

The Fingerprint of God: Series 3—Part 1

"I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR"—GOD

Vision May 27, 2021



2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the LORD."

This lesson series comes from one of two visions I had on May 27, 2021. Along with the vision I shared concerning how God views us when we play with His Word. In this vision, concerning our lessons, I saw a side-view mirror with the fingerprint of God placed where the looking glass is located. Then, I heard the words, **"I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR."**

Before we dig into the word, I want to review some terms, of course, that we already know the definition of. However, they are significant for this lesson series.

Definitions:

*** God's fingerprint is an idiom for God's presence, strength, and power. It also symbolizes God's true identity throughout His Logos word (Bible).*

***Side-view mirror: a mirror on the outside of a vehicle that allows the driver to see what is behind and to the right or left of the vehicle; A mirror projects from the side of a motor vehicle allows the driver to see behind one side. A mirror projects the distance of objects (characters) and provides warnings of dangers.*

***Mirror: a reflective surface, now typically of glass coated with a metal amalgam, that reflects a clear image; (of a reflective surface) shows a reflection of. A mirror is also known as a looking glass or reflector.*

***Reflection: an image seen in a mirror or shiny surface; an image of light on a surface.*

***Image: A representation or similitude of any person or thing, formed of a material substance; as an image wrought out of stone, wood, or wax; the general impression (fingerprint) that a person, organization, or product presents to the public (character).*

In this series, we will discuss a few words taken from the four definitions, as they will take on a whole new meaning: *looking-glass, looking back, looking to the right or left, image, reflection/reflector, light, view, and character.*

I want to begin with an early account in the Bible, recorded with the two word's **reflection and reflector**. However, I need to set up a foundation first. In *Proverbs 13:10*, the Bible reads, "*Only by pride comes contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.*" And in *Proverbs 6:16-19*, (16) *These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: (17) A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, (18) An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, (19) A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."*

Pride is our subject today, and we can see from the two verses that God hates pride as it is an abomination unto Him. So, what is the definition of pride and abomination?

***Pride: a high or inordinate opinion of one's dignity, importance, merit, or superiority, whether as cherished in the mind or as displayed in bearing conduct, etc.; a becoming or dignified sense of what is oneself, one's position or **character**; self-respect; self-esteem.*

***Abomination in the Hebrew is toebah (to-ay-baw'): it is defined as a detestable act or thing; loathsome.*

According to God, pride is a detestable and loathsome act and is an eliminator from the work of the Holy Spirit. Pride will always work against us, and we will never be victorious in any situation as long as pride is active and at work in our lives. We can see this as early as with Lucifer.

***Lucifer: He was the anointed cherub that covers. His name means **light bearer**, **light reflector**, or one who **refracts light** (the condition of the eye). With Lucifer's name came purpose. I am sure that we have all grown up hearing that Lucifer was the coordinator and leader of all the heavenly worship. However, this was not his only purpose. So, let's read the scripture to which we will find out his additional sacred purpose.*

Ezekiel 28:12-19, (12) "Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

***In Hebrew, there are several words for lament or lamentation, but all convey the same sense, to outwardly demonstrate deep sorrow or regret. In Hebrew, the lament definition is "to wail "or "cry out." Lamentation is also known as a funeral song.*

(13) Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

(14) Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. (15) Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. (16) By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore, I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. (17) Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. (18) Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore, will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. (19) All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.

In the book of Ezekiel, the prophet addresses the pride of the king of Tyrus (also known as Tyre. Tyrus is located in Lebanon), who had great wisdom, but who was

possessed and run by the devil. Ezekiel prophecies that he would face judgment from God. So, the scriptures are going back and forth, speaking of the king and the cherub that covers, revealing two sides of the scriptures.

***Cherub is defined as a created angel with many faces.*

An example would be in *Ezekiel 10:14*, "Each one had four faces: the first face was the face of a cherub, the second face the face of a man, the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle."

The first mention of a cherub is in *Genesis*, where a cherub was assigned as a guardian of the eastern entrance of Eden's garden. This happened after Adam was forced out due to his disobedience. The cherub was placed at Eden's door to prevent Adam from returning and eating from the Tree of Life in his sinful condition (*Genesis 3:24*). Later, two cherubs made from beaten gold were placed on the mercy seat's seal (lid) of the *Ark of the Covenant*, symbolically guarding the seat to where God descended on the *Day of Atonement* every year (*Exodus 25:19*). Now, we see in *Ezekiel 28:14* that the prophet Ezekiel reveals that the one being spoken of is the "anointed cherub." The Hebrew word for "anointed" is *mimshach* (*mim-shakh*'), and it means a "sense of expansion or stretching out the wings." In verse 14, he mentions and identifies a cherub that "covereth." In Hebrew, this means "to fence in and protect." So, the prophet Ezekiel identifies a vital angelic being that formed a protective covering with outstretched wings.

The angel described is a guardian of the "light" of God's presence and Glory. In verse 13, Ezekiel says that "every precious stone" was thy covering. Then, he proceeds to name nine precious gemstones that formed a breastplate or covering on the vesture of this angelic creature. These are nine of the twelve stones representing the *Old Testament* priest's breastplate consisting of the 12 tribes of Israel (We discussed this in the *Cinderella Analogy*) (*Exodus 28:17-20*). With this evidence, we can analyze that Lucifer had an authority role or the office of a priest. Lucifer was the cherub of the highest order, first in power and authority over all the other angelic creatures. In verse 14 of the *Torah*, he is referenced as "kurev," protecting a large region.

*****Side Note: Who knows what the Torah is? The Torah is the first five books of Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). The word Torah comes from the root word "yarah," meaning "to shoot an arrow" or "to hit the**

mark. When properly used, the word means "teaching" or "instruction." Teaching is associated with the Holy Spirit, just as God taught Moses what to do and say (Exodus 4:15). Yeshua (Hebrew for Jesus), our Messiah, assumed the title of Rabbi (teacher) and performed much of His ministry as a Teacher (John 1:38).

The Torah is the **Light** of our Eternal Creator's teachings or instructions. The teachings figuratively point us in the Way like an archer points an arrow. The Torah is a scroll rolled and wrapped around two wooden shafts.

The nine stones are also the replica of the twelve gemstones in the New Jerusalem Gate and Foundation (Also discussed in the *Cinderella Analogy*). The number twelve also represents the twelve apostles, twelve hours in a day and twelve months in a year, etc...

God is self-existent, and everything else He created, including the angelic beings. The purpose of all creation is for God's pleasure (*Philippians 2:13, Revelation 4:11*), to serve Him (*Ephesians 2:10*), and **reflect** His Glory (*Isaiah 43:7*). So, the purpose of the stones on the angelic being, also known as Lucifer, was to shine with great brilliance of radiant **light reflecting** God's Glory.

