification) is God’s final work on our soul through His sanctifying grace. It is God’s sanctifying grace that transforms our soul fitting for Heaven and to bring us into that perfect union and perfect relationship with God – a transformation that He began on our soul here on earth. “Only the PURE in heart will see God.” (Matthew 5:8). Are we “Pure” in heart when we leave this earth? While our soul has grown in holiness in God’s sanctifying grace, corruption remains on our soul and we remain with sin. And scripture tells us: “no sin is allowed in Heaven.” (Revelation 21:27).

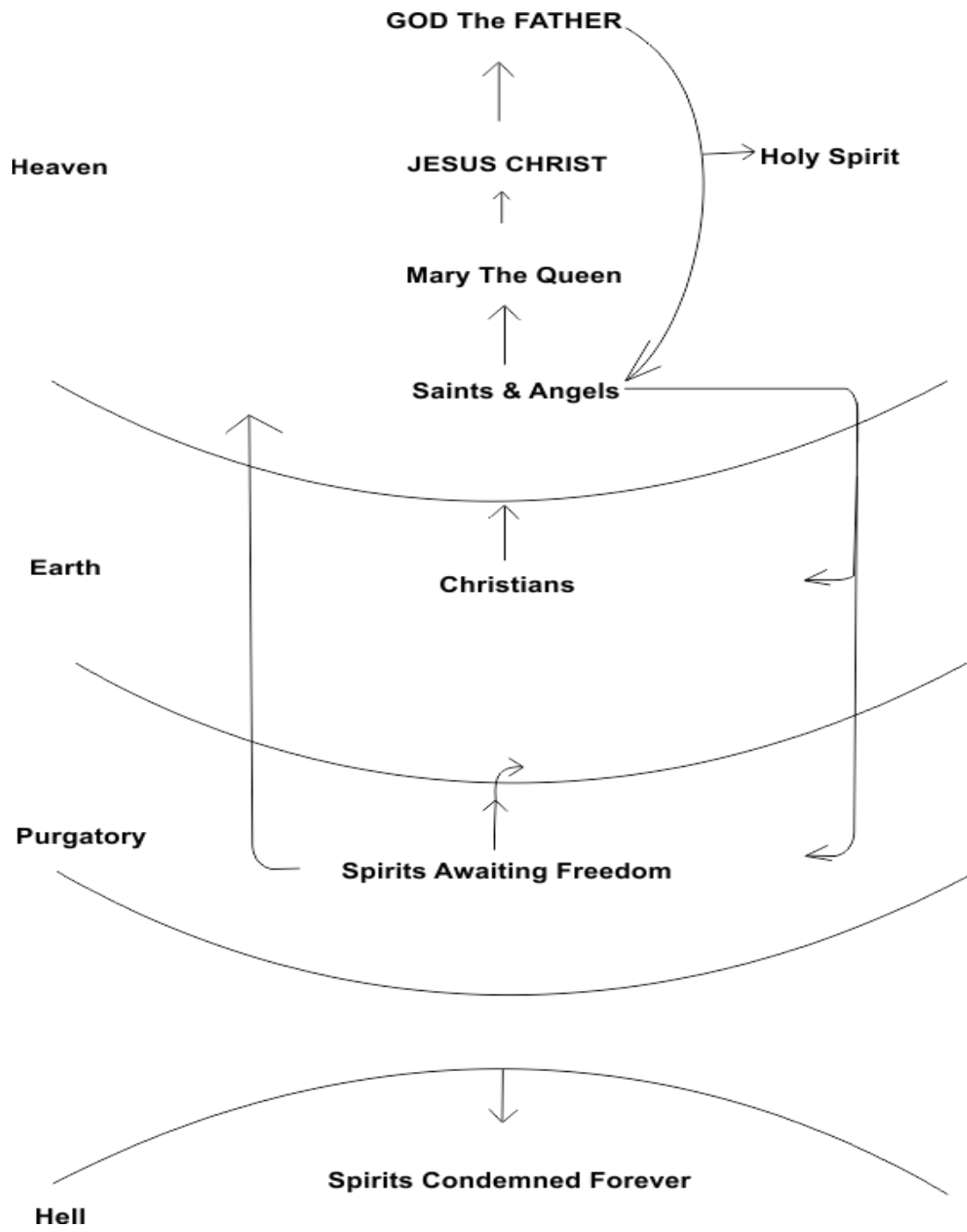
Have you ever wondered why God threw out the man who was not wearing wedding clothes during His wedding banquet? Sin and the devil in us are trying to enter heaven through us and only God can identify his deceit and impersonation. When God sees sin and the devil in us, He throws us into the refinery fire, the fire of purity. These are the people who did not complete their purification and/or sanctification on earth by suffering, prayer and mortification after repentance. God gives perfection through the fire of purifying grace; He purifies the soul of such people in purgatory in order to get rid of that evil impulse in us which causes us to sin.

Saint Paul tells the Hebrews that the spirits of righteous men in Heaven “have been made PERFECT.” (Hebrew 12:23). Considering this statement, we won’t be mistaken if we say there is a final stage of purification or sanctification between leaving this earth and entering Heaven that we must undergo to be cleared up completely in God’s sanctifying grace for a pure heart so we can see God fully.

The Holy Spirit, who is our helper, sees us through purification or sanctification both in the physical and in the spiritual realms. If the earthly purification and/or sanctification are not complete on earth, we will have to complete it in Purgatory by God’s sanctifying grace to make our hearts pure, because without being pure of heart, we can’t see God fully.

Some people misinterpret the meaning and concept of Purgatory. Purgatory is not for the damned, nor is it a second chance to be saved. Purgatory is for the saved (those who repented of their sins before death) for the final stage of purification. Purgatory is a spiritual place of which earth stood between it and Heaven. The time experienced in Purgatory is not the same with the ordinary time experienced on earth. That is, time in the afterlife does not work the same as it does on earth. Nevertheless, we pray for those in Purgatory that their time in Purgatory will be shortened and reach perfection to be in full union with God more quickly.

Let’s use the following flow diagram to further explain the concept of Purgatory and how the living plays a key role in helping souls in Purgatory.



## Explanation

The little arrows represent movement of prayers and requests. You will notice that from earth, prayers and requests moves directly up without falling – straight to heaven, getting to the saints and from the saints to our Queen the mother of Jesus and from Jesus to the FATHER of all. The FATHER through the Holy Spirit directs the Angels to carry out the act of releasing souls in Purgatory and that is represented by the largest arrows. Did you notice the arrow of souls in Purgatory? It could not go straight up because they have fallen and in need of my prayers and your prayers offered to God on their behalf. They rely on the living to help them obtain mercy from God. Jesus Christ who is seated at the right hand side of His FATHER intercedes for us. Also there is no solution for souls and spirits in hell fire. Prayers can't be offered on their behalf. Read 1John 5:16-17.

The souls in Purgatory cannot pray for themselves because they are under the Justice of God, but we can pray for them and God will grant them mercy. We can as well offer to God on their behalf our sufferings and good deeds so that their days in purgatory can be shortened. Catholics can go to the sacrament of confession where Jesus forgives our sins but He also starts healing our souls of the damage sin has done as we do the sacrament of penance. And so He makes us stronger so that we become less attached to sin and so obtain less time in Purgatory for them and for ourselves too during our turn.

We can say the Rosary, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, the Precious Blood Chaplet and the Chaplet of God's Love and Mercy for the souls in Purgatory. These prayers are very powerful for them or the best way of all to help them is to get a mass offered for them which is the Sacrifice of the everlasting covenant of Jesus at Calvary nearly 2000 years ago can be offered to the FATHER for souls in Purgatory.

Also, if it pleases the FATHER, He can bless us by permitting the angels who carry out the act of releasing souls from Purgatory to enable us see souls released as a result of our help and this is represented by the large arrow from the angels which point to the earth.

No earthly man is perfect except Jesus our Lord, therefore everybody will be made perfect by the purifying fire of love and how long we spend in the fire depends on how much we achieved in doing God's will during our live on earth.

## **TESTIMONIES OF PURGATORY SHARED BY THE SAINTS**

The following testimonies are copied from the book written by Fr. F.X. Schouppe, S.J. titled: "PURGATORY Explained by the Lives and Legends of the Saints", Chapter 15, pg. 59-62.

Saint Magdalen de Pazzi, in her celebrated vision where the different prisons of Purgatory were shown to her, saw the soul of her brother, who had died after having led a most fervent Christian life. Nevertheless, this soul was detained in suffering for certain faults, which it had not sufficiently expiated upon earth. These, says the saint, are the most intolerable sufferings, and yet they are endured with joy. Ah! Why are they not understood by those who lack the courage to bear their cross here below? Struck with this frightful spectacle which she had just contemplated, she ran to her Prioress, and casting herself upon her knees, she cried out, "O my dear mother, how terrible are the pangs of Purgatory! Never could I have believed it, had not God manifested it to me... And, nevertheless, I cannot call them cruel; rather

are they advantageous, since they lead to the ineffable bliss of Paradise." To impress this more and more upon our minds, it has pleased God to give certain holy persons a small share in the pains of expiation, like a drop of the bitter cup which the poor souls have to drink, a spark of the fire which consumes them.

The historian Bzovius, in his history of Poland, under the date 1598, relates a miraculous event which happened to the venerable Stanislaus Chocosca, one of the luminaries of the order of St. Dominic in Poland. One day, whilst this Religious, full of charity for the departed, recited the Rosary, he saw appear near him a soul all enveloped in flames. As she besought him to have pity on her, and to alleviate the intolerable sufferings which the fire of Divine Justice caused her to endure, the holy man asked her if this fire was more painful than that of earth? "Ah!" she cried, "all the fires of earth compared to that of Purgatory are like a refreshing breeze." Stanislaus could scarcely believe it. "I wish," he said, "to have a proof. If God will permit, for your relief, and for the good of my soul, I consent to suffer a part of your pains." "Alas! You could not do this. Know that no human being could endure such torment and live. However, God will permit you to feel it in a light degree. Stretch forth your hand." Chocosca extended his hand, and the departed let fall a drop of sweat, or at least of a liquid which resembled it. At the same instant the Religious uttered a piercing cry and fell fainting to the ground, so frightfully intense was the pain. His brethren ran to the spot and hastened to give him the assistance which his condition required. When restored to consciousness, he related the terrible event which had occurred, and of which they had a visible proof. "Ah! My dear Fathers," he continued, "if we knew the severity of the Divine Chastisements, we should never commit sin, nor should we cease to do penance in this life, in order to avoid expiation in the next."

Stanislaus was confined to his bed from that moment, he lived one year longer in the cruelest suffering caused by his terrible wound; and then, for the last time, exhorting his brethren to remember the rigors of Divine Justice, he peacefully slept in the Lord. The historian adds that this example reanimated fervor in all the monasteries of that province.

Similar fact occurred in the life of Bl. Catherine de Racconigi. One day, when suffering so intensely as to need the assistance of her sisters in religion, she thought of the souls in Purgatory, and, to temper the heat of their flames, she offered to God the burning heat of her fever. At that moment, being rapt in ecstasy, she was conducted in spirit into the place of expiation, where she saw the flames and braziers in which the souls are purified in great torture. Whilst contemplating, full of compassion, this piteous spectacle, she heard a voice which said to her, "Catherine, in order that you may procure most efficaciously the deliverance of these souls, you shall participate, in some manner, in their torments." At that same moment a spark detached itself from the fire and settled upon her left cheek. The sisters present saw the spark distinctly, and saw also with horror that the face of the sick person was frightfully swollen. She lived several days in this state, and, as Bl. Catherine told her sisters, the suffering caused by that simple spark far surpassed all that she had previously endured in the most painful maladies. Until that time Catherine had always devoted herself with charity to the relief of the souls in Purgatory, but from thenceforward she redoubled her fervor and austerities to hasten their deliverance because she knew by experience the great need in which they stood of her assistance.

Because you are reading this, searching for answers to better serve God, I know there is still hope for you. God's offer of salvation remains open for all who will accept it. However, you cannot delay forever. Now is the time to return to God and repent of your sins because you don't know what the next hour or the next day holds, therefore make good use of the opportunity while you are still alive to reconcile with God, else, if you die without repenting, Jesus Christ being merciful will cease to be and you will receive Justice instead of mercy. May this never be your portion in Jesus name! Amen!

For those who still doubt the existence of Purgatory, let me ask them some questions to get them thinking:

1. What do you think is the fate of aborted babies?
2. What do you think will happen to a new born baby in the afterlife if he/she dies immediately after child birth without the baptism that cleanses us from the inherited sin of Adam and Eve?
3. What is the fate of a sinner, who returned to God and repented, then dies the next day in a state of grace?
4. What will be your fate if you die now?

For Further Reading: Isaiah 48:10, Zechariah 3:1-8, 9:11, 13:9, Matthew 3:10-11, Hebrews 11:35-40.

***Everyone will be purified by fire as a sacrifice is purified by salt. (Mark 9:49 TEV)***

## CHAPTER 4

### TESTIMONY OF THE POWER IN HIS BLOOD AND WATER

They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony... (Revelation 12:11 NIV)



Let me quickly remind us that we are constantly at war (spiritual battle) with the rulers, the authorities, the powers of this dark world and the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. See Ephesians 6:10-12.

God in His infinite Love and Mercy have not left us to the mercy of these forces of darkness, He had provided for us war armour and weapons to do battle against these forces. The spiritual armour and weapons God made available for our use are: Faith (is the shield used for extinguishing all the flaming arrows of the evil one), the Word of God (which is the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Holy Spirit), Prayer, Praise and Worship, Blood and Water of the Lamb, the Fire of God, the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, Love and Mercy, etc. For detailed explanation of these armours and weapons, please turn to Chapter 5 "Weapons and Armours for Spiritual Battle."

### **A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM GOD**

God communicates with us in various ways through dreams, vision, inward witnessing, etc. See Job 33:14-16.

In 1999, I got a message from God via dream, I found myself standing between two women, and both of them were holding a bow and arrow in readiness to shoot. Their bows and arrows were pointed towards me, for I stood between them. There where I stood, a very bright white light shone over me while at my left and right hand sides where both women stood were dark respectively. Then I saw a big human hand stretched out from the bright white light giving what looked like a scroll to me. I received the scroll but wasn't happy that I got a scroll instead of a bow and arrow like that of the women who stood in the darkness by my right and left sides. I never knew I was having something better than a bow and arrow.

I woke up confused over the meaning of the message from my dream. It was difficult for me to understand then because I wasn't spiritually sound. There were other options which I didn't take. I was supposed to share this dream with those that had the gift of interpreting dreams, which I refused to. Instead, I kept the dream to myself.

***Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach, if it is encouraging; let him encourage, if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously, if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully. (Romans 12:4-8 NIV)***

From the above bible quotation, one could deduce that I was supposed to look for someone gifted by God's grace with the interpretation of dreams.

The bible made it more clearly that when we receive messages from God through dreams and unable to explain/interpret the meaning, we should look for someone who can interpret, just like when Pharaoh enquired from Joseph the meaning of his dreams and also when Nebuchadnezzar had his dreams interpreted by Daniel. See Genesis 41:1-40, Daniel 2:1-49 and 4:1-27.

Guess what? This very book “God is Loving and Merciful” was the message (the scroll) which I received from God. It was made known to me by the Spirit of God during my quiet time in His presence (Holy Ghost School).

Those two women standing at my left and right hand sides were the forces of darkness trying and working fruitlessly to prevent the manifestation of God’s will in my life by firing their flaming arrows.

***In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. (Ephesians 6:16 NIV)***

The forces of darkness will always shoot their flaming arrows of setback, force doctrine, illness, pain, discouragement, etc. in order to thwart the manifestation of God’s will in our lives. God’s infinite Love and Mercy had assured us in Psalm 91 that as long as we continue to dwell in His protection, believing and trusting in His Words, we need not fear the terror of night nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the plague that destroys at noon, that a thousand may fall at our left side, ten thousand at our right side but it will not come near us. We should always thank the Lord for His Love and Mercy which knows no bounds.

### **MY FIRST EXPERIENCE OF THE POWER IN HIS BLOOD**

Dearly beloved, I want to share with you a testimony of my first experience of the power in the Blood of Jesus Christ. If not for His precious Blood, His saving Blood, His healing Blood, His purifying Blood, etc, you won’t be reading this book today. I would have been dead and forgotten a long time ago. But I thank the Almighty God for showing me His unlimited Love and Mercy.

Sometime in the year 1997, I had a horrific attack by a demon of death while in the dream (the spirit realm). This attack was aimed at taking my life. Have you heard the story of someone that slept at night and in the morning he or she was discovered dead? That would have been my case if not for the saving Blood of the Lamb.

In my dream, which is the spirit world, I was in my father’s house, our family house. I came out of my room and entered the children’s parlour, while heading towards the passage way to meet my family members, some of them were standing in the passage at the entrance door which led to the kitchen, while some were in the kitchen. Suddenly, I saw a giant ugly looking demon coming out of the visitor’s room behind me. Immediately, fear gripped me. This fear enabled the demon to pin me at the door way which stood between the children’s parlour and the passage way. I was so scared that I didn’t even remember to plead the Blood of Christ. I noticed that the demon was slowly walking towards me, holding a small rough dagger in its hand that was lifted up and waiting to strike, its face was very ugly with blood in its mouth. The demon had a rough hair like loosed hair attachment. I started shouting for help, calling my family members by their names but they could not hear me. There was light where they stood and I was pinned at the door which stood between the parlour that was dark and the passage way that had light. I kept shouting still there was no help until when the demon almost struck my neck with the dagger that I shouted “Blood of Jesus!!” Guess what happened? Have you heard the sound of a flowing stream of rushing water before? That was the sound I heard when I shouted “Blood of Jesus.”

His Blood formed a mighty sea and flushed the demon. I woke up at the same time, with sweat all over my body. Ever since then, I've had no such attack.

Sometimes later, I read about this demon in a book written by Iyke Nathan Uzorma titled: "Occult Grand Master Now in Christ." This demon is usually projected by occult men to destroy those they wish to kill and also, the demon operates more in the dream.

To illustrate further the power in the Blood of Jesus Christ as a complement to my experience, let me include here, a true life story, written by Rev. Father Stephen Uche Njoku in one of his books titled "Radical Prayer".

It was in the month of June 1989. A Christian whose name I wish to withhold for obvious reasons visited a friend. In the friend's house this Christian joined the company of three other persons. Being a militant kind, he immediately was drawn to the argument that was going on. It was about marriage and divorce. One of those present was the man of the occult organization. He was of the opinion that marriage is not meant to be permanent. If it works, fine. If it does not work the man should drive away the woman and waste no time in looking for another woman. The Christian objected to it and reaffirmed that it is contrary to the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 5:31-32).

The occult man would not hear the name Jesus mentioned. This Christian took note of his annoyance and called the man back to the name of Jesus and asked him to explain the reason for his anger. The man bluntly stated that the name of Jesus should not be mentioned. First of all, he questioned why people should worship Him. He called Jesus "that man" and would not himself call the name of Jesus. Then he called Him a wicked man. The occult man claimed he belonged to the "middle temple," (whatever that means) and that he served Lucifer. He went further to claim that they have been striving ever since the man sat on a throne to dethrone him and destroy Him. In their operations in the middle temple where Lucifer makes his appearance they tried to dethrone Jesus. Each time they attempted to attack the one on the throne, that is, Jesus, Blood would begin to drop from his body one by one until it would become a very deep sea impossible to cross. Finally he asked: "why should Jesus sit on that throne which we see only at a far distance? Well since we cannot get at Him we deal with His Christians. Already we have weakened them. We make sure His "stupid" kingdom does not stand", so he claimed. Little did he know that the victory of Jesus belongs to us too, for those who know their God.

Just at that moment the Christian became angry and dug in. He turned round and saw the picture of Jesus hanging on the wall. It was the picture of Jesus hanging on the cross and Blood dropping from His face. The Christian pointed to the wall and asked this occult man to look at the picture. He turned and looked and fell on the floor. He claimed he stumbled on a side stool. The Christian began to defend the name of Jesus and to emphasize why all should believe in Him and ridiculed the false claim of Lucifer and his occult system. As the Christian talked, the man began to shake until finally he became feverish. Since a medical doctor was the owner of the house, medical help was easy. The man ended up asking questions about how to be free from the bondages of the system and become a Christian.

I hope you were able to see how powerful the Blood of Jesus is? In both testimonies, the Blood of Jesus transforms to a mighty ocean or sea or river to do battle. That is how the Blood of Jesus works when you plead it against the evil forces of darkness. Read more on the Blood of Jesus Christ in Chapter 5.

## THE CONQUEST OF HIS BLOOD AND WATER

*Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of Blood and Water. The man who saw it has given testimony and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe.*

*On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity. (John 19:34-35 and Zechariah 13:1 NIV)*

God's Love and Mercy knows no bounds. His Love and Mercy are called to duty by our prayers and you know what? In Ephesians 6:18, we have been commissioned to ask for "anything".

***Pray all the time. Ask God for anything in line with the Holy Spirit's wishes. Plead with Him, reminding Him of your needs and keep praying earnestly for all Christians everywhere.***

Ask God for anything and keep praying for all Christians everywhere (including those in Purgatory). What a great privilege we have that when we pray to God to show Love and Mercy on souls in Purgatory, by pleading the Blood and Water of the Lamb on them, He definitely shows them Love and Mercy.

God never changes, He is the same God of yesterday, and He is still the same today and will remain the same tomorrow and forever. God once did set spirits in prison free. Read 1Peter 3:18-22. Considering the fact that He never changes, when we pray through His Son Jesus Christ to do the same today, He will definitely free souls detained in Purgatory because He is full of Love and Mercy.

In 2008, I was prompted by the Spirit of God to pray for souls in Purgatory. I combined three prayers of the Roman Catholic Church, prayers sent to earth from Heaven. These prayers are:

1. The Holy Rosary prayer
2. The Divine Mercy prayer and
3. The Precious Blood prayer.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of February, 1997 during the 8<sup>th</sup> day of the second Novena of the Precious Blood prayer, Brother Barnabas through whom our Lord Jesus Christ revealed the Precious Blood prayer was transformed in spirit. He saw our Lord on a cross. He clearly saw the sacred side of Jesus Christ. Suddenly, there were drops of Blood which he counted to be twelve. As soon as that of Blood was over, there were drops of Water which he also counted to be twelve.

