

All scriptures are from the King James Version of the Bible (KJV), unless otherwise noted.

*The Holy Art of War*

A guide to unlocking spiritual mysteries in the Bible

Paperback Edition

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First Edition

**THE  
HOLY  
ART OF  
WAR**

**Dr. Will Gerard**

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## Chapter 1

# Introduction

MY PEOPLE ARE DESTROYED FOR LACK OF KNOWLEDGE: BECAUSE THOU HAST REJECTED KNOWLEDGE, I WILL ALSO REJECT THEE, THAT THOU SHALT BE NO PRIEST TO ME: SEEING THOU HAST FORGOTTEN THE LAW OF THY GOD, I WILL ALSO FORGET THY CHILDREN.

— Hosea 4:6

**W**E are in a war. Whether we like it or not, while living on earth we're all engaged in a massive ongoing war between unseen forces in the spiritual realm. This battle between good and evil is constantly being fought and the spoils of the war are not for money, real estate, gold, diamonds or oil, but for God's children. In other words, there are deadly skirmishes being fought over people like you and me as we speak.

### *The Purpose of this Book*

One of Satan's greatest deceptive strategies has been to deceive the world, and keep people under a misconception about God, who they don't really understand in the first place. We live in a world in which the Bible and Christian faith are being ridiculed. Educated people are more easily convinced of the existence of extraterrestrials, than that there is a supernatural God to answer to.

The devil has also kept division in the church. He has done so by proclaiming truth leavened with little white lies. For example, he comes with a truth, like God is omnipotent. Then he adds a slight twist, claiming God is controlling everything. This means that God is in control of everything that happens all the time and we don't really have any say in it. On the surface this seems good and true, but it's not. It is dangerous and deceptive. Satan is lying by falsely glorifying God. Not many people even realize that this is a vicious lie about the Almighty. They buy into it because it resonates with their own desire to recognize the supremacy of God. But having convinced people of this one lie, the devil has also convinced them that everything, whether evil or bad, is from God. The truth is that Satan is the author of all evil in the world, not God. But by cleverly adding a very subtle twist to the truth, he manages to turn people against God.

This concept of the all-sovereignty of God is a lie that the devil has been spreading for centuries in order to have people blame God for all kinds of evil, such as killer hurricanes, killer accidents, killer diseases like cancer, and child deaths, to mention just a few. The truth is that God is indeed omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, but He also gave us free will *and* He delegated the administration of the earth to mankind in the Garden of Eden. It is the devil and his demons who are responsible for all evil. Not God. This matter will be examined in detail in this book from scriptures, such as 1 John 1:5, which says:

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.



Over a period of thousands of years the devil has succeeded in disarming Christians through deceptions and by twisting the truth. He has essentially pulled the teeth of Christianity. He has even convinced Christians they aren't supposed to battle him. He has made Christians believe that God is to blame for all the diseases and tragedies in the world. He has convinced churches that the tools Jesus gave us to fight him are nothing more than symbolic. He has even deceived them into thinking that ideas originating in paganism and the occult are compatible with Christian faith. He has painted a false portrayal of Jesus. He came as an angel of light and convinced modern society that good and evil can be correlated to feeling good and feeling bad, the palatable and the offensive, the poor and the rich, tolerance and intolerance, inclusiveness and exclusivity. The church has been lead away from the truth. His deceptions are cunning and virtually endless.

This book's title can be acronymized as "THAW", which is what I hope for the Christian church in general - to finally become unfrozen and effective for the kingdom of heaven.

I wrote this book to present the truth, expose Satan and turn that deception around for whomever finds it and decides to read it and accept it. I want all Christians to understand that we are called to fight in the holy war. We are called to be holy soldiers for Jesus. If you want to serve in the SWAT team for Jesus, then this is the book that you should read. You will be armed and prepared for battle with weapons of light for the Kingdom of God. We are supposed to engage the enemy and I will show that to you from the Bible. I'm also going to teach you what your weapons of light are, the biblical battle strategies at your disposal and how to do battle against the enemy.

But the revelations God gave me are much more than that and that brings me to the second reason I wrote this book. I want everyone who reads it to benefit from the same revelations that God gave me. These revelations need to be shared I therefore urge you to not hold on to these principles selfishly, but pass it on and spread it as far and wide as you can. Even if it is just to tell someone about this book.

### *How to Read this Book*

In order to get anything from this book you need to have an open mind. What I'm about to reveal to you will challenge the religious beliefs that you've been taught. I did an experiment once and asked people why they closed their eyes during prayer. Most people could not really give a good reason why, because they've never given extra thought to it before. It is just something they had learned from their parents or by watching what others do in church. Some people said it's to concentrate better on the content of the prayer. But then had to admit that closing one's eyes also made it easier to get distracted by other thoughts.

There is still so much tradition, dogma and ceremony embedded in our idea of practicing the Christian faith, that most people don't even realize that they are caught up in it at all. After all, Jesus Christ wasn't hunted down, tortured and executed because the Romans wanted Him dead. He was prosecuted by the *religious leadership* of the day, because Jesus criticized their religious ways. Jesus was against *religion* itself. And it's the very church that He grew up in that ended up killing Him. If you want to get to the truth, then be prepared to put aside everything that you've been taught by your pastor, priest, minister or reverend, father, mother, grandparent, uncle, aunt or any other religious mentor. I would dare to say that if you've had no Christian upbringing, then you're better off than a Christian who picks up and reads this book, because the Christian has to be deprogrammed first. The false religious ideas have to be expunged out of the Christian first before he or she would be able to understand and accept the hidden truths in the Bible.

### *Test Everything*

This book is not perfect. The only book that is perfect is the inspired work of God. There is no other book that has only truth. No biblical teacher or preacher has the whole truth. Not

one. I am no exception. The only person who ever lived who had the whole truth, is Jesus. The belief system of every evangelist, preacher, teacher, author, bible scholar and believer has been tainted in their doctrine in one way or the other. That is why there are so many different churches and church denominations. The devil knows how to plant deception and discontent in people, especially believers. Even the most Spirit-filled and inspired evangelical leaders are still human and has doctrinal fallacies contaminating their teachings.

The Bible tells us to test everything against two or three witnesses. As you read this book, do test everything and pray for discernment. If you have questions, find mistakes, wish to inform me of serous doctrinal errors, or just want to comment, please feel free to shoot me a short note by emailing [TheHolyArtOfWar@gmail.com](mailto:TheHolyArtOfWar@gmail.com). I cannot promise that I will answer every email, but I will appreciate well researched and thought through comments.

### *Who this Book was Written for*

When I started writing this book, I initially intended it only for Christians who are Spirit-filled followers of Jesus, but who are desperately in need of instruction on how to fight the devil. Because unfortunately, most of Christianity does not subscribe to the concept of spiritual warfare for various reasons. Moreover, I found that even the most Spirit-filled Christian teachers whom I have the greatest respect for, don't necessarily believe in engaging the enemy. In order to make the book read-worthy to all of them, I had to start explaining the authority that Jesus delegates to believers. In order to explain authority, I had to include chapters that capture the essence of the Biblical account from the creation in Genesis all the way to the New Testament.

I know that many people who call themselves Christians are somehow involved in the occult, probably because they think that it's an innocent pastime and that there is no harm in dabbling with superstitions, horoscopes, mind readings, channeling, playing with Ouija boards, or even being actively engaged in satanism or witchcraft. By the time I had written a chapter to include them, it wasn't difficult to extend it to include atheists as well. In order to make the book accessible to all of them I included chapters to show the integrity of the Word of God in the Bible by including chapters that deal with popular theories of creation and evolution, and biblical evidence, and apologetics. Since this is not the main theme of the book, these chapters only highlight some of the main ideas.

The book is divided into six parts. Part one is an introduction into the integrity of the Word of God through the Bible. Part Two deals with the Old Testament and gives an historical overview from creation through the exile of the Jews and the restoration of Jerusalem. Part Three deals with the New Testament and the impact of the Messiah's life on believers. Part Four explains how to become a Christian and what it means to be a disciple. Part Five deals with the devil, his kingdom and his methods. Part six introduces the spiritual realm, weapons of light, and the biblical battle strategies at our disposal.

I hope and pray that you will find godly revelation from this book no matter what your background is, and that you will be blessed by it.

— Will Gerard



## Chapter 2

# Creation Theories

WHO HATH MEASURED THE WATERS IN THE HOLLOW OF HIS HAND, AND METED OUT HEAVEN WITH THE SPAN, AND COMPREHENDED THE DUST OF THE EARTH IN A MEASURE, AND WEIGHED THE MOUNTAINS IN SCALES, AND THE HILLS IN A BALANCE?

— Isaiah 40:12

As a research scientist in industry and later as a university professor, I often encountered people with little or no scientific background who approached me with what they thought were new discoveries or inventions. Sometimes they'd been working on it very hard for many many years, dumping lots of their time and energy into it, having read numerous books, and even learned to manipulate complex mathematical equations. However, their ideas were inevitably always flawed because they lacked the necessary know how about the elemental laws of physics, math and basic chemistry. Students often "invented" perpetual motion engines in some form or another. One that often pops up again and again is the concept of the car that can run on water as its fuel. Basically electricity from the car battery is used to separate out hydrogen, which is then used for combustion to run the engine, to which is connected an alternator to charge the battery. The byproduct from the combustion cycle is water vapor, which can be collected and returned to the water reservoir to complete the cycle. I would either tell them to read the first few chapters in a textbook about thermodynamics and then come back to me, or I'd ask them to write the energy balance equations for the chemical processes involved. Most of the time I would never hear from them again. The system cannot work. It isn't scientifically possible to build a perpetual motion engine.

Physics and mathematics aren't for everyone. Most people are not physicists and most people who went to school disliked the subject of mathematics with a passion. However, the opposite is true about philosophy. Almost everyone likes philosophy in one way or another. How the universe came into existence and how intelligent life came about, are interesting topics to just about everyone. There is a lot of reading matter on it out there, especially with the Internet. Stephen Hawking's books were best sellers to a mostly non-technical readership.

### 2.1 The Nature of Science

But what is science? Oxford Dictionaries defines science as: "The intellectual and practical activity encompassing the systematic study of the structure and behaviour of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment." In *The Meaning of It All*, a collection of lectures by Nobel Prize Laureate Richard Feynman, Dr. Feynman said that objectivity is an important characteristic of science, as well as the independent repeatability of the experiment. He also stated "If it disagrees with experiment, it's wrong. In that simple statement is the key to science." So, let's update that definition and define some additional terms that are important concepts in the scientific world:

**SCIENCE:** The intellectual and practical activity encompassing the objective systematic study

of the structure and behavior of the physical and natural world through observation and independent experimental verification.