So, we see that God covered Lucifer with nine precious stones that would reflect the **light** of God's Glory. In other words, he was the **mirror** for God. However, Lucifer forgot he was a **mirror reflection** that generated God's radiance and beauty as time went by. The Bible says he was deceived by the reason of his beauty or by the reason of his brightness (*verse 17*).

Let's continue with the remainder of the scripture before moving on: (13) *Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.* Ezekiel's cherub (Lucifer) was formed with both "tabrets and pipes." The word "tabrets" in the King James Bible indicates timbrels used on a tambourine—small metal-like objects that create a rhythmic sound with this round percussion instrument when beaten with the hand. However, the Torah does not use the word "tabret's" but "pendants." The pipe referred to is not as of a music instrument style. However, this word comes from the Hebrew word "bezel," a technical term relating to a jeweler's work (*Strong's Concordance*) that holds a gemstone. Using the King

James version, the "tabret" connects Lucifer to music and worship and the "pipe" connects him to God's work that contained (held) the jewels. However, the Torah speaks of the "setting or fastening" and the jewels.

"Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God." This passage means that he was in the Eden of heaven before his fall. The Garden of Eden means an enclosed, protected area of pleasure.

(14) *Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.* In this scripture, the cherub is defined as the "anointed that covereth." The Hebrew word for "anointed" is not the typical Hebrew word for anointing oil or the anointing with the Holy Spirit. This anointing is "mimshach" (mim-shakh').

****Mimshach (mim-shakh') Strong's Concordance: perhaps expanded or far-reaching wings (a sense of expansion or stretching out the wings); the anointed cherub that covereth.**

Again, Ezekiel identifies the cherub that "covereth." The Hebrew "covereth" is defined as "to fence in and protect." So, Ezekiel describes the angelic cherub (Lucifer) as a significant creature that formed a protective covering with outstretched wings. This is also an **image** of the *Ark of the Covenant* as the two cherubs stretch out their wings toward each other, protecting the mercy seat. Furthermore, demonstrated in *Solomon's Temple*, two massive winged creatures called *cherubim* stood in the *Holy of Holies* protecting the *Ark of the Covenant* (We discussed this in the *Cinderella Analogy*).

The passage, "thou wast upon the holy mountain of God," refers to the temple of God in heaven, the sacred holy mountain of the Lord, where the holy angels continually worship God.

The passage, "thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire," refers to an unspecified (to the reader) named area or places in the heavenly Sanctuary/Temple.

(15) *Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. (16) By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore, I will cast*

thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. (17) Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. (18) Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore, will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. (19) All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.

For the sake of time, I want to paraphrase the remainder of the verses:
In verse 14, we read that Lucifer was created perfect until iniquity was found in him, and he was cast out of the holy mountain in heaven (verse 16). He corrupted his wisdom and became proud of his own brightness or his beauty (verse 17). Thus, just as the anointed cherub was cast out of heaven, Ti-re's proud and self-appointed, god-like prince would also be removed from his high throne. Therefore, bringing him down to ashes, to the *aghast* (my translation: *a-gassed*) (Torah) of the people (verse 17-19).

The Torah uses the word "aghast." "Aghast" means struck by shock, terror, or amazement. So, this verse could be translated as: "Therefore, bringing him down to ashes, to the amazement of the people."

*****NOTE TO ME: Have someone read Ezekiel 28:11-19 from the Torah to show the difference in the translation—two sides of the mirror.**

**Adonai: In English is translated as Lord (lower letters) master. In Hebrew, the word Adonai is translated as YHWY—LORD—The I AM (all CAPS). YHWY is revered so holy that the vowels were not added to the word to prevent them from saying YHWY'S name in vain.*

**ELOHIM in Hebrew is translated as "Might One" or "Supreme One."*

*Now, let's look at Isaiah 14:12-15, (12) "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! (13) For thou hast said in thine heart, **I will** ascend into heaven, **I will** exalt my throne above the stars of God: **I will** sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: (14) **I will** ascend above the*

heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High. (15) Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."

Lucifer had forgotten his purpose and became so impressed with himself that he lifted himself above the throne of God. Look at verses 13 and 14 again: (13) *"For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. (14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the Most High.* Lucifer lost his privileged wisdom as he became overly confident in His beauty and reality by the pride of arrogance. With Lucifer's puffed-up imaginations, he thought that he should have a more significant position than God, the One in Whom created him. Five times, Lucifer exhorts himself above God and finds out quickly that God will not tolerate a detestable and loathsome attitude called pride. Therefore, God strips him of his vesture's authority and kicks him out of heaven, along with a third of the angels who sided with Lucifer.

So, in all actuality, as a play on words, *Isaiah 14:12* could be translated as God saying, *"You have fallen Ole' mirror, son of the dawn ("dawn" is taken from the Torah). You are nothing because, without my radiant reflection, you are nothing but a priceless and shattered (Hebrew-weaken: to prostrate; by implication; decayed) mirror."* Meaning he is nothing without God's radiant Glory.

Pride is a permeant eliminator that will deplete every ounce of God's Glory from us; therefore, shattering our Christ-like **character** and keeping us from enjoying God's heavenly gems. Repentance and humility are our only hope.

**James 4:5 says, "But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."*

***Humility: The quality or condition of being humble; The state or character of being humble; freedom from pride and arrogance; lowliness of mind; a low estimate of one's self; self-abasement; An act of submission.*

****Have you ever heard the saying, "The mirror has two sides?" This is the same question I heard the Holy Spirit speak as I looked into the mirror while washing my hands. This first lesson and the conclusion are derived from that question.**

The Mirror Has Two Sides:

The Prophet Ezekiel speaks of both the king's pride and Lucifer's, the angelic cherub. Thus, showing two sides of a scripture. In contrast, if we hold up a double-sided **mirror**, one **image** in the **mirror** reveals and **reflects** our natural face. The natural look reveals our lesser side, the side that is easy to manage or neglect, and the area of our **character** that is easy to become accustomed to seeing—the face without polish and shine.

Although God sees all things, great and small, the flip side of the **mirror** magnifies our **image** of imperfections that we normally can't see. Therefore, bringing to the surface all the **character's** impurities. In the process of magnifying, the king of Tyrus and Lucifer became prideful as they were looking through the **mirror** of the vanity. However, for the Christian, it is in the make-up of the magnifying that we can grow spiritually. To develop, we must first look in the **looking-glass** and see where our **character** needs to change and advance in our spiritual looks. Likewise, when we magnify God through worship, God will reveal the bright and radiant **Light** of His Glory—just as He did through the angelic being, Lucifer.

How do the angelic cherub, Lucifer, and the church (*ecclesia*) mirror one another? Let's look at *1 Peter 2:5*, "*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*"

**1 Peter 2:9, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:"*

***Priesthood in Hebrew is defined as priest's offices. In other words, he carries out the official duties of a priest.*

Do you think it could be possible that God patterned the church as the replacement of Lucifer, the original heavenly priest? I believe (know) so. Why? Because our role and his are in proximate **imagery**. God has provided us a breastplate of righteousness, set's up lively stones that I think are related to the nine fruit of the Spirit and the nine spiritual gifts, called us a royal priesthood, and gives us instruction to follow the priestly duties.