These twelve drops of Blood and Water came from the sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ when He was pierced with a spear by a soldier named Longinus at mount Calvary. This fact was revealed to Blessed Faustina Kowalska of the Divine Mercy by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Meditating on both revelations and on God's words in John 19:34 and Zechariah 13:1, I was moved by the Spirit of God to form this prayer:

**Lead: Oh twelve drops of Blood and Water which gushed forth from the sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ at mount Calvary as a fount of Love and Mercy for us**

**Response: Wash away my sins/Wash away the sins of the whole world Amen!**

How to say the prayer for God's Love and Mercy is explained in Chapter 5. God's Love and Mercy knows no bounds or limit, it is unlimited. Jesus revealed this to Saint Faustina when He said:

**"I have opened My Heart as a living fountain of Mercy. Let all souls draw life from it. Let them approach this sea of Mercy with trust.**

**I am Love and Mercy itself. Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet. My Mercy is greater than your sins and those of the entire world. I let my Sacred Heart be pierced with a lance, thus opening wide the source of Mercy for you. Come then with trust to draw graces from this fountain. I never reject a contrite heart. Sooner would Heaven and Earth turn into nothingness than would My Mercy not embrace a trusting soul" (Page 26 and 27 of the Divine Mercy Message and Devotion book 1993 Edition)**

I am used to saying the prayer of God's Love and Mercy using the Chaplet of the Precious Blood. Sometimes, I say the prayer for myself or for the world.

Prompted by the Spirit of God in 2008, I offered the prayer to God as alms, for the freedom of souls in Purgatory, using the 9 days Novena that was revealed to Saint Faustina by our Lord Jesus Christ. This made me to change the response to:

**Wash away the sins of souls in Purgatory. Amen!**

During the course of saying the prayer, I requested from God in my heart that those souls He will release from Purgatory as a result of my prayers, should also pray for me to make Heaven after leaving the earth when I die. Little did I know that God would let me witness their freedom?

After saying the prayer on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the Novena, at night in my dream while I was asleep, I saw a Golden door in front of me. On this Golden door were different precious stones woven together. No door in the world matched its beauty. See Revelation 21:19-20 for the list of these precious stones.

While I was joyfully admiring the door, suddenly a great bright light appeared behind the Golden door, like the light of the sun. As the light becomes brighter and brighter, the Golden door started reducing in its size till it disappeared i.e. the bright light engulfed the door. Then I saw a being like a human, dressed like a priest coming out from the source of that great bright light, holding a Chalice in His hand. Where He stood, looked like an altar and there were other beings too at the right and at the left side of the altar dressed in milkish white garment. Facing the altar were many beings, as black as charcoal from their head to their feet. I was behind them watching all that was going on. I gave to those beings standing at the left and right sides of the altar what looked like a chair designed in the form of an hourglass because it was demanded for. Then I woke up.

The Spirit of God made me to understand that the place where all these took place was in the Heavenly Sanctuary. Please read Hebrews 8:1-5.

The being dressed like a priest represents our Lord Jesus Christ the High Priest in the order of Melchizedek, i.e. a King and a Priest. See Hebrews 7.

Those other beings at the right and left sides of the altar are altar servants, assisting the High Priest. The many black beings who stood in front of the altar, were souls released from Purgatory, waiting to be purified by the Blood of the Lamb which the Chalice in the Priest's hand represents. After their purification, they will enter the kingdom of God and dwell in His presence.

The chair which looked like an hourglass stands as a reminder to those souls released from Purgatory to pray for me to make Heaven at the hour of my death. Remember, I prayed for it.



Dearly beloved, it is our duty as soldiers of Christ, as Christians to pray for our fellow Christian brothers and sisters and for the souls who have departed this world. I enjoin you to pray especially for souls suffering in Purgatory. Plead the Blood and Water of Jesus on their behalf, to wash away their sins, so that their days in Purgatory may be shortened. God bless you. Amen!

***This is the one who came by Water and Blood – Jesus Christ. He did not come by Water only, but by Water and Blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that testify: the Spirit, the Water and the Blood; and the three are in agreement... And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. (1John 5:6-8, 11-12 NIV)***

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## CHAPTER 5

### WEAPONS AND ARMOURS FOR SPIRITUAL BATTLE

The weapons we use in our fight are not the world's weapons but God's powerful weapons, which we use to destroy strongholds. (2Corinthians 10:4 TEV)

Put on all the armour that God gives you, so that you will be able to stand up against the Devil's evil tricks.

For we are not fighting against human beings but against the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world, the rulers, authorities, and cosmic powers of this dark age. So put on God's armour now! Then when the evil day comes, you will be able to resist the enemy's attacks; and after fighting to the end, you will still hold your ground. (Ephesians 6:11-13 TEV)

Truly we do not battle against our fellow man, but against our sinful nature, the vices of the world and against powers of the dark world and spiritual forces of evil.

These forces are so powerful that on our own we can not defeat them except when we have Jesus in us and we in Jesus that we can be able to subdue and conquer them.

God is so Loving and Merciful that despite the fall of man, He still provided us with war equipments from His Arsenal to enable us do battle against the forces of darkness. The war equipments provided by God are in two folds namely: Spiritual Weapons and Spiritual Armours.

### **SPIRITUAL WEAPONS**

Spiritual weapons are battle equipments made available to us by God, to enable us do spiritual battle against the forces of darkness. We use them for attacking and fighting, they work very well with our faith and some of them are dual in nature (i.e. both weapon and armour).

### **SPIRITUAL ARMOUR**

Spiritual armours are battle equipments provided by God. They enable us protect and defend ourselves against the evil deeds of the forces of darkness.

Below are the list and explanation of the various weapons and armours we have at our disposal. Some of them are of the two fold.

## **PRAISE AND WORSHIP**

***After a severe beating, they were thrown into jail, and the jailer was ordered to lock them up tight. Upon receiving this order, the jailer threw them into the inner cell and fastened their feet between heavy blocks of wood.***

***About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a violent earthquake, which shook the prison to its foundations. At once all the doors opened, and the chains fell off all the prisoners. (Acts 16:23-26 TEV)***

### **What is Praise and what is Worship?**

Praise is a vehicle of faith which brings us into the presence and power of God! It means to speak well of God, it is to acknowledge what God has done, it invokes God's presence. In other words, Praise means to commend, to applaud or magnify. Praise is to the New Testament what sacrifices and offering was to the Old Testament, it is a sacrifice.

Worship on the other hand means a deeper feeling of love and respect for God. It is a strong feeling of admiration, so much that whatever God does is right and just. It is an outward experience of an inward change. Worship takes us into a deeper intimate experience with God.

Therefore, Praise and worship brings our spirit into a pinnacle of fellowship and intimacy between us and God. Praise and worship transports us into the realm of the supernatural and into the power of God. It magnifies our awareness of our spiritual union with the most high God. In other words, it is the “gate-pass” which allows us to enter the sacredness of His glory, the holy of holies. It is the incense that invokes God’s Spirit.

**Note:**

For praise and worship to be very effective, it must flow from the heart of a humble state. We need the Spirit of Christ before we can offer a worthy sacrifice of praise and worship.

***But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him (John 4:23 KJV)***

## **TYPES OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP**

There are seven types of or way to praise and worship, they include:

- ❖ Barak
- ❖ Tehillah
- ❖ Yadah
- ❖ Halal
- ❖ Zamar
- ❖ Shabach and
- ❖ Towdah.

### **Barak (baw-rak) 1288**

This way of praise is one we commonly see around the altar of God. It means to kneel down or to bow. It means to give reverence to God as an act of adoration, to bless the LORD. It is a physical application – to bow or kneel with the intent in ones heart that God is king and you yield to Him. You are acknowledging Him as KING and GOD. See Psalm 103.

### **Tehillah (tel-hil-law) 8416**

This type of praise is singing but a spontaneous new song. It is the singing that pops up from our hearts. It refers to a special kind of singing – it is singing unprepared and unrehearsed. Praises like this are the type that God enthrones or inhabits. He manifests Himself in the midst of exuberant singing. See Psalm 22:3.

### **Yadah (yaw-daw) 3034**

This means praises done by the extension of both hands. It carries the meaning of absolute surrender, as a young child does to a parent – “pick me up, I am all yours.” See Psalm 42:5.

### **Halal (haw-lal') 1984**

This is the kind of praise exhibited by David when he danced for joy and gladness at the return of the Ark of the Covenant. He danced till he became naked. This is the most “fun” kind of praise because it requires one to step outside of his personality for a moment. This includes dancing and laughing and leaping and twirling before the Lord. It includes the humble state of the heart before God. The heart that is turned towards God and not afraid to BOAST in and of God is called a “halal” heart. It is in halal praise that we got the word Hallelujah which literally means “praise the Lord.” See 1Chronicles 16:4 and Nehemiah 12:24

### **Zamar (zaw-mar') 2167**

It means to sing praises with musical instruments. Zamar means to touch the strings, it refers to praise that involves instrumental worship. The clapping of the hand and the stamping of the feet during praise is also a form of Zamar. See Psalm 150.

### **Shabach (shaw-bakh') 7623**

Shabach means to shout or to address in a loud tone. It is proclaiming with a loud voice, unashamed, the GLORY, TRIUMPH, POWER, LOVE and MERCY of GOD. Example of this praise is when you ask people to stand up and shout a phrase like “praise the Lord” on the count of three! It should be done whole heartedly. See Psalm 63:3-4.

## **Towdah (to-daw) 8426**

It means to give worship to God by the extension of the right hand in adoration or agreeing with what God has done or will do. Thanking God for something that one doesn't have in the hope that God will be faithful to His words. See Psalm 50:23.

### **PRAISE AND WORSHIP AS A WEAPON FOR SPIRITUAL WARFARE**

***After consulting with the people, the king ordered some musicians to put on the robes they wore on sacred occasions and to march ahead of the army, singing: "Praise the LORD! His love is eternal!"***

***When they began to sing, the LORD threw the invading armies into a panic. The Ammonites and the Moabites attacked the Edomite army and completely destroyed it, and then they turned on each other in savage fighting. When the Judean army reached a tower that was in the desert, they looked towards the enemy and saw that they were all lying on the ground, dead. Not one had escaped. (2Chronicles 20:21-24 TEV)***

Singing praises and worshipping the Lord is a powerful weapon that we have against satan and his armies and they don't like it. When we praise and worship God, it takes away the feeling of fear from us, knowing fully well that God dwells in praise and worship and as such all the host of heaven will be present, in readiness for battle.

A sincere worship and praise to God by a humble and contrite heart enables one to attack, fight, defeat and drive away the forces of darkness.

When we offer a sincere worship and praise to the Lord, it kills the devil (self destructively), it also throws the camp of the enemy into confusion.

When God's people begin to praise His name, it sends the enemy running! And if the whole world would sing praises to the Lord at the same time, satan and his armies will run out of this earth. I challenge you to become a person of praise and you will experience the great power of God!

For Further Reading: Joshua 6:4-5, Isaiah 12:1-2, 5-6.

## **PRAYER**

***But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith will not fail. And when you turn back to me, you must strengthen your brothers.***

***... Get up and pray that you will not fall into temptation. (Luke 22: 32 and 46 TEV)***

### **What is Prayer?**

Prayer is the lifting up of our minds and hearts to God. It is our invitation to access the very presence of God. It is a way of going to His presence to find freedom, life, His kingdom and deliverance from temptation and sin. Also it is a form of communicating with God or to the Saints.

The word “Pray” originates from the Latin word “Precari” which means to entreat or ask. While we often think of prayer primarily as asking God for something, prayer, properly understood, is a conversation with God or with the Saints. Just as we cannot hold a conversation with another person unless he/she can hear us, the very act of praying is an implicit recognition of the presence of God or the Saints here with us. And in praying, we strengthen that recognition of the presence of God, which draws us closer to Him. That is why the church recommends that we pray frequently and make prayer an important part of our daily lives.

The secret of all failures is our failure in secret prayers. The greatest thing we can do for God or man is to pray. For we can accomplish far more by our prayers than by our works!

## **CLASSIFICATION OF PRAYER**

There are two classifications of prayer namely: Planned and Unplanned prayers. Both are very effective.

### **Planned Prayer**

Is a prayer prepared and organized for a particular purpose. Here, you know why you are praying and what you seek to achieve. In this class, prayer is not made or said unexpectedly. Most times, this prayers are been revealed by God through the Saints. Good examples of this class of prayers are the ones you see in prayer booklets.

The prayer I made on behalf of souls in Purgatory is a planned prayer; it was a combination of three planned prayers revealed by Jesus our King and the Queen of heaven and earth (Mary the mother of Jesus Christ). These prayers include:

1. The Holy Rosary prayer revealed to us by the Queen through Saint Dominic and Blessed Alan de la Roche.
2. The Divine Mercy prayer revealed to us by Jesus through Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska in 1930 – 1938.
3. The Precious Blood prayer revealed to us by Jesus through Blessed Barnabas in 1997.

With the help of the Holy Spirit, I combined these prayers and obtained the prayer for God's Love and Mercy.

### **PRAYER FOR GOD'S LOVE AND MERCY**

The prayer for God's Love and Mercy could be said using the chaplet of the Precious Blood. Below is how to say the prayer.

#### **STEP I**

1. Make the sign of the cross (A)
2. Say the prayer to the Holy Spirit (B)
3. Say the Glory be to the FATHER... (C)
4. Say the Apostles creed (D)
5. Say the Lord's prayer (E)
6. Say the Hail Mary three times (F)

#### **STEP II**

1. Glory be to the FATHER
2. Sorrowful Mysteries (one respectively on each large beads)      Repeat step 2 on each of the large beads (White beads)
3. The Lord's Prayer
4. Three Hail Mary (i.e. three times)

#### **STEP III**

Say on each of the 12 small beads (Red beads)

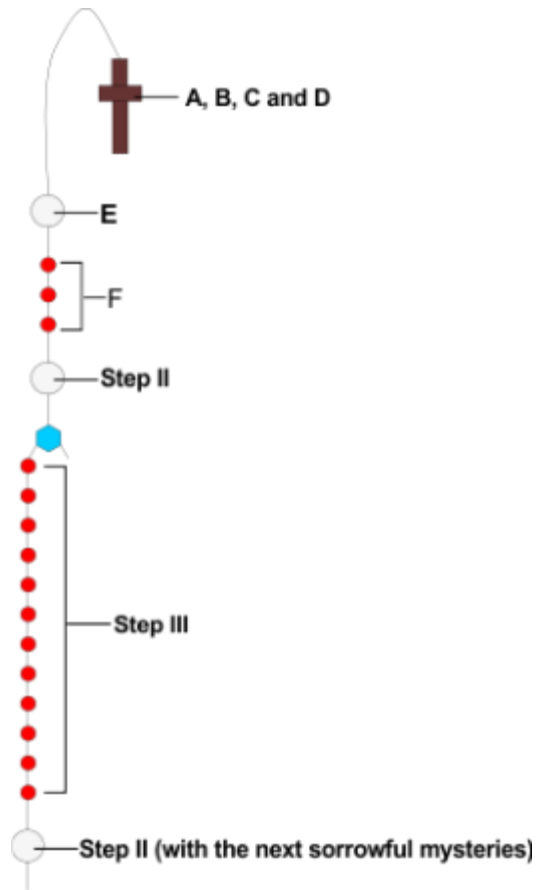
L: Oh Twelve Drops of Blood and Water

Which Gushed Forth from the Sacred

Heart of Our Lord JESUS CHRIST at

Mount Calvary as a Fount of Love and Mercy for Us

R: Wash Away My Sins or Wash Away the Sins of the Whole World. Amen!



**Concluding Prayer**

- ❖ Glory be to the FATHER
 

L: Oh Most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ	X3
R: Heal the Wounds in the most sacred Heart of Jesus	X3
  
- ❖ Say the Anima CHRISTI Prayer
 

L: Oh Most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ	X3
R: Heal the Wounds in the most sacred Heart of Jesus	X3
  
- ❖ Say the Hail Holy Queen Prayer
- ❖ Say: Oh most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, we honour, worship and adore You because of Your work of the everlasting covenant that brings peace to mankind. Heal the Wounds in the most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Console the Almighty Father in His throne and wash away the sins of the whole world. May all revere You, oh Precious Blood, have Mercy. Amen!

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Have Mercy on Us

Immaculate Heart of Mary Pray for Us



St. Joseph, the Husband of Mary

St. Peter and St. Paul

St. John at the foot of the Cross

St. Mary Magdalen

All the prayer Warriors and Intercessors of Heaven

All the great Saints of our Lord

All the heavenly Hosts, Legion of Mary

❖ Say the Litany of the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

L: Oh Most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ X3

R: Heal the Wounds in the most sacred Heart of Jesus X3

❖ Say: Our Lady, Queen of the Precious Blood Sprinkle Us and all men with the Precious Blood of thy Beloved Son Jesus. X3

❖ Say: Eternal FATHER, show Mercy in the name of the precious Blood of Thy Son. Show us Mercy we implore Thee. Eternal FATHER we offer You the Most Precious Blood of Jesus, shed for us with such great and bitter pain and through the Merit and efficacy of the Blood, we entreat Your Divine Majesty to grant us Your Holy Benediction on order that we may be defended thereby from all our enemies and be set free from every ill. May the Blessing of the Almighty God the FATHER, SON and HOLY SPIRIT, descend upon us and remain with us forever. Amen!

Finally; say the Novena to the Mercy of GOD.

### **Unplanned Prayer**

Unplanned prayer is a prayer not prepared for and organized. It occurs spontaneously and it's said for a particular purpose but most times unknown. Here, you hardly know why you are praying except if God reveals to you. Example of this class of prayer is when we pray in tongues and in the spirit.

***Those who speak in strange tongues do not speak to others but to God, because no one understands them. They are speaking secret truths by the power of the Spirit. (1 Corinthians 14:2 TEV)***

***And pray in the spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayer requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. (Ephesians 6:18 NIV)***

Praying in the spirit occurs very often, it suddenly comes in the mind. Have you had any inward feeling which occurred to you unexpectedly to pray? Like say, pray for prevention of accident, illness, etc. these prayers are done in the mind because it comes to you at any given time, no matter where you may be. You could be in a meeting, in the church, in the school while lecture is going on, etc.

When you begin to pray for the prevention of the accident or the illness in your mind, you are praying in the spirit. Sometimes, God tells you why you said the prayer, sometimes, He doesn't. but know it that it's for a purpose, it could be you prayed to prevent an accident that might occur somewhere, or that you prayed to avert an impending illness.

## TYPES OF PRAYER

All prayers are not the same, below are brief description of the various kind of prayers.

### **Supplications**

This is sometimes called petition, entreaties or requests. Supplication means to petition or entreat someone for something. Prayer of supplications is the type of prayers we are most familiar with. In them, we ask God for things we need – primarily spiritual needs, but physical ones as well. Our prayers of supplication should always include a statement of our willingness to accept God's will, whether He directly answers our prayer or not.

### **Thanksgiving**

Thanksgiving today, is the most neglected type of prayer. Thanksgiving is an all-inclusive act that involves praise and worship. Thanksgiving should be a regular part of our talking to God; we should get into the habit of thanking God throughout the day for the good things that happen to us and to others.

**Read Ephesians 5:19-20.**

### **Adoration**

Adoration prayer is a prayer of worship. In it we praise the greatness of God, and we acknowledge our dependence on Him in all things. The Gloria (Glory be to God) is an example of this type of prayer.

### **Expiation**

Expiation is a prayer for forgiveness. In it, we acknowledge our sinfulness and humbly ask God for His forgiveness and mercy.

### **Love**

Prayers of love or charity are just that – expressions of our love for God, the source and object of all love. The act of charity which is said thus: *My God, because You are so good, I love You with all my heart, and for your sake, I love my neighbour as myself;* is a good example.

### **Intercessions**

Intercession means to plead or mediate on behalf of another person. Intercession will involve various degrees of supplication. It is not normally a one – off prayer. It requires persistence. See Luke 11:5-8.

## PRAYER AS AN EQUIPMENT OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Another powerful equipment in spiritual warfare is prayer. It serves as a weapon and as armour. It is a weapon because of its dynamic nature, with it; you can request and put to action other weapons such as the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. Also, it is protective armour in the sense that a praying person never falls into the trap of the enemy.

***Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation... (Mark 14:38 NIV)***

The following is how effective prayer is during spiritual warfare whether planned or unplanned.

1. It heals and gives us life. See Isaiah 38:1-6
2. It prevents us from falling into the trap of the enemy. See Matthew 26: 41
3. It takes away sins. See 1 John 1:9
4. Prayer causes our inner man to be strengthened. Ephesians 3:16
5. Prayer builds up and increase our faith
6. Prayer unlocks the power of God and breaks the chain of captivity.

**Note:** A praying Christian is a very powerful Christian.

For Further Reading; Mark 9:14-29.

## WORD OF TESTIMONY

***They overcame him... By the word of their testimony... (Revelation 12:11 NIV)***

Word of testimony or better still word of our testimony is a very powerful and mighty weapon in the Arsenal of God. It is very offensive. This weapon is one of the most dangerous against satan and he knows it.

Whenever we testify about the goodness of the Lord, we overcome the enemy. The enemy projects fear, unbelief and doubt to make us think and believe that God does not exist or that God is not faithful, but if and when we testify, we suppress and overcome that fear, that unbelief and doubts created by the enemy. The enemy greatly hates it when we share with others about the goodness, love and mercy of God towards us.

Our word of testimony gives glory to God for what He has done. It also creates an atmosphere for the same thing to happen again. For instances, when you testify about a healing of pain that you have received, it creates and brings back that same spiritual moment for others who have various types of pains to receive their healing.

Testimonies build our faith and also the faith of the hearer. They could say to themselves, "if the Lord did that for him or for her, He will surely do the same for me." So let us always share with others about all the goodness, love and mercy shown to us by God, because when we do, the following happens:

1. It breaks the chains of fear, doubt and unbelief.
2. It increases our faith in God and the faith of the hearer
3. Testimony releases God's glory into the earth
4. Testimony gives glory to God
5. It creates spiritual atmosphere for people to receive healing, miracles and salvation.

So therefore, it doesn't matter how small or how big your testimony is, the most important thing is to share it with someone. And by so doing, you are killing the enemy and putting them to flight.

Let me use this opportunity to share with you a testimony. On Sunday the 15<sup>th</sup> of July, 2012, my sister called my mum from South Africa, she said that the medical report concerning her blood level was very low, below 25% or equal to 25% and that the doctor told her the report was bad for her as a pregnant woman. It is a bad report in the sense that most pregnant women lose a lot of blood during childbirth and in her own case, she was having very little to spare. Normally, a pregnant woman is expected to have a blood level of about 50% or over but she wasn't having enough in her.

That same day, my mum told me about it and asked me to pray for her. During that period, I was saying the prayer for God's Love and Mercy together with the Divine Mercy Novena on behalf of souls in Purgatory, starting at 3 PM. It was the 4<sup>th</sup> day of my prayer when my mum requested that I should pray for her. I offered the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> days of the prayer on her behalf.

We did not hear from her till on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July, 2012 when she was in labour. She called, crying over the phone that my mum should pray for her. My mum told me about it and also asked me to pray for her too.

To the glory of God's name, she gave birth like a Hebrew woman without losing blood at about 4 PM South African time. She was discharged that same day too. God blessed her with a baby boy.