**HYPOTHESIS:** A supposition or proposed explanation made on the basis of limited evidence as a starting point for further investigation.

**THEORY:** A hypothesis that has been both observed and experimentally verified, both objectively and independently.

**ASSUMPTION:** A thing that is accepted as true or as certain to happen, without proof. (Assumptions are often used as preconditions (or requirements) for a hypothesis to be considered valid, for example to simplify the math involved.)

Richard Feynman, who was a cultural Jew and agnostic, described modern physics using an analogy with the game of chess as follows:

*One way that's kind of a fun analogy to try to get some idea of what we're doing here to try to understand nature is to imagine that the gods are playing some great game like chess. Let's say a chess game. And you don't know the rules of the game, but you're allowed to look at the board from time to time, in a little corner, perhaps. And from these observations, you try to figure out what the rules are of the game, what [are] the rules of the pieces moving.*

*You might discover after a bit, for example, that when there's only one bishop around on the board, that the bishop maintains its color. Later on you might discover the law for the bishop is that it moves on a diagonal, which would explain the law that you understood before, that it maintains its color. And that would be analogous we discover one law and later find a deeper understanding of it.*

*Ah, then things can happen—everything's going good, you've got all the laws, it looks very good—and then all of a sudden some strange phenomenon occurs in some corner, so you begin to investigate that, to look for it. It's castling—something you didn't expect.*

*We're always, by the way, in a fundamental physics, always trying to investigate those things in which we don't understand the conclusions. We're not trying to all the time check our conclusions; after we've checked them enough, they're okay. The thing that doesn't fit is the thing that's most interesting—the part that doesn't go according to what you'd expect.*

*Also we can have revolutions in physics. After you've noticed that the bishops maintain their color and that they go along on the diagonals and so on, for such a long time, and everybody knows that that's true; then you suddenly discover one day in some chess game that the bishop doesn't maintain its color, it changes its color. Only later do you discover the new possibility that the bishop is captured and that a pawn went all the way down to the queen's end to produce a new bishop. That could happen, but you didn't know it.*

*And so it's very analogous to the way our laws are. They sometimes look positive, they keep on working, and all of a sudden, some little gimmick shows that they're wrong—and then we have to investigate the conditions under which this bishop changed color... happened... and so on... And gradually we learn the new rule that explains it more deeply.*

*Unlike the chess game, though... In the case of the chess game, the rules become more complicated as you go along, but in the physics when you discover new things, it becomes more simple. It appears on the whole to be more complicated, because we learn about a greater experience; that is, we learn about more particles and new things, and so the laws look complicated again. But if you realize that all of the time, what's kind of wonderful is that as we expand our experience into wilder and wilder regions of experience, every once in a while we have these integration in which everything is pulled together in a unification, which it turns out to be simpler than it looked before.*

What Dr. Feynman illustrated with this analogy is that all scientists are trying to figure out what the rules are that govern various aspects of our universe through observation. There is

a lot of guesswork involved, and as the body of knowledge grows, it gets updated constantly. Scientists also deploy predictive mathematical models, their imaginations, as well as the scrutiny and debate in the scientific community. There are constantly new observations being made or new discoveries that require us to question, modify or adapt standing scientific theories. Richard Feynman said:

*"So what we call the scientific knowledge today is a body of statements of varying degrees of certainty. Some of them are most unsure; some of them are nearly sure; but none is absolutely certain."*

## 2.2 Creationism

Creationists believe in godly acts of divine creation that followed the biblical narrative, as in the description in the Book of Genesis and elsewhere in the Bible. Among them are people who do believe in Big Bang theory and that the Bible does not contradict science, but still argue that our universe is the result of intelligent design by a supreme divine being. Most of them believe that the biblical accounts are literal explanations of what happened. For instance, that God created the first man, *Adam*, literally out of dirt; a woman, *Eve*, from Adam's actual rib; that everything was created in exactly six twenty four hour periods; and so on. They believe that the story of creation in the Book of Genesis must be literal rather than allegorical and that the validity of the Bible depends on it. For example, if the story of Adam and Eve was just poetic symbolism for the evolution of man from ape, then the New Testament is inaccurate in Luke 3:38 where it explicitly names Adam in the lineage of Jesus. According to Genesis, the sun was created on the 4<sup>th</sup> day, one day after the creation of all vegetation. That could not be true if the 3<sup>rd</sup> day was actually hundred, thousands or millions of years long, because plants depend on sunlight for photosynthesis for survival. The Book of Genesis tells the story of the Noah's Great Flood that occurred around 4100 years ago. The Bible says the water covered the entire earth and all mountains, destroying all land based creatures, except for eight people on an ark. This is hard to swallow for many people, who either think it's a fable, or, argue that it could not have been a global catastrophe, but that there might have been a local flood that was contained in parts of the ancient Middle East.

The problem is, if all these and other Bible accounts are not true, then the rest of the Bible must also be called into question. After all, the Bible is considered to be the inspired Word of God written by men. Creationists are therefore passionate about their theories. Famous creationists and organizations include Dr. Henry Morris, founder of *the Institute for Creation Research*, Dr. Ken Ham, who founded *Answers in Genesis*, Dr. Kent Hovind, a former science teacher who is famous for his debates, particularly on creationism versus Darwin Evolution, and there are many others. It might be surprising to learn that large numbers of scientists from all fields of science are creationists. There is even a professional organization dedicated to creationism, describing itself as follows: "*The Creation Research Society* is a professional organization of trained scientists and interested laypersons who are firmly committed to scientific special creation."

## 2.3 Flat Earth and Geocentric Models

Ancient cultures believed the earth was flat. Pythagoras (570-495 BC), Plato (427-347 BC) and Aristotle (384-322 BC), all believed in a spherical earth well ahead of the standing paradigm during their respective lifetimes. However, there have always been people who cling to the flat earth model. Recently, the ability for regular people to propagate their ideas over the Internet to millions of viewers and listeners has caused a resurgence of so-called flat-earththers. Many flat earththers are creationists who believe in the ultimate authority of the Bible, and interpret Bible verses as stating that the earth is a stationary flat disk with a dome over it. For example, in Joshua 10:12-14, Joshua commanded the sun and the moon to stand still for a day and they did

— an event that modern science could not explain if it were true, not only because the moon orbits the earth orbiting the sun in the accepted heliocentric model of the solar system, but also because there is no good scientific explanation for the earth and moon to both come to a sudden halt. There are also branches of creationists who believe in a geocentric model of the universe, claiming that the spherical earth is the stationary center of the universe. Both of these groups are mostly comprised of people who have no formal scientific training. Even though they put enormous effort into defending their hypotheses and on trying to generate alternative theories to what science dictates, their explanations are littered with misinterpretations and incorrect applications of modern scientific concepts and theories. They also set themselves apart from other creationists, because their ideas are heavily dependent on mass conspiracies in order to refute the existing body of evidence that is quite extensive, such as satellite imagery of the earth, the Apollo moon landing, space probes, gravity, astronomy, etc.

There is nothing wrong with questioning existing theory and coming up with alternative hypothesis based on the Bible. However, it is wise to approach new ideas with caution if you have to put more faith in conspiracy and outlandish, unscientific concepts and models to explain away well known and proven phenomena, than in the accuracy of biblical interpretation. And therein lies the problem. Flat earth depends on alternative models for the earth and the solar system that are based on not only sparse, but also clearly erroneous hypotheses to replace an extensive body of evidence by requiring their followers to discard known facts and instead buy into mass conspiracy theories — all resting on an unsteady foundation of questionable interpretation of only about 100-150 Bible verses.

## 2.4 Ancient Extraterrestrials

Another hypothesis that's been popularized especially by television shows, is that intelligent civilization on earth has been seeded or helped along by extraterrestrials. Although very interesting, it is pseudoscience and I don't want to give it more credibility than it deserves.

The term *UFO* stands for "unidentified flying object". Any object that is flying and unidentified is technically a UFO. By that definition the Bible does talk about UFOs. The Bible also talks about angels, fallen angels, devils, and spirits that appear to be inter-dimensional beings. I suspect that the UFO phenomena could be altogether demonic.

The Bible does point to spiritual realms and heavens. It even mentions strange flying objects in visions and flying chariots, like the one that the prophet Elisha saw carrying Elijah away to heaven.

Technically, God *IS* an extraterrestrial by the pure definition.

However, thinking of the creator as little green or gray men moving about in disk or triangular shaped spaceships is merely how someone's limited mind is able to imagine depending on which comic books the person has read, which shows they've been watching, and the science fiction they've been exposed to. People are always trying to fit the creator of the universe into their own experience and reality, but limited by their own understanding. Essentially, they're trying to fit God into the biggest box that they're able to grasp with their three pound brain. The inability to think outside the box of own subjective experience is a form of limited intelligence. Intelligent people who are able to transcend their own experiences are able to invent new things and are called visionaries.

## 2.5 Evolution Theory

Mainstream atheists and agnostics have latched on to the scientific literature by Charles Darwin in 1859 entitled "On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life", or simply *Evolution Theory*, or *Darwin Evolution*.

It teaches that advanced lifeforms originated billions of years ago from a primordial soup containing the carbon element that underwent a chemical evolution when, by coincidence, all the right conditions so happen to coincide in perfect harmony to create all the right enzymes and proteins to mysteriously combine in the precise manner necessary for the first lifeforms to come into existence. Over long periods of time these primitive lifeforms developed the capability to eat, reproduce, and then evolve into more and more advanced lifeforms, eventually leading to the plants and living creatures of today, including modern man. In essence, according to evolution, a man is nothing more than an animal with advanced cognitive function compared to other animals. Most importantly, no divine interaction was necessary to evolve humans from some primordial soup.

Evolutionists won't tell you that they don't really know what these right conditions really were, because nobody has been able to reproduce the necessary ideal condition to create life in a laboratory.

Another objection to Darwin Evolution is that observable adaptation of a certain species to a new environment, and crossbreeding always remains within the kind of animal. Hence, cats don't breed with horses, but interbreeding of different cat species and horses with donkeys are possible.

The truth is that the Theory of Evolution is based on pure speculation. There is no factual basis for it and there is zero evidence for it. Evolution is in reality a religion specifically designed to deny the existence of God.

Believing in Evolution Theory requires faith - a lot of faith - in speculative, faulty reasoning.