Furthermore, Lucifer had authority over the worship as he spread his wings around God's throne by protecting the Glory of His **light**. We are instructed to raise our hands (a form of blessing), offer a sacrifice in the sanctuary, sing, praise, and worship God with loud-sounding musical instruments. In addition, we are called to be the **light** of the world, set on a hill (hill also known as a mountain, and God set Lucifer upon the holy mountain to worship Him), shining forth YHWH'S Glory (*Matthew 5:14-16*). The **light reflector** is the gemstones or jewels reflecting God's **character**—the Personification of His Spirit. And, we are to guard our breastplate of righteousness against the fiery darts of the fallen enemy and the presence of God in our life, preventing His **light** from dimming or going out. One **imagery** to shine God's Glory is to remain humble.

**Colossians 2:2-3, "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; (3) In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."*

The Bible is full of mysterious puzzles, and the three missing stones in the third row of Lucifer's breastplate are one of the many. We can identify this mysterious fingerprint as a *latent print*: a print that can't be seen; it's invisible to the eye, taking extra processing and may need to be swept with a brush of powder.

**Proverbs 3:13-15, (13) "Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding, (14) for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold. (15) She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her."*

*Ezekiel, 28, does not read why the three stones on the third row of Lucifer's breastplate were missing. However, I want to show you an analysis (*an-al'-oo-sis*) of what the Holy Spirit led me too, this week.*

God has a purpose for everything in which He does. He is *omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. Meaning, He is everywhere at the same time. He sees and hears all things. And, He has all power.* When God created the "anointed" cherub, Lucifer, He set him in the highest priestly authority, as he was over all the other heavenly angels. God gave him the role of the worship leader and presented him with musical abilities. Furthermore, God gave him the great honor to be His **mirror** that would shine forth His radiant Glory. Although God

gave Lucifer much authority and responsibility, He already knew that Lucifer would become proud and arrogant of his beauty. God knew that Lucifer would turn one-third of the angels against Him. Knowing that God kicked Lucifer out of the Holy Mountain. Therefore, knowing the outcome, God set limitations on Lucifer, "Saying, I'm going to "anoint" and bless you, BUT I'm not going to bless you with everything." To understand the significance of the concept, we have to go back and take a closer look at which stones were missing from the breastplate: The tribe of *Issachar, Gad, and Asher* (This is the order placement in the Bible. However, on the breastplate, the order is *Issachar, Asher, and Gad*.) **Note to me: Show example.**

Let me set up a foundation for the upcoming analysis (*an-al'-oo-sis*): In *Genes* 49, Jacob has become old and gathers all twelve of his sons together to give them his prophesy of blessing or cursing before he dies. By Jacob's twelve sons, the twelve tribes are formed. There are 33 verses to this account, so we aren't going to read them all for the sake of time. You can go back and study this on your own. However, I am going to pull out and refer to *Issachar, Gad, and Asher's* blessings—the missing tribe's stones.

**Genesis 49: 14-15, (14) "Issachar is a strong ass couching down between two burdens: (15) And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute.*

**Genesis 49:19, "Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last."*

**Genesis 29:20, Asher: (20) "Out of his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties." Note: dainties mean seed. Therefore, meaning he will have many royal children.*

So, with the three missing stones, from Lucifer's breastplate and without his knowledge, God is making a bold statement to say, "I am going to "anoint" and bless you, BUT I am not going to give you everything. You will never be able to bear the burdens of others—Issachar. You may win some battles, BUT you will never overcome at the end—Gad. And, you will never produce royal seed—Asher."

I asked you earlier, do you think we are the replacement for Lucifer's priestly authority. Let me add this to my question: Lucifer will never worship God again, BUT we will. Lucifer will never stand on the Mount of God, BUT we will. And Lucifer will never wear a priestly garment ever again, BUT we will. This is a powerful conclusion that stands. And, although there are no clear visual fingerprints (*patent or plastic*) as to why the three stones on a third of row of Lucifer's breastplate were missing, I love and find joy in this hypothesis of findings that the Holy Spirit directed me to.

God desires that we mature in His Spirit and grow in His Word. However, today's lesson's focus is an important reminder that we are nothing without God. If we lose our humility, therefore becoming a **character** of pride, and thinking we are doing things ourselves then, we are deceived by our own wisdom and will endure a great and mighty fall. *1 Corinthians 10:31* says, "...do all things for the glory of God." It's God's beauty that radiates, not ours.

The fingerprint of God is mirrored in the character of His humility, and He is saying, "Magnify Me because "I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR," for I Am only one worship away."

The Fingerprint of God: Series 3—Part 2

"I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR" —GOD



2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the LORD."

Before we dig into the word, let's review our definitions.

Definitions:

*** God's fingerprint is an idiom for God's presence, strength, and power. It also symbolizes God's true identity throughout His Logos word (written Word/Bible).*

***Side-view mirror: a mirror on the outside of a vehicle that allows the driver to see what is behind and to the right or left of the vehicle; A mirror projects from the side of a motor vehicle allows the driver to see behind one side. A mirror projects the distance of objects (characters) and provides warnings of dangers.*

***Mirror: a reflective surface, now typically of glass coated with a metal amalgam, that reflects a clear image; (of a reflective surface) shows a reflection of. Also known as a looking glass or reflector.*

***Reflection: an image seen in a mirror or shiny surface; an image of light on a surface.*

***Image: A representation or similitude of any person or thing, formed of a material substance; as an image wrought out of stone, wood, or wax; the general impression (fingerprint) that a person, organization, or product presents to the public (character).*

In this series, we will discuss a few words taken from the four definitions, as they will take on a whole new meaning: *looking-glass, looking back, and to the right or left, image, reflection/reflector, light, view, character.*

The Bible mentions "glass" very little; however, it is referenced as the "**looking-glass** in Exodus." The *Hebrew* translation for **looking glass** is "rei" (reh-ee') and is defined as a **mirror** (as seen).

While Moses and the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, Moses built a portable tabernacle tent. There was a piece of fine furniture made of glass within the tabernacle, and it is known as the *brazen laver*. If you remember, Cinderella's glass slipper symbolizes seeing her true identity through the **looking-glass** of her shoe. In contrast, Christians can know their true identity by the **looking-glass** of the Word of God, as we are instructed to **mirror** our life after Christ's identity.

Made In the Image and Likeness of God:

Genesis 1:26-27, (26) "And God said, Let us make man in our **image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. (27) So God created man in his own **image**, in the **image** of God created he him; male and female created he them".*

***The word "us" refers to the Godhead: The Father, The Word, and the Holy Spirit. So, God talks with the Word (Jesus) and Holy Spirit about making man in His **image**. The unity between the Godhead created man in His (God's) **image**.*

So, we all know that men and women were both made in the **image** and likeness of God. But what does this mean?