Dearly beloved, there is nothing impossible for God to do. Is there any problem in your life, which had been disturbing you, making you to cry and worry? Stop worrying and crying, you have a Loving and Merciful FATHER, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the Uncreated Creator of all things, etc. go into your room today, knee down and talk to Him about your problems and they will be solved.

For Further Reading: Isaiah 12: 4-6 and Psalm 105: 2.

## **THE BLOOD OF JESUS**

***They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb... (Revelation 12: 11 NIV)***

The blood of Jesus is a very powerful weapon; it is also among the most dangerous weapons against the enemy. The blood of Jesus renders complete havoc on the enemy and drowns the enemy. It completely wipes out everything that is of the enemy.

The blood of Jesus is both a weapon and armour. It is a weapon in the sense that when we are attacked by evil spirits and we plead or shout the “Blood of Jesus,” it forms a mighty ocean and destroys the enemy totally and never again will that enemy attack you again.

It is an armour when we cover and soak ourselves with it, i.e. when we say “I cover myself with the Blood of Jesus.” Whenever we cover ourselves with the blood of Jesus, the enemies will pass over if they see us. This is what the bible signified in Exodus when it says thus:

*The blood on the doorposts will be a sign to mark the houses in which you live. When I see the blood, I will pass over you and will not harm you when I punish the Egyptians. (Exodus 12: 13 TEV)*

The blood of Jesus is also a cleanser; it atones and cleans our sins, setting us free from the bondage of sin. When we plead the blood of Jesus, the following happens:

1. It protects us from attacks
2. It breaks the chain of sin
3. It drowns and destroys the enemy completely and never will the same enemy disturb you again.
4. It atones and cleans our sins
5. It heals our spiritual wounds
6. It gives us the power to resist sin
7. The Blood of Jesus causes the devil to flee from you
8. The Blood of Jesus saves. See 1Peter 1: 18-19.

Further Reading: Hebrews 12: 24 and 1John 1: 7.

## **THE BREAD OF LIFE (BODY OF CHRIST)**

***I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eats of this bread, he shall live forever and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. (John 6: 51 KJV)***

The Bread of Life which is the flesh of Jesus Christ is a mighty weapon and armour, freely given to us by the sovereign Lord. Christ has given us all we need to get to heaven. The Bread of Life is His most perfect gift to us and this gift of self in the Bread is a sign of His great love for us.

The Bread of Life is a mighty weapon against the power of death (the second death). When we eat the Bread of Life in a state of grace (being free from sin), we are assured of eternal life. See John 6: 54.

This is what happens when we eat the flesh of Jesus:

1. The flesh of Jesus transform us into Christ
2. It fills us with graces
3. It enables us to bear much fruit
4. It helps us to pray effectively

5. Eating the flesh of Jesus enables His Spirit to dwell in us
6. It makes us holy
7. It unites us with Christ and one another
8. It purges away our sins
9. It gives us everlasting life
10. The Bread of Life strengthens us and helps us to overpower sin.

For Further Reading: Psalm 81: 10, Matthew 26: 26, Mark 14: 22, Luke 22: 19, Acts 2: 42-47 and 1Corinthians 11: 23-29.

## **THE WATER OF LIFE**

***... if thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water. (John 4: 10 KJV)***

The water of Jesus which is the water of life, is another powerful weapon against the enemy, it is also one of the most dangerous. It rages like the tsunami, its waves can move mountains. It also renders complete havoc and destruction on the enemy, it drowns the enemy too. The water of Jesus wipes away every unclean thing. It is a weapon of mass destruction. Read Genesis 6 and 7.

The water of Jesus gives life to the spirit man in us, it heals us of every illness and diseases and it restores all we have lost to the enemy during our slavery in sin. It also washes away our sins and releases the power of the Holy Spirit on us. The water of life gives increase to everything we do, so plead it on your business.

Further Reading: Jeremiah 2: 13, Ezekiel 47: 1-12, John 7: 37-39, 19: 34, 1John 5: 5-8, Revelation 7: 17, 21: 6, 22: 1-2 and 17.

## **SWORD OF THE SPIRIT**

***Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. (Ephesians 6: 17 NIV)***

The word of God which is spiritual equipment for spiritual warfare is both an offensive weapon and protective armour. It is powerful, quick and sharper than any sword in the world. With the word of God, we can easily fight, defeat and defend ourselves against the false doctrines projected by the enemies through false prophets. When we speak the word of God from our mouths, it becomes a spiritual sword and with it, we cut the enemy into shreds. With the word of God, we can speak to every problem and see it solved.

Remember, man does not live on bread alone but also on the word of God (Matthew 4: 4). We should get into the habit of eating (studying) God's word so as to grow our spirit man and as such, we become spiritually powerful to defeat the enemies and defend ourselves against their deceit.

For Further Reading: John 1: 1-14, Hebrews 4: 12 and Revelation 19: 13-15.

## **THE MIGHTY NAME JESUS CHRIST**

***For this reason God raised Him to the highest place above and gave Him the name that is greater than any other name. And so, in honour of the name Jesus all beings in heaven, on earth, and in the world below will fall on their knees and all will openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2: 9-11 TEV)***

The name JESUS is a mighty weapon and we have a right to use it as His children. We are supposed to do all things in His Name. He gave us power and authority in His name when He said in Mark 16: 17-18 thus:

*... In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people and they will get well.*

Jesus is always present whenever we call His name. The enemy has to yield to the mighty Name of JESUS. There is nothing in heaven, on earth and beneath that can stand up at the mention of His Name. Every time the devil hears the name JESUS, he trembles.

For Further Reading: Matthew 18: 20, Luke 10: 17-20, John 14: 13-14 and Acts 4: 12.

## **THE TONGUE**

***Death and life are in the power of the tongue... (Proverbs 18: 21 KJV)***

The tongue we use for speaking is a very dangerous and deadly weapon that we have. It is a very powerful weapon which can be used to bring "life or death". We must use it wisely and with great caution, we must really watch what we speak over others and over ourselves.

We are to use the tongue to bring life to the things of the Lord and to our fellow man. On the other hand, we should use it to bring death to the enemies.

The tongue is a symbol of a sword and a bow used for shooting arrows. The tongue is as sharp as a sword and it is used as a bow for shooting arrows.

How is the tongue like a sharp sword and a bow for shooting arrows?

We use the tongue to speak isn't it? Yes! The words we speak out from our mouth through the aid of the tongue are sharp swords and arrows.

Words are things that we don't have a shortage of, they are a powerful offensive weapon that we have in our spiritual Arsenal. They can be used to strike and bind the enemies with.

Words can also be used to encourage others and ourselves. They can be used to bring death to the enemies and life to others and ourselves.

Words are sharp swords used for cutting the enemy and we are able to do this with the help of the tongue. Also our words are arrows used for shooting at the enemy and our tongues serves as a bow for shooting them. The words we speak can bring injury and wounds to the enemy that we are fighting against and they can bring healing to us and others.

Jesus made us to understand how powerful our words are when He said in Matthew 12: 37, thus:

*For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.*

So, let us be very careful and watch the words that we speak.

For Further Reading: Psalm 52: 2, 57: 4, 64: 3, Proverbs 15: 4, 18: 8, Isaiah 49: 2, 50: 4, Jeremiah 9: 3,8, 1Peter 3: 10 and revelation 19: 15.

## **ANOINTING**

***Do not touch my anointed ones... (Psalm 105: 15 NIV)***

The anointing of the Holy Spirit is both a weapon and armour. It is our secret weapon of spiritual warfare. Many people don't understand what the anointing is and what it is capable of doing.

The anointing of the Holy Spirit breaks all the chains of bondage and completely destroys it. As you minister to others, the anointing in and on your life destroys the chains of the enemy used against the people of God.

The anointing of the Holy Spirit is used for the following:

1. To preach good news (the word of God)
2. To free captives, those enslaved by sin
3. To enable the physically and spiritually blinded persons to see, etc.

For Further Reading: Isaiah 61: 1-3, Matthew 10: 7-8 and Luke 4: 18-19.

## **OUR LIGHT**

***Ye are the light of the world... (Matthew 5: 14. KJV)***



You, I and every other person who believe in Jesus Christ are the light of the world. Our light which is Jesus in us is a great weapon for spiritual warfare against the enemy. It is both a weapon and armour.

Jesus is the light in us; He protects and fights for us. He shines through us to those around us. When He shines through us, He exposes the enemy and chases away darkness.

Darkness symbolizes spiritual blindness or ignorance and also the kingdom of the devil is referred to as world of darkness. See Ephesians 6: 12.

The enemy doesn't like to have light around because it exposes his plans and lies that he uses against the people of God. He does everything possible to put out our light.

**Note:**

Whenever we sin, our light goes off and as such, the enemy gains advantage over us. It is wise to quickly reconcile with God when we have offended Him, so that the enemy would not gain the upper hand when they attack.

For Further Reading: Isaiah 49: 6, John 1: 4-5, 3: 20-21, 9: 5, Ephesians 5: 8-10 and 1John 1: 5-10.

## **ANGELS**

***And he answered, fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. (2 Kings 6: 16. KJV)***

We have Legions of heavenly angels as army of war whenever we need them. Whenever the enemies gather against you, call on the Lord to send His warring Angels and He will answer you just like He did for Elisha when the Arameans soldiers gathered against him. See 2 Kings 6: 8-23.

Satan and his army of darkness do not stand a chance with the Lord by our side. But he will still try to attack us and try to take us out until the end of time.

For Further Reading: Exodus 14: 19, 33: 2, 2 Kings 19: 35, 2 Chronicles 32: 21, Psalm 35: 5-6 and Acts 5: 17-24, 12: 1-11, 18-24.

## **FIRE OF GOD**

***Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. (1 Kings 18: 38. NIV)***

The fire of God which is also called “Holy Ghost Fire” is the greatest weapon we have in the Arsenal of God. It is both a weapon and armour.

The fire of God burns up and destroys the enemy. The enemy has no chance against this awesome and powerful weapon. It consumes every unclean thing. It becomes a destructive weapon when we attack the enemy with it and protective armour when we pray to God to make us a pillar of fire.

The fire of God does the following:

1. It purifies
2. It protects
3. It burns and consumes our enemies
4. It increases our passion of love for God
5. It impels us to speak the word of God boldly
6. The fire of God cleanses sin and refines us.

For Further Reading: Genesis 19: 24-25, Exodus 3: 2, Leviticus 9: 24, Numbers 9: 15-16, 11: 1-3, Deuteronomy 9: 3, 2 Kings 1: 9-15, Psalm 97: 3, Ezekiel 1: 4, Matthew 3: 11, Acts 2: 3-4 and Revelation 20: 9.

## **SNOW AND HAIL**

***And as the enemy was racing down the hill to Beth-Horon, the Lord destroyed them with a great hail storm that continued all the way to Azekah; in fact, more men died from the hail than by the swords of the Israelis. (Joshua 10: 11 TLB)***

Snow and hail is a very powerful weapon we have in the weapons room of God. It is used for mass destruction of the enemies. It is a very dangerous weapon against the enemy; it kills faster and has a wider coverage of destruction.

For Further Reading: Job 38: 22-23, Psalm 147: 16-17 and 148: 8.

## **FAITH**

***... Every child of God is able to defeat the world. And we win the victory over the world by means of our faith. (1 John 5: 4 TEV)***

Faith is a supernatural gift from God; it enables us to believe without doubting whatever God had revealed. It is powerful armour used to shield ourselves against the deceit of the enemy. Our faith in Jesus and in what He said breaks off the chains of doubt and unbelief and extinguishes all the flaming

arrows projected by the enemy. Our faith grows rapidly and stronger when we make the word of God a part of our daily thoughts.

Faith is so powerful that with little of it, we can move mountains. It is by our faith which the Lord has given to us that we overcome and have victory over the enemy. Faith does the following:

1. Faith opens the doors of impossibility i.e. it makes the impossible possible.
2. It unlocks the power of God that is in us
3. Faith uproots mountains and obstacles planted by the enemy
4. It shields us from the doubt and unbelief projected by the enemy
5. Faith helps us to receive the promises of God
6. It is by our faith that we receive miracles and healings.

For Further Reading: Matthew 21: 21-22, Mark 9: 23, 11: 22-24, Ephesians 6: 16, Hebrews 11.

## **FORGIVENESS**

***For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (Matthew 6: 14-15 KJV)***

Forgiveness is a very powerful weapon against sin. It is very effective in setting us free from the slavery chains of sin. It works when we forgive those who offend us and as such, our heavenly Father forgives us too when we ask Him for forgiveness. Remember in the Lord's Prayer that we say:

*... And forgive us our sins, just as we have forgiven those who have sinned against us. (Matthew 6: 12 TLB)*

Satan knows that if he can hurt us through the action or word of others, that there will always be a reaction to it. Our reaction determines whether or not we have our armour on and if we actually behave like Jesus. If we truly walk along the way of the Lord, our reaction will be on the positive side.

Jesus forgave His executioners when He said to His Father thus:

*Forgive them, Father! They don't know what they are doing ... (Luke 23: 34 TEV)*

They never knew that the enemy was doing his bad work through them. The enemy uses people all the time. We are to see the source of where it is coming from and realize that people are being used. Therefore, let us do to those who hurt us what our LORD did to those who accused Him.

### **Note:**

Two wrongs don't make it right!

For Further Reading: Acts 7: 60, Romans 12: 14-21, Ephesians 4: 31-32 and 1 Peter 3: 9.

## **LOVE**

***Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. (1 Peter 4: 8 NIV)***

Yes, love is a powerful weapon against sin. It prevents us from sin because when we truly love God and man the way we love ourselves, we won't do anything that will hurt them, we will always be at peace with God and our fellow man. When we love, we won't kill, steal, cheat, curse, etc.

Jesus conquered sin with Love by laying down His life for us on the cross at mount Calvary. He said:

*Greater love hath no man than this; that a man lay down his life for his friends. (John 15: 13 KJV)*

We are called to love those who hurt us because by so doing, we show them the love of Christ. It also reverses the end result that the enemy doesn't like i.e. it causes the heart of those who hurts us to change for the better when they see the person of Christ in us.

For Further Reading: Leviticus 19: 18, Song of Songs 8: 6-7, Matthew 5: 43-48, Luke 6: 27-36, John 13: 34-35, 1 Corinthians 13: 2, 16: 14 and 1 John 4: 7-21

## **SLING AND STONE**

***And so, without a sword, David defeated and killed Goliath with a sling and a stone! (1 Samuel 17: 50 TEV)***

Slings and Stones were among the most important weapons in an ancient army's arsenal. It is unclear when men first started slinging stones instead of throwing them. Yet, once known, it did not take long to learn that stones could be slung faster, farther and more accurately, than they could be thrown. Early slingers also found smoother, rounded stones were far more effective than any other shape.

Slings are generally made of single long strip of leather or woven wool, with a central "Pocket" for the stone. The length of a sling determines the farther its range i.e. the longer the sling, the longer its range and vice versa.

Sling and Stone as a weapon for spiritual warfare appears more of physical than spiritual, given the fact that I am writing about spiritual weapons. But by the leading of the Holy Spirit, I was informed that what Slings and Stones are to the Benjamites of Israel is what the Holy Rosary is to Catholic Christians.

The founder of the Rosary was Saint Dominic during the time that the Albigensian heresy was devastating the Christian Faith. It was one of Saint Dominic's disciples, Alan de la Roche who began to establish Rosary confraternities to promote the praying of the Rosary. Tradition has it that the Blessed Mother herself asked for the practice as an antidote for heresy and sin.

Rosary means a crown of roses, a spiritual bouquet given to the blessed Mother. It is also, in a general sense, a form of chaplet or corona (crown), of which there are many varieties in the church.

The Rosary is made of strings, beads, a crucifix and a medal. It becomes holy when blessed by a priest. The Holy Rosary is considered a perfect prayer because within it lays the awesome story of our Salvation. With the Rosary in fact we meditate on the mysteries of the Incarnation and Redemption (Joyful, the light, the sorrow and the glory) of Jesus and Mary, represented by the decades. Each Mystery has a set of five decades.

The Joyful Mystery which has five decades; the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity, the Presentation of Jesus in the temple and the Finding of Jesus in the temple helps to explain the mystery surrounding the contest between David and Goliath.

*He took his shepherd's stick and he picked up Five Smooth Stones from the stream and put them in his bag. With his sling ready, he went out to meet Goliath...*

*He put his hand into his bag and took out a stone, which he slung at Goliath. It hit him on the forehead and broke his skull, and Goliath fell face downwards on the ground. (1 Samuel 17: 40 and 49 TEV)*

The five stones David picked from the stream represents the five decades of the joyful Mystery. The first stone he slung at Goliath represents the first decade of the Joyful Mystery which is the Annunciation of the coming of the Saviour of the world, the King of kings, of which His kingdom will have no end. This was confirmed when Nathan the prophet announced to David and when Angel Gabriel announced to Mary thus:

*Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever. (2 Samuel 7: 16 NIV)*

*You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of His Father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, His kingdom will never end. (Luke 1: 31-33 NIV)*

Believe it or not, the Holy Rosary is a spiritual form of Sling and Stone, it is very powerful weapon and armour against evil. The Holy Rosary does the following when prayed meditatively i.e. meditating on the Mysteries:

1. It gradually gives us a perfect knowledge of Jesus Christ
2. It purifies our souls, washing away sin
3. It gives us victory over all our enemies
4. It makes it easy for us to practice virtue
5. It enriches us with graces and merits
6. It supplies us with what is needed to pay all our debts to God and to our fellow man
7. It obtains all kinds of graces for us from Almighty God
8. Those who are fettered have their bonds broken
9. Those who weep find happiness
10. The dead (the Holy Souls) have their pains eased by suffrages.

Finally, our Blessed mother the Queen of heaven and earth made 15 promises to those who recite the Holy Rosary thus:

1. Whoever shall faithfully serve me by the recitation of the Rosary, shall receive signal graces.
2. I promise my special protection and the greatest graces to all those who shall recite the Rosary
3. The Rosary shall be a powerful armour against hell, it will destroy vice, decrease sin and defeat heresies
4. It will cause virtue and good to flourish, it will obtain for souls the abundant mercy of God, it will withdraw the hearts of people from the love of the world and its vanities, and will lift them to the desire of eternal things. Oh, that souls would sanctify themselves by this means
5. The soul which recommends itself to me by the recitation of the Rosary shall not perish.
6. Whoever shall recite the Rosary devoutly, applying himself to the consideration of its sacred Mysteries shall never be conquered by misfortune. God will not chastise him in His justice, he shall not perish by an un-provided death, if he be just, he shall remain in the grace of God, and become worthy of eternal life.
7. Whoever shall have a true devotion for the Rosary shall not die without the Sacrament of the church
8. Those who are faithful to recite the Rosary shall have during their life and at their death the light of God and the plenitude of His graces; at the moment of death they shall participate in the merits of the Saints in paradise.
9. I shall deliver from Purgatory those who have been devoted to the Rosary.
10. The faithful children of the Rosary shall merit a high degree of glory in heaven
11. You shall obtain all you ask of me by the recitation of the Rosary.
12. All those who propagate the Holy Rosary shall be aided by me in their necessities.
13. I have obtained from my Divine Son that all the advocates of the Rosary shall have for intercessors the entire celestial court during their life and at the hour of death.
14. All who recite the Rosary are my children, and brothers and sisters of my Son, Jesus Christ
15. Devotion of my Rosary is a great sign of predestination (Given to St. Dominic and Blessed Alan)

For Further Reading:

### **Sling and Stones**

Judges 20: 16, 1 Samuel 17: 40-51, 2 Kings 3: 24-25, 1 Chronicles 12: 1-2, 2 Chronicles 26: 13-14, Job 41: 28 and Zechariah 9: 15

### **Key Rosary Prayers**

Prayer to the Holy Spirit – Psalm 104: 30, Acts 2: 3-4, 17-18

The Apostle's Creed – Acts 2: 22-37, 1 Peter 3: 18-22

The Glory be – Ephesians 3: 20-21

The Lord's Prayer – Matthew 6: 9-13

The Hail Mary – Luke 1: 28, 41-42

### **The Four Mysteries**

#### **1. Joyful Mystery:**

The Annunciation – Luke 1: 31-33

The Visitation – Luke 1: 39-41

The Nativity – Luke 2: 5-7

The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple – Luke 2: 21-40

The Finding of Jesus in the Temple – Luke 2: 42-52

## **2. Mystery of Light:**

The Baptism of Jesus – Matthew 3: 13-17

The manifestation of Jesus at the wedding feast in Cana – John 2: 1-11

The proclamation of His Kingdom – Matthew 4: 12-17

The transfiguration of Jesus – Matthew 17: 1-9

The institution of the Holy Eucharist – Luke 22: 19-20

## **3. Sorrowful Mystery:**

The prayer and agony of Jesus – Luke 22: 39-46

The scourging of Jesus – Matthew 27: 26

Jesus is crowned with thorns – Matthew 27: 27-31

Jesus carried His cross – John 19: 16-17

The crucifixion and death of Jesus – John 19: 28-30

## **4. Glorious Mystery:**

The resurrection of Jesus – John 20: 1-18

The ascension of Jesus – Luke 24: 50-53, Acts 1: 9-11

The descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles – Acts 2: 1-12

The assumption of Mary body and soul into heaven – Revelation 12: 14

The coronation of Mary as Queen of heaven and earth and the glory of all Saints – Revelation 7: 9-17, 12: 1-11, 19: 7-8, 22: 1-6, Psalm 149: 4-9.

We have known and seen some of the Spiritual weapons and armours we as Christians have at our disposal, even the Catholic Christians are blessed with many more.

To be able to know when and how to use these spiritual weapons and armours effectively; we will need the directives of the third Person of the Blessed Trinity (the Holy Spirit). Without Him, these weapons and armours won't do us any good.

## **THE HOLY SPIRIT**

***He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine and shall show it unto you.***

***All things that the Father hath are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you. (John 16: 14-15 KJV)***

Without the help of the Holy Spirit, we cannot know how, when and what weapon and/or armour to make use of during spiritual battles. We need the Holy Spirit in our lives if we are to achieve victory in all things.

The Holy Spirit helps us in every area we allow Him to. He is a revealer; He reveals things to us, including the plans of the enemy. The Holy Spirit gives us the right words to speak, He gives advices on how to operate and apply those weapons and armours. The Holy Spirit is the greatest factor in all that we do for the Lord and He increases the odds in our favour during our fight against the enemy. He is ready at all times and will always help us if we allow Him to.

## **TESTIMONY OF HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKS**

This testimony was given by a brother nicknamed Dumdum during my village annual fasting and prayer convention held every third Saturday of March at my father's compound.

When it was time for testimony, he was counted among those for testimony and he gave this testimony:

He told us that a report got to the charismatic group of St. Leo's Catholic Church Ikeja that there was an evil tree at a particular residence in Ikeja which had been taking the lives of children most especially.