## 2.6 *The Miracle of Life*

Despite our best efforts, science has no explanation for the miracle of life. No laboratory is capable of manufacturing an ant. Not even the simplest single cell living organism can man create from scratch in a laboratory. What gives life to a single cell organism such as an amoeba or a paramecium remains a complete mystery. Even the most advanced autonomous robots being built in sophisticated university and military laboratories today all walk crudely and are limited to primitive functions. Humans cannot create life, not to mention intelligent life.

We are incapable of manufacturing a living ant. We are incapable of manufacturing a living plant. We are able to manipulate what God made in some ways, but we cannot create a living flower from scratch, that will attract a bee that will be an integral part of its recreation process.

There is a joke about a scientist who approached God and said, "Listen God, we humans don't need you anymore. These days we can sequence DNA, clone people, create artificial intelligence and do all sorts of clever things that used to be considered miraculous." God replied, "Is that so, huh? What do you say we put your theory to the test. Let's have a competition to see who can make the best human being, say, a male like I did in the beginning when I created Adam." "Fine" says the scientist as he bends down to scoop up some dirt. "Whoa!" says God, "Not so fast. You got your own dirt."

## 2.7 *The Big Bang Theory*

How the cosmos and everything in it was created is a question to which the answers are as diverse as the number of people one might ask. Ancient civilizations have had varying ideas about this topic too. Over the ages numerous philosophers, cosmologists, scientists, professors, theologians, poets and many intellectuals have attempted to answer this question. From the perspective of Christianity, we often like to divide them into two categories: those that believe in God and those who don't. Or theists and atheists.



The Big Bang theory claims that the entire universe originated from an infinitesimally small singularity that exploded, causing time, space, matter and all the laws of the universe to come into being in an instant from nothingness. It teaches that the universe is still expanding, and over time the matter collected and arranged itself into cosmic entities such as stars, planets, galaxies, and nebulae. The sun, earth, moon and the rest of our solar system were formed sometime between the Big Bang and now.

Christians and atheists are both divided on the Big Bang hypothesis. There are Christians who object to it mostly because it doesn't fit the six-day creation narrative in Genesis. Many atheists object to it because adopting the Big Bang theory inevitably begs the question of who ignited it and made the Big Bang happen in the first place — thus giving a foothold to the existence of a supreme deity that flipped the switch to start it all. In general, most atheists are therefore against it, claiming that the universe has always existed. People like Stephen Hawking tried to marry the Big Bang theory to atheism by theorizing natural ways for the Big Bang origins of the universe, yet denying an intelligent designer behind it.

## 2.8 Age of the Universe

The farthest stars are billions of light years away from earth according to NASA and cosmologists. If the universe was created in six days about six thousand years ago, like the biblical narrative suggests, then light could not have traveled for billions of years. Some creationists, who believe that the universe is only six thousand years old according to the Bible, argue that God might have created the universe to appear aged, just like Adam was created a grown man according to Genesis. Or, that the distant galaxies only *appear* billions of light years away due to relativistic effects and that the laws of physics were still forming in those first moments of creation, but these types of counter arguments aren't very convincing to people who oppose the creationism theories.

Icarus, an enormous blue star that was discovered using the Hubble space telescope (HST), is approximately nine billion light years from earth according to cosmologists. It is the furthest star that has been observed<sup>1</sup> as of the writing of this book. This means the light that was picked up by the telescope to see Icarus had traveled approximately nine billion years from the star to reach Hubble. If the universe was only six thousand years old, then Hubble would only be able to detect stars that are six thousand light years away and closer. Anything further would not be detectable until their finally light reaches earth. Creationism theory that the universe is only about six thousand years old, therefore doesn't hold up against this kind of evidence. Or does it? How does Hubble determine the distance of stars if it can only measure the light that reaches its sensors?

At vast distances approaching one light year ( $9.5 \times 10^{12}$ km) or further, stereoscopic distance estimation cannot be used, because even the diameter of the earth's orbit around the sun about ( $149 \times 10^6$ km) appears like a single point in comparison to the distance to objects that far away (a ratio of 63,495:1 at one light year away), producing massive error. Some other means must then be deployed. Keep in mind that no matter what methodology we deploy from earth or from space, the margin of error increases exponentially the larger the cosmic distance is that we're attempting to measure.

Light has particle and wave properties. Light particles are called photons. The truth is that a fresh photon looks no different from a photon that had been traveling a long time at the speed of light. If we look at the wave properties of light, then it has both an electric and a magnetic component, but again the time it traveled makes no difference. Hubble's lenses can collect minute intensities of light at the sensors that measure their various frequencies – from infra red at the low end of the spectrum through the visible spectrum all the way to the high frequency

<sup>1</sup> Icarus became observable due to an effect called gravitational lensing, where the gravitational field of a large body can bend light essentially magnifying it. In the case of Icarus it was magnified enough to be visible.

ultra violet light. For scientists to determine the distance of an image of, say, a galaxy seen by Hubble, they have to compare the size of the galaxy relative to other objects that are much closer, the estimated relative movements of objects, and the frequencies of the light as well as a red tint in the images that is attributed to Doppler effect due to moving stars, called *red shift*. Based on this information they then apply mathematical and computations involving statistical probabilities that are all based on cosmological and scientific theories to estimate the age of the entity. The truth is that these estimates are based on so much speculation and assumption, that it could be completely wrong.

The Hubble space telescope has been proudly cited as the first telescope to prove that the universe is over 13 billion years old. This figure is not fact, but speculation. The age of 13 billion years is derived from a cosmological theory involving Hubble's Law. This theory is based on mathematical equations measuring the movement of distant stars with respect to one another, estimating the expansion of the galaxy and *poof!!!*, an age of 13.4 billion years or so pops up. The theory is also littered with assumptions and it remains nothing more than guesswork.

After its launch in 1990, the Hubble telescope was the source of great embarrassment for NASA after it was discovered that the images were out of focus and distorted. Spending tens of millions to investigate the problem, it was eventually found that the main mirror's profile wasn't correct, and the mirror had been incorrectly polished while it was being manufactured on earth causing an aberration of images received. The reason for the error is that a testing device to ensure the precise shape of the mirror while it was being polished, was not properly calibrated. It cost NASA several hundreds of millions of dollars to send up servicing missions to install optics in Hubble to correct for the flawed main mirror. News articles reported that when the testing device, called a null reflector, was being calibrated, the wrong system of measurement was used by mistake — meaning mils from the US system of units were confused for millimeters from the metric system of units. There is no doubt that the Hubble space telescope has helped to advance our knowledge of the heavenly bodies. Still, considering that a ten billion dollar telescope put in space has a major flaw on its most important instrument, the main mirror, it is not inconceivable that there may be other flaws that just haven't even been discovered yet. The Hubble Telescope, the authoritative star gazer that looks back in time to measure the age of the universe, is therefore likened by some scientists to a sick and crippled old man with many flaws, injuries, sicknesses and bandages, wearing thick corrective glasses. The truth is, no one can say for sure how old our universe really is. The age of anything outside our solar system further than a few light years is based on pure speculation.

## 2.9 Time and Space

If the Big Bang theory is true, then gravity, time and space didn't exist at the moment right after the Big Bang as they do today. One second on a particular clock back then could have lasted billions years on the same clock today.

Genesis 1:5 reads:

And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

Here, the Bible doesn't associate a day with a specific amount of time. It associates day and night with the presence and absence of light. To prove that the six days of creation were normal 24 hour periods, creationists use Exodus 31:17, which says:

It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.

Considering Genesis 1:5, the concept of a twenty four hour period of time called a day we

know today didn't exist prior to the earth revolving around the sun at the same rate it does today. In fact, the Sun, moon and stars were created on the fourth day in Genesis 1:14-19 to set up the concept of days, years and seasons. :

And God said, "Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning— the fourth day.

Hence, one day in Genesis 1:1-13 may not have any correlation with the amount of time we associate with one twenty four hour period that we know today.

The word *day* used in Genesis 1 and in Exodus 31:17 in Hebrew is יוֹם<sup>2</sup> and its English transliteration is *yôm* pronounced "yome". Its meaning according to the Strong's Concordance for H3117 could also be "age", "era", or "an indefinite time". The word *morning* could mean "dawn", and *evening* could mean "dusk". One could argue that "the morning were the first day" could also mean "the dawn of the first era".

However, the plants and trees were created on the third day, one day before the sun was created. But plants rely on photosynthesis using sunlight. They wouldn't have survived in darkness if the sun was created thousands of years, hundreds of years, or even a year later. This indicates that the third day was indeed a twenty four hour period if we believe the Bible.

Similar arguments exist for space and matter. For instance, if the Big Bang theory is true, then space didn't have the same dimensions back then as it has today either. A ruler that is exactly one meter long would not have been the same length right after the Big Bang. How would one measure it? Well, the only way to do so would be to shine a light beam along the length of the ruler and measure the time it would take the light to travel. Assuming the speed of light remains constant, we could then compare the results to verify the length of the ruler at different instances in history. In case you missed it, that last sentence started with the word *assume*. We would have to *assume* that the speed of light was the same back then as it is today. All scientific theories contain that word numerous times. Earlier the word *assumption* was defined as: "a thing that is accepted as true or as certain to happen, without proof." Assumptions are often just wrong.

When the bible says that God created light, it may not even refer to natural light, which is the visible electromagnetic spectrum. It might mean something entirely different, such as the Word of God or the spiritual light of God's glory. The Bible says God saw it was good, and separated it from darkness. Then He created the heavenly bodies later on the fourth day. In other words, He created light, separated it from darkness, and then days later, He created the Sun and the moon that shine natural light on the earth.

## 2.10 Gravity

There is nothing wrong with people attempting to imagine different theories to explain our origin or that of the universe. We are made to be inquisitive and to use our imaginations towards creativity. But the fact is nobody really knows what happened because nobody was there then to testify about it today. All we can do is extrapolate what we understand from our present body of knowledge to try to piece together a guess of what may have happened in the past. Yes, there are all kinds of clever and complicated mathematical models and algorithms and complex theories. The truth is, the best theory is all just man-made hallucinations.

<sup>2</sup> H3117

For example, pick up a pen, hold it about one foot above the floor and let it go. It drops to the floor. No surprise there. But despite the best efforts of science, we still don't know what causes gravity. Newton and Albert Einstein each came up with theories to describe the rules by which it operates on objects, but the actual mechanism remains a mystery.