***The Hebrew word "**image**" is tselem (tseh'-lem) (My translation: t-sel-um). Meaning **image**, likeness, and resemblance. So, with this definition in mind, we can determine we look like God.*

*The Hebrew word "form" is yatsar (yaw-tsar') (My translation: yet-sar). Meaning to fashion or form out of clay or a vessel; of a carver or graven **image**. So, God created and formed us as a Potter would mold an **image** of clay or vessel.*

Therefore, forming us to resemble His **image**. And although God is a Spirit, He takes on the form of a body.

Throughout the pages of the written “Word” (Logos/Bible), we can identify that God has the same features as we do. He has:

1. A face: 1 Chronicles 16:11, "Seek the Lord and His strength; Seek His **face** continually."
2. Eyes: Proverbs 15:3, "The **eyes** of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."
3. Ears: 1 Samuel 8:21, "When Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the **ears** of the Lord."
4. Mouth\Tongue: Isaiah 58:14, "Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the **mouth** of the LORD hath spoken it."
5. **He speaks**: Genesis 1:3, "Then God **said**, "Let there be light"; and there was light."

I know you get the picture, so you can search the scriptures to prove my continued claim for the sake of time. God has a nose and can smell; He has arms, hands, fingers, feet, and legs. He sits, walks, and has a back. He has white hair and has emotions such as laughing, anger, etc.

***An example we might understand more clearly is when we have a baby, they are made in our **image**—they resemble either the father or the mother. Or in other words, they are a clear picture of or a spitting **image** of the parent(s). In the case of God, we look like the **image** of our heavenly Father.*

***Likeness—as our children grow older, they take on the personality and act like either the mother or father. Or in other words, they take up their character traits.*

A Mirror Image:

When we look into a **mirror**, we see an **image** of ourselves. We recognize the face because of its distinguishing characteristics. But my **image** in the **mirror** is only a **reflection**, not the real me. The **reflection's** view looks like me, but I can't say that the **image** is the person of me.

Although we are made in the **image** of God, we are not God. We are only a shadow or **reflection** of Him that **reflects** His nature, **character**, and work. When we say we **reflect** the nature and **character** of God, we are, in essence, saying that we have a mental, moral, or righteous likeness and a social or communal likeness to the God the Father (Abba) who created us. We are **reflecting** the communicable traits of God. Meaning, we can communicate God's **characteristics** to others by our thinking, actions, and speech. God's **character** takes on *Personification* in our lives.

We can see how the **mirror reflection** works naturally, but let's continue by viewing through Abba's *looking-glass*.

The Looking-Glass:



The King James Version defines a mirror as a brazen glass, glass, or mirror.

****The Greek word and definition in the Strong's Concordance for the mirror is *esoptron* (es'-op-tron): a mirror (an object for looking into); a mirror, looking-glass (made of highly polished metal).**

*****ésoptron* (es'-op-tron)– a metallic mirror (not made of glass). Ancient mirrors (merely made of polished metal) only produced an indistinct (unclear) image (reflection). So, to get an accurate picture (reflection), the viewer had to look from several different angles ("standpoints").**

To understand the biblical meaning of the "**looking-glass**," we must first look to the tabernacle, where it all begins.

***Exodus 30:17-21, (17) "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, (18) Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash withal: and thou**

shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. (19) For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: (20) When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD: (21) So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, even to him and to his seed throughout their generations."

The bronze *laver* was the second piece of furniture in the outer court and set between the door of the Holy Place (inner court) and the altar. Another name for the *laver* is the *basin*. The *laver* was a requirement for the priest who passed through the tabernacle. No priest could pass by without first washing his hands and feet. Washing their hands represented their service and washing their feet represented their walk with God. If they walked by without washing, the penalty was death. The *laver* represents *God's Word, baptism, and the washing of sins*. The priest had to walk through the tabernacle pattern before reentering with the Israelites to atone for their sins.

The brazen *laver* came after the altar (sacrifice first). As the priest entered the gate of the outer court, he faced the altar, as he was ready to act as a serving priest. So, at the *laver*, he prepared himself for the further service of God. He could then minister at the altar or the Holy Place because he washed at the *laver*. Again, the altar always came first for the priest—salvation and then service. God was approached by way of the blood and the water.

***Note: blood and water were also the fluids that flowed from Jesus' body onto the earth's surface when the Roman soldier pierced His side.*

The *laver* was for the priest only. No Israelites were permitted to wash. *Exodus 40:11-16* shows that Moses washed Aaron and his sons; however, he only washed them once.

**Exodus 40:11-16, (11) "And thou shalt anoint the laver and his foot, and sanctify it. (12) And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with water. (13) And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint him, and sanctify him; that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. (14) And thou shalt bring his sons, and clothe them with*

coats (15) And thou shalt anoint them, as thou didst anoint their father, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office: for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations (16) Thus did Moses: according to all that the LORD commanded him, so did he."

How The Laver Got Its Name:

For making the *laver*, the women of Israel used their most highly prized possessions, the brass mirrors, from the Egyptians. The women had taken the brass mirrors from Egypt when they escaped their slavery. *Exodus 3:22 says, "But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians."*

**The Amplified Bible says, "But every woman shall [insistently] ask her neighbor and any woman who lives in her house, for articles of silver and articles of gold, and clothing; and you shall put them on your sons and daughters. In this way, you are to plunder the Egyptians [leaving bondage with great possessions that are rightfully yours]."*

***Spoil: Personal or household effects, livestock, or other items of value that are taken as plunder from a defeated enemy.*

***Plunder: To take the goods by force, or without right; to pillage; to spoil; to sack; to strip; to rob; as, to plunder travelers.*

The Israelite women took jewels of silver and gold, jewels set in silver and gold, or "vessels of silver, and vessels of gold," a plate of both sorts, cups, dishes, clothing, etc. The Israelites did not get paid for the years of their extremely hard labor during slavery. So, the plunder, or in other words, loot, considered by God, was their wages for their work during the six years of their slavery—God will always recompense what the enemy (devil) has stolen from us.

***Recompense: to make amends or award (someone) for loss or harm suffered.*

**Deuteronomy 15:12-18, "And if thy brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee. (13) And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty: (14) Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy*

flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith, the LORD thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him. (15) And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee: therefore, I command thee this thing today. (16) And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee; because he loveth thee and thine house, because he is well with thee; (17) Then thou shalt take an aul, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant forever. And also, unto thy maidservant thou shalt do likewise.