The case was investigated and the following was discovered:

- ❖ That the tree was planted and worshiped by the forefathers of the current landlord and that sacrifices were been offered to the tree.
- ❖ That it had been killing people living there both new and old tenants alike because the present landlord failed to offer sacrifices to it.
- ❖ That the current landlord knew about it and had secretly sort all means to subdue and render the tree powerless but to no avail and
- ❖ That he finally broke his silence and revealed the secret behind all the deaths in the compound when the tree killed his own child.

With all the above findings, the charismatic group sprung into action, the Holy Spirit revealed to them what is to be done. He told them (both the tenants and the charismatic representatives) to fast and pray



for over a particular period of time which I did not take note of and that during the fasting and prayer assignment, the married ones should not make love to their spouse.

After the fasting and prayer assignment, it was then the final day of battle. Before the battle, it was announced that those who did not do the fasting and prayer as it was agreed should go in doors while those who did it well should remain. After the announcement, only three people remained two brothers and a sister. Others went indoors and peeped through their windows.

The remaining three started with praise and worship and while they were singing and praising God, one of the brothers was busy cutting the tree with a cutlass. As he was cutting the tree, it bled. The tree resisted while the cutting continued till the Holy Spirit intervened by revealing to the sister among them that why are they battling physically with the tree, that it is a spiritual fight and that it should be fought spiritually. He told them through the sister that they should shout "Holy Ghost Fire" 100 times. At that, they began to shout "Holy Ghost Fire" and at the hundredth time, the tree uprooted and fell down. It was victory.

All the residents of the house saw all that happened and marveled at the power of God. Even the landlord who was formerly a Muslim became a Christian from that day and till today, he still worship at St. Leo's Catholic church Ikeja.

Beloved reader, we can't do without the Holy Spirit, He is the teacher we have presently and having Him around us always, means obeying God's command, doing His will and being in His presence.

We are the battle axe of the Lord, to be used by Him to destroy the enemy. It is time to fight with all that the good LORD has given us!

God be with us, Amen!

**To support the Author and encourage him, please pay whatever your heart tells you, to the following bank account:**

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## CHAPTER 6

### BATTLE FOR SUPREMACY – GOOD VERSUS EVIL

And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil, and satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him...

And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. (Revelation 12: 7-17 KJV)

In the very beginning was a kingdom, the kingdom of God. His kingdom had a Queen, the mother of the King of kings, for without a Queen mother, the kingdom of God won't be complete. She is clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and she had a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was created to be the mother of all, the mother of those who believe in her Son the King of kings (JESUS CHRIST). Her name is Mary the mother of Jesus Christ. See Revelation 12: 1-6.

In God's kingdom were all kinds of Angels and creatures created by Him. He created the angels to exercise free will, in other words, they were created to make decisions without the influence of anybody except theirs. Of all the Angels and creatures created, God made satan the ruling prince of the celestial order. He ruled over the seraphim, cherubim, powers and archangels. In some senses, he was like the second in command after GOD.

Like the saying goes, "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely". As time passes by, satan grew more in greed for power, pride and envy. Like the meaning of his name "the accuser", he accuses his fellow Angels in God's presence in order to gain more favour from God which he never had because he had been completely favoured according to God's wisdom. He accuses falsely but God who is all knowing, knew his intent. Even those whom he was right about their fault or mistake if at all there was any, was shown mercy by God. Satan thought this character of God (being merciful) to be God's weakness and that after all God is not all knowing because if He was all knowing, He would have known about the faults and mistakes of other Angels and as such punish them. But God being highly merciful over looked their faults or mistakes and from thence on, he plotted to overthrow God.

Satan's anger, greed for power, pride and jealousy grew even more when he discovered in the Divine plan that a kingdom will be created on earth starting from the garden of Eden and will be ruled by the son of god as king, with Angels at his service. His anger, greed, pride and jealousy consumed him after this discovery to the point that he thought himself a better ruler or king than God his creator and as such convinced himself that he could overthrow God.

Satan began his plot against God by campaigning for support, deceiving other Angels and creatures, telling them that God intends to make them serve man, whom was made of clay. He filled them with pride instead of humility. They failed to understand that the greatest is the one who serves as it was written in God's word. See Mark 9: 35. Also they failed to enquire from God for a better understanding; instead they acted according to their freewill.

However, satan managed to win over to his side a third of all the Angels and creatures created by god. While he was on campaign drive deceiving his fellow angels, he made other plans to prevent the manifestation of God's will, in other words, he worked against God's will, doing his instead. He chose to reject God as his creator.

God who was fully aware of all that was going on still went ahead with His Divine plan. He created the heavens and the earth. While God's creation was going on, satan was busy working against it.

On the third day of God's creation on earth, He planted trees that bear fruits with seeds in them, according to their various kinds. God looked and saw that they were all good. See Genesis 1: 11-13.

At night fall, satan paid visit to the site where God was preparing a garden for man and planted his own seed also at the center of the garden where God had planted the seed of the tree of life. After planting his, he left to carry out other evil plans of his.

At this point, let me ask you a question: who do you think planted the seed of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? GOD/Satan?

To be able to answer the above question properly, we need to read what Jesus taught about the kingdom of heaven thus:

***... The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.***

***The owner's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?'***

***"An enemy did this," he replied. The servants asked him, 'do you want us to go and pull them up?'***

***'No,' he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters first collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned, then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.'" (Matthew 13: 24-30 NIV)***

From the above parable, we could deduce that satan was responsible for planting the seed of the knowledge of good and evil. To explain this further, let us read Genesis 1: 11-13, 29 and 2: 9.

***Then God said, "let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds". And it was so. The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruits with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning- the third day.***

***Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food..."***

***And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground-trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.***

God who is loving and merciful created all kinds of trees, trees bearing fruits with seeds in them. He checked after creating and found out that what He created was good. Also a tree bearing fruit with seed in it symbolizes reproduction, that is, God created all kinds of trees bearing fruits with seeds in them so that they will continue to produce more trees of their kind, bearing fruits with seed in them throughout the generations. However, a tree whose fruits are seedless is a temporary tree, with time it will cease to exist.

If it was God who planted the seed of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, why will He contradict Himself after saying that all the trees he planted was good for food and later commanding and telling Adam that he was free to eat from any tree in the garden but he shouldn't eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when he eats of it, he will surely die? If this is the case, then God would no longer be a perfect God because He had made a mistake in creating what wasn't good for food, after saying in Genesis 1: 29, that: every seed bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it would be as food for us. But since God is perfect, this boils down to the fact that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil wasn't planted by God because its fruit was seedless and therefore not good for food. Please read Genesis 1: 29 and 2: 9 carefully.

Obviously, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was only pleasing to the eyes but wasn't good for food because its fruit was seedless and can't reproduce which symbolizes "death". If it was good, God wouldn't have singled it out as bad. God categorically stated the difference between the trees He planted and the tree that was planted by the enemy, when He told Adam and Eve that they are free to eat of every seed-bearing plant and of every tree that has fruit, with seed in it. Since Adam and Eve can't eat the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, it therefore means that its fruit is not with seed in it and its seedless fruit means death.

Now, who do you think planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? I believe you are finally convinced that it was planted by satan and not God. Read Matthew 13: 35-43.

## **THE BATTLE IN HEAVEN**

After he had planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he left to continue his campaign for support and conspired to overthrow God.

Satan was able to deceive a third of all the angels and creatures created by God. In numbers, they were estimated to be 133,306,668 angels according to the Bishop of Tusculum (C. 1273), and this was reaffirmed by Alphonso de Spina (C. 1460) during the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

Having deceived a large number of angels, he felt that over throwing God would be possible. With large support of angels on his side, he engaged the armies of God, led by Archangel Michael.

The battle in heaven was so severe and bloody that even satan and his angels were defeated and he was captured.

Satan had the last opportunity to obtain divine mercy from god who is rich in love and mercy, when he was brought before god for judgment, but he blew it away, out of pride.

When judgment commenced, all the angels who witnessed the misdeeds of satan, including those he approached but refused to join his army of rebels were summoned to testify. They testified and satan was found guilty of every accusations. He was asked to prove his innocence of the charges against him. Knowing fully well that he was guilty of all the charges and that if he accepts his fault and pleads for mercy, it will be shown to him but he would lose his position as part of the punishments to serve. See

Matthew 5: 19. Instead of humbling himself, accepting defeat and plead for forgiveness, he proudly chose to deny all the accusations and claimed to be innocent.

His denial and claim to be innocent, prompted series of questions which he couldn't defend like: "if you are innocent, why did you wage war against the heavenly throne?" satan replied, "I expected that I would be attacked and arrested." Then he was asked another thus: "how can somebody who is innocent be anticipating attack and arrest?" this question made him dumb for some minutes. At this point, he blew every chance of gaining divine mercy because he allowed his pride to overwhelm him and he began to curse, threaten and blaspheme.

When satan was through with his cursing, threatening and blaspheming, then came God's verdict which states that satan will be banished from His kingdom and towards the end of days, he will be chained and locked up in Abyss for a thousand years, then he will be thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where he will be tormented day and night forever and ever. At this, satan and his angels were hurled to the earth. They lost their place in God's kingdom forever.

## **THE DOWNFALL OF MAN**

The earth and the sea became satan's new home. Filled with fury because he had only a short period of time to accomplish his evil intentions, he wasted no time at all. He immediately paid visit to the Garden at Eden, to see if his plan had worked. He knew that if man should eat from his tree, he would gain control over man and the earth.

When he got to the Garden at Eden, he discovered to his greatest disappointment that Adam and Eve had not eaten from his tree. He knew because God's covering was still on them. He paused for a while pondering within: "why haven't Adam and Eve eaten from my tree yet? May be God told them not to eat from it." With these thoughts, he planned on how to make Adam and Eve eat his fruit.

Satan was a clever being; he made use of his knowledge of the account of creation. He knew that Eve was created weaker than Adam, and then he reasoned that it would be easier to deceive the woman than the man. He began to monitor her movement till the time Eve was suddenly walking towards the center of the Garden. Immediately he noticed that she was approaching the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he entered the serpent. Before this, he had thought it to be wise that it would be easier to believe someone whom had been known than a total stranger, for he was a stranger and that was why he used the serpent.

After he had entered the serpent which is large enough in size to cover a tree, he stood between the tree of life and the tree of death. He covered the tree of life with the size of the serpent to prevent Eve from seeing the fruits of the tree of life, and then he asked Eve, in order to clear any doubt, if God actually told them not to eat from his tree.

After exchanging greetings, he asked: "Did God truly say, 'you must not eat from any tree in the Garden'?" see Genesis 3: 1. Unsuspecting Eve thought that she was discussing with a member of the fold and wanting to put God's instruction right, promptly answered the serpent thus: "we may eat fruit from

any tree in the Garden but actually, God told us not to eat the fruit of this tree or even touch it; that when we do, we will surely die.” Read Genesis 3: 2-3.

Indeed, satan suspected that God was behind their refusal to eat from his tree, though he wanted to know exactly what God told them which deterred them for quite a while, that was why he started by asking if God actually told them not to eat from any tree in the Garden. Remember, God told them that surely they would die if they should eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

So, at the answer of Eve, he smiled disarmingly, then in a more re-assuring tone, he seriously told Eve: “surely you will not die, for God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like Him, knowing good and evil.” This implies that God is a liar, God is not sincere and God is scared of having rival, in other words, that God is never who they think He is and that the only way to find out if these facts are true is by eating from the tree which God forbids.

Considering the statements of the serpent, Eve for the first time, began to admire the tree. She noticed that the fruit was pleasing to the eyes and felt that it could be good for food; also she desired to gain wisdom. She began to ponder within herself “how can a tree as beautiful as this cause death? After all, death could be something bad. But God Himself acknowledged that everything He created was good!” Eve never knew that there was an enemy (satan) seeking their downfall, even if she knew, satan pretended to be a friend.

Her pondering became so obvious that she was in a dilemma. Immediately satan noticed it, he plucked a fruit from the tree and ate in order to clear her of any doubt. At this point, Eve decided to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

***The woman saw how beautiful the tree was and how good its fruit would be to eat, and she thought how wonderful it would be to become wise. So she took some of the fruit and ate it... (Genesis 3: 6 TEV)***

Eve didn't eat one but more than one fruit because the taste was sweet. During this time, the consequence of Eve's action had not dawned on her. She beckoned on Adam her husband to come so she could tell him her latest discovery.

When Adam approached her, he noticed that his wife was holding the fruit of the forbidden tree, suddenly his voice screamed out in fear as he asked his wife: “Are those not the fruits of the forbidden tree which you are holding?” “Truly they are the fruits of the forbidden tree!” replied Eve. She said further: “take these, they are yours, I have eaten mine, and I found out truly that it was good for food.”

Adam was not concerned much about whether the fruit of the forbidden tree was good for food or not, what occupied his thoughts more was what God told them about the tree. At the moment, what God told them about the tree re-echoed in his ears. But looking at his wife, he noticed that she changed in facial appearance, voice and behaviour. Then he thought within himself: “but she did not experience anything bad, how come? It seems the fruit is really good after all!” finally, he gave in and ate all that was given to him by Eve.

Immediately Adam finished eating, their eyes opened. For the first time, they realized that they were naked. Their nakedness was an ugly sight to behold, so they made covering for themselves using fig leaves. Read Genesis 3: 7.

***Finally, build up your strength in union with the Lord and by means of His mighty power. Put on all the armour that God gives you, so that you will be able to stand up against the devil's evil tricks (Ephesians 6: 10-11 TEV)***

There are three Eras as regards the battle between good and evil on earth, they include:

1. The era of God the Father: this era was characterized mainly of physical battles between flesh and flesh, with the use of physical weapons but having spiritual implication.
2. The era of God the Son: this era was characterized mainly of spiritual battles between man and the devil, using spiritual weapons.
3. The era of God the Holy Spirit: this era is characterized of both physical and spiritual battles between the offspring of Jesus Christ and the offspring of satan.

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BATTLE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL ON EARTH**

The fall of man marked the beginning of the battle between good and evil on earth.

God knowing fully well that Adam and Eve had eaten from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, came down to them. When they heard the sound of His footsteps, they ran away and hid from the LORD God. The LORD God called Adam, but Adam replied in the negative that he cannot heed God's call because he was naked and afraid. God asked him: "who told you that you are naked? Did you eat the fruit of the tree I forbid you not to eat from?" see Genesis 3: 11. Adam replied putting the blame on Eve: "it was the woman you put here with me – she gave me some fruits from the tree, and I ate it." Genesis 3: 12.

Then the LORD God said to the woman: "why did you give to Adam the fruit of the forbidden tree to eat?" Eve replied, shifting the blame to the serpent: "the serpent tricked me, and I ate the fruit." Genesis 3: 13.

The LORD God turned to the serpent and said: "you will be punished for this; you alone of all the animals must bear this curse: from today on you will crawl on your belly, and you will have to eat dust as long as you live. I will put enmity between you and the woman, her offspring and your offspring will always be enemies. Her offspring will crush your head, and you will bite her offspring's heel"

The above pronouncement of God on the serpent (satan) marked the beginning of the battle between good and evil on earth. Also in the same pronouncement, God fore told His helping hand in the incarnation and redemption of His Son Jesus Christ, who will always defeat satan and the victory of those who will believe in His Son Jesus Christ.

The woman and the man weren't left without their own punishment. To the woman, God said: "I will greatly increase your pains in child bearing, with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be



for your husband, and he will rule over you.” And to the man, God said: “because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, you must not eat of it; cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken, for dust you are and to dust you will return.” Genesis 3: 16-19.

## CONSEQUENCES OF THE DOWNFALL OF MAN

Whenever we sin against or disobey God, there is always a consequence. Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating the fruit of the forbidden tree and the following was the result:

- ❖ **Death:** Satan cannot give a perfect gift and besides that, the creation of man was part of the reasons he fell and ever since then, he had sworn to destroy man. Know it today that God created man to live forever which was why He planted the tree of life but man acting on the gift of free will, chose death which is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Now, who can live beyond 120 years? None! Except by God’s grace.
- ❖ **Hardship:** man was created not to work much, his top priority was to commune with God and whenever he feels hungry, he goes to any tree approved by God to eat and life goes on. But when man disobeyed God, he lost the free economy created by God and he got hardship (economic crisis) for obeying Satan. Instead of the trees to work and produce food, man will have to toil, struggle and suffer before he could eat.
- ❖ **Pain and Sickness:** their disobedience brought about pains and illnesses. Think of it, don’t we feel pain today? Namely: back pain, tooth aches, neck pain, etc. also there are various types and kinds of diseases today all brought about by man’s disobedience.
- ❖ **Loss of Power and Authority:** Satan never wanted to serve man, he wanted to control and rule over man and this was part of the reasons he lost his place in the kingdom of God forever. Part of his plan was to bring man under his control and rule, so when man fell through his deceit, he gained power and authority over man and over the earth. Initially, man was given power and authority over all creatures and over the earth by God but they lost it to Satan because they obeyed him and by so doing, disobeyed God. For disobeying God, they lost God’s covering which is the Spirit of God that gives them power and authority over the whole earth.
- ❖ **War:** war as we know it, isn’t a joyful or a positive thing; it brings death, pains, sorrows, etc. the fall of man marked the beginning of both physical and spiritual warfare on earth, which will end after the era of the Holy Spirit. This leads us to the next part of this chapter.

We have seen the consequences of disobeying God’s will which many of us still suffer today especially the unbelievers. Directly or indirectly, every sin has its consequence and the consequences are painful, ugly and sorrowful. Therefore, it is wise to trust and obey God for there is no other way to happiness except to trust and obey God. Read Deuteronomy 28.

Now let us look at the three Eras in the Bible.

## THE THREE BIBLICAL ERAS

There are three major eras in the bible which includes:

1. The era of God the Father
2. The era of God the Son and
3. The era of God the Holy Spirit.

Let us take them one at a time:

### **The Era of GOD the FATHER**

The era of God the Father is characterized mainly of physicality, that is the battle between good and evil is fought between man and his fellow man. It involves the use of physical war weapons and armours but having its spiritual implications. We will take a look at some bible passages to further explain this:

*The valley was full of tar pits, and when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah tried to run away from the battle, they fell into the pits, but the other three kings escaped to the mountains. The four kings took everything in Sodom and Gomorrah, including the food, and went away. Lot, Abram's nephew, was living in Sodom, so they took him and all his possessions.*

*When Abram heard that his nephew had been captured, he called together all the fighting men in his camp, 318 in all, and pursued the four kings all the way to Dan. There he divided his men into groups, attacked the enemy by night, and defeated them. He chased them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus, and recovered the loot that had been taken. He also brought back his nephew Lot and his possessions, together with the women and the other prisoners. (Genesis 14: 10-12, 14-16 TEV)*

Now, let's explain it from a spiritual perspective: we all know that Abraham was right before God, he obeyed God in all things. If we like Abraham should obey God and do His will at all times, we will be able to do battle with little effort at the enemy's camp and victory will always be ours because we obeyed and did the will of the Alpha and the Omega (God who is the beginning and the end).

Just like Abraham gathered 318 trained men born in his household to attack four kings and their armies, we will gather the spiritual armours and weapons provided to us by God and do battle at the enemy's camp.

After Abraham had defeated the four kings, he recovered and restored all the stolen goods to those who own them and brought back his relative Lot and his possession, together with the women and the other people. Same thing applies in our spiritual lives when we are right in God's sight, we will defeat our enemies, free our fellow brothers and sisters from captivity and restore all their spiritual and material blessings stolen from them by the enemy.

Remember, to be victorious at all times means to always trust, obey and do God's will. Let us see a situation where by we disobey God:

*But if you will not listen to me and carry out all these commands, and if you reject my decrees and abhor my laws and fail to carry out all my commands and so violate my covenant, then I will do this to you: I will bring upon you sudden terror, wasting diseases and fever that will destroy your sight and drain away*

*your life. You will plant seed in vain, because your enemies will eat it. I will set my face against you so that you will be defeated by your enemies, those who hate you will rule over you and you will flee even when no one is pursuing you. (Leviticus 26: 14-17 NIV)*

Whenever the Israelites sinned or disobeyed God, He abandoned them and as such, they were left exposed to their enemies (other neighbouring nations) who took advantage of their fall. Their enemies would battle them and defeat them, taking them into captivity to become slaves, also their properties or possessions are lost to their enemies.

It is only by God's love and mercy that they are saved, especially when they cried to the LORD for help. Same happens to us when we sinned against God. Know it today that we are God's temples and that He dwells in us. When we sin, He would abandon us because we are unclean and as such, we would be left exposed to the enemies who come in to torment us by bringing untold hardship upon us. They steal our blessing, possessions or properties and then we fall under their control and rule as slaves. Read 1 Samuel 15: 10-11 and 16: 14, 1 Corinthians 3: 16-17 and 2 Corinthians 6: 16-17. But if we stick to God, obeying all His commands, no harm will befall us (Psalm 91: 9-10).

It is wise that we ask for forgiveness immediately we fall so that our

Sorrows won't be multiplied, see Leviticus 26: 18-39. If we humble ourselves before Him and confess our sins, God who is rich in love and mercy will listen and set us free. See Leviticus 26: 40-43 and Ezekiel 18: 21-23.

The following bible references are more examples of physical battles during the era of God the Father:

- ❖ Joshua 6, 7, 8: 1-29
- ❖ Judges 2: 10-23 & 3
- ❖ 1 Kings 22: 1-38
- ❖ 2 Kings 24 & 25
- ❖ 2 Chronicles 20: 1-30, 24: 17-25 and 25: 1-24
- ❖ Nehemiah 9, EST.

One common thing among the three biblical eras is that they promise something very special, something of great benefit to all. The era of God the Father promised us a Saviour, a mighty warrior Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit (the Helper and Comforter). Read Isaiah 7: 14, 9: 6-7, Joel 2: 28-29 and Zechariah 12: 10. They taught us the best ways to do battle against our enemies. This leads us to the next era.

### **The Era of GOD the Son**

The era of God the Son was the era of our Lord Jesus Christ. His era was characterized more of spiritual battles between man and evil spirit, involving spiritual weapons. During His era, He taught us how to prepare for and do battle by what He did, what He taught and the corrections He made.

*Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"*

*Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness" then John consented.*

*As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on Him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is My Son, whom I love, with Him I am well pleased." (Matthew 3: 13-16 NIV)*

Before Jesus started battle, He did baptism, though He wasn't in need of it, but He did it to teach us our first step. This His action taught us that if we are to succeed in the battle between good and evil, we must first of all, clean or wash ourselves of every sin that is in us so that we may not be found wanting or lacking when the enemy attacks. When we humble ourselves before God and confess our sins, he would forgive us and accept us as sons and daughters, and then His Spirit dwells in us.