Even string theory and other modern alternatives involving a complexity of increasing dimensions in the mathematical descriptions of it, are mere guesses as to the true cause of the gravitational force. For over half a century the physics community has been seeking evidence of a fundamental particle that is theorized to be responsible for gravity and hundreds of billions of dollars have been spent on elaborate experiments involving large particle accelerators to try to find the so-called *Higgs boson*. The largest particle accelerators in the world are located near Geneva at CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research involving over 100 countries. So far, they've found only inconclusive evidence of this particle.

### *Dark Matter*

Astronomers and cosmologists discovered that observable rotating galaxies would fly apart given our current understanding of the laws of physics, because there is not enough mass to keep them together. The concept of dark matter was then conjured up to introduce sufficient mass in these systems to make their equations work. Dark matter has never been observed and its existence has never been proven.

The more one knows about natural sciences, the better one understands just how little we really know. I'm here to tell you that we really know almost nothing.

### *General Relativity*

In "A First Course in General Relativity" by Ken Schutz, he states:

Stephen Hawking was probably the most famous cosmologist to have ever lived. The singularity theorems of Penrose and Hawking (see Hawking and Ellis 1973) have shown that our universe certainly has a singularity in its past, regardless of how symmetric it may have been.

But the theorems predict only the *existence* of the singularity: the nature of the singularity is unknown, except that it has the property that at least one particle in the present universe must have originated in it. Nevertheless, the evidence is strong indeed that we *all* originated in it.

However, he then continues with a big disclaimer:

Another consideration however is that we don't know the laws of physics at the incredible high densities which existed in the early universe. The singularity theorems of necessity assume...

and then he lists assumptions about the primary variable in the equations as well as assumptions that Einstein made.

In 1916, Albert Einstein published an article pronouncing his theory on General Relativity. It took one hundred years for scientists to finally find some evidence of General Relativity. The Nobel Prize in Physics was awarded in 2017 to three American researchers associated with LIGO, the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory for measuring gravitational waves for the first time. In February 2016, they announced that they've recorded gravitational waves emanating from a pair of massive black holes that had collided a billion light years from earth. So it took scientists one hundred years from 1916 to 2016 to find the first evidence of the theory on general relativity and space-time.

In case you missed that, let me just say that again. It took scientists one hundred years to prove Einstein's theory about gravity and it was recognized for the first time in 2017. And it remains, to this day, just a theory.

Scientists can at best only speculate about the origins and nature of our universe based on their interpretation of scientific methods. Similarly, biblical scholars can at best only speculate about the best interpretation of the descriptions of creation that we find in the Bible. In either case it is the human factor that can produce erroneous interpretation.

I am absolutely certain of one thing, and that is that no human has the ability to comprehend God. We don't even understand how an ant works. We won't ever understand how a God created a universe. Dr. Albert Einstein, a man celebrated as perhaps the smartest modern scientist, was not an atheist. Max Jammer's book *Einstein and Religion* contains several quotations from Dr. Albert Einstein on his views about God:

*"Behind all the discernible concatenations, there remains something subtle, intangible and inexplicable. Veneration for this force is my religion. To that extent, I am in point of fact, religious."*

*"Every scientist becomes convinced that the laws of nature manifest the existence of a spirit vastly superior to that of men."*

*"The divine reveals itself in the physical world."*

*"My God created laws... His universe is not ruled by wishful thinking but by immutable laws."*

*"I want to know how God created this world. I want to know his thoughts."*

*"What I am really interested in knowing is whether God could have created the world in a different way."*

*"This firm belief in a superior mind that reveals itself in the world of experience, represents my conception of God."*

*"My religiosity consists of a humble admiration of the infinitely superior spirit... That superior reasoning power forms my idea of God."*

*"I am not an atheist, and I don't think I can call myself a pantheist."*

*"Then there are the fanatical atheists whose intolerance is of the same kind as the intolerance of the religious fanatics and comes from the same source."*

*"There is harmony in the cosmos which I, with my limited human mind, am able to recognise, yet there are people who say there is no God. But what really makes me angry is that they quote me to support such views."*

## 2.11 Scientific Facts vs. Blind Faith

Atheists will often argue that they'd rather anchor their beliefs in scientific facts, than base them on blind faith like Christians do. The truth is quite the opposite. As a scientist I object to the notion that science has an explanation for origins based on facts. That's not true. Every scientific "theory" about creation is based on hallucinations that are, in fact, hypotheses, based on speculation, assumption and extrapolation of observational evidence. None of them are based on fact.

### *Laws of Thermodynamics*

The three laws of thermodynamics are fundamental to science. Every theory about creation, whether it involves a deity or not, violates the laws of thermodynamics. In order to accept any one of the creation theories, including evolution, one has to discard the very foundation on which modern science rests.

The Law of Conservation of Energy, or the first law of thermodynamics, states that energy cannot be created or destroyed in an isolated system. For a universe to have existed forever stars must have been burning forever. But where would the fuel to have burned forever and keep burning then come from? The Big Bang theory, on the other hand, dictates that mass and energy and everything else in the universe were created out of nothing, which is contrary to thermodynamics.

The second law of thermodynamics states that the entropy of an isolated system always increases. In lay-man's terms this means that a system always tends to become more disorderly and university textbooks on physics add under the same heading that the entropy of the universe only increases and never decreases.

All creation theories and evolution involve great disorder becoming orderly. It is noticeable in everything from the microcosmic atom to things around us, like the orderly arrangement of rose petals, to the order that is present in the macro cosmic universe. This could only be possible if there is something external to the universe that created everything out of nothing and that forced it to be orderly.

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, cosmology is "a theory or doctrine describing the natural order of the universe". The word *cosmos* is derived from the ancient Greek word *κοσμός*<sup>3</sup>, which literally means "orderly arrangement", which contradicts the laws of thermodynamics. Herein lies the paradoxical irony of cosmology in general, that mostly argues against the existence of God claiming to use science. There must have been an intelligent designer behind the creation for it to exhibit so much order.

The Big Bang theory and concepts like dark matter originated from the academic field of cosmology. Merriam-Webster Dictionary also defines cosmology as "a branch of metaphysics that deals with the nature of the universe." Any atheist who bases his belief system about creation on science is therefore basing it on abstract hallucinations and assumptions in unproven theories involving such things as dark matter and mystery particles, not on facts.

We shall see later that the faith of newborn Christians, on the other hand, rests on an accumulation of overwhelming evidence. The body of evidence on which The Truth in the Gospel is grounded, is so vast that it transgresses the great mysteries such as our origins and the reason for our existence, among many other foundational questions.

To be an atheist one has to either reject all this factual evidence or be completely ignorant to it. Either way, atheism is a religion itself that requires more blind faith than to be a Christian. Add to that the realization that there is a supernatural realm that existed before God created everything; and that that supernatural realm is more real than our natural world. In Ecclesiastes 8:17 it says:

Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea farther; though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it.

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<sup>3</sup> H2889

## 2.12 *The Ant and the Bulldozer*

Humanity knows very little about our origins. We understand almost nothing about the laws that govern the universe, even though we might think we've made a lot of progress over the past few centuries. One of the problems with humans is vanity. In 1 Corinthians 3:18-20 Paul writes:

<sup>18</sup>Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

<sup>19</sup>For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

<sup>20</sup>And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

People generally think too much of themselves. The person who believes for a fact in one creation theory or another is much like an ant sitting on a paved surface in front of a bulldozer, declaring to the other ants that he understands how the pavement was created and the nature of the massive yellow thing that shakes the earth.

All of humanity combined doesn't have the mental ability to explain a God or His works. The almighty God that created the universe and everything in it down to the smallest atomic particle is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient and unbound by time, space or a limited set of dimensions. Yet every single one of us are.

The Second Epistle of Paul to Timothy ends by instructing Timothy to continue trusting the Word of God instead of listening to worldly arguments that oppose the Bible and are falsely called "science" (or "knowledge" according to the Amplified Bible):

<sup>20</sup>O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

<sup>21</sup>Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.

After 27 years in academia chasing new ideas and a better understanding of scientific and engineering principles, it dawned on me that there are far longer lasting treasures to be found in the Bible than in the pursuit of scientific knowledge. What good would all my knowledge or publications in the technical fields such as mathematics, the natural sciences, computers, the electromagnetic theory, or other fields be in the afterlife? In the end, the pursuit of knowledge is as futile as the pursuit for money, power, fame, real estate, possessions, and all earthly desires.

The Bible, on the other hand, tells us exactly *where we came from, who made us, why we're here, how we're supposed to live, where we're going*, and gives answers to all deep questions in between. It also explains exactly how we can interact with the supernatural realm, which is nowhere to be found in any scientific text.

In the end, I agree with what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 3:19, that the wisdom of this world is foolishness:

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

The next chapter will examine the Bible itself, and why it should be given any credibility.

## Chapter 10

# The Disciples's Authority

BEHOLD, I GIVE UNTO YOU POWER TO TREAD ON SERPENTS AND SCORPIONS, AND OVER ALL THE POWER OF THE ENEMY: AND NOTHING SHALL BY ANY MEANS HURT YOU.

— Luke 10:19

### 10.1 Adam's Rank and Authority

WHEN Adam and Eve were created in God's image and with His likeness they were given all authority over all creatures on earth. Psalm 115:16 reads:

The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.

But when they were cast out of Eden and separated from God after they committed sin, mankind lost its rank that was higher than the angels on earth, to Satan. God didn't strip man of his authority over the earth. In fact, man's authority was reaffirmed by God after the Great Flood, as we read in Genesis 9:1-3:

<sup>1</sup>And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

<sup>2</sup>And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

<sup>3</sup>Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

Satan never obtained his rulership over the earth lawfully, because God didn't pass earthly authority over to the devil. God gave it to man. Carelessly, by committing sin, Adam and Eve began mankind's foolish habit of serving Satan and thereby surrendering all of our God given authority on earth over to Satan and his kingdom of darkness. The God given authority over the planet has been and is still being squandered and handed over to a criminal daily. It is a grand failure in stewardship that every person is guilty of each time they serve Satan by committing sin instead of obeying the almighty God. In Romans 6:16 Paul writes:

Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

In John 8:34 we read what Jesus told the Pharisees:

Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.



And in John 8:44 Jesus also said:

Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Psalm 8:4-8 (AMP) reads:

<sup>4</sup>What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of [earthborn] man that You care for him?

<sup>5</sup>Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You have crowned him with glory and honor.

<sup>6</sup>You made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet,

<sup>7</sup>All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field,

<sup>8</sup>The birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.

Here, we read that man was created a little lower than God.

## 10.2 *Jesus' Rank as a Man*

Then, in Hebrews 2:6-9, we read how all people, including Jesus himself were made lower than the angels after the Fall of Man:

<sup>6</sup> But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him?