***Aul: An instrument only referred to in connection with the custom of boring the ear of an enslaved person (Exodus 21:6; Deuteronomy 15:17), in token of his volunteering lifelong service when he might be free.*

(18) It shall not seem hard unto thee, when thou sendest him away free from thee; for he hath been worth a double hired servant to thee, in serving thee six years: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all that thou doest.

So, the women took the shiny metals taken as spoil and made the *laver* in the tabernacle. Exodus 38:8, "And he made the *laver* of brass, and the *foot* of it of brass, of the **looking-glasses** of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation."

***The "foot of it" means the Pedi stool that the *laver* stood upon.*

***Brass in the scripture speaks of the judgment of God, able to withstand the fire of testing. It also speaks of strength.*

***Note: It may read bronze *laver* depending on your Bible translation. Brass and bronze were considered the same at that time.*

***Note: Although the women gave up their pricey jewels to make the *laver*, they were not permitted to go beyond the door of the tabernacle.*

As the priest entered through the gate of the tabernacle to worship and serve the LORD, he first came to the altar of burnt offering, a picture of the death of a substitute Lamb, and the place of the blood. It pointed to the Cross and toward Jesus Christ on Calvary, the starting point of salvation. It is the place of our justification by faith, based on the shed blood and the death of our

Savior. This settles our salvation as we are now in the tabernacle—the symbolic habitation of God. Even though no further progress has been made, everyone who has stopped at the altar of burnt offering has come by faith in the Cross of Christ and is now IN Christ because they have been redeemed (saved). Since Jesus Christ is the tabernacle (the tabernacle is a picture of Christ) and the dwelling place of God, we are in Christ the moment we step through the door and accept the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus upon the altar.

But this is only the beginning. Salvation begins at the brazen altar (Cross), but we know that it does not end there. The "redeemed" is now to go on to the next step, and then the next, and the next, until they attain the final victory and rests underneath the *Shekinah Glory* in the Holy of Holies.

As mentioned earlier, a **mirror reflects** the natural features of the person looking into it. **Looking-glasses** were for glorifying the flesh and the gratification of the old nature. They are a symbol of human vanity and human pride—the two things that God calls an abomination that **mirrors** the **image** of Lucifer (We learned this last week). The women of Israel were to surrender these **looking-glasses** and yield them, give them up to be made into a *laver* of cleansing. The *laver* then speaks of separation from the flesh, the world, and from the old nature: *A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, he that soweth discord among brethren (Proverbs 6:16-19), in addition to all the other sins.*

After a person, therefore, is saved, they must next be separated before he can go on to be of service in the tabernacle, at the table, the menorah (candlestick or lampstand), and the intercessory altar of incense. We are then, followed by the Ark of the Covenant. In other words, when we are saved, we don't stay the same; we are transformed (transitioning; metamorphizing into a new cycle of life) and separated by the cleansing of the Word; then, we move on to greater glory. To put it even plainer, we ask for forgiveness (justification). Then we stop participating in the sins—this is identified as the cleansing process by the Word of God and also known as the sanctification process.

The women surrendered their **looking-glasses** to be formed in the **image** of the brazen *laver* for the judging of the Israelites sins and worldly behaviors. The *laver*

contained water, and the water is the Word of God by which we are cleansed and sanctified. Jesus said in *John 15:3*, "*Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.*"

In *John 17:17*, he prays: "*Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth,*" and Paul says in *Ephesians 5:26*, concerning the church: "*That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word.*"

No Dimensions and Unlimited Power:

The *laver* was the only furnishing in the tabernacle for which God gave no dimensions. Detailed instructions for every other article were spoken to Moses by YHWY, but not for the *laver*. This speaks of its limitless power. There was no floor in the tabernacle, only ground, and no chairs for the priests to sit down. They were always standing and walking, for the intercession of the people, and their hands and feet became dirty constantly, becoming defiled every step they took. We are always becoming defiled in our walk in the world, including our service to the Lord. We are saved and justified; we have the Holy Spirit to lead us, but we are still in the world and of the flesh, and the temptations of sin come upon us. However, we have a limitless supply of the power of the Word of God to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Our Advocate, Jesus Christ, is our Mediator between the Father and us. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).*

We are washed clean from our past and present sin nature at the time of regeneration (getting saved; renewal; re-birth). *Old things passed away; behold, all things made new (2 Corinthians 5:17). Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost (Titus 3:5).* However, the washed and cleansed priest still needs to wash his hands and feet from the defilement of sin day by day. Likewise, as long as we are here on the earth, we are in the world; although we are not of the world, we stand in constant need of daily cleansing.

From the **looking-glass** of the *laver*, we find that Jesus, the Living Word, is the cleansing and sanctifying power in our lives that speaks of the water of the washing of the Word—Scriptures of God. We are regenerated by faith in the blood, cleansed, and set apart by the washing of the water of the Word—by

confession, by a willing surrender of all the things that belong to our old nature, and by willing submission to Jesus Christ, our Deliverer.

The purpose of this second lesson is that God is directing us to look into the **looking-glass**—the **mirror** of our soul—and examine our heart's view. Are we picturing the **image** and likeness of our Abba Father? Is our **character** lining up with His Word? Is our **view** clear, OR are we in an out-of-focus position and need to be adjusted by the Magnifier—GOD? Are we bathing daily and keeping our jeweled breastplate's **image** shined?

*The fingerprint of God is His mirrored Word, and He is saying, **Magnify Me because "I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR."** I Am only one alter, one washing, and one cleansing away."*

The Fingerprint of God: Series 3—Part 3 "I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR"—GOD



2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the LORD."

To begin, let's review a few of our definitions:

***God's fingerprint is an idiom for God's presence, strength, and power. It also symbolizes God's true identity throughout His Logos word.*

***Side-view mirror: a mirror on the outside of a vehicle that allows the driver to see what **is behind** and to the right or left of the vehicle; A mirror projects from the side of a motor vehicle allows the driver to see **behind** one side. A mirror projects the distance of objects (characters) and provides warnings of dangers.*

***Mirror: a reflective surface, now typically of glass coated with a metal amalgam, that reflects a clear image; (of a reflective surface) shows a reflection of. Also known as a looking glass or reflector.*

***Reflection: an image seen in a mirror or shiny surface; an image of light on a surface.*

***Image: A representation or similitude of any person or thing, formed of a material substance; as an **image** wrought out of stone, wood, or wax; the general impression that a person, organization, or product presents to the public.*

In this series, we have been discussing a few words taken from the definitions: *looking back, image, reflection, light, view, character, and looking glass.*

The biblical meaning of **mirror** is defined as the Word of God, so what does the Word of God say about **turning back** and **looking to the left and right**?

The Image of Looking Back—1:



The Hebrew for "**looked back**" (*shub*) (*shoob*) means more than to glance over one's shoulder. It means to regard, consider, pay attention to, bring back, and turn aside.

The Hebrew for "**looked back**" *shub* (*shoob*) means more than to glance over one's shoulder. It means to behold, return, regard, consider, and pay attention to.