After we have received the Spirit of God and have been accepted as sons and daughters, the next step follows, which is the training proper. This training is best received in His presence and it is continuous i.e. having quiet time in God's presence always at a specified time. Jesus went to the desert, a secluded place to commune with God after His baptism:

*Then the Spirit led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After spending 40 days and nights in God's presence without food, He became hungry. Then the devil came to Him and said, "If you are God's Son, order these stones to turn into bread." Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 8:3 in reply thus: "man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."*

*Then the devil took Jesus to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the highest point of the temple and said to Him, "if you are God's Son, throw Yourself down, for the bible says in Psalm 91: 11-12 that; "God will put His angels in charge of You to protect You from wherever You go. They will hold You up with their hands to keep You from hurting Your feet on the stones." Jesus replied by quoting Deuteronomy 6: 16 which says; "Do not put the Lord your God to the test."*

*Then the devil took Jesus to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "all this I will give You," said the devil, "if You will bow down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Go away satan! For the bible says, "Worship the Lord your God and serve only Him!" (Deuteronomy 6: 13)*

*Then the devil left Jesus until an opportune time and angels came and helped Him. (Matthew 4: 1-11)*

The above victory of Christ taught us how important it is to be well groomed in the word of God. He clearly stated the usefulness of God's word when He said "man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." While satan was tempting and trying to deceive Him by quoting the bible, Jesus also quoted the word of God to counter his deceit till He defeated satan. Beware of false prophets, study your bible always.

Jesus taught us that the word of God is a spiritual weapon against the tricks and deceit of satan and to use it very effectively means that we must always study the word of God just like how we eat food every day.

Studying the word of God everyday is our second stage in preparation for the battle between good and evil after we have repented of our sins. The second stage or step is where we receive military training, we gain many hidden knowledge about God in this stage, also we are taught by the Spirit of God how the enemy operates and how to defend ourselves and attack the enemy, using the spiritual armours and weapons provided to us by God. At this stage, we are taught how to identify who the enemy is.

Having a personal communion with God everyday at a specified period of time which is done in stage two is called Holy Ghost school. See chapter seven for more detail explanation of Holy Ghost school. In this stage, we receive our military training directly from the Spirit of God. At this stage, we are fed by God on His words which are spiritual food that enables our spirit man to grow in power and authority over our enemies.

Where should we commune with God? God is Omni-present, meaning that God is everywhere. Since God is everywhere, it means that we could commune with Him at any given point in time wherever we find ourselves at home, at our places of work, at school, at the church, est. It is best to commune with God at a secluded place, a place free of people, noise and distractions, just like how Jesus did His by going to the desert. Having a personal communion with God alone in your room is also better. Read Luke 4: 42 and 5: 16.

**Note:**

Having a personal communion with God is a continuous process because our spiritual growth is in stages and since we are always in battle, we will always need renewal of spiritual strength and spiritual strategies which we receive in God's presence.

While we are receiving training in god's presence, the Spirit of God introduces the third stage which is called spiritual test. At this stage, satan is allowed to attack us, like how the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the desert to be attacked. If we overcome satan, we will be promoted to the next stage but if we are defeated by satan, we will have to repeat all over starting from stage one (repentance stage) until we have succeeded in defeating satan. Stage three is continuous because satan never gives up until we have left this world.

When we have defeated satan and have overcome sin in the third stage, the Spirit of God then takes us to the fourth stage which is the fruit bearing stage. At this stage, the battle between good and evil is fierce; it involves the use of more spiritual armours and weapons. At this stage, we battle satan and his armies over the souls of our brothers and sisters who have been held captive and tormented by sin and evil spirits respectively. Jesus did the same after He defeated satan in stage three, He moved to the fourth stage and declared thus:

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has chosen Me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind; to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save His people. (Luke 4: 18-19 TEV)*

Below are some bible references of spiritual battles fought by our Lord Jesus Christ:

1. Matthew 4: 23-25 (Jesus preaches and heals the sick)

2. Matthew 8: 14-17 (Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law)
3. Matthew 9: 27-33 (Jesus heals the blind and mute)
4. Mark 1: 21-28 (Jesus drives out an evil spirit)
5. Mark 5: 21-43 (Jesus gave life to a dead girl and healed a sick woman)
6. Mark 9: 14-29 (Jesus healed a boy with an evil spirit)
7. Luke 8: 26-39 (Jesus healed a demon-possessed man)
8. Luke 13: 10-17 (Jesus healed a crippled woman)
9. Luke 18: 35-43 (Jesus gave sight to blind Bartimaeus)
10. John 4: 46-54 (Jesus heals the official's son)
11. John 9: 1-12 (Jesus heals a man born blind)
12. John 11: 38-44 (Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead)

The fifth stage is the final stage called reward stage. We step into this stage when we die in a state of grace. In this stage, we are made perfect and rewarded by God based on our earthly achievements in fulfilling God's will. See Matthew 16: 27, Revelation 2: 7, 10, 17, 23 & 26-28. While we await our entry into stage five, we can confidently say like Saint Paul, knowing fully well that we are obeying God's commands thus:

*For I am already being poured out; like a drink offering and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing (2 Timothy 4: 6-8 NIV)*

The era of Jesus marked the fulfillment of God's divine curse on satan. He demonstrated to us on the cross at mount Calvary the depth of His Love and Mercy for us. His era brought salvation to all mankind. Jesus fought a great battle for all (both the living and the dead), He conquered the prince of this world and restored our lost glory, that whoever believes in Him shall have eternal life and shall have power and authority over satan and his armies. He conquered death and hades for they had no power over Him.

Jesus conquered satan, death and hades using the following spiritual weapons:

- ❖ Love
- ❖ Mercy
- ❖ Praise and Worship
- ❖ Prayer
- ❖ Light
- ❖ Word of God
- ❖ Blood and water

Let's see how it all happened: it all began on a Thursday morning, the first day of the feast of unleavened bread sequel to the feast of Passover, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb.

His disciples asked Him where would be better for them to make preparations for Him to eat the Passover. So He sent two of His disciples into the city (Peter and John) to meet a man carrying a jar of

water, who will lead them to the man who owns the place where Jesus and His disciples will eat the Passover. They went and did exactly what the LORD instructed them. They met the owner of the house, who showed them a large upper room, furnished and ready.

In the evening of that same day being Thursday, Jesus and His disciples arrived at the place prepared for them. While they were eating at the table, Jesus said "I tell you the truth; one of you will betray Me." They became unhappy and one after the other, they asked "is it me?" When Judas asked, the LORD replied: "Yes it is you."

They were still eating when Jesus took bread, gave thanks to God the Father and broke the bread, then He gave it to His disciples and said: "Take and eat, this is My Flesh." After supper, He took the cup, gave thanks again to God the Father and offered it to His disciples, then He said "drink from it, all of you. This is My Blood of the new and everlasting covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins, do this in remembrance of Me." Also He told them "I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in My Father's kingdom."

After the supper and the institution of the holy Eucharist, Jesus looked towards heaven and prayed for Himself, His disciples and for you and me thus:

#### **For Himself**

*... He looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come. Give glory to your Son, so that the Son may give glory to You. For You gave Him authority over all humanity, so that He might give eternal life to all those You gave Him. And eternal life means knowing Jesus Christ, whom You sent. I have shown Your glory on earth; I have finished the work You gave Me to do. Father! Give Me glory in Your presence now, the same glory I had with You before the world was made.*

#### **For His Disciples**

*I have made You known to those You gave Me out of the world. They belong to You, and you gave them to Me. They have obeyed Your word... I pray for them, I do not pray for the world but for those You gave Me, for they belong to You... And now I am coming to You, I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world. Holy Father! Keep them safe by the power of Your name, the name You gave Me, so that they may be one just as You and I are one. While I was with them, I kept them safe by the power of Your name, the name You gave Me. I protected them, and not one of them was lost, except the man who was bound to be lost so that the scripture might come true.*

#### **For You and Me**

*I pray not only for them, but also for those who believe in Me because of their message. I pray that they may all be one. Father! May they be in Us, just as You are in Me and I am in You. May they be one, so that the world will believe that You sent Me. I gave them the same glory you gave Me, so that they may be one, just as You and I are one: I in them and You in Me, so that they may be completely one, in order that the world may know that You sent Me and that You love them as You love Me... (John 17: 1-26 TEV)*

After praying, Jesus told His disciples other things concerning His kingdom. Christ also taught us how satan operates towards God's children or believers when He said to Simon Peter thus:

***Simon, Simon, satan has asked to have you, to sift you like wheat, but I have pleaded in prayer for you that your faith should not completely fail. So when you have repented and turned to me again, strengthen and build up the faith of your brothers. (Luke 22: 31-32 TLB)***

From the above bible quote, we are able to understand that satan has no control or authority over a child of God and for him to afflict a believer, he takes permission from the Almighty God (the Uncreated Creator). Please read Job 1: 6-12.

Remember that it is said: "touch not my anointed and do My prophet no harm." See Psalm 105: 15. Except God permits, satan has no power over your life. But for those who disobey God, he (satan) rules. Let us continue.

So after praying and teaching His disciples, they all sang a hymn (praise and worship). When they were through with singing, Jesus and His disciples went out to the Mount of Olives.

Around the Mount of Olives, Jesus went with His disciples to a place called Gethsemane. When they got there, He told some of them to stay behind while He went to another nearby place with Peter, James and John to pray. As they were going He said to them, "the sorrow in My Heart is so great that it almost crushed Me. Stay here and keep watch with Me." (Matthew 26: 38)

When the Cup of affliction came, the cup which contains the intended wrath of God upon the world because of our sins, Jesus fell with His face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, take this cup of suffering from Me! Yet not what I want, but what You want."

Jesus returned to His disciples and found them sleeping. Then He asked Peter, "How is it that you three were not able to keep watch with Me even for one hour? Keep watch and pray that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Matthew 26: 40-41). This statement of Christ marked the importance of prayer as a spiritual weapon against the tricks of the devil and it also pointed our very close enemy which is our body. The weakness of the body is noticed when we are lacking the Spirit of God. We need the Spirit of God in our hearts to be able to conquer the flesh, the world and the devil. Ask for God's Mercy, seek His love, knock and His Spirit will be released upon you. In other words, thirst more for all that concerns Jesus.

So, Jesus went away a second time and prayed, "My Father! If this cup cannot go away until I drink it all, Your will be done." (Matthew 26: 42). When He returned again; He found them sleeping. By then, their eyes were so heavy. He left them and went away the third time and prayed the same thing.

After drinking from the cup, He returned to His disciples and said to them, "are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise! Let us go! Here comes My betrayer!" (Matthew 26: 45-46). Many Christians like Peter, James and John are still deep in sleep today while their enemies are busy plotting their complete downfall (death without repentance). I have fallen asleep so many times, but all thanks to God the Father for waking me up (keeping me alive) today to realize my mistakes. Beloved child of God, it's time for you to wake up



from your slumber, there are many distractions in the world today which keeps us far from God. Until we have realized this fact, we can't win the battle which rage between good and evil. Brother or Sister, the battle is still on and fierce, repent and return to Jesus today!

So Judas came to the olive grove, guiding a group of soldiers and some officials from the chief priest and Pharisees. They had torches, lanterns and weapons with them. Jesus went to them and asked "whom are you looking for?" they replied, "Jesus of Nazareth." Immediately Jesus finished saying "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground. This signifies the power in the name of Jesus Christ, that every knee, every tongue, every obstacle, every stronghold, est. must always bow whenever His name is mentioned. See Philippians 2: 10-11.

Again He asked them, "Who is it you want?" and they replied, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I told you I am He, if you are looking for Me, then let these men go."

Suddenly Peter drew a sword and struck Malchus the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. Immediately Jesus commanded Peter, "Put away your sword! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given Me?" then Jesus touched Malchus' ear and healed him, at the same time, He said "No more of this!" (This statement marked the end of the battle between a man and his fellow man using physical weapons)

After that, the group of soldiers arrested Jesus. They bound Him and brought Him first to Annas the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest who had advised the Jews that it would be good if one man died for the people. See John 11: 49-50.

Simon Peter and Judas Iscarot followed them and while they were walking, they discussed the issue of betrayal. Based on their discussions, Judas thought that Jesus Christ was going to perform the miracle of disappearing or do something extraordinary; after all, he had kept his part of the bargain by making sure he delivered Jesus Christ into their hands (the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard). Peter being convinced of what Judas said to him followed to see how it would manifest. They never knew it was the time for Jesus Christ to redeem man from the power of death and restore power and authority to man, especially to those who believed in Him.

Unfortunately, things began to unfold against their thoughts. Fear gripped them and Peter denied Jesus three times before the cock crowed just exactly what Christ told him would happen.

At Caiaphas' court, all the chief priests, elders and teachers of the law came together. They were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put Him to death, but they couldn't find any. Many testified falsely against Him, but their statement was baseless.

However, some men stood up and gave this false testimony against Jesus: "We heard Him say, 'I will tear this temple which is man-made and in three days I will build another that is not man-made.'" Still their testimony could not hold water because Christ meant the temple of His body.

The high priest stood up before all that were gathered and questioned Jesus, "Have You no answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against You?" but Jesus kept silent and would not say a word. The high priest asked Him again, "are You the Messiah, the Son of the most High God?" Jesus

replied "I am and you will see in the future the Son of man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Immediately Jesus finished speaking, the high priest tore his robes and asked, "why do we need more witnesses? You heard the blasphemy. What is your decision?" they replied "He is worthy of death." Then some began to spit at Him, they blindfolded Him, hit Him with their fists, some slapped Him and said, "Prophecy to us, Christ. Who hit You?"

When Judas saw all these, he felt so bad and was filled with remorse. He had thought that Christ was going to escape before any harm would be done to Him, but things happened differently. Then he returned the thirty pieces of silver coins to the chief priest and the elders and said: "I have greatly sinned, for I have betrayed an innocent blood." They replied, "What is that to us? That's your business." So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. He went away and hanged himself.

It was Friday morning, the eve of the Passover when the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate the Roman governor. The Jews refused to enter the palace in order to avoid ceremonial uncleanness. Therefore Pilate came out to them and questioned, "What offense are you bringing against this man?" they answered, "if He wasn't a criminal, we wouldn't have handed Him over to you." Pilate replied, "Take charge of Him yourselves and judge Him by your law" "we are not permitted to put anyone to death," they objected. Jesus spoke about this when He said in Matthew 20: 18-19.

Pilate went back inside the palace and called Jesus in, then he asked Him, "are You really the King of the Jews?" in reply, Jesus questioned him, "is that your own knowledge or did people talk to you about Me?" Pilate replied, "Do you think am a Jew? Your own people and the chief priests handed You over to me, what is Your offence?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world, if my kingdom were of this world, My armies would fight to keep Me from being arrested by the Jews; but My kingdom is not of this world." Then Pilate said, 'You are a king after all!' "You are right," replied Jesus. "For this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world to testify to the truth; those on the side of truth listens to Me." Read Luke 1: 31-33 and John 3: 16-17. Pilate never knew that Jesus was the Son of God, he asked "what is the truth?"

Pilate went out again to the Jews and said, "I find no crime in Him." This statement of Pilate proved that Christ was unjustly judged by the Chief priests. During that time, they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas who took part in a rebellion and it was the Jewish custom for Pilate to release to them a prisoner at the time of the Passover, then he asked the Jews, "will you have me set free for you the king of the Jews?" they shouted in reply, "No, not Him! We want Barabbas!"

Pilate then gave command to his soldiers who scourged Jesus and twisted a crown of thorns which they placed on His head. They clothed Him in a purple robe and went up to Him in turns saying ridiculously, "Long lives the King of the Jews!" and slapped Him in the face.

More crowds had gathered, so that Pilate should release to them a prisoner of their choice, he had Jesus and Barabbas brought out before them. While Pilate was sitting in the judgement hall, his wife sent him a message that he shouldn't partake in the shedding of Jesus Blood because He was innocent. And for this fact she suffered much in her dream.

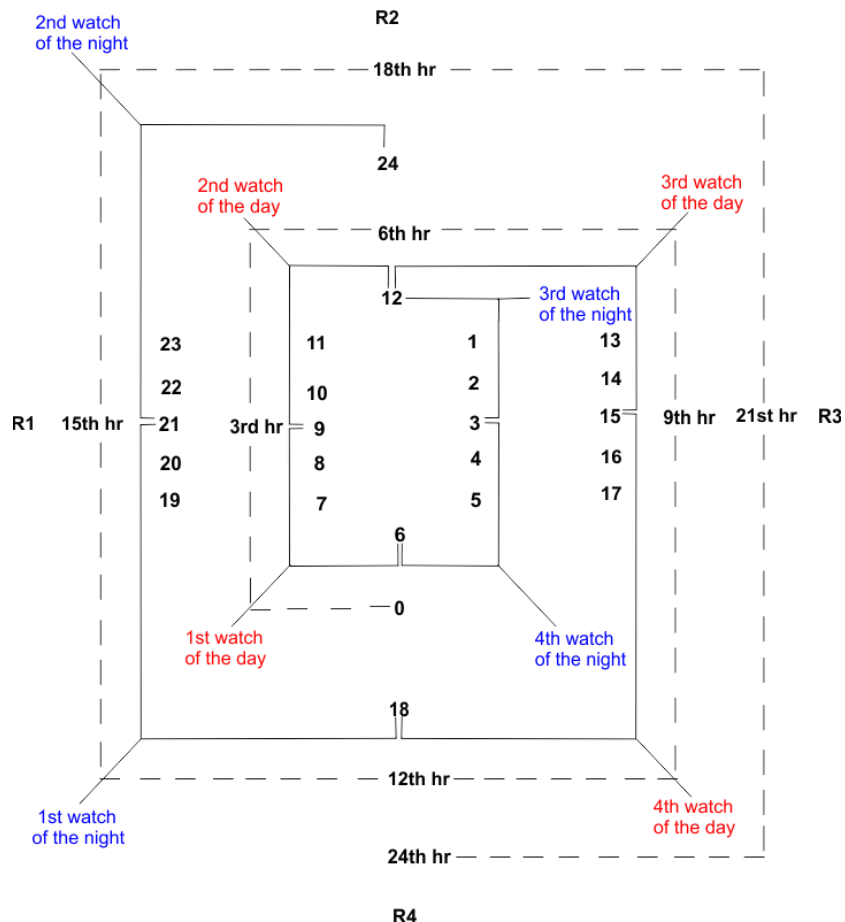
Meanwhile, the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to favour Barabbas and have Jesus put to death.

When the governor was ready, he asked the crowd, “which of these two will you prefer I set free for you?” they shouted “Barabbas!” “Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?” asked Pilate. They all shouted, “crucify Him!” knowing full well that it was out of envy that the Jews handed Christ to him, he asked them, “why? What offence did He commit?” but they shouted even louder, “crucify Him!!”

When the governor noticed that he wasn’t succeeding at convincing the crowd to favour Christ, but was creating an up roar, he then took water and had his hands washed in front of the crowd and said, “I am innocent of this man’s blood, His blood will be on your head!” all the Jews people replied, “yes, let His blood be on us and on our children!” they prayed very well without knowing it because their hearts were filled with wickedness but Jesus Christ whom is very rich in love and mercy pleaded for forgiveness on their behalf. His purpose for coming into the world was to redeem man from the power of evil and not to condemn man, by offering His Blood for our cleansing. This explains why it is said, “The Blood of Christ speaks better word than the blood of Abel” see Hebrews 12: 24.

Finally, Pilate gave in; he released Barabbas to the Jews and handed Jesus over to be crucified.

### 4Rs TIME



At this point, let me introduce the 4Rs Time which will help us explain better the victory of Christ and how God the Holy Spirit operates in our lives.

The above diagram is a spiritual concept which explains earthly time as no time-in the sense that time waits for nobody. It is a "Now" time meaning that: time for repentance is at once, instant or immediate without procrastination. Mind you, delay they say could be very dangerous. Do you know exactly when, where and how you will die? If you and I can't answer exactly, then why delay repentance? So therefore, on the very day you hear the word of God or read about Him, harden not your heart. He loves you and He wants you back no matter how deep your sins, His mercy is deeper.

The 4Rs time is a multipurpose concept which we could use to determine the exact or estimated time an event occurred in the gospel of Matthew, Mark, Luke (Hebrew timing); read Matthew 20: 1-12. It helps us to explain the victory of Christ while on the cross at Calvary and what the various hours signifies. With it, we could explain how the Holy Spirit operates in the lives of believers and unbelievers.

So, let's use the 4Rs time to explain the victory of Christ and see what His seven statements express: Jesus carried His cross from Jerusalem and went out of the city to a place not far from it called the place of the skull which means Golgotha in Aramaic language and Calvary in Latin language. He was crucified at the third hour which is 9:00 AM (Mark 15: 25), the hour of the first daily sacrifice. Christ offered His body as a very perfect sacrificial lamb for the forgiveness of all the sins committed in the past, during His time and the sins which will be committed thereafter considering the dead, the living and those yet to be born. Read 2 Esdras 7: 136.

From the third hour (9AM) to the seventh hour (1PM), Christ made seven statements which expresses the depth of His Love and Mercy for all of mankind; He said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" Luke 23: 34. This statement signifies the depth of God's Mercy that no matter how great the sins of the dead and the living put together, the Mercy of God is over 100% capable of forgiveness, how much more then will He not forgive the sins of an individual who sincerely asked for His Mercy. Also dying on our behalf signifies the depth of His Love towards you, me and all of mankind. Can we offer prayers for God's mercy upon the person killing us, stealing from us, insulting us, etc? It is difficult to pray for such a person but beloved reader that is how the battle between good and evil is fought. Christ taught us to be loving and merciful not only to those who show love and mercy to us but also to those who hurt us. See Luke 6: 32-36

He said, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in paradise." Luke 23: 43. This statement signifies salvation and points to Jesus Christ as our Saviour who has the power to grant us eternal life, especially to those who believe in Him, just like the good thief.

Jesus said, "Woman, behold your son; behold your mother." John 19: 26-27. This statement marked the institution of Mary's Motherhood as a Mother to all those who believe in Jesus. In other words, Christ was significantly telling every believer represented by John that His mother is also our Mother just like His heavenly FATHER is our Father also. Jesus was the first fruit of her womb and He being the first fruit grew and bore many fruit (those who believed in Jesus) see Revelation 12: 17. Therefore, you as a Christian, Mary the Queen of heaven and earth who is the Mother of Jesus Christ the King of kings is also your Queen and Mother. That was why she said, aided by the Spirit of God in Luke 1: 46-55 thus:

***My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for He has regarded me; His lowly servant! From now on all generations will call me blessed; for He who is mighty has done great things for me and holy is His name. And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm and scattered the proud with all their plans. He has brought down mighty kings from their thrones and exalted those of low degree. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away with empty hands. He has kept the promise He made to our ancestors, and has come to the help of His servant Israel. He has remembered to show mercy to Abraham and to all his descendants forever!***

See how blessed God made her in Revelation 12: 1-5. If your mum is treated with contempt or like she is useless or not useful, will you be pleased? Have you thought of how Jesus Christ would feel if you reject His Mother? Please change your negative mindset towards her.