<sup>7</sup> Thou madest him a **little lower than the angels**; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

<sup>8</sup> Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

<sup>9</sup>But we see **Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels** for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

## 10.3 *The Temptation of Christ*

Once Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist where He received the Holy Spirit, He went into the desert to fast forty days and be tempted by the devil. In Luke 4:6 the devil stated his claim to the authority that he stole from Adam, and tried to tempt Jesus by offering it to Him should He serve him.

<sup>5</sup> And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

<sup>6</sup> And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

Jesus rebuked the devil, but didn't argue when the devil claimed to have the authority to transfer all this power to Jesus. The devil claimed that he owned all the kingdoms on the earth and that he could transfer it to anyone he chose. Since the kingdoms serve the devil, they are indeed under his jurisdiction.

### 10.4 *Casting Out the First Demon*

Jesus started preaching in the synagogue with so much authority that it astonished people as we read in Mark 1:21-28. His first supernatural deed was to cast out a demon, which amazed them even more:

<sup>21</sup> And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.

<sup>22</sup> And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

<sup>23</sup> And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

<sup>24</sup> Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

<sup>25</sup> And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

<sup>26</sup> And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

<sup>27</sup> And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

<sup>28</sup> And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

Notice that the unclean spirit recognized Jesus as the Son of God, and Jesus first commanded it to be silent and then to come out. People were amazed as this was the first time that a demon had been cast out of someone. Never had this been done before.

Also notice where Jesus encountered this demonized person. It was inside the synagogue. Therefore, don't be too surprised to learn that our churches are filled with demonized people in modern day.

### 10.5 *David, King Saul and the Evil Spirit*

In the Old Testament, the closest incident to casting out a demon was when David played lyre to refresh King Saul so that he became well and an evil spirit left him. Playing the lyre was an idea that came from Saul's servants, because in 1 Samuel 16:14-16 it says:

<sup>14</sup> But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an **evil spirit** from the Lord tormented and troubled him. <sup>15</sup> Saul's servants said to him, Behold, an **evil spirit** from God torments you.

<sup>16</sup> Let our lord now command your servants here before you to find a man who plays skillfully on the lyre; and when the **evil spirit** from God is upon you, he will play it, and you will be well.

It seems that this was a regular occurrence the way it is written in 1 Samuel 16:21-23:

<sup>21</sup> And David came to Saul and served him. Saul became very fond of him, and he became his armor-bearer.

<sup>22</sup> Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David remain in my service, for he pleases me.

<sup>23</sup> And when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, David took a lyre and played it; so Saul was refreshed and became well, and the **evil spirit left him**.

David playing the lyre for Saul was therefore not the same as casting out a demon the way Jesus did it and taught it.

## 10.6 *Jesus Delegates Authority to Disciples*

When Jesus cast out the unclean spirit in the synagogue, the people were amazed because it had never been done before. At the time they knew and understood that people could be oppressed by evil spirits, but there existed no known cure for it.

People didn't have the authority to cast out demons until Jesus came to restore authority to believers. In Luke 10:17-20, after Jesus had sent out 70 disciples, they were very excited upon their return:

<sup>17</sup>And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

<sup>18</sup>And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

<sup>19</sup>Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

<sup>20</sup>Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

In verse 19 and several other places in the Bible the translators used the word *power* for two different Greek words. The English transliteration for the first instance of "power" (to tread on serpents), is *exousia* from ἐξουσίαν<sup>1</sup>, which literally means "physical and mental power and authority". The Greek to English transliteration for the second instance of "power" (of the enemy) is *dynamis* from δύναμις<sup>2</sup>, which refers to a power that is "miraculous", "mighty" or "physical". The English word *dynamite* is derived from this word. The verse means that Jesus gave us authority over demons and over the physical power and supernatural power of the enemy.

## 10.7 *The Name Above All Names*

As a man, Jesus was created a little lower than the angels in our fallen world. However, as the Son of God, He carried the authority of the Father through the Holy Spirit to perform miracles, heal people and cast out demons. His disciples discovered that through His name (by the authority that He had delegated to them) they also had authority over devils. Philippians 2:9-11 makes it clear:

<sup>9</sup>Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

<sup>10</sup>That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

<sup>11</sup>And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

## 10.8 *The Great Commission*

The Book of Matthew closes with the Great Commission, which refers to what Jesus ordered all of us to do before He ascended into heaven. In Matthew 28:16-20 (AMP) it states:

<sup>18</sup> Jesus came up and said to them, "All authority (all power of absolute rule) in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.

<sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations [help the people to learn of Me, believe in Me, and obey My words], baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

<sup>1</sup> G1849

<sup>2</sup> G1411

<sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always [remaining with you perpetually - regardless of circumstance, and on every occasion], even to the end of the age."

Jesus received not some, but *all* authority in heaven and on earth.

### 10.9 *Jesus Delegated Authority to Believers*

Jesus delegated His authority to those who believes in Him. In Mark 16:17-18 it says:

<sup>17</sup> And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

<sup>18</sup> They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Here the Greek word for "serpents" is ὄφεις<sup>3</sup> transliterated into English as *ophis* and refers to demons, or cunningly malicious people, especially Satan. The Greek word for "take up" is ἀρῶ<sup>4</sup>, transliterated into English as *aero* and could also mean to take away or to remove.

This authority is not delegated to anyone, but only to those who believe in Jesus and obey Him. When a person becomes a new creature in Christ, they also receive the delegated authority of Jesus to heal the sick, cast out demons, and raise the dead.

John 1:12 states that those who receives Him and believes in Him, are given the power to become the sons of God:

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

In Mark 13:34, Jesus said:

For the Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

### 10.10 *The Authority to Baptize*

The Great Commission includes the words "baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Let's examine the authority Jesus granted His followers to baptize people as part of the Great Commission.

First, let's make it clear that you cannot baptize yourself. If someone wants to receive the baptism in water or the baptism of the Holy Spirit, or both, then it is important for the person to find a disciple of Christ who is filled with the Holy Spirit. It won't help to go to a someone who has a false doctrine or who doesn't believe in all the gifts of the Spirit. The reason is that it is extremely important for the Holy Spirit to be present at the baptism. There is a spiritual significance to being baptized and it is not merely symbolic. The best guide we have for leading us to the right person is the Holy Spirit. We can test candidates for performing a baptism by their fruits of the Holy Spirit and we can also see if they have any of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They were listed in the previous chapter starting on page 84.

This person needn't have been schooled at a seminary and doesn't have to be ordained by a church. The authority to make disciples does not come from any church. Only Jesus had the authority to give. And Jesus delegated that authority to all of His disciples to make disciples,

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<sup>3</sup> G3789

<sup>4</sup> G142

to baptize, to heal the sick, to cast out demons, to raise the dead, and to preach the Gospel. Someone who wants to get baptized should find a truly Spirit-filled reborn Christian — a disciple of Christ. We have now established that the person performing the water baptism must be a disciple of Christ, and the first reason for that rule is that they must be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Let's look at the Great Commission once again. It is in Matthew 28:18-20, where Jesus gave His last instructions before He ascended into heaven:

<sup>18</sup>And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

<sup>19</sup>Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, **baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:**

<sup>20</sup>Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

In many churches that practice water baptism today, the church leaders will therefore baptize people while saying something like "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." But what does it mean to baptize *in the name of* these three? We know the name of God is יהוה<sup>5</sup> (YHWH) or יהוהי (Jehowah), meaning "the one who was, who is, and who always will be". And we know that the name of the Son is *Yeshua* from the Hebrew word ישוע<sup>6</sup>, *Iēsous* from the Greek word Ἰησοῦς<sup>7</sup>, and *Jesus* in plain English. But what is the name of the Father and what is the name of the Holy Ghost? In Section 10.11, *The Trinity*, on page 99 the names and titles used for God are listed. You will notice that there are no separate Hebrew, Greek or English names in the canonical texts for the Father or for the Holy Spirit.

Many of the church leaders who baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, do so without truly understanding what they are actually saying or why. When a phrase is repeatedly used without emphasis on understanding it or its meaning, then uttering it is more of a mantra, a chant, or an incantation. They're using "in the name of" as if it is some sort of magic phrase. Incantations are used for magic spells in witchcraft. It's not what we're supposed to do. Jesus didn't intend for us to be using magic phrases. The Word of God operates through faith, not incantations and definitely not through witchcraft.

The phrase *in the name of* in the Greek is εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ transliterated into English is *eis to onoma tou*. It literally means "by the command and authority of". A person using it is "acting on behalf of" or "promoting the cause of" the authoritative figure whom he or she serves, such as the emperor or king. This is just like the Roman soldier who'd knock on a locked gate shouting "Open up in the name of Caesar!" - meaning "by the authority given to me by Caesar". In other words Jesus authorizes us to baptize by the delegated authority of not only Himself, but also by the delegated authority of the Father and the Holy Spirit.

In verse 18 He says *all* authority has been given to Him in heaven and in earth. In verse 19 He connects it with the next statement by using the word *therefore*. He has all the authority and therefore he authorizes His followers to baptize people by that same authority. That authority comes from the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit – the Trinity. It's the Power of Attorney of the Trinity given to us.

That is a lot of authority for baptizing people! Please take a moment and just think about what this really means. Jesus has *all authority* on earth and in heaven. He delegated the authority of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit to His followers to teach and baptize people. Try to

<sup>5</sup> H410

<sup>6</sup> H3443, H3444

<sup>7</sup> G2453

imagine the importance and magnitude of this authority. This is literally the most authority anyone could possibly obtain. There is nothing that can trump it. Not even the President of the United States can offer someone that kind of authority. But Jesus offered it all to us after He was tortured, executed, resurrected and before He ascended into heaven. How can anyone say it is merely symbolic? How can anyone say it is not important? It is by the authority of the creator of the universe that we've been commanded to teach the Gospel and to baptize new believers.

If the delegated authority of the Godhead is required to baptize, then that must imply that not everyone has the authority to perform baptisms. So, who is authorized? The traditional church took that and claimed it only for the priests and pastors. But whether you have attended seminary school isn't what qualifies one for the delegated authority. This authority must come from God inside of us. Someone who isn't a believer or who haven't received the Holy Spirit or who hasn't been baptized themselves, cannot baptize someone else. Jesus delegated the authority to baptize to His disciples, and that is the second reason that only a disciple of Jesus is authorized to perform water baptisms. You must be a complete new creature in Christ to be able to exercise the authority delegated to you by the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit to baptize anyone.