****To look:** *nabat* (*naw-bat'*): observe, pay attention too, gaze.

****To turn:** *panah* (*paw-naw'*): regard, turn, turn back, turn around.

Although "**Looking back**" can be identified with repentance; it can also represent sin, and there is always God's judgment reaped when we **look back**, consider, or pay attention to past or present events outside of God's **viewpoint** and will. Lot's wife is a prime example as God delivered Lot and his family from the destruction upon the two cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Yet, Lot's wife turned and **looked back** in disobedience.

Let's Breakdown the Story from the Beginning:

**Genesis 19:1-28, (1) "And there came two angels to Sodom at even, and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;*

Along with his family, Lot lived in the cities of Sodom when they left Abraham's (camp) site. Lot was sitting at the gate of Sodom, where financial and judicial transactions took place when two angels came into town in the evening. Lot was more than just a resident; he was a public official—a leader—a Sodomite.

(2) And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. (3) And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

When Lot saw the angels, who came to inspect the land, he was deeply concerned because he knew they would see many unholy things in the night. Lot invited (pressed, pleaded, or begged) them to stay with his family because of the dangerous and sinful circumstances in the city streets. Finally, after Lot's begging, the angels decided to stay. Lot had prepared a feast with unleavened bread for them, and they ate.

Side Note—History:

Have you ever heard that there were some lost or rejected Books written that did not get published within the King James Version Bible? Show them my book and briefly discuss (along with the Book of Enoc and Jasher). A Jewish history book, Jasher, written by a Palestinian Jew (mentioned in the Bible in Joshua 10:13 and 2 Samuel 1:18), describes the events that took place in the night.

**Jasher 19:3-7, (3) “And by desire of their four judges the people of Sodom and Gomorrah had beds erected in the streets of the cities, and if a man came to these places, they laid hold of him and brought him to one of their beds, and by force made him to lie in them. (4) And as he lay down, three men would stand at his head and three at his feet, and measure him by the length of the bed, and if the man was less than the bed these six men would stretch him at each end, and when he cried out to them, they would not answer him. (5) And if he was longer than the bed, they would draw together the two sides of the bed at each end until the man had reached the gates of death. (6) And if he continued to cry out to them, they would answer him, saying, Thus shall it be done to a man that cometh into our land. (8) And when men heard all these things that the people of the cities of Sodom did, they refrained from coming there.”*

With this reading from *Jasher*, we can now get a deeper glimpse and mental **image** of the horrific events that took place in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Before we read verse 4, I want to back track and read *Genesis 18:20-21*, "(20) *“And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; (21) I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.*

This is in reference to that God visited with Abraham and said, *“He had come to see if the cry of sin in Sodom and Gomorrah was as grievous as to what He was hearing in Heaven.”* Two things to notice: God hears the cries of sin and investigates the cries He hears.

(4) But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter:

Sodom and Gomorrah are known as the "*cities of sin*" that comprise gross homosexuality and sex crimes. The sexual sins and perversion were so great that not only were all older men living in sodomy, but every young boy was too. So, both old and young from every corner of the city was going out and surrounding Lot's house. Here, we see that everyone in the city knew where Lot lived—probably because he was a well-known official.

***Note: the term sodomy comes from Sodom.*

(5) And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.

As all the older men and young boys saw the angels, a disgusting and despicable event took place, as I'm sure it made God sick to His stomach to look down and **view** what was happening to His beloved angels. Homosexuality was so great that men wanted to "know" and have sexual relations with the two angels of the LORD. In other words, the men wanted to rape these men as they had no understanding that they were the angels of God. However, I believe if they would have had known, they would still have wanted to engage in this despicable sexual act.

(6) "And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, (7) And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly.

Notice how Lot calls the men "*brethren*." By using this term, it shows how far Lot had backslid. He saw himself as one of the men of Sodom and even called them *brethren or brothers*—Lot identified himself with these unholy men. I'm not saying Lot participated in their sexual sins because the Bible does not say he did. However, he did associate them with his brothers.

(8) Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof.

Lot had offered his two virgin daughters instead of the angels to the vile men of the city. This, again, shows how twisted and perverted Lot's mind had become. His thinking had become reprobate.

***The Greek for reprobate means adokimos (ad-ok'-ee-mos): One that is unapproved or something that is broken; rejected; castaway; found worthless. It describes a mind that has been omitted and can no longer discern right or wrong.*

Lot's mind was so reprobate that he thought it wasn't okay to rape the visiting angels, but it was okay to rape his two daughters. However, it could have been possible that Lot knew that the older men and young boys preferred the same sex over women and would therefore deny the daughters. No matter Lot's thinking, what person in their right mind would offer his daughters to be raped—NONE, BECAUSE THIS IS LUDACRIS!

(9) And they said, Stand back. And they said again, this one fellow (Lot) came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot and came near to break the door (10) But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. (11) And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door.

The Sodomites had no respect for Lot as they became angry and violent with him because they said he had no right to judge them because he came to the city as a sojourner. Then, the Sodomites tell Lot they will treat him worse than they would

with the men (angels)—meaning, they would rape him worse than the angels. The men put so much pressure on Lot and moved toward the door to knock it down, but the angels pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. The angels struck them with blindness, and they could not find the door. The men who wanted to rape the angels were so driven by their lust that even though they were temporally blinded, they still tried to force their way on the angels. However, they couldn't find the door to follow through with their twisted advances.

(12) And the men (angels) said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place: (13) for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it. (14) And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.

The angels of the Lord warned Lot to take his family out of the city because they would destroy it due to the tremendous outcry and sin against God. So, Lot did as they commanded; however, Lot's sons-in-law mocked him because they had never seen him act righteously and did not take him seriously, thinking they thought he was joking. Therefore, they stayed in the city of sin.

(15) And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.

***The word "hastened" in Greek is hormaó (hor-mah'-o) which means to rush or set in motion. The angels had to rush Lot, as Lot did not want to leave; in verse sixteen he lingered.*

(16) And while he lingered, the men (angels) laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.

The Bible does not say why Lot lingered, but it could be that he was trying to persuade the other family members and possibly others to flee with him.