So at the sixth hour (12PM), the beginning of the third watch of the day, darkness covered the whole world. See Matthew 27: 45, Mark 15: 33 and Luke 23: 44. This darkness signifies the sins of the whole world which Jesus Christ took upon Himself so that the wrath of God which was supposed to befall upon us befell instead on Him (the Sacrificial Lamb of God). At this time, Christ was interceding in the spirit on behalf of man while God the FATHER turned His back against Him, which seems as though God refused to listen then Jesus said, "My God, My God why have You forsaken Me?" Matthew 27: 46. By the time God accepted His Sacrifice of Love and Mercy, Christ was at the point of death, then He said, "I thirst." See John 19: 28. This statement prompted a soldier to soak a sponge with wine vinegar, and then he lifted it to Jesus lips using a stalk of the hyssop plant. This act spiritually means cleansing see Psalm 51: 7. It signifies that God had agreed to wash away our sins and heal our spiritual wounds, with the Blood of His Son Jesus Christ because His Body and blood was pure and perfect which was worthy enough to gain salvation for all of mankind. Also He accepted because he is a Loving and a Merciful God.

Knowing full well that all had been completed, Christ said, "It is finished." John 19: 30. This statement implies that Christ conquered the flesh, the world and the devil in order to help us regain that power and authority which man lost to satan at the garden of Eden and to lift those curses upon man and the earth so that whoever believes in Him, He gives that power and authority to overcome the flesh, the world and the devil. See Matthew 28: 18-20 and Mark 16: 15-18.

Finally, some seconds towards the seventh hour (1PM), Christ said, "FATHER, into Your hands I commit My Spirit." Luke 23: 46. At the click of the seventh hour, He gave up His Spirit and descended to the kingdom of darkness where He preached to the spirit of those who disobeyed long ago (1 Peter 3: 18-19). Meanwhile before His preaching, something dramatic occurred. A great light shone in the kingdom of darkness as Christ was descending into it, His light lit the Kingdom of darkness which made satan and his cohorts (death and hades) took to their heels.

Towards the ninth hour (3PM), the hour of the beginning of the second daily sacrifice, the Blood of Christ dropped to the earth from His head. Exactly the moment his Blood touched the earth, the curtain of the temple was turn in two from top to bottom which signifies the immediate access to God at any given time and place. Also the earth quaked and the rocks split, then tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died before Christ were raised to life. These holy souls could not enter the kingdom of God because they had not been baptized, for Christ had said, "Unless a man is born of water

and the Holy Spirit, he can not enter the kingdom of God.” (John 3: 5). They were first raised to life because they were holy, then they stood near their tombs as they await the baptism of water and the Holy Spirit.

While the earth quaked, great fear and panic struck the soldiers who were guarding Him, this prompted the Jews who thought that evening was near and they requested to have the legs of Jesus and those crucified with Him broken in order to speed up their death because they don't want the bodies of Christ and the other two left on the crosses during the Sabbath.

After the approval by Pilate to have their legs broken, the soldiers therefore broke the legs of the first and the second men who had been crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus, the weapons they held fell off their hands, and then they discovered that He was already dead. Instead of breaking His legs, a soldier named Longinus pierced the sacred Heart of Jesus Christ with a spear at exactly the ninth hour (3PM), issuing forth a sudden flow of Blood and Water as a fountain of Love and Mercy which is the Spirit of God. At that moment, the darkness which came upon the earth at the sixth hour (12PM) disappeared which signifies the total cleansing of our sins (both the living and the dead) and those holy souls who were raised to life received their baptism of water and the Holy Spirit, which manifested in the form of Blood and water. Guess what? John the Baptist was among those holy souls.

The pierced Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ fulfilled what the prophet Zechariah prophesied in Zechariah 12: 10 and 13: 1. The hour it occurred which is the ninth hour (3PM), marked the hour of great Mercy. Let's see what Jesus Christ told Saint Faustina of the Divine Mercy about this hour:

***My daughter try your best to make the stations of the cross in this hour, provided that your duties permit it and if you are not able to make the stations of the cross, then at least step into the chapel for a moment and adore in the most Blessed Sacrament, My Heart, which is full of Mercy, and should you be unable to step into the Chapel, Immerse yourself in prayer there, where you happen to be, if only for a very brief instant... I remind you, My Daughter, that as often as you hear the clock strike the ninth hour (3PM); immerse yourself completely in My Mercy, adoring and glorifying it, invokes its omnipotence for the whole world, and particularly for poor sinners, for at that moment Mercy was opened wide for every soul. In this hour you can obtain everything for yourself and others for the asking; it was the hour of grace for the whole world-Mercy triumphed over justice.***

So Christ descended to the land of the spirits at the 7<sup>th</sup> hour (1PM). The spirits of the dead saw a great light and were filled with great Joy but death and hades fled when they saw the light of Jesus Christ. At the time the Blood from the Head of Jesus touched the earth, while His body was still on the cross; life entered all the holy souls who died before Christ and were raised to life from the dead. But the spirits of those who disobeyed God's command remained with Christ though their pains were eased at that moment and so at the ninth hour (3PM), when the sacred Heart of Jesus was pierced, every sin which had been committed by man before the time of Christ, during his time and after His time was forgiven.

He paid the price for all generations once and for all. In other words, His Blood became the new and everlasting Covenant for the cleansing of sins.

Satan, death and hades fled at the sight of Jesus because they could not withstand the brightness of His light. Also the Blood and Water which gushed forth from the sacred heart of Jesus formed a mighty ocean and destroyed their kingdom while at the same time; it washed away the sins of those spirits who disobeyed God.

Christ spent 606 days in the land of the dead during which He preached the good news to the spirits of those who disobeyed God the Father. All of them believed in him and accepted Him as their LORD and Saviour. On Sunday morning, the beginning of a new week, between the 23<sup>rd</sup> hour to the 24<sup>th</sup> hour at 5:40AM, the timing at which the sun begins its rising from the east in Jerusalem, the earth quaked as Jesus resurrected, followed behind by those spirits. Please read **Matthew 28: 1-7, Ephesians 4: 8-10 and 1 Peter 3: 18-22**. The dying and resurrection of Jesus Christ fulfilled what the prophets said:

***He will swallow up death forever. The sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; He will remove the disgrace of His people from all the earth. (Isaiah 25: 8 NIV)***

***I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. Where, o death, are your plagues? Where, o grave is your destruction? ... (Hosea 13: 14 NIV)***

After Jesus resurrected from the dead, He spent forty days on earth, teaching his disciples about the kingdom of His FATHER. On one particular day within that period of forty days, while He was eating with His disciples, He instructed them saying:

***“Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my FATHER promised, which you have heard Me speak about. For John baptized with Water; but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” (Act 1: 4-5 NIV)***

The implication of what Jesus said above suggest that there are three baptisms if linked with the statement of John the Baptist in Matthew 3: 11; the baptism with Water (repentance), the baptism with the Holy Spirit (power and authority) and the baptism with fire (purification and perfection). Read Luke 3: 16.

The baptism with fire is received more completely after our life on earth and this proves that there is truly a place in the afterlife where the spirit of those who died in a state of grace are purified and made perfect by God.

So Jesus Christ ascended into heaven on the fortieth day after His conquest, as He carried along behind Him the spirits of those He released from the prison of death and hades. Please read Matthew 28: 18 and Philipians 2: 1-11 to see how he was rewarded.

He will come into the world again at the appointed time set by His FATHER. This time around, not as the Saviour of the world but as a just Judge and everyman both the living and the dead will be rewarded according to their good or evil deeds because now there is no excuse for sin. Read John 15: 22-25

Beloved reader, the battle still rages and to be able to triumph over the flesh, the world and the devil, we must need the Spirit of God and this leads us to the Era of the Holy Spirit.

## **The Era of GOD the Holy Spirit**

***... You will succeed, not by military might or by your own strength, but by My Spirit ... (Zechariah 4: 6-7 TEV)***

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Blessed Trinity, He is also known as the counselor who is active in the lives of believers.

We are presently in the era of the Holy Spirit and the last of the three biblical eras which will usher in the great tribulation. This era is characterized mainly of deeper spiritual knowledge and revelations. The battle of good and evil in this era is fought between the offspring of Jesus Christ and the offspring of satan.

In this era, the Holy Spirit is more active in seeking and reconciling the lost children of God with God the Father. These children of God are those believers who have been dedicated to God through water baptism and the baptism with the Holy Spirit but somehow out of their own negligent were defeated during the battle of good and evil by the flesh, the world and the devil.

This period of the Holy Spirit is used for training and teaching us deeper knowledge of God, to prepare us for the coming kingdom of Jesus and the gathering of God's chosen.

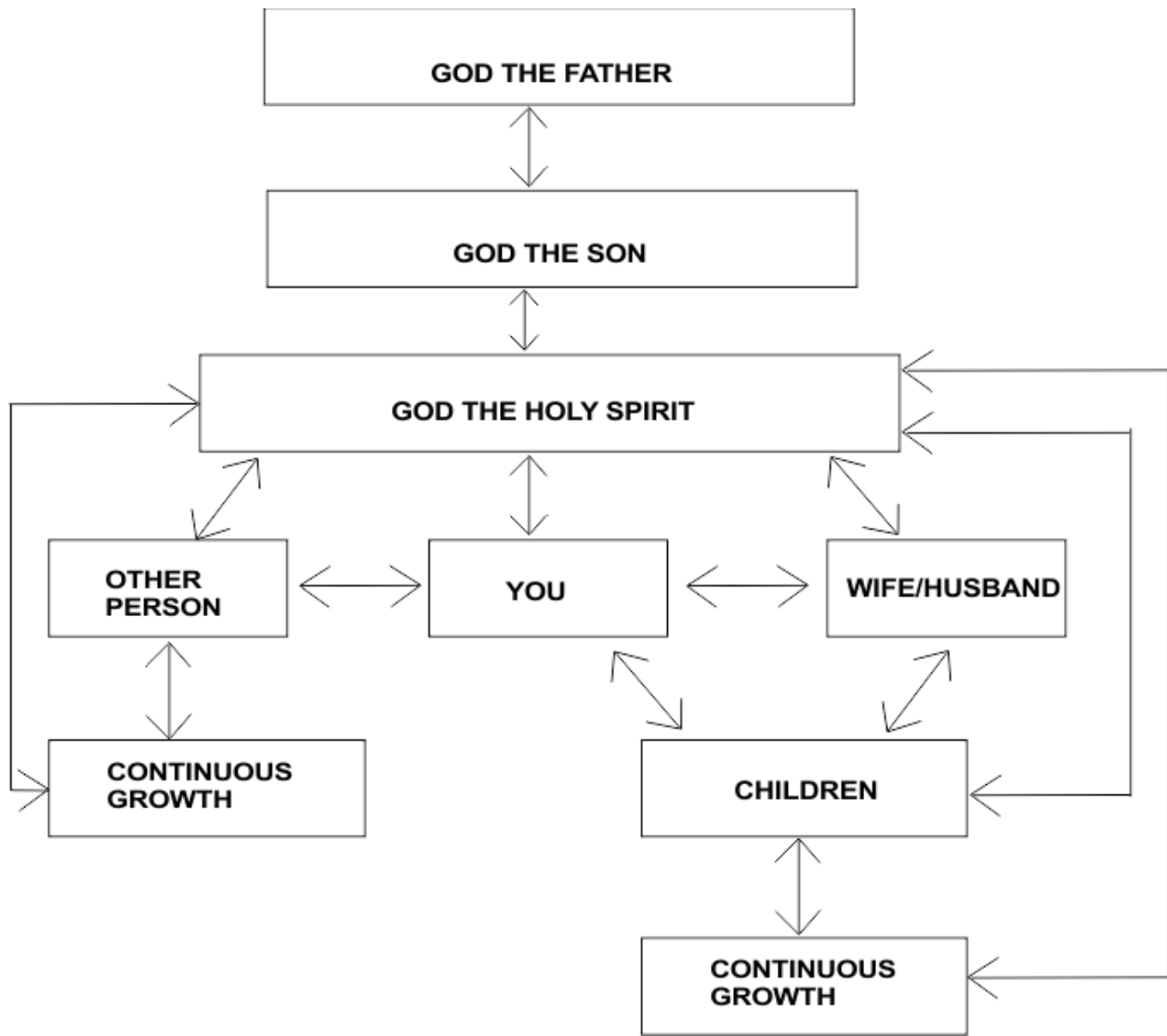
The Holy Spirit is God's mark of seal on us. Remember we are the temple of God, created in His image and likeness, created as heirs to His throne of which Jesus Christ is the first of His sons. In other words, if we are to partake in His kingdom rule and become a member of the royal family of God, we must be led by the Spirit of God, for without the Spirit of God, we cannot succeed in the battle of good and evil.

When we have sincerely confessed our sins and have accepted Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, God releases His Spirit (the Holy Spirit) on us, to occupy us. His dwelling is in our hearts. As we are reborn by water baptism or by the Sacrament of penance, we become a baby Christian. The Holy Spirit in us will be the one to take care of us in all things. He will feed us, cloth us, equip us, teach and train us, etc. this raising program is best received in God's presence. It is in God's presence that we are best groomed to become a prince or a princess.

God's presence, otherwise known as fellowship and communion with God is the school prepared for His sons and daughters. It is called HOLY GHOST SCHOOL or SCHOOL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. It is God's new move for His children at this end time. See chapter 7 for detail explanation of HOLY GHOST SCHOOL.

As we grow in the spirit, His Fruits begins to manifest in us which are: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control, Forgiveness, etc. these Fruits of the Holy Spirit which is also the seed of the Holy Spirit in us grows and bears much more fruits. The diagram below explains thus:





The flow of the lines is the movement of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit takes what belongs to the Father and the Son and makes them known to you. You bear fruit by sharing what the Holy Spirit had taught and revealed to you with other people, your wife or husband and your children. When they believe, the Holy Spirit then deals directly with them, revealing more knowledge to them and they in turn bears fruits by also sharing with other people what the Holy Spirit had taught and revealed to them and the process continues. See John 16: 12-15.

Satan looks good on the outside, but he is a beast in sheep's skin. On the inside, he is the most ruthless, evil, deceitful, yet intelligent being ever created. He is the father of the unsaved, and all that practice evil. He is the father of the worst killers and terrorist, but his evil exceeds them all (see John 8: 44). His aim is to deceive angels and you, plus overthrow God.

He hates born again Christians and God's angels. From your birth, he tries to prevent you from knowing and following Jesus. If you know and follow Christ, he becomes your enemy and worst nightmare. Then he tries to distract you from God.

Satan tries in every means to stop Christians from serving the Lord and studying His word. The Christian's defense is to understand the word of God and to obey His word, plus not giving a place to the devil by willfully sinning. Nevertheless, born again Christians may be faced with every temptation imaginable as they serve God. Some may be killed.

To triumph in the battle between good and evil, we must need the Holy Spirit who gives us all the necessary graces for our spiritual strength and who reveals to us the battle rules, the battle grounds, our enemies and what spiritual weapons to apply at any given spiritual battle.

## **SPIRITUAL BATTLE RULES**

The following spiritual battle rules will help us be on the alert for satan's treacherous tendencies:

- ❖ Know your enemy
- ❖ Never underestimate what he can do
- ❖ Never underestimate how far he will go to defeat or kill you
- ❖ Never give him an opening to defeat you
- ❖ Never surrender
- ❖ Never leave your post until relieved
- ❖ Obey those over you.

## **BATTLE REALMS**

The battle between good and evil are fought in two realms: the Physical realm and the Spirit realm. In these battle realms, we are confronted by three classes of enemy namely: the flesh, the world and the evil spirits.

### **BATTLE IN THE PHYSICAL REALM**

The physical realm is the earth we live in. it is the realm of reality and awareness where we commonly feel pains, see things clearly and are limited to certain things we do. In this realm, we are confronted by the three classes of enemy.

#### **The Flesh**

Flesh here does not mean our skin, meat, or bones; also it does not refer only to sexual desires. These are part of God's creation. Rather, "Flesh" refers to an inherent bent towards sin that every human being inherits from Adam and Eve. It refers to the sinful nature of man, those evil things the flesh enjoys

such as fornication, lust, greed, jealousy, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, selfish ambition, factions, drunkenness and orgies.

The flesh is the enemy within, I call it the spy because it lives inside of us and its mission is to weaken our soul and our spirit, thereby rendering them vulnerable to the other two classes of enemy; the world and the evil spirits. The flesh only craves, it is the duty of the soul and spirit to check what it craves for or else the flesh will drag them to the ground.

The flesh is aided by the five human senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch), it uses them to tempt the soul and the spirit. Whenever we satisfy the evil craving of the flesh, our spirit and soul becomes weak which means that the Holy Spirit had left, leaving us exposed to our other enemies; the world and the evil spirits. But if we are quick to realize our fault and sincerely plead for mercy, we will be saved.

We overcome the flesh by always eating the word of God, praying consistently and being mindful of what we watch, read and listen to.

### **The World**

The world here means the social system, the value system of this present earth, which had changed drastically from what God intended it to be.

Ever since the fall of Adam and Eve, the world seizes to be what it was originally created to be by God. Evil entered the world through the disobedience of man. And since then, we have been fighting to make it a better place.

The world today is filled with many evil which the people of the world are now beginning to accept as normal. What seems good is not good, but what is good is good. Today the world is accepting those things that seems good but which is evil in the sight of God.

Today, many countries of the world are legalizing gay marriage and also encouraging other countries to follow. Musicians praise satan with their songs and we join them in singing such songs. Abortion is presently legal in almost every country of the world; divorce is becoming a normal thing and a means of getting rich quick if you know what I mean etc.

Christians must do battle against such decayed moral values by preaching the word of God, teaching the ways of God, living the life of Christ and praying for the worldly ones. Remember, Christians are not of this world, but in the world to save souls from the captivity of worldly desires. The worldly people will hate you for this, and would do anything to lure you into submission. You must not give up even at the point of death.

### **The Evil Spirits**

Evil spirits here are fallen angels and the creation of man is part of the reasons they rebelled. As such, they would do anything to take us down with them to the pit of hell.

Evil spirits are the core enemy, all we suffer today originated from them. The illness, the pains, death, accident, etc. are all from this enemy. Without the Spirit of God in you, this enemy will drag you to the pit.

***... Apart from Me you can do nothing. (John 15: 5)***

This kind of enemy afflicts us with various kinds of sufferings such as health problems, financial problems, etc. many souls are held captive by this enemy and it is our duty as Christians to fight and rescue our fellow brothers and sisters.

Evil spirits are more active in battle at the spirit realm. At the physical realm, they use their agents to attack you. Their agents includes: magicians, false prophets, occult men and women, etc. this enemy (evil spirits) comes in various kinds. They include:

- ❖ Unclean spirit
- ❖ Lying spirit
- ❖ Evil spirit of deception
- ❖ Deaf and dumb spirit
- ❖ Evil spirit of infirmity
- ❖ Evil spirit of oppression
- ❖ Evil spirit of seduction
- ❖ Familiar spirit, etc.

As long as we believe, trust and obey God, we will always defeat this evil spirits using the spiritual weapons and armours explained in chapter five of this book.

### **BATTLE IN THE SPIRIT REALM**

The spirit realm is the world of the spirits. It is the realm of reality where we hardly feel pains, see things unclearly and things we can do are unlimited. In this realm, our soul and spirit are involved and are confronted by mainly two classes of the enemy – the world and the evil spirits. We unconsciously enter this realm while sleeping. Our dreams while asleep are the spirit realm and whatever happens there, either good or bad manifests in the physical realm.

The battle in this realm is more fiercely than the battle in the physical realm. If the evil spirits succeed in this spirit realm, it will manifest in the physical realm. This explains why many of our brothers and sisters had died while asleep.

This evil spirits have a spy within you called the flesh – the root of disobedience which we inherited from Adam and Eve. It strikes whenever it craves for worldly things which are contrary to the will and principles of God. Overcoming the flesh is not always easy for those who had formed the habit of committing a particular sin, especially when it strikes in that aspect.

If you give in to the evil cravings of the flesh, it is very wise to quickly and sincerely ask God for mercy or else you will be left exposed for the evil spirits to mess you up and probably kill you, except if God intervenes.

When we sin, God gives us enough time to repent and if we fail to repent during the time of grace that was given to us, it may lead us to death. When we sin, it weakens our spirit man and renders our soul unclean. The Holy Spirit leaves our body when we sin, making it difficult for us to pray and obey God's command and if we are not quick to reconcile with God, we will end up committing more grievous sin which could lead us to death. Remember, the wages of sin is death (Romans 6: 23). See James 1: 14-15.

Those who have been subdued by the flesh and the world in the physical realm and also don't know how to pray or are not used to applying the spiritual weapons and armours in every bad situation should be very thankful to God if they survive the night during their sleep.

Our spirit and soul leaves our body while we sleep and ventures into the spirit realm which we are able to notice in our dreams. Those who are not spiritually equipped should count themselves saved by God if the spirit of death missed them. There are other evil spirits like the spirits of seduction; they entice you to have sex with them. This act corrupts the mind which is the soul and weakens the spirit man. In the physical realm, it creates hatred in marriages and engagement relationships; which could lead to divorce and break up respectively. One could be offered poisonous food to eat by the spirits of infirmity which leads to strange illness in the physical realm.

But those who know God and obey His commands will do exploits and will conquer. They will call down fire on their enemy and it will manifest, they will plead the Blood of Jesus Christ and will see it in action and so much more. For one with God is majority. It is wise to pray and commit your spirit into God's hand before sleeping.

Overcoming these forces in our lives, as well as helping others to overcome them, are part of the battle we wage against the flesh, the world and the evil spirits. We are to disengage ourselves from all ungodly things, while at the same time influencing others for the cause of Christ. Read Job 29: 12-17 to see more on how we could help others and win them over for Christ.

## **THE 4Rs TIME**

The 4Rs time is a spiritual concept used by the Holy Spirit on believers who have fallen (sinned) during the battle of good and evil and on those who do not believe in Jesus Christ in order to reconcile them with God the Father. Read John 16: 7-11.

The 4Rs time fully means: Return time, Recycle time, Refine time and Redemption time.

### **Return Time (R1)**

Is the time you realize your own faults, your mistakes and the sins you have committed, knowing that you deserve great punishment for them. It is the time you turn back towards God, pleading for His mercy and His love to be shown to you. In other words, it is the time you repent of your sins. Your

repentance means you have detested your sins, that you are willing to obey God's commands and to have a personal communion with Him. God will definitely forgive you, then the next R time which is the Recycle time begins. See Joel 2: 13.