It is important to understand that although Jesus received *all* authority in heaven and in earth, He didn't delegate authority in *all things* to us, but only for specific things that he commanded, like preaching the Gospel, baptizing people, casting out demons, healing the sick, raising the dead. There are godly acts that we aren't authorized to perform. For example, the authority to act as the judge at the end of tribulation, was not delegated to us.

### 10.11 *The Holy Trinity*

Notice that Jesus didn't mention water in either Matthew 28:19 or Mark 16:16. The baptism He spoke of might have also included the baptism to the Holy Spirit. In fact, it's better to read what He said as meaning to "wash them", "cleanse them", or "free them of sin" spiritually by following what He had taught them. To baptize in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit therefore means to cleanse people spiritually by the delegated authority of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. It includes everything we need for salvation, that is, repentance, baptism in water and baptism to the Holy Spirit.

Also, notice that:

- repentance is an act to the **Father**
- water baptism is remission of sin through a burial and rebirth by the blood of the **Son** and to **Jesus**
- baptism to the **Holy Spirit** is as it implies.

So, repentance to the Father, water baptism Jesus and baptism to the Holy Spirit is a spiritual power wash, anointing and empowerment by the authority of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit – the Trinity of God.

There is only one God, who is:

- supreme
- holy
- good
- omnipresent (everywhere)
- omnipotent (all powerful)
- omniscient (all-knowing)

- unlimited in every way.

God is not limited to time, space or matter, or to a set of dimensions. He is powerful and unlimited in ways that our 3 pound brains cannot comprehend.

However, God does not control everything. He gave man and His angels free will. He gave dominion over the earth to Adam. God does not force His will.

God has revealed Himself to mankind in three distinct divine persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In 1 John 5:7 we read:

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

Here, Jesus is the Word and the Son.

In the Hebrew and Greek texts, there are several words used for *God*. Let's take a quick tour of some of the names and titles for God in the biblical texts:

**ADONAY:** אֲדֹנָי<sup>8</sup> means *the Lord* and is only used as a proper name of the Lord. It could also mean *Lord* or *my Lord*.

**YHWH (OR YAHWEH):** יהוה<sup>9</sup> is the name of God in Hebrew, but without the sounds of the vowels. It appears 6500 times. Vowels are indicated by dots and stripes (called vowel points) above, inside and below the Hebrew letters. The vowel points in the name of God were banned by Jewish rabbis when copying the manuscripts, because of a traditional belief that pronouncing the name of God is disrespectful. Since YHWH is unpronounceable, the word *Yahweh* was invented by gentile scholars who wanted to be able vocalize Bible texts that include YHWH.

**JEHOWAH:** יהוה<sup>10</sup> is the name of God in Hebrew with all the vowel points. Nehemia Gordon, a Karaite Jew, who has been researching the name of God in ancient manuscripts, pointed out that יהוה<sup>10</sup> is compounded from יהיה + הוה + יהיה that, transliterated into English from left to right, are the words *Yiyheh + Hoveh + Hayah*, which mean "the one who always was, who is and who always will be." Over a thousand ancient Hebrew manuscripts have been found that contain the name of God with the vowel points present either because removing them was overlooked by mistake during the copying process, or the person who was copying the manuscript deliberately ignored the rabbinic tradition altogether.

**'AB:** אב<sup>10</sup> is a title in Hebrew and means "father". It implies intimate love.

**'EL:** אל<sup>11</sup> is a title in Hebrew and means "strength", "might" or "power" and occurs 250 times.

**'ELŌHIM:** אֱלֹהִים<sup>12</sup> is a title in Hebrew and is plural for 'el. It occurs 2600 times.

**GĀ'AL:** גָּאֵל<sup>13</sup> is a title in Hebrew and means "redeemer".

**'EL GIBBOR:** גִּבּוֹר אֱל<sup>14</sup> is a title in Hebrew meaning "mighty God".

**YĀSHA':** יָשַׁע<sup>15</sup> is a title in Hebrew and means "savior".

**MĀGĒN:** מָגֵן<sup>16</sup> is a title in Hebrew and means "shield".

**MELEK:** מֶלֶךְ<sup>17</sup> is a title in Hebrew and means "king".

<sup>8</sup> H136

<sup>9</sup> H3068

<sup>10</sup> H1

<sup>11</sup> H410

<sup>12</sup> H430

<sup>13</sup> H1350

<sup>14</sup> H1368

<sup>15</sup> H3467

<sup>16</sup> H4043

<sup>17</sup> H4428

**'ŌZ:** עֹז<sup>18</sup> is a title in Hebrew and means "strength".

**'ĒL'ELYŌN:** אֱלֹהֵי יְיָ<sup>19</sup> is a title in Hebrew and means "most high God".

**PĀLAT:** פֹּלֵט<sup>20</sup> is a title in Hebrew and means "deliverer".

**YHWH SEBĀ'ŌT:** צְבָאוֹת יְהוָה<sup>21</sup> is a title in Hebrew meaning "Lord of hosts"

**SADDIQ:** צַדִּיק<sup>22</sup> is a title in Hebrew and means "righteous".

**QĀDŌSH:** קָדוֹשׁ<sup>23</sup> is a title in Hebrew and means "holy one".

**'ĒL SHADDAY:** אֱלֹהֵי שָׁמַיִם<sup>24</sup> is a title in Hebrew and means "almighty".

**SHĀPHAT:** שֹׁפֵט<sup>25</sup> is a title in Hebrew and means "judge".

**THEOS:** θεός<sup>26</sup> is a Greek word for "God" in the New Testament. It occurs almost 1350 times.

**BĒN** בֶּן<sup>27</sup> is a title in Hebrew meaning "Son" when used in prophecies pointing to the Messiah.

**HUIOS:** υἱός<sup>28</sup> is a title in Greek meaning "Son" when it refers to the Son of God, who is Jesus.

**MĀSIAH:** מָשִׁיחַ<sup>29</sup> is *Messiah* in Hebrew and means *anointed One* or *consecrated One*.

**CHRISTOS:** Χριστός<sup>30</sup> is Greek for *Messiah*. Its Greek root is χριω<sup>31</sup> transliterated into English as *Chriō*, which means "anoint"; or "smear or rub with oil", referring to the practice of rubbing oil as part of the preparation and treatment of leather for armor, containers, shoes, and clothing, among others.

**KYRIOS:** κύριος<sup>32</sup> is a title in Greek meaning "Lord" for the Messiah, for "God" and for "angel of the Lord".

**DESPOTĒS:** δεσπότης<sup>33</sup> is a title in Greek meaning "master".

**YESHUA:** יֵשׁוּעַ<sup>34</sup> is the name of Jesus in Hebrew. It doesn't appear in the Old Testament to mean Jesus, except in coded form (see "Yeshua is My Name" in Chapter 3 on page 27). The Hebrew word יְשׁוּעָה<sup>35</sup> transliterated into English as *yeshū'āh* means "salvation" and the word יְהוֹשֻׁעַ<sup>36</sup> transliterated into English as *yēhōšūa* means "Jehowah saved".

**IĒSOUS:** Ἰησοῦς<sup>37</sup> is the name of Jesus in Greek.

**RŪAH QŌDESH:** רוּחַ קֹדֶשׁ<sup>38</sup> is the Hebrew for "Holy Spirit".

**HAGIOS PNEŪMA:** ἅγιος πνεῦμα is Greek for "Holy Spirit".

<sup>18</sup> H5797

<sup>19</sup> H5945

<sup>20</sup> H6403

<sup>21</sup> H6635

<sup>22</sup> H6662

<sup>23</sup> H6918

<sup>24</sup> H7706

<sup>25</sup> H8199

<sup>26</sup> G2316

<sup>27</sup> H1121

<sup>28</sup> G5207

<sup>29</sup> H4899

<sup>30</sup> G5547

<sup>31</sup> G5548

<sup>32</sup> G2962

<sup>33</sup> G1203

<sup>34</sup> H3442, H3443

<sup>35</sup> H3444

<sup>36</sup> H3091

<sup>37</sup> G2453

<sup>38</sup> H6944 with H7307



The name of Jesus doesn't appear in the King James Old Testament. However, in the Hebrew manuscripts His name appears seventy seven times, because it means *salvation*. For example in Isaiah 12:2

Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.

Reading it in Hebrew this verse states twice that *Jehowa is my Jeshua*.

The concept of the godhead, the Trinity, is impossible to grasp with human understanding, because it doesn't fit within our earthly experience. Trying to dissect the Trinity, arguing over the semantics of it, or who is the Father vs. the Son vs. the Holy Spirit leads nowhere. It's unimportant. We are not meant to understand God. We are meant to worship and serve God. We can accept the Trinity and that it is so, because we trust God's Word to be true.

In Deuteronomy 6:4 we read:

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord:

In John 1:1 we read about Jesus:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

And in

And in 2 Corinthians 3:17, we read about the Holy Spirit:

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

Our relationship with the Trinity is summarized in Galatians 4:6 as follows:

And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

A simple way to try to think of the Trinity of God is using the metaphor of H<sub>2</sub>O, the chemical composition of water. When the temperature of water drops below 0°C, it freezes and it turns into ice. It is unique and different from the fluid, water, but it is still H<sub>2</sub>O. On the other hand, when the temperature of water rises above 100°C at sea level, it turns into water vapor or steam. Once again, it is still just H<sub>2</sub>O even if we can no longer see it with our eyes.

God is not limited to time, space, and matter as we are. He *created* time, space and matter. God also created all the laws of the universe. In fact, God made a rainbow, which appeared for the first time right after the Great Flood was over.

In physics we fully understand the phenomenon of a rainbow as the refraction of light when it passes through water vapor or tiny droplets of water in the air. Light waves change direction due to a change in their velocities while their frequencies remains constant as they pass from one medium to another such as from air into water and back into air. We can calculate the refractive index of a material precisely by knowing its electric permittivity,  $\epsilon$ , and magnetic permeability,  $\mu$ , which are its electromagnetic properties.

We don't know if light behaved differently as it traveled through water before that rainbow appeared after the Great Flood was over. But since there were no rainbows beforehand, then the law of refraction must have been different. We can't even imagine what the world might have looked like or all the consequences involved with having a different set of laws governing the behavior of light traveling through substances. Maybe the color of the sky was white instead of

blue, but we will never know. We can trust that a loving God is omnipotent and that He has the ability to change any law of physics at any instant of time any way He pleases and in ways that are far beyond our understanding. We will never have the capacity to understand God. We will never be able to fully comprehend the Trinity of God either.