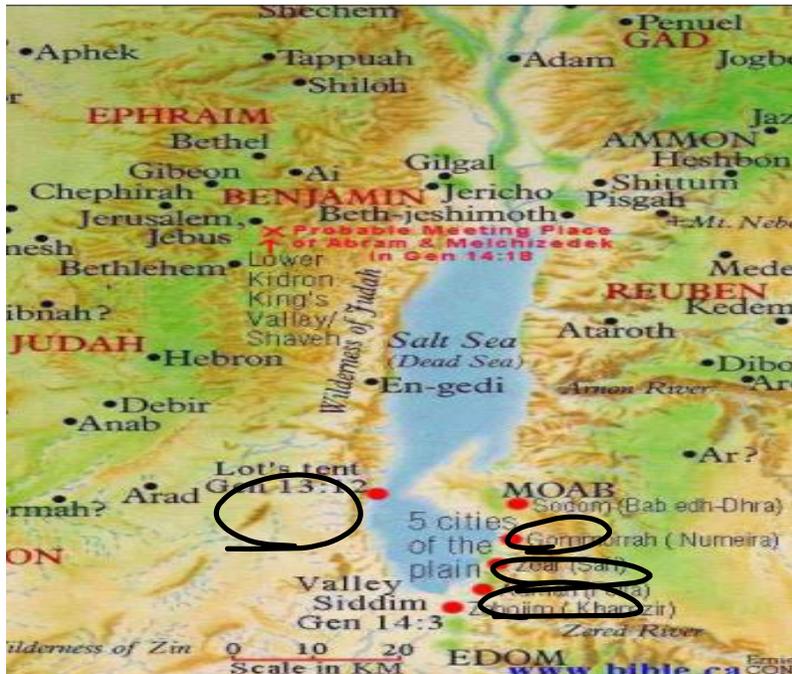
We see here that the angels took the wife and two daughters by the hand and dragged Lot and his family out of Sodom against their will. So, only four left the city and not the ten that Abraham had asked God in hopes to save the city. The purpose for the angels dragging and forcing them out by the hand was because Abraham had prayed and sealed their safety as he interceded on their behalf before the Lord. So, only four left and not the ten that Abraham had asked God in hopes of saving the city. The purpose for the angels dragging and forcing them out by the hand was because Abraham had prayed and sealed their safety as he interceded on their behalf before the Lord. God's faithfulness to Abraham to protect his nephew and family from destruction exemplifies how God can change incoming circumstances by one person's prayers and devotion to trust God.

*(17) And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; **look not behind** thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed. (18) And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord: (19) behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die: (20) behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live. (21) And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken. (22) Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou become thither. Therefore, the name of the city was called Zoar.*

The angels of the Lord told Lot that they would escape to the mountain; however, Lot was afraid of evil and death to come upon him, so Lot persuaded them to take them to the city of Zoar. The following morning, at daybreak, the angels made sure Lot, his wife, and daughters left before God destroyed the city (*Genesis 19:13*). As they fled, the angels warned them, "*Escape for your life! **Do not look behind you**, and do not stay anywhere in the valley; escape to the mountains, or you will be swept away*" (*Genesis 19:17*).

*(23) The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. (24) Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; (25) and he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. (26) But his wife **looked back** from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. (27) And*

Abraham get up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD: (28) and he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.



It was morning when Lot entered Zoar, the only city saved by the destruction, but the angel of the LORD stayed behind in Sodom. As the cities, plains, and inhabitants were destroyed with fire and brimstone, Lot ran with his daughters. *"But his wife, from behind him, **looked back**, and she became a pillar of salt" (Genesis 19:26).* She lagged behind as she turned and watched the flaming fire of brimstone fall from the sky, consuming everything she valued. Then it consumed her. Again, the *Hebrew* for "**looked back**" means more than to glance over one's shoulder. It means "to regard, to consider, to pay attention to." The scene Lot's wife **viewed** was a look of longing that indicated reluctance to leave or a desire to return.

The scriptures don't say whether her death was a punishment for valuing her old life so much that she hesitated in obeying God's command or if it was a simple consequence of her reluctance to leave her life quickly. Either she identified too much with the sin city by excepting and joining it—or she neglected to obey God's warning fully, and her punishment was death.

God gives us similar warnings in *Ephesians 4:22-24* as He tells us to *take off the old self that is ruled by sin and be renewed, putting on the new self in God's likeness (His **character**)*. Similarly, *1 John 5:16* says that *willful, deliberate sin can lead to death*. Lot's wife couldn't accept the warning as she **looked back**. What she chose to value in her heart led her to sin, which led to her death. *Luke 17:32* says, *"Remember Lot's wife! As this is the second shortest scripture in the Bible. But let's look at the significance of it.*

God called Lot, his wife, and his family to leave behind everything that they had to save their life, but Lot's wife could not let go, and she paid for it with her life. Jesus tells her story to the disciples in a series of parables, as He describes a future event: *"It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed. On that day, no one on the housetop, with possessions inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no one in the field should **go back** for anything. Remember Lot's wife! Whoever tries to keep their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life will preserve it" (verses 28–33).*

*"When "the Son of Man is revealed," it will be time for people to flee. There will be no time to take anything along. If you see the sign when you are on the roof (a rooftop deck with exterior stairs was a common feature of houses at the time), you should not even take time to go into the house to gather up your possessions. You need to get out and "**don't look back**." Lot's wife is an example of what will happen if we do. If we try to save our life (that is, the things that our life is made up of), we will lose everything. Leave it all to save our life."*

The parable corresponds to a scenario similar to a person who wakes up in the middle of the night to find the house consumed in flames. That person might be tempted to run around and gather up valuable items, but the delay might prevent a safe escape—all the things will be lost, as well as the person's life. It is better to leave it all behind and get out with our life unharmed.

In *Luke 9:62*, a similar view is expressed by Jesus, although Lot's wife is not mentioned. Jesus said, *"No one who puts a hand to the plow and **looks back** is fit for service in the kingdom of God."* In context, Jesus is talking about people who want to follow Him but are hindered by their concern for other things. It is not just that they **look back**, but they have divided loyalties, like Lot's wife. This

example could be seen as "they are riding the fence."

In five different scriptures, Jesus also used the statement *"whoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it."* (Matthew 10:39; 16:25; Mark 8:35, Luke 9:24; 17:33) The whole purpose of Jesus' teaching is that He requires us to keep our eyes forward, not focusing on the "life" of this world and everything it offers. Attempting to "save our life" is the same as **"looking back."** Attachment to our "old life" will cause us to lose our lives, and Lot's wife is the illustration and example that Jesus speaks of to remember— *"Remember Lot's wife."*

Due to Lot's wife's disobedience, her judgment was turned into a pillar of salt. In Judaism, Lot's wife became a symbol for a rebellious unbeliever. What I find interesting is that she is described as a *"pillar."* *The Hebrew for "pillar" refers to a garrison or a deputy, that is, something set to watch over something else.* The **image** or statue of Lot's wife is still standing, above a cave, watching over the Dead Sea area today. To this day, no life of vegetation can exist in that area, as it is a powerful reminder to us not to **look back** from the profession of our faith but to follow Jesus without hesitation or reluctance.