How does one become aware of this time? One is able to know that it's time to return to God when he or she is been preached to about Jesus Christ. If he or she is not yet born again, it means that God is telling him or her that it is time to return to Him. Also when you are faced with serious problems in finance, health, family or you survived a ghastly accident, etc, check yourself properly to see if you are doing God's will, if not, it means that God is saying now is time for you to return and repent of your evil ways. But if you are obeying God's commands and yet you suffer, please remain steadfast because the troubles you face today will become your glory tomorrow.

### **Recycle Time (R2)**

This is the time when God treats your spirit man which had been damaged because of sin. At this time, He heals your spirit man and prepares you for what He intends to accomplish with you in this world. Mind you, this treatment is received in God's presence while having a personal communion with Him. Hosea 6: 1 and Ezekiel 36: 26-27

### **Refine Time (R3)**

This is that time when God begins to purify and sanctify your soul. It is a period of expiation and a period of test. At this time, your faith will be tested by trials and difficulties of life which would require endurance or perseverance from you while at the same time you are working for God and winning souls for Christ. See James 1: 2-18, Romans 5: 1-5 and 1 Peter 1: 3-9.

### **Redemption Time (R4)**

This is that time when God opens His door of blessings upon you by restoring all you lost to the enemy. It is also that period when He says come my son or come my daughter into My kingdom, into the place prepared for you, where sin and death ceases to exist. It is a time of everlasting joy and happiness; a time when we will reunite again with our departed brothers and sisters. To God be all the glory Alleluia Amen! See Ephesians 1: 13-14 and Revelation 20: 11-15; 21: 1-4.

## **THREE GROUPS OF SOULS INVOLVED IN SPIRITUAL BATTLE**

There are three groups of souls engaged in the battle between good and evil:

- ❖ The Victorious Souls
- ❖ The Ignorant Souls and

❖ The Defeated Souls.

### **Victorious Souls**

Victorious souls are those who know much about the battle that rages between good and evil. They face the difficulties of life without complain and overcome them by applying some or all of the spiritual weapons and armours made available to man by God. They are soul winners for the sake of Christ.

Victorious souls are those Christians, who believe in Jesus Christ and always have a personal interactive relationship with God the Holy Spirit, they know God and are always in His presence. God feeds them, trains and heals them in His presence; they are being led by the Spirit of God. These are the true sons and daughters of God the Father, the princes and princesses, heirs to the throne of God the Father of which Jesus Christ is the first of His Sons. In other words, they are members of the Royal Family of God.

These Christians had been given authority and power in the name of Jesus Christ to drive out demons, they will speak in new tongues, they will pick up snakes with their hands and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people and they will get well, etc.

### **Ignorant Souls**

These group of souls lack spiritual knowledge, they are not aware of the spiritual battle that rages in the spirit and physical realms every seconds, every minutes and every hour of their daily lives which affects them negatively. They always complain in difficulties and fail to realize the power and authority they have in Jesus Christ.

Some of them are Christians and many of them are not. They've heard about Jesus Christ in some ways but chose to do their own will according to the desires of their flesh. They live outside the presence of God; they don't have a personal interactive relationship with God.

Ignorant souls are easily held captive and could be killed by the enemy (evil spirits) because they lack the knowledge of who they are in Jesus Christ and what the spiritual weapons and armours God gave to us is capable of solving.

Until these souls realize the power and authority they have in Jesus Christ, they will always lose in the battle between good and evil.

### **Defeated Souls**

Defeated souls are aware of the battle but could not patiently endure the difficulties of life according to God's will, so they gave in to the worship of their greatest enemy (satan) for worldly riches and power. They chose to gain the whole world and suffer the loss of their souls. They forgot that every difficulty has expiring date.

Defeated souls are the offspring of satan, they battle against the victorious souls over the souls of the ignorant. They include:

❖ False prophets

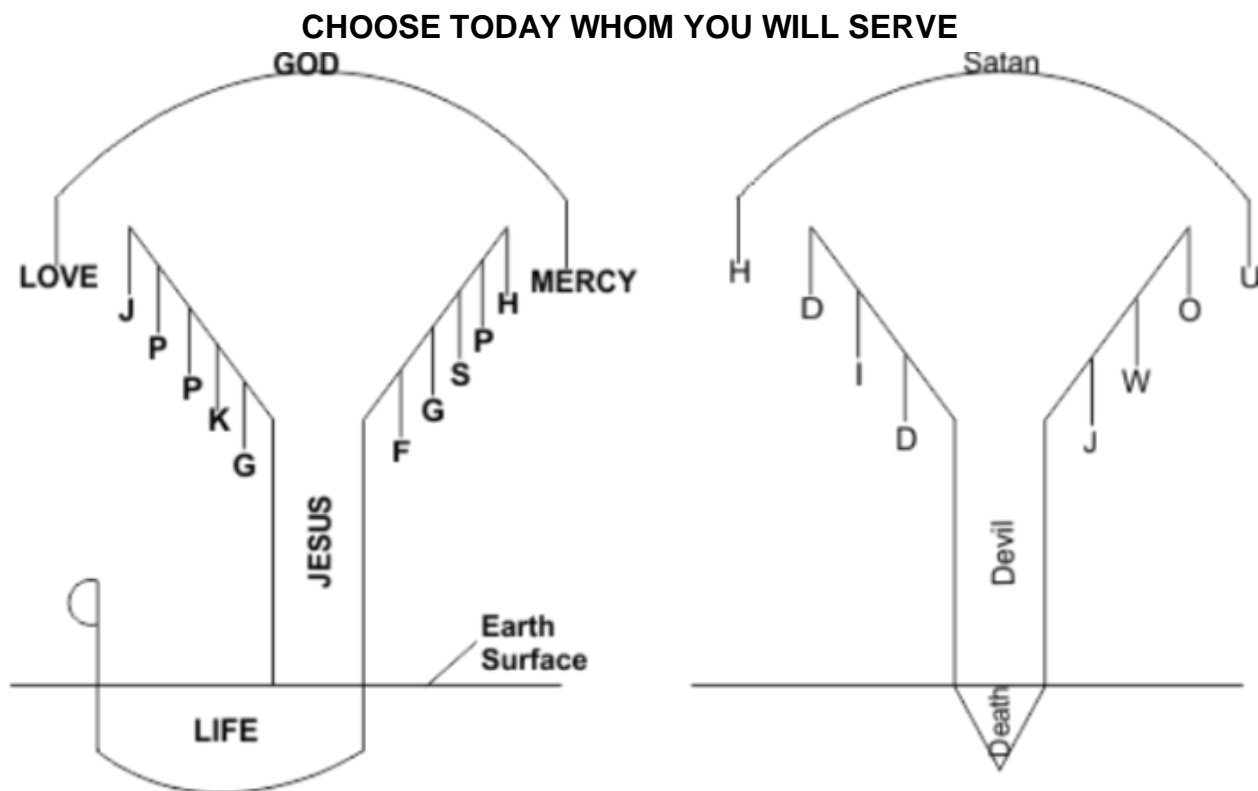
- ❖ Occult men and women
- ❖ Magicians
- ❖ Those who practice witch craft
- ❖ Diviners i.e. fortune tellers, and those that does things that are against Christ.

These souls are destined for hell but could only be saved by the Almighty God, the Uncreated Creator; if only they can denounce their evil ways by humbling themselves before Him and sincerely seeking His love and mercy.

If you are in any of the two groups other than the victorious group, God is telling you today thus:

***If you would but listen to Me, if you would abandon your evil ways and follow My ways, I would quickly subdue your enemies and turn My hand against your foes!***

This means you should return your heart to Him and sincerely ask for His love and mercy which He will definitely grant you because his love and mercy are far greater than all the sins you have committed. Just trust and obey.



The first diagram from the left is a symbol of Jesus Christ as the tree of life. It enables us to see clearly what Christ meant when He said thus: "I am the true vine and My Father is the Gardner... I am the vine, you are the branches. If a man remains in Me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing..." read further John 15: 1-17. Also when He said thus: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14: 6).



It means that people who believe in Jesus Christ and follow His ways are those who fulfill God's will. They are known by their characters which are the fruits of the Holy Spirit. When they die, Jesus Christ who is the giver of life will grant them eternal life in the kingdom of His Father.

The little lines hanging on the tree are the fruits of the Holy Spirit. From the left to the right they are: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control, Perseverance, Hope and Mercy (Forgiveness).

The curved line which descended to the depth of the earth and ascended from the depth of the earth to its surface means eternal life given to those who fulfilled God's will.

The other diagram at the right looks the same in shape like the first at the left, but only a deception of the devil claiming to be God. It means that the character of people who follow the ways of satan leads to death and that he does not have the power to give life, which explains why the tree at the right had a downward triangular shape beneath the earth surface.

The little lines hanging on this tree are the fruits of the devil. From the left to the right, they are: Hatred, Debauchery (Immoral behaviour which involves sex, alcohol or drugs), Idolatry, Discord, Jealousy, Witchcraft, Orgies and Unforgiving. These character which are the fruits of the devil leads to eternal death.

You don't need to be told anymore how loving and merciful God is, judging from what you have read so far. The choice is personal; decide today whom you will follow.

If you have chosen JESUS CHRIST, please say this prayer:

**Oh Loving and Merciful Father, I am very sorry for all the sins I have committed knowingly and unknowingly. Please forgive me according to Your unfailing Love, according to Your great Mercy, wash away my sins with the Blood and Water which gushed forth from the Sacred Heart of Your Son Jesus Christ.**

**I am willing to render worthy services to You from today! Please send Your Spirit to take possession of me as I surrender all my will in order to do Your will.**

**Thank You Jesus Christ, thank You my LORD and Saviour. All these I ask for through Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Amen!**

The next chapter will tell you what to do. God bless you.

CHAPTER 7  
HOLY GHOST SCHOOL

But as for you, Christ has poured out His spirit on you. As long as His Spirit remains in you, you do not need anyone to teach you. For His Spirit teaches you about everything; and what He teaches is true, not false. Obey the Spirit's teaching, then, and remain in union with Christ. (1 John 2: 27 TEV)

## **What is Holy Ghost School?**

Holy Ghost school is God's end time program for the preparation and perfection of the bride of Christ.

Holy Ghost school simply means learning directly from God! It happens whenever you separate yourself to God at a specific time each day, allowing God to teach and lead you in His ways. At that particular time you separate yourself to God each day, you are to study His word (the Holy Bible). The Holy Spirit is our teacher in Holy Ghost school. Whatever you find difficult to understand in the word of God, just ask the Holy Spirit and He will make you to understand it clearly.

Where is Holy Ghost School?

Holy Ghost School is everywhere, it is at that place where you separate yourself everyday to God at a specific time. It could be in your room, at your place of work, at the hospital, at the church, etc.

The specific time at which you separate yourself to God is called covenant time. It is at that time you go into God's presence for Him to train and teach you His ways. It is a time meant for you and God alone. For example, if you promised God that you will be in His presence at 8PM, each day, that 8PM becomes your covenant time with Him and you must separate yourself to God everyday at that time, studying His words.

## **Why Holy Ghost School?**

The following are reasons why being in God's presence at Holy Ghost School hour is very important in our present time:

- ❖ It helps us to being intimate with Jesus.
- ❖ In His presence, the shroud that enfolds us will be destroyed.
- ❖ To feed and grow our spirit man.
- ❖ In God's presence, death is swallowed up forever and our tears are wiped away from our faces.
- ❖ In God's presence, we are made perfect.
- ❖ Our sins are washed away in His presence.
- ❖ It is in God's presence that we are able to know the purpose for which we were created.
- ❖ In God's presence, we gain freedom from captivity.
- ❖ In His presence, we are protected against God's coming judgment and destruction of the world.
- ❖ We receive power and authority in His presence.
- ❖ We are trained and equipped for battle in His presence.
- ❖ In His presence, hidden and deeper knowledge about God are revealed to us by the Holy Spirit.

## **EVENTS THAT WILL OCCUR BEFORE THE WORD ENDS**

This world is coming to an end; no one knows exactly the day or the hour when it will end except the Father. In His infinite love and mercy, He had given us some clues through the prophets, His Son and the Saints, to enable us know the beginning of the end. These clues are found in the books of Daniel and Esdras, the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, the second letter of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians and

the book of Revelation. It's like a jigsaw puzzle which I will put together to give us a clearer view of the events that will lead to the end according to the Holy Spirit's prompting.

They are:

### ❖ THE BIRTH PAIN

The world had grown old and unable to bear any longer because of man's wickedness and the spread of evil. If only all mankind living presently would turn away from evil and seek Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world, things would be restored to normal but it is impossible because the offspring of Satan lives among the people of God. Since the whole world would not in one Spirit of Christ Jesus seek the love and mercy of the Father, terrible disasters will come upon the world.

These terrible disasters are the birth pains recorded in 2 Esdras 15, Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21 and Revelation 6. Let's take them one after the other to determine the common truth in them and see how they fit to our present time.

***The lord says, I am going to bring terrible disasters on the whole world-war and famine, death and destruction (2 Esdras 15: 5 TEV)***

***You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places (Matthew 24: 6-7 NIV)***

***When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains. (Mark 13: 7-8 NIV)***

***... Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earth quakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven. (Luke 21: 10-11 NIV)***

***I looked, and there was a pale-colored horse. Its rider was named death, and hades followed close behind. They were given authority over a quarter of the earth, to kill by means of war, famine, disease, and wild animals. (Revelation 6: 8 TEV)***

The common truth among these bible verses is death and destruction around various places in the world. God will allow death and hades to bring death and destruction upon a quarter (i.e. one-fourth) of the earth because the evil of the world has increased greatly and has reached its limit. See 2 Esdras 15: 6.

From the bible verses above are listed the terrible disasters which death and hades would use to bring death and destruction upon the world. They are: war, famine, earthquakes and pestilences. Now, let's relate them to our present time.

### **=WAR=**

War is a situation of fighting over a period of time which involves the use of deadly weapons between two or more countries or nations or states or kingdoms or different groups of people within a given country or nation or state or kingdom.

The greed for power and control is the major cause of war. The leaders of various countries of the world who belong to one or more cult/club are used by the forces of evil to engage themselves in war. Their major aim is to gain control of the world and rule it. In the process of struggling for power and control, many people are killed and properties destroyed. We have witnessed many of these wars in our time; some are political, socio-economic or religious in nature. Examples are:

1. The terrorist attacks on lives and properties of Christians in the northern part of Nigeria by the Boko-Haram sect which is both political and religious in nature.
2. The war on terrorism (war between the United Nations and some terrorist group)
3. The two civil war in Ivory Coast (the first began on 19 September 2002 which ended by late 2004 though the country remained split in two with a rebel-held north and a government-held south. The second civil war broke out in March 2011 between military forces loyal to Laurent Gbagbo the president of Cote d'ivoire since 2000, and military forces in support of the internationally recognized president-elect Alassane Quattara)
4. The civil war in Libya which resulted to the death of many Libyans in 2011 and the death of their former leader Muammar Muhammed Abu Minyar al-Gaddafi on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2011.
5. The Arab spring uprising in 2011 which was triggered by an event which occurred in Tunisia on the 17<sup>th</sup> of December 2010, leading to the death of many people across North-Africa and the Middle East.
6. The current civil war in Syria which started in 2011 and still rages on presently.
7. The conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians, etc.

From the listed wars, we could deduce that in our present time, some had occurred, some are still on and some are yet to come. No doubts, these wars causes' death and destruction of lives and properties, since it involves the use of deadly weapons such as: surface to air missile, cruise missile, rocket launcher, armoured tanker, hand grenades, various types of guns and ammunitions, etc. all these weapons brought about the destruction of lives and properties.

### **=FAMINE=**

Famine is a widespread lack of food over a long period of time, caused by some factors like drought, war, etc. this phenomenon is usually followed by regional malnutrition, starvation, epidemic and increased mortality.

Despite repeated stated intentions by world leaders to end hunger and famine, famine remains a chronic threat in much of Africa and Asia. In July 2005, the famine early warning systems network labeled Niger with emergency status, as well as Chad, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Somalia and Zimbabwe.

In January 2006, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization warned that 11 million people in Somalia, Kenya, Djibouti and Ethiopia were in danger of starvation due to the combination of severe drought and military conflicts. Below are lists of famine in the past and the present time:

1. 1914-1918 mount Lebanon during World War 1 which killed about a third of the population.
2. 1916-1917 German famine during World War 1, caused by the British blockade.
3. 1928-1930 Famine in northern China, caused by drought which resulted in 3 million deaths.
4. 1967-1970 Biafran famine caused by Nigerian blockade during the Nigerian civil war.
5. 1972-1973 Famine in Ethiopia caused by drought and poor governance.
6. 1991-1992 Somalian famine caused by drought and civil war.
7. 1998 Sudan famine caused by war and drought.
8. 2008 Myanmar food crisis caused by cyclone Nargis which devastated Burma's major rice producing region.
9. 2009 Kenya food crisis which affected 10 million Kenyans.
10. 2012 West African famine (Mali and Niger).

Considering the above listed cases of famine in the history of our time, we could deduce that drought and war are the major causes of famine. Though we have earlier seen how deadly and destructive wars could be. But there is another major factor drought.

What is drought? It is a long period of time when there is little or no rain or snow, aided by the depletion of the ozone layer otherwise known as global warming.

Drought devastated crops around the world in the year 2012, including corn and soybeans in the United States, wheat in Russia and Australia and soybeans in Brazil and Argentina. This has contributed to a 6 percent rise in global food prices from June to July (the United Nations data).

I believe you know what doom this spelt, if the trend of drought should continue and probably increase in the future, considering the fact that major world producers of food are affected? It means that there will be famine more serious than previous once and as such would lead to the increase of food scarcity which in turn would lead to increased hunger and starvation that would cause the death of many people in the world.

### **=EARTHQUAKES=**

Earthquake (also known as a quake, tremor or temblor) is a sudden and violent shaking of the ground, sometimes causing great destruction, as a result of movements within the earth's crust.

Earthquakes are measured using observations from seismometers or seismographs. The moment magnitude is the most common scale on which earthquakes larger than approximately 5.0 are reported for the entire globe.

Magnitude 3.0 or lower earthquakes are mostly almost imperceptible or weak and magnitude 7.0 and over, potentially cause serious damage to lives and properties over larger areas, depending on their depth.

The largest earthquakes in historic times have been of magnitude slightly over 9.0 or equal to. The most recent large earthquake of magnitude 9.0 or larger was a 9.0 magnitude earthquake in Japan in 2011 (as of December 2016) which triggered a tsunami, was the largest Japanese earthquake since records began.

The shallower an earthquake, the more damage to structures it causes. When a large earthquake is located offshore, the seabed may be displaced sufficiently to cause a tsunami. It can also trigger landslides and occasionally volcanic activity.

Earthquakes are caused mostly by rupture of geological faults, but also by other events such as volcanic activity, landslides, mine blasts and nuclear tests.

Earthquake is no doubt a terrible disaster which is highly deadly and destructive in nature. Below are listed cases of earthquake:

#### **Cases of Magnitude 8.5 and Above**

1. The 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake which occurred at the Indian ocean Sumatra, Indonesia on December 26, 2004.
2. The 2005 Sumatra earthquake at Sumatra, Indonesia on March 28, 2005.
3. The 2007 Sumatra earthquake which happened in Sumatra, Indonesia on September 12, 2007.
4. The 2010 Chile earthquake that occurred in Maule, Chile on February 27, 2010.
5. The 2011 Tohoku earthquake which occurred offshore at the Pacific Ocean, Tohoku region, Japan on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2011.
6. 2012 Aceh earthquake at the Indian Ocean, Sumatra, Indonesia on April 11, 2012.

#### **Ranked Deadliest Earthquakes on Record**

1. The Haiti quake on January 12, 2010.
2. The Indian Ocean quake on December 26, 2004, etc.

#### **Ranked Property Damages Caused by Earthquake**

1. The 2011 9.0 magnitude quake in Tohoku, Japan which destroyed properties worth \$122 billion.
2. The 2008 8.0 magnitude quake in Sichuan, China that damaged properties worth \$75 billion.
3. The 2010 8.8 magnitude quake in Chile destroyed properties estimated to be between \$15 billion to \$30 billion.

4. 2012 4.6 to 6.1 magnitude quake that destroyed properties worth \$13.2 billion in Emilia, Italy.
5. 2011 6.3 magnitude quake which destroyed properties worth \$12 billion in Christchurch, New Zealand, etc.

More destructive and deadly earthquakes are still to come in the future, how prepared are you if caught by this terrible disaster? Believing in Jesus, trusting in Him and obeying His commands are the only sure way of escaping this destructive destroyer.

### **=PESTILENCE/EPIDEMIC=**

The Oxford English dictionary defined Pestilence as an old usage (word not commonly/presently used) which literally means any infectious disease that spreads quickly and kills a lot of people. While the word Epidemic which is commonly used means a large number of cases of a particular disease happening at the same time in a particular community.

The International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC) and Red Crescent Societies defined an epidemic as the unusual increase in the number of cases of an infectious disease which already exists in a certain region or population. It can also refer to the appearance of a significant number of cases of an infectious disease in a region or population that is usually free from that disease.

From the above definitions, we could deduce that Pestilence or Epidemic is an infectious disease of any kind, which spreads rapidly in a short period of time within a particular region of a given state or country, killing many people.

Disasters such as tropical storms, floods, earthquakes, droughts, etc, could result to epidemic. Epidemics may also attack animals leading to local economic disasters.

### **Types of Infectious Disease**

There are various kinds of infectious diseases such as:

1. Avian influenza (AI)
2. Cholera
3. Dengue Fever
4. Ebola and Marburg
5. Malaria
6. Measles
7. Meningococcal meningitis
8. Yellow Fever
9. HIV/AIDS
10. Tuberculosis, etc.

Approximately half of all deaths caused by infectious diseases each year can be attributed to just three diseases: Tuberculosis, Malaria and AIDS. Together, these diseases cause over 300 million illnesses around the world and more than 5 million deaths each year.



So far, we have seen how deadly and destructive these terrible disasters are. According to the gospel of Matthew 24: 8, they are the beginning of birth pains.

One may ask: why would a loving and merciful God allow these terrible disasters to kill and destroy? The answer is in 2 Esdras 16: 18-20 and it says:

***Troubles will come and many people will groan. Famine will come, and many will die. Wars will come, and the world powers will tremble. Disasters will come, and everyone will be terrified. What will people do when these disasters come? Famine, epidemics, troubles, and suffering are sent to punish and correct people. But in spite of all this, they will not turn away from their sins; they soon forget their punishment.***

In essence, it is telling us that God allowed these terrible disasters to kill and destroy as a kind of punishment for the sins we have committed in order to make us repent from our sins and turn back to Him who is the Almighty Creator of all things both visible and invisible. But verse 20 says that despite all these, they will not turn away from their sins... read Revelation 3: 19-20.

Since the world cannot sincerely and humbly seek the face of the Almighty God for forgiveness in one Spirit of Christ Jesus, these terrible disasters will continue to kill and destroy. The unrepentant hearts of men will take us to the next event which is the Rebellion.