The First Epistle of Peter starts as follows in 1 Pet 1:1-2:

<sup>1</sup>Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

<sup>2</sup>Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

God gave man free will to choose and God isn't a respecter of persons, so the foreknowledge of the Father refers to God's plan from the beginning to send His only Son to save us. These are the components of salvation when a person is reborn into Christ: The sanctification of the Holy Spirit into obedience to God and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus that cleanses us from all sin.

Notice that the Trinity are all there and obedience is important and mentioned first. It also implies that obedience may not even be possible without sanctification of the Holy Spirit.

### *10.12 Is Baptism Optional or a Prerequisite?*

In modern Christianity there's a lot of confusion about baptism. In the New Testament and in churches today we find several types of baptism as well as various interpretations of what scripture says about baptism, for example:

- Baptism in water by John the Baptist
- Baptism of babies by the sprinkling of water
- Baptism in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
- Baptism in water in the name of Jesus
- Baptism of the Holy Spirit
- No baptism at all

This begs the question: is water baptism a prerequisite for salvation, or is it optional? Let's examine this important and often controversial question more closely.

One of the arguments used to try to show that water baptism is optional, is that the thief who died on the cross next to Jesus went to heaven according to Luke 23:39-43, yet was not baptized:

<sup>39</sup>And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

<sup>40</sup>But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

<sup>41</sup>And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

<sup>42</sup>And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

<sup>43</sup>And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

However, Jesus had all authority to forgive sin. He saw the faith in that man, forgave him, and told him that he would be in the kingdom with Jesus. This argument does not hold water for proving baptism is optional. Besides, nowhere in the Bible does it say that the thief was not baptized. It is unlikely of course, but nobody can prove that he was or wasn't baptized.

Another type of argument used in attempts to prove that baptism is optional, is by contrasting a verse such as Mark 16:16 with figures of speech found in verses such as John 6:40. In Mark 16:16 Jesus said:

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Jesus also said that those who *see* Him and believes will have everlasting life in John 6:40:

And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

The reasoning then, is that if we take Mark 16:16 literally, thereby claiming that baptism is a prerequisite for salvation, then we should do the same when reading John 6:40 and consider seeing Jesus to be a prerequisite for salvation. However, the Greek word used for *see* in this passage is  $\theta\epsilon\omega\rho\omega$ <sup>39</sup> transliterated into English as *theoron*, which also means "behold", "experience", or "discern". Even if Jesus meant seeing with our fleshly eyes, it doesn't say that those who never saw Him are damned. This argument is also invalid and does not prove that baptism is optional.

Yet another reason used to try to prove that baptism is optional, is by arguing that the disciples of Jesus weren't baptized. This is mainly from John 4:1-2:

<sup>1</sup>When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,

<sup>2</sup>(Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)

However, the first disciples of Jesus were disciples of John the Baptist when they decided to follow Jesus. It is recorded in Matthew 4:18:

And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

More detail is provided in John 1:35-41:

<sup>35</sup>Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples;

<sup>36</sup>And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

<sup>37</sup>And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

<sup>38</sup>Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?

<sup>39</sup>He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.

<sup>40</sup>One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

<sup>41</sup>He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

<sup>39</sup> G2334

At least two of the first disciples of Jesus must've therefore already been baptized for remission of sin by John the Baptist before they started following Jesus. Since Jesus didn't baptize but His disciples did (which is what we just read in John 4:2), it is likely that other new disciples were baptized by the ones who had already been baptized. Unfortunately, the Bible doesn't offer enough details. But we can't conclude that the disciples weren't baptized and therefore using it as an argument that baptism is optional is quite a stretch.

Some people will try to argue that there are examples of people who were baptized *after* they were born again in scripture, such as the house of Cornelius. Therefore, they say, the baptism is unnecessary for salvation. It is recorded in Acts 10:44-48 that the house of Cornelius were baptized in water *after* they received the baptism of the Holy Ghost and spoke in tongues. However, the order is not important. Of course, only believers who've repented can be baptized. But the order of baptisms has nothing to do with the question of whether water is optional or if it is a requirement for salvation.

Another argument that is often used has to do with the disciples in Ephesus that Paul ran into who were reborn before they were baptized in water. This is recorded in Acts 19:1-5:

<sup>1</sup> And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,

<sup>2</sup> He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

<sup>3</sup> And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.

<sup>4</sup> Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

<sup>5</sup> When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

<sup>6</sup> And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

It is then argued that since they were already reborn and recognized by Paul as being *disciples* before they were baptized, baptism cannot be a prerequisite for salvation. Let's go over the passages very carefully.

Paul felt these disciples needed to be baptized a second time, because the first baptism they received by John the baptist was to repentance, but not in Jesus' name. They knew John and they knew John's teachings. So what did Paul say in verse 4 that they didn't already know? What did they hear that convinced them to be baptized again? The answer is that they didn't yet know *who* John was talking about when he said there would be someone coming after him in whom they should believe. Therefore they didn't know of the Holy Spirit either. It is only after Paul had revealed to them the full Gospel, and that it was Jesus who John had preached about, that they were baptized again. Paul laid his hands on them and this time they received the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit started manifesting in them, because they started speaking in tongues and prophesied. We can learn from these passages that before baptizing someone by the authority of Jesus, one has to make sure that they've heard and understood the gospel and have faith in Jesus. However, it these passages do not prove that baptism is optional.

Another popular argument used to try to prove that baptism is not necessary, is by using 1 Corinthians 1:17 where Paul writes:

For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

My immediate answer to this argument is this: If Jesus commanded us to baptize, who are

you going to listen to? Will you do what Jesus said or will you use what Paul said as an excuse? Secondly, Paul wasn't talking about us. He was talking about himself. He was saying what Christ sent him to do. We are not Paul. We cannot adopt the commission that Paul received from Christ as our own and then use it as an excuse to avoid what Jesus commanded us to do.

Besides, the verses prior to verse 17 explains why Paul wrote that. He was saying that he's just so glad he didn't baptize all of them, because there were people among them who would have accused him of baptizing in his own name. Here are the rest of the verses:

<sup>11</sup>For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

<sup>12</sup>Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

<sup>13</sup>Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

<sup>14</sup>I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;

<sup>15</sup>Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.

<sup>16</sup>And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

<sup>17</sup>For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

Paul had heard that these people were arguing among themselves about baptism and by whom their baptizing had taken place. Paul did baptize but he was saying that the main mission Jesus gave him was to spread the Gospel. In Acts 9:15-16, the angel told Ananias what God had in store for Paul, who was at the time still known as Saul:

<sup>15</sup>But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

<sup>16</sup>For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

Paul always had other disciples traveling with him and they did most of the baptizing. As we saw earlier, Jesus didn't baptize either, but let His disciples perform all the baptisms. Paul did perform baptisms, but he mostly preached. His main mission was not to baptize. Paul's main mission was to spread the Gospel. And this is exactly what Paul did, as he planted several churches and is responsible for most of the New Testament in the Bible today. Paul wasn't trivializing the importance of baptism for a believer at all. He was merely saying that it wasn't the main mission the *he* received from Christ. He was not saying baptism is optional at all.

So far we've tried to find reasons for baptism to be optional and failed. Now let's look at verses that might imply that baptism is a prerequisite for salvation.

While talking to Nicodemus in John 3:5, Jesus said:

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Most people argue that the *water* Jesus was talking about, refers to the amniotic fluid that surrounds a fetus in the womb – thus He was talking about a natural birth, not water baptism. Of course, this is highly likely. Yet, Jesus didn't waste words and since *every* person is born naturally, "born of water" would have been superfluous in that sentence. Jesus often answered the Pharisees deliberately in spiritual allegory that they usually misunderstood. For example John 2:19:

Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

What Jesus said to Nicodemus by itself is too vague to conclusively say that Jesus was even talking about baptism. There'd have to be more witnesses to use John 3:5 as proof that baptism is required for salvation.

A well known verse about baptism is found in Mark 16:16 where Jesus said:

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Here we see two requirements to be saved: belief and baptism. However, the logic in this statement is often misunderstood.

First, notice that Jesus only mentions unbelief as a reason to be damned. He doesn't mention that you won't be saved if you don't get baptized. This is similar to a coach saying to some athletes: "Those of you who practice *and* cross the finish line, will get \$50. But, those of you who don't cross the finish line will get nothing. Does he mean that those who don't practice are guaranteed to get nothing? No, but they are unlikely to win, aren't they? Does he mean it's unnecessary to practice? No, the coach never said practicing is unnecessary, unimportant, or optional. The reason it is difficult to understand is because this is not pure binary logic. There is room for probability and uncertainty.

Here is another example to illustrate this logic with: Suppose a military airplane is on fire and about to explode. The officer in charge tells the soldiers: "If you jump and open your parachute, then you will survive. But if you don't jump, then you will die." Is he saying it's not necessary to open the parachute? No. Is he saying opening the parachute is optional? No. Is it possible that someone who does not jump might survive? No. Everyone who doesn't jump will die in the plane when it explodes a few seconds later. Is opening the parachute required to survive? Let's put that question differently: Will a person die (with absolute certainty) if their parachute doesn't open? Well, it depends. It's always possible for someone to jump out of the airplane and be lucky enough to fall through trees land on a thick bed of snow or on a steep incline without having opened a functional parachute, and survive. This has actually happened to people.

Alan Magee, an American airman during WWII, holds the world record for jumping from 22,000 feet out of a burning airplane and surviving the landing without a parachute. Flight Sergeant Nicholas Stephen Alkemade, who was a rear gunner in Royal Air Force during World War II, survived a fall of 18,000 feet, also without a parachute. Of course, colliding with earth at 120-150mph makes it highly unlikely to survive, so what happened to these two gentlemen were uncommon to say the least.

It would be safe to say that opening a parachute is not optional for survival when jumping out of an airplane at 20,000 feet, whether it is burning or not. Surviving without one is unlikely and would be extraordinary, but it is possible.

Suppose I said to you: "Jumping out of an airplane without a functional parachute always ends in death." Is that statement true or false? It is false. Is it therefore ok to jump out of an airplane without a parachute? No.

This example can now be turned into King James English as follows: "He that jumpeth and openeth his parachute shall live, but he that jumpeth not shall die." Now compare this to what Jesus said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." He didn't say that people who aren't baptized won't be saved. He didn't say baptism is optional either. So we can't make those statements.

Remember that Jesus is God and He cannot lie. When Jesus talked about baptism, He knew there are people who will be saved without getting baptized. He could not say that it is absolutely

necessary for salvation, because it isn't and that would be a false statement. Jesus knew there are exceptions. However, He was definitely not telling us that we should consider it to be optional or just symbolic either, because that is also untrue.