Sodom and Gomorrah, along with the cities of Admah, Zeboiim, and Zoar consisted of the five "cities of the plain." There were five cities, and only one survived the angel's destruction: the small city in the mountains called Zoar (Genesis 19:30). Notice how the angels could not bring fiery judgment until Lot was safe in Zoar (Verse 22). *Luke 21:36 and 1 Thessalonians 5:9* say that believers will also escape the wrath to come if we stay faithful to God—*"For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our LORD Jesus Christ."*

As I ponder upon the *"pillar of salt,"* I am reminded, again, of *Matthew 5:13-14, (13) "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. (14) "You are the **light** of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. (15) Neither do people **light** a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives **light** to everyone in the house. (16) In the same way, let your **light** shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."*

Since the Word of God is a **looking-glass**, we can see, when we demonstrate the "salt and light" or see others showing good deeds, we are **viewing** clearly the fingerprint's **image** and **character** of God as **HE IS CLOSER THAN HE APPEARS**. Christians must always be aware of their spirit's attitude keeping it in line with God's **character** and His commandments. We must learn to recognize His presence in others as we, too, like Lot's wife, maybe in the presence of angels unaware (*Hebrews 13:2*).

Although Lot's wife demonstrated the opposite of "salt and light, by **looking back**, God placed His permanent *plastic marking* upon her **image** for all to see—as to say, "I AM JEHOVAH YHWH—THE SALT OF THE EARTH (AND LIGHT OF THE WORLD)—and MY judgment is sure.

The fingerprint of God is mirrored in the character of salt, light, and judgment, and He is saying, "Don't look back but magnify Me because "I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR!" I AM only one glance away."

****Extra:** (*Genesis 19:35-38*) The end of Lot's story is just as sad as his former days. As Lot's and his two daughters lived in the cave, they were afraid they would not know men and bear children to carry on their father's seed/legacy because Lot was old in age. One night the oldest daughter decided to get Lot drunk. When Lot became intoxicated to the point, he was unaware of what was taking place. When Lot was so drunk, she raped him and became pregnant. The following night, the oldest daughter told the younger daughter what she had done, and they decided that she would also rape her father, becoming pregnant. Lot was not aware of what took place either night. The oldest daughter had a son, and she named him Moab, the father of the Moabites unto this day. The younger daughter also had a son, and she called him Benammi, the father of the Amorites of this day.

Lot's experience after he left Sodom and dwelt in the cave is two lessons within itself: *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you (Matthew 7:12)*, and *you reap what you sow (Galatians 6:7)*. Lot offered his two daughters to be raped by the older men and young boys of the city of Sodom, and yet he finds himself being raped by his daughters.

The Fingerprint of God: Series 3—Part 3
"I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR"—GOD
The Image of Looking Back—Continued



2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the LORD."

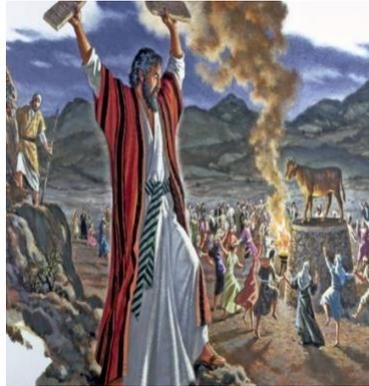
***Side-view mirror: a mirror on the outside of a vehicle that allows the driver to see what is behind and to the right or left of the vehicle; A mirror projects from the side of a motor vehicle allows the driver to see behind one side. A mirror projects the distance of objects (characters) and provides warnings of dangers.*

***The Hebrew for "**looked back**" means more than to glance over one's shoulder. It means "to regard, to consider, to pay attention to."*

In the past year, we have learned how to recognize God's fingerprint in colors, numbers, shapes, frequency, symbols, scriptures, parables, and within the *Cinderella Analogy*. Yet still, within the marking of His fingerprint, life is difficult, hardships arise, and darkness looms—this season is known as the wilderness.

Often, Christians who travel through the wilderness may become dry, thirsty, or hungry spiritually. However, the saddest moment is when a Christian becomes tired, frustrated, and disobedient, **turning back** to old habits, disobedience, and sin, not realizing *God is **CLOSER THAN HE APPEARS***.

The Image of Looking Back—2



*Numbers 14:3-4, (3) "Why is the LORD bringing us into this land to fall by the sword? Our wives and children will become plunder. Would it not be better for us to **go back** to Egypt?" (4) So, they said to one another, "Let us appoint a leader and return (**go back**) to Egypt."*

After 40 days of surveying the land of Canaan, twelve spies (one for each tribe) returned to Moses to report their findings. Although Joshua and Caleb returned with the hope God promised, ten spies returned with a "report of doubt," saying that they could not take the "Promise Land" because of the giants in the land. Due to their unbelief, they had to wander in the wilderness for 40 years—one year for every day they spied out the land. All the while, they wanted to **return** to Egypt and **back** to their bondage of slavery. Bondage is a clear definition of sin, and slavery is the precise definition of being held captive by the enemy. Sadly, the Israelites preferred a life of sin and captivity rather than looking and pressing forward to a land filled with milk and honey. However, while traveling, God met Moses on *Mount Sinai*.

**Exodus 32:1-35 NIV, (1) "When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, "Come, make us God who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him." (2) Aaron answered them, "Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons, and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me." (3) So, all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. (4) He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, "These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt." (5) When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, "Tomorrow there will be a festival to the LORD." (6) So, the next day, the people rose early and sacrificed*

burnt offerings and presented fellowship offerings. Afterward, they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry.

***Revelry: Lively and noisy festivities, especially when these involve drinking a large amount of alcohol.*

(7) Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt. (8) They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, "These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt." (9) "I have seen these people," the LORD said to Moses, "and they are a stiff-necked people. (10) Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation." (11) But Moses sought the favor of the LORD his God. "LORD," he said, "why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? (12) Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth'? Turn from your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on your people. (13) Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Israel (Jacob), to whom you swore by your own self: "I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever." (14) Then the LORD relented (changed His mind) and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened." (15) "Moses turned and went down the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands. They were inscribed on both sides, front and back.

*** When reading verse 15, did you notice the inscription was on both sides of the tablets, front and back. I have never heard that taught, and when we see pictures of Moses holding up the carvings of tablets, we always see the inscription on one side. So, this is a false illusion.*

(16) The tablets were the work of God; the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets. (17) When Joshua heard the noise of the people shouting, he said to Moses, "There is the sound of war in the camp." (18) Moses replied: "It is not the sound of victory, it is not the sound of defeat; it is the sound of singing that I hear."

Over-View:

When Moses went up into *Mount Sinai* to receive the *Ten Commandments*, he left the Israelites for forty days and forty nights. The Israelites feared that he would not return and demanded that Aaron make them "*a god to go before them.*" So, Aaron gathered up the Israelites golden earrings and ornaments, constructed a "*molten calf,*" and they declared: "*This is thy god, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt*" (*Exodus 32:1–4*).

Aaron built an altar before the golden calf and proclaimed a feast to the LORD the next day. So they rose up early the next day and "offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings, and the people sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play" (*Exodus 32:6*). God told Moses to go back to the camp that the Israelites