## ❖ THE REBELLION

***Do not let anyone deceive you in anyway. For that day will not come until the final rebellion takes place... (2 Thessalonians 2: 3 TEV)***

Rebellion according to the third sense in the Oxford English Dictionary means opposition to authority, being unwilling to obey rules or accept normal standards of behaviour, dress, etc.

God gave us rules and regulations through Moses and the Prophets, to enable us live at peace with Him and with our fellow man. Those rules were further explained clearly to us by His Son Jesus Christ in the gospel of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Since our definition of rebellion means the willingness to disobey rules or reject normal standards of behaviour established by authority, it therefore means that disobeying the rules and regulations of the Almighty God who is the highest of all authorities whether in heaven, on earth or beneath the earth is a rebellion.

Presently, there is a rebellion against the teaching and lay down rules and regulations of our Lord Jesus Christ which is obviously noticeable. I call it "national rebellion" because it involves a group of people in a given country. These people are leaders and lawmakers of various countries of the world. Some or most of them are Christians who collectively decided to rebel against the rules and standards of our Lord

Jesus Christ by legalizing same sex marriage (SSM), etc. below are list of countries where same sex marriage have been legalized:

1. In the year 2000, Netherlands legalized same sex marriage. They were the first country in the world to do so.
2. Belgium followed in 2003
3. In June 2005, Spain legalized SSM
4. On July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2005 Canada joined the list of countries where same sex marriage is legal.
5. On 15<sup>th</sup> November 2006, the legislature of South Africa passed a law legalizing same sex marriage (marriage involving a man and a man or a female and a female), by a vote of 230 to 41 with three abstentions.
6. Norway legislation passed a law legalizing SSM in June 2008
7. On April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009, the legislation of Sweden overwhelmingly passed a law legalizing same sex marriage.
8. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of December 2009, Mexico City approved SSM.
9. Portugal, in which 97% of the population identifies with the Roman Catholic Church, turned its back on the Church's teachings and legalized same sex marriage in 2010.
10. Iceland legalized same sex marriage in 2010 and the first same sex couple were Prime Minister Johanna Sigurdardottir and her long-time female partner Jonina Leosdottir.
11. Argentina passed a same sex marriage bill amid intense opposition from the Roman Catholic Church and evangelical Christian groups in 2010 and was signed into law in July 2010, etc.

***They know that God's law says that people who live in this way deserve death. Yet, not only do they continue to do these very things, but they even approve of others who do them. (Romans 1: 32 TEV)***

Be warned, God's wrath is coming upon the world, shun evil and repent so that you may live forever. Otherwise, you will be destroyed by fire in hell forever.

### **The Spirit of Antichrist**

***The secret power of antichrist is already at work, but the one who now stops it from achieving its main objective will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way (2 Thessalonians 2: 7)***

Yes, the secret power of the spirit of antichrist is currently at work all over the world. Presently in the USA, Britain, Germany, etc. Christians are being persecuted one way or the other for praying in the name of Jesus Christ or calling God in public. The following are some reports as regards the ban on mentioning the name of Jesus Christ or God in public and other cases of persecution:

1. Persecution of Christians on Rise- in USA: "... government agencies around the USA are trying to push Christian expression out the door..." senior citizens being banned from praying over their meals in the senior center...' one of the most strident examples: the misuse of the Establishment clause to attempt to ban any mention of God from historical markers, monuments or even museum exhibits, 'French says. This represents an effort to whitewash God from American history.'" For more detail on this report, please visit: <http://www.wnd.com/2012/09/persecution-of-christians-on-rise-in-u-s/>

2. Christians victims of rising 'hostility' from government and secular groups, report says: "... there's been a rising pattern of hostility towards Christians in America over the past decade. The 140 page survey of Religious Hostility in America, prepared by the Liberty Institute and Family Research Council, highlighted more than 600 examples illustrating what characterized as religious animosity shown by judges, government bureaucrats, schools and secular groups. Among the examples listed in the survey:

= Matthew Reynolds, Valedictorian for HLV Junior-Senior High School in Victor, Iowa, was told he had to give a 'secular' speech after he wished to attribute his success to his faith in Jesus Christ during his graduation speech...

= Dr. Frank Turek, a Cisco employee, was fired for expressing his views on traditional marriage in his book, even though he never voiced his religious opinions at work.

= Samantha Schulz, 8, was barred from singing 'kum ba yah' at a boys and girls club in Port Charlotte, Fla., because the song included the words 'oh, Lord.'

= Lorena Cenzone-DeCarlo, a nurse at Manhattan's Mount Sinai Hospital, was forced to participate in a late-term abortion against her religious convictions, and was threatened with job termination and loss of license." For more detail on this report, please visit: [www.foxnews.com/us/2012/08/24/christians-victims-rising-hostility-from-govt-and-secular-groups-report-says/](http://www.foxnews.com/us/2012/08/24/christians-victims-rising-hostility-from-govt-and-secular-groups-report-says/)

3. Islamic Indoctrination in Textbooks: "Political correctness has a double standard when it comes to teaching about religion in public schools. Drop Christianity down the memory hole but give extensive and mostly favorable coverage to Islam. "Even the mainstream media have provided extensive coverage of the steady stream of court cases and threatening letters from the American Civil Liberties Union aimed at removing all signs of Judeo-Christianity from public schools. Not only must prayer be prohibited, a cross and the Ten Commandments removed... a Valedictorian banned from thanking God for His help, a football coach prohibited from bowing his head during a student-led pre-game prayer." Visit:

[www.townhall.com/columnists/phyllisschlafly/2012/04/03/islamic\\_indoctrination\\_in\\_textbooks/page/Full/](http://www.townhall.com/columnists/phyllisschlafly/2012/04/03/islamic_indoctrination_in_textbooks/page/Full/) for more detail.

4. Student suspended for saying Gay is wrong: "Fourteen-year-old Dakota Ary [explained:]. 'We were talking about religions in Germany. I said, 'I am a Christian. I think being a homosexual is wrong,' he said. It wasn't directed to anyone except my friend who was sitting behind me. I guess [the teacher] heard me. He started yelling. He told me he was going to write me an infraction and send me to the office.' An assistant principal called Ary's mother... [her response:] '... My son is on the honor roll with great grades... He was stating an opinion. He has a right to do that.'" visit:

[www.nation.foxnews.com/homosexuality/2011/09/22/student-suspended-saying-homosexuality-wrong](http://www.nation.foxnews.com/homosexuality/2011/09/22/student-suspended-saying-homosexuality-wrong) for more detailed report.

5. 'In God We Trust' banished from classroom: "'a team of free-speech experts has announced plans to challenge a decision by a panel of the 9<sup>th</sup> U.S. circuit Court of Appeals that banished the national motto, 'In God We Trust,' from a school teacher's classroom... The school allowed a 35 to 40 foot

string of Tibetan prayer flags with images of Buddha, a poster with the lyrics from John Lennon's anti-religion song 'Imagine' (which begins, 'imagine there's no Heaven'), a poster with Hindu leader Mahatma Gandhi's '7 Social Sins,' a poster of Muslim leader Malcolm X and another of Buddhist leader Dalai Lama." For more detail on this report, visit: [www.wnd.com/2011/09/346701/](http://www.wnd.com/2011/09/346701/)

6. 'Bloodless persecution' Predicted for Christians: "Christianity has been around what now is Europe since the first century, with some parts of the New Testament written to people in Greece and Rome. But new report is warning that open hostility to Christianity across the continent is on the rise and intolerance is being paired with legislative power to attack and violate the religious rights of the faithful. 'There are signs that hostility towards free and open demonstrations of faith is growing. Christians are increasingly marginalized.'" Visit: [www.wnd.com/2011/02/259777/](http://www.wnd.com/2011/02/259777/) for detailed report on this topic, it will interest you.
7. Persecution a sign of end times: "Matthew Sherwood... says his co-worker and boss often told him that his God was a joke and that believing that Jesus was crucified on the cross is 'garbage.' Sherwood alleges that his colleagues also changed his facebook bio to read, 'satan is king. All hail satan! I am officially a Satanist.'..."

"Dr. Michael Coffman, president of Environmental Perspectives... believes Christians will soon be unable to proclaim their faith publicly without facing consequences. 'it's only a matter of time before our very protections are going to be fully lost and we will be as demonized and persecuted as all the Christians in other nations of the world.'" For more detail visit:

[www.onenewsnow.com/culture/2010/12/29/persecution-a-sign-of-end-times](http://www.onenewsnow.com/culture/2010/12/29/persecution-a-sign-of-end-times)

Please visit <http://www.crossroad.to/News/Persecution/seeds.html> for a complete list of reported cases of Christians being persecuted for Christ's sake since 2009 till date.

We are presently in the period of the rebellion. The rebellion against God and the persecution of His saints will continue, it will worsen when Saint Michael the Archangel who currently holds back the power of satan from fully achieving his main objective is taken out of the way. When this occurs, there will be great distress which is the next event known as the great tribulation.

#### ❖ THE GREAT TRIBULATION

I used to think that the Rapture will take place before the great tribulation until the Spirit of God opened my eyes to see that it is not true. If Rapture is meant for the saints, then who are the saints talked about in Daniel 12: 7 and Revelation 13: 7. The trumpet to wrap things up will be sounded after the great tribulation to signal the coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST and His kingdom rule. It is at this time that the Rapture will occur. Those who died for Christ sake during the great tribulation will rise and those who survived the tribulation will both be taken to meet the LORD in the sky so as to align with the heavenly armies to battle satan and the two beasts and their armies. Read Matthew 24: 29-31, 1Thessalonians 4: 16-17 and Revelation 19: 11-21.

The great tribulation is a period of trial for Christians. It is that time when Christians all over the world will be persecuted and killed because of their faith in Jesus Christ. The persecution and killing of Christians would last for three and a half years. See Daniel 12: 7 and Revelation 13: 5.

We are presently in the period of the rebellion which will usher in the great tribulation at a time when the evil ruler (the beast) will be revealed. In Daniel 12: 11, we are told that the great tribulation will begin starting from the day that the daily sacrifice is stopped and the abomination that causes desolation is set up. For us to be able to identify the day when the great tribulation begins, we will need to know: what is the daily sacrifice, the abomination that will be set up and the location where these things will occur.

### **THE DAILY SACRIFICE**

The daily sacrifice is a Jewish tradition practiced in Judaic religion. It is a daily offering made to God by fire which involves two male lambs a year old without defect, 2 kilograms of flour mixed with 2 litres of olive oil as a grain offering and 2 litres of wine for the wine offering. This sacrifice is offered to God daily in the morning and in the evening using one lamb, 1 kilogram of flour mixed with 1 litre of olive oil and 1 litre of wine respectively for each period of the day. This way of offering sacrifice to God was practiced under the first covenant during the time of Moses. See Numbers 28: 1-8, 9-10.

**The morning sacrifice** was killed as soon as the sun rose, and then prepared and burned on the altar and the various prayers, blessings and psalms to complete the sacrifice by about 9 AM. To accomplish the many rituals and prayers, they started the Morning Daily process well before sunrise.

**The evening sacrifice** began after the hour of prayer which is 3 PM, followed by several other preparations. Blessings and psalms and prayers were offered before the killing of the lamb. The evening lamb was killed and was then prepared and burned on the altar immediately after sunset.

The only difference being that the morning sacrifice was burned on the altar after the sun rose and the evening sacrifice was burned on the altar after the sun set.

The above method of offering sacrifice to God took a new form when Jesus Christ offered Himself as a sacrificial lamb without fault (free of sin and/or broken bones) on the cross at mount Calvary from the hour that marked the end of the first daily sacrifice to the hour that marked the beginning of last daily sacrifice. He offered His Body and Blood as the new and everlasting covenant in replacement of the first covenant. (Please read Hebrews 8 and 10: 1-14 for reasons why the first covenant needed change).

Presently, the new form of offering sacrifices daily to God is been practiced by Catholics in the sacrifice of the holy mass where Christ is offered to God in an unbloody manner in the morning and in the evening every day, for the forgiveness of sins. See 1 John 2: 1-2.

The daily sacrifice which involves a year old lamb, etc, is a tradition practiced by the Jewish people who believe in Judaic religion (Judaism), while the daily sacrifice which involves Jesus Christ as the sacrificial lamb is practiced by Catholic Christians. Since angel Gabriel who told Daniel about the abolished daily

sacrifice did not specify exactly which of the two he meant, we will have to monitor both religion to enable us know the time when the great tribulation starts.

We have been able to determine what the daily sacrifice is, now let's see what the abomination that causes desolation is.

### **THE ABOMINATION THAT CAUSES DESOLATION**

We will look at some bible verses which refer to the abomination to see what clues lies in them.

***His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation. (Daniel 11: 31 NIV)***

***So when you see standing in the holy place the abomination that causes desolation, spoken of through the prophet Daniel-let the reader understand-then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. (Matthew 24: 15-16 NIV)***

***When you see the abomination that causes desolation standing where it does not belong-let the reader understand-then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. (Mark 13: 14 NIV)***

From the above bible verses, we could deduce that the abomination that causes desolation is something that can be set up i.e. something which can be built or put together. It is also something that can be seen with the eyes and it will be standing in the holy place where it does not belong (in a temple). The verses did not completely tell us what exactly the abomination that causes desolation is; though they informed us that it will be set up, visible and standing in a temple. To be able to determine what exactly the abomination is, we will need some other bible verses to help us trace the person responsible for its set up and by so doing; we will know what it is.

In Daniel 11: 31, we are told that a man was responsible for setting up the abomination that causes desolation through the help of his armed forces. Now the question boils down to: who is the man? Daniel 11: 21 said that he was a man from no royal background but by trickery he became a king-an evil king. Reading further through to verse 37 of Daniel 11, we will discover that the evil king is the man referred to in 2 Thessalonians 2: 3-4 and also the first beast spoken of in Revelation 13: 1, because his blasphemous behaviour as stated in Daniel 11: 36-37 matches the blasphemous behaviour of the evil man and the beast mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2: 3-4 and Revelation 13: 5-8 respectively. Let's see these bible verses:

***The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place. He will show no regard for the gods of his fathers or for the one desired by women, nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above them all. (Daniel 11: 36-37 NIV)***

***... That day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is***

**worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God. (2 Thessalonians 2: 3-4 NIV)**

**The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months. He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander His name and His dwelling place and those who live in heaven... all inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world. (Revelation 13: 5-8 NIV)**

Deducing from the above verses, you will agree with me that the blasphemous behaviour of the evil king in Daniel 11: 36-37 matches the blasphemous behaviour of the evil man and the beast in 2 Thessalonians 2 and Revelation 13 respectively. Now that we have seen that the evil king in Daniel 11: 21-37 is the same person spoken of in 2 Thessalonians 2 and Revelation 13, we can confidently conclude that the abomination which causes desolation is an idol image of the evil king set up by his armed forces in God's temple, so that everyone may worship him as god, considering the facts in 2 Thessalonians 2: 4 and Revelation 13: 14-15 which says thus:

**He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets Himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God. (2 Thessalonians 2: 4 NIV)**

**And it deceived all the people living on earth by means of the miracles which it was allowed to perform in the presence of the first beast. The beast told them to build an image in honour of the beast that had been wounded by the sword and yet lived. The second beast was allowed to breathe life into the image of the first beast, so that the image could talk and put to death all those who would not worship it. (Revelation 13: 14-15 TEV)**

The image of the evil king (the evil man or the first beast) will be set up in God's temple by his armies. His image will be standing in the holy place (God's temple) where it does not belong. The false prophet (the second beast) will promote the worship of the evil king (the evil man or the first beast) and his image by performing deceitful miracles which will make people especially the unbelievers to think that truly the evil king is God. The power of satan is the secret power behind the evil king (first beast) and the false prophet (second beast). See Revelation 12: 3, 9, 13: 1-2, 11-12.

### **THE LOCATION**

So far so good, we have been able to determine what is the daily sacrifice and the abomination that will cause desolation, but one thing still remain, which is; the place where the daily sacrifice will be first stopped and the abomination set up. The clue lies in Luke 21: 20-21 which says:

**When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. (Luke 21: 20-21 NIV)**

Considering the above bible quotations, we could understand that the place where the daily sacrifice would be abolished and the abomination which causes desolation set up will be the temple of God in the city of Jerusalem.

One might ask: why Jerusalem? Satan is always envious of God because he wanted to be God. So, just like God planted the tree of life at the center of the garden in Eden, satan planted also at the center the tree of death.

Jerusalem is the heart or center of the world, see Matthew 12: 40. As the heart pumps blood to all parts of the body through the veins, so also the Gospel about the life, teaching and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ was spread to all parts of the world through His Apostles from Jerusalem.

Therefore, satan will copy this pattern and through the false prophet (second beast), he will spread the worship of the evil king (first beast) who survived a fatal wound to his head, from Jerusalem to other parts of the world.

Let us keep a watchful eye on Jerusalem to enable us know when the daily sacrifice of either the Judaic faith or the Catholic Christian faith is abolished and the image of the beast placed in God's temple, so that we may not be caught unaware, since this evil act of satan through the evil king (first beast) and the false prophet (second beast) marks the beginning of the great tribulation.

During the great tribulation period, Christians all over the world will be forced to abandon their faith in Jesus Christ. Satan will appear in human form as the evil king (first beast) and through the false prophet (second beast) he will perform deceitful miracles that will make many people to think that truly the evil king who is satan's incarnate is God. Those deceived by his counterfeit miracles will worship the evil king and his image; they will receive a mark on their forehead or on their right hand. This mark represents the name of satan. Whoever receives the mark belongs to satan because his mark on you signifies that he own you.

True believers of our Lord Jesus Christ will resist the mark and worship of the evil king and his image even in death. Because of their refusal to worship the evil king, his image and receive his mark on their forehead or on their right hand, they will suffer greatly. Some will be killed, some imprisoned, some will suffer hunger and thirst since they can't buy or sell anything unless they have the mark of satan, etc.

One might ask: why will a Loving and Merciful God allow His people to suffer this much? Suffering for Christ's sake is a baptism of fire (purification and perfection) see Daniel 11: 35, 12: 10 and Mark 10: 38-39. James and John wanted to share in Christ glorious kingdom by sitting at His right and left sides of His throne, just like every Christian would love to partake in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, but Christ asked them if they can drink the cup of suffering that He would drink and if they can be baptized the way He must be baptized. Today, Christ is also asking you thus:

***... Can you drink the cup of suffering that I must drink? Can you be baptized in the way I must be baptized? (Mark 10: 38 TEV)***



Therefore, if we must inherit the kingdom of God, we must go through series of trials and difficulties for the sake of Jesus Christ. If we remain faithful to God during our trials and difficulties, at the end, we will share in His glory.

***... If we share in Christ's suffering, we will also share in His glory (Romans 8: 17)***

***For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake. (Philippians 1: 29 KJV)***

So, what is that thing which will make you deny Jesus Christ before men? Is it suffering, money, fear of dying, gold or silver, hunger or thirst, food or water, etc? What? Jesus Christ gave an important warning to us when He said thus:

***For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for Me and for the gospel will save it... If anyone is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His Father's glory with the holy angels. (Mark 8: 35-38 NIV)***

To emphasize what I am trying to make you understand, I will share a testimony with you:

A Christian brother with other passengers were travelling on a long distance journey by bus, while they were on their way towards their various destinations, the brother suggested that someone should lead in praise and worship while he will take charge of prayers after the praise and worship. A young lady moved by the Spirit of God offered herself to lead in the praise and worship of God the Father as other passengers sang along with her. After praise and worship, he prayed for God's protection against accident, armed robbery attack, etc. after he had finished praying, a marketer took charge, he started by preaching about God before he introduced his products to the passengers. When he was through with marketing and sales, he sat back as the journey progressed.

Suddenly, men of the underworld who pretended to be fellow passenger unleashed terror. They ordered the driver to stop the bus at gunpoint and called out the lady who led in praise and worship, the brother who prayed and the marketer who preached. In turns at gunpoint, they were forced to deny Jesus Christ or be killed. The marketer out of fear denied Jesus and obtained a deceitful praise from the armed robbers. When it was the lady's turn, she refused to deny Jesus; instead she shouted "Jesus is Lord!" The armed robbers threatened that she would be killed but before killing her, they would prefer to see if the last person-the brother would deny Jesus. When asked to deny Jesus, the brother told them that Jesus had been faithful to him and for that reason, he won't deny Him.

Finally, the armed robbers concluded that the marketer was a hypocrite, then killed him and spared the lives of the lady and the brother who upheld the name of Jesus Christ. They allowed every other passenger to continue their journey without robbing them except the marketer who lost his life for denying Jesus.

The great tribulation is a period of trial and a means of purification and perfection for us Christians who remain faithful to God till the end of the forty two months allowed the evil king to torment us.

To be victorious during the great tribulation means to be very strong in faith and to be very strong in faith means eating the word of God daily. Please see the beginning of this chapter to see how to eat God's word and grow your faith.

### **FINAL CONCLUSION**

Those who worshiped the beast and his image and received his mark on their forehead or on their hands out of ignorance and lack of faith in Jesus Christ will suffer God's wrath (Revelation 14: 9-10 and 16:)

Those who died for Christ's sake because they refused to receive the beast's mark and worship him and his image will be raised back to life when Jesus Christ comes into the world to reign as king for a thousand years (Revelation 20: 4-6). They and those who survived the great tribulation and are victorious over the beast, his image and over the mark of his name will reign together with Christ for a thousand years (Matthew 24: 29-31 and Mark 13: 24-27)

After the one thousand years reign of our Lord Jesus Christ, satan who will be caught during the battle of Armageddon (Revelation 16: 14-16 and 19: 19-21) and locked up in the Abyss (Revelation 20: 1-3), will be set free for a short time. During his freedom, he will gather from the four corners of the earth those who had the mark of his name for a final battle against God's people who dwell in Jerusalem but fire from heaven will devour them and satan will be thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will forever be in torment (Revelation 20: 7-10).

Suddenly, the people of God and our Lord Jesus Christ and every living thing will sleep, the world will return to its former state of silence before creation. After seven days, the world will end then judgement will commence and it will last for seven years. Death and hades will be thrown into the lake of fire. Those who had their names written in the book of life will inherit the new earth but those whose names are not found in the book of life will be thrown into the lake of fire (2 Esdras 7: 30-44 and Revelation 20: 11-15).

If God is not Loving and Merciful, will He inform us of all these end time events? No! but you see, God is indeed Loving and Merciful, that is why He had informed us about these end time events beforehand, in order for you and me to get ourselves prepared by building our spiritual strength and faith in His presence where we eat His words daily at a covenant time, so that when the time of trial comes, we will be victorious.

Therefore, dedicate a covenant time to God today, that time at which you will separate yourself to God in His presence daily in order to eat His words that gives spiritual power and authority. Start your Holy Ghost school today! God bless you. Amen!

**... As God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity (Colossians 3: 12-14)**

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