Moreover, when people say baptism is essential for salvation, then they're passing judgment over everyone who weren't baptized, including that thief on the cross next to Jesus, supposing that he wasn't baptized. The truth is, if someone who believes didn't get baptized, then it would be up to Jesus to judge them, not up to people.

The statement by Jesus in Mark 16:16 is a factual truth meant for everyone. It neither states baptism is optional nor that it is required. It merely states two facts. Those who believe and get baptized will be saved. Those who don't believe will be damned. Jesus will decide about those who believed but didn't get baptized.

The statement in Matthew 28:19 is a command Jesus gave to His disciples:

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

This command is not for people who haven't been baptized yet, because only Spirit-filled disciples can baptize people. The command is directed at disciples, preachers, teachers, and prophets. Teachers and church leaders should therefore be very careful about teaching anything else, because anything which deviates from that statement is false teaching. Jesus *commanded* his followers to baptize people. Faith in Jesus also includes obeying Him. If you are a follower of Jesus and you have faith in Him, then you cannot ignore His commands.

So, the answer to the original question is *neither*. Baptism is neither optional nor a prerequisite for salvation. Jesus commanded us to baptize. Therefore it is extremely important and that is how we should view it, teach it and practice it.

Surely then, given the magnitude of the delegated authority by which Jesus commanded his followers, baptism cannot be taken lightly. Baptism in water is a very important act of faith in following what Jesus told us to do. Everyone should get baptized where possible and everyone preaching the Gospel should baptize people as well or at least instruct them to get baptized if there is something standing in their way of baptizing a believer themselves. Not baptizing because it is too inconvenient or not wanting to deal with it, is wrong. Saying that repentance is sufficient and baptism is unnecessary, is also utterly wrong and false teaching.

### 10.13 *The Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist*

Another event that we need to examine is when Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River.

In Luke 20:3-4 Jesus asked the chief priests and scribes a riddle in response to them asking by which authority He was preaching:

<sup>3</sup>And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me:

<sup>4</sup>The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

Since they refused to answer Him, He didn't give them the answer.

Of course, the baptism of John was from heaven. John the Baptist was fulfilling a prophesy (Isaiah 40:3) as we read in Matthew 3:3:

For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

John the Baptist was sent by God to prepare the way for the ministry of Jesus. In John 3:26-27 we read what John the Baptist said:

<sup>26</sup> And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.

<sup>27</sup> John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

Now John preached about repentance and baptized for the remission of sin. He was also foretelling the coming of the Messiah. In Matthew 3:1-2 it states:

<sup>1</sup> In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,

<sup>2</sup> And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

In Matthew 3:11 John says:

I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.

In Acts 19:4 we read:

Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

There is a riddle to this event, because John the Baptist baptized for the remission of sin by repentance. However, Jesus had no sin as we can see from scriptures such as 1 Peter 2:22:

Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

Jesus didn't have to repent or obtain forgiveness for sin, because He was the only man who've ever lived who had been innocent of *all* sin.

So, the question then is: *Why did Jesus go to John to get baptized?*

Matthew 3 covers the baptism of Jesus in most detail and in verses 13-17 we read:

<sup>13</sup> Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

<sup>14</sup> But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

<sup>15</sup> And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

<sup>16</sup> And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

<sup>17</sup> And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

There are a few important points to take note of:

1. John immediately recognized Jesus as the Messiah. This must've been by the Holy Spirit. It is written that John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit before he was even born (Luke 1:15).
2. John also questioned the act of baptizing the Messiah and went so far as asking Jesus why Jesus wanted to be baptized by John. Not everything had been revealed to John



and he was surprised that Jesus came to him to be baptized. In fact, he wanted it to be reversed so that he'd be baptized by Jesus. Surely the Messiah should baptize the prophet that prepared the way. Why did the prophet baptize the Messiah? The fact is, as we saw earlier, that Jesus didn't baptize according to scripture. In John 4:1-2 we read:

<sup>1</sup>Then therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,

<sup>2</sup>(Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)

The prophets always anointed the kings, as the prophet Samuel anointed Saul and David to rule the people of Israel, so John the Baptist anointed Jesus as the Messiah.

3. The reason Jesus gave for asking John to baptize Him was *to fulfill all righteousness*. The word *righteousness* in Greek is δικαιοσύνη transliterated into English as *dikaïosynē*, which means "meet the demands of God's law." It was the fulfillment of the prophesy found in Daniel 9:24:

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

4. The Holy Spirit descended down on Jesus like a dove (see this chapter page 55).
5. A voice from heaven said "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Luke tells us in Acts 10:38 exactly why Jesus was baptized:

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

So, the reason Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist was to fulfill God's Word and a prophesy to be anointed with the ministry of the Holy Spirit and to announce the arrival of the Messiah.

In Luke 4 we read how Jesus went to the synagogues to preach after He came out of the fasting in the desert where He had been tempted by Satan. He went to a synagogue in Nazareth where He read the prophesy from Isaiah 61:1-2 and publicly announced that He is the Messiah. This event is recorded in Luke 4:18-21:

<sup>16</sup>And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

<sup>17</sup>And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

<sup>18</sup>The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because **he hath anointed me** to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

<sup>19</sup>To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

<sup>20</sup>And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

<sup>21</sup>And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

The verb *anoint* in Hebrew is מָשַׁח<sup>40</sup> transliterated into English as *māshah*. It means to consecrate or anoint with oil. It is the root of the Hebrew word מְשִׁיחַ<sup>41</sup> transliterated into

<sup>40</sup> H4886

<sup>41</sup> H4899

English as *māsiāh* meaning "anointed" or "consecrated person" (usually a king, priest, or saint); specifically the *Messiah*. The Greek word is Χριστός<sup>42</sup> transliterated into English as *Christos*, from the Greek root χριω<sup>43</sup> transliterated into English as *Chriō*, which means "anoint" or "smear or rub with oil". This was from the practice of rubbing oil as part of the preparation and treatment of leather for armor, containers, shoes, and clothing, among others.

Since *Christ* which is the same as *Messiah* means "anointed one", this also explains why Jesus had to be baptized by John the Baptist. He had to be anointed by God into His earthly ministry as the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God.

In 2 Corinthians 1:21 Paul writes:

Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;

Paul says here that God anoints reborn Christians. Just like the baptism of Jesus was the anointing of the anointed One, so we are anointed by God when we get baptized with the Holy Spirit into Jesus. Just because this anointing of God is invisible to us in the natural world, does not mean it is invisible in the spiritual world. In the spiritual realm the anointing of God must have great significance.

### 10.14 *The Word*

The ultimate authority rests in the Word of God. In John 1:1, we read that Jesus is the Word:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

a little further on in John 1:14 we read:

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

John witnessed Jesus in the flesh. Today, we have the Word of God given to us in the Bible. It is the key that unlocks the authority and all the spiritual blessings to us, because it is available to everyone and we can all touch a Bible and read it.

However, the Bible is just a book of ink on paper with some string and glue holding it together. Without the Helper, who is the Holy Spirit, it is impossible to understand the content of the Bible. Unlocking the secret knowledge in the Bible requires a spiritual relationship with God.

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for "Word" is דָּבָר<sup>44</sup> transliterated into English as *dābār*. The Strong's Concordance defines it and its root as follows:

**H1696** דָּבַר *dābar* a primitive root; perhaps properly to *arrange*; but used figuratively (of words) to *speak*; rarely (in a destructive sense) to *subdue*: — answer, appoint, bid, command, commune, declare, destroy, give, name, promise, pronounce, rehearse, say, speak, be spokesman, subdue, talk, teach, tell, think, use entreaties, utter, well, work.

**H1697** דְּבָרָה *dābār* from H1696; a *word*; by implication a *matter* (as spoken of) or *thing*; adverbially a *cause*: — act, advice, affair, answer, any such, any thing, because of, book, business, care, case, cause, certain rate, chronicles, commandment, commune, communication, concern, concerning, confer, counsel, dearth, decree, deed, disease, due, duty, effect, eloquent, errand, evilfavouredness, glory, harm, hurt, iniquity,

<sup>42</sup> G5547

<sup>43</sup> G5548

<sup>44</sup> H1697

judgment, language, lying, manner, matter, message, [no] thing, oracle, ought, parts, pertaining, please, portion, power, promise, provision, purpose, question, rate, reason, report, request, said, as hast said, sake, saying, sentence, sign, so, some uncleanness, somewhat to say, song, speech, spoken, talk, task, that, there done, thing, concerning, thought, thus, tidings, what, whatsoever, wherewith, which, word, work.

In the New Testament, two distinct Greek words with different meanings were translated into the word *Word* that have caused much confusion among Christians. The first is ῥήμα<sup>45</sup>, transliterated into English as *rhema*, which means "an utterance". The second is λόγος<sup>46</sup> transliterated into English as *logos* means a "doctrine" or "understanding" in addition to meaning "an utterance".

When a verse in the New Testament refers to the *Word of God* translated from *rhema* or *logos*, then the actual meaning is often lost due to the limitation of the English translation. The difference between *rhema* and *logos* can be described loosely as follows: *logos* is the entire idea being conveyed, while *rhema* is a specific utterance inspired by the power of the Holy Spirit. Both must remain in harmony with the entire Bible and cannot be simply verses quoted out of context. For example, telling someone about the Gospel or quoting verses out of the Bible to explain a doctrine is *logos*. The teaching of faith healing, which requires an understanding of the entire Bible, is *logos*. When a Christian lays hands on someone and the Holy Spirit brings into remembrance a verse such as Isaiah 53:5 and he or she utters it saying: "By His stripes you are healed!", that is *rhema*. When one says "In the name of Jesus", or "by the authority delegated to me by Yeshua, it is supposed to be *rhema*. If not, it's not from the Holy Spirit and no healing would take place.

This book contains *logos*. This chapter explains principles to unleash the power of the Holy Spirit through *rhema*, which requires knowing the *logos*.

Today, the Word of God can be encountered in the *spoken* form, *written* form, in form of *logos* and in the form of *rhema*. The spoken or written form is accessible to anyone who has access to the Bible, even if it is just one verse by reading it or hearing it. The *logos* can only be received with the help of the Holy Spirit. This does not mean the person has to be a Christian. The Holy Spirit can impart a deeper understanding to an atheist or an agnostic too, for example.

The *rhema* is available to reborn Christians, who can impart it to non-believers by speaking, writing it or praying it. Someone in trouble yelling "Jesus, Help!", would be utilizing *rhema* in that short prayer.

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<sup>45</sup> G4487

<sup>46</sup> 3057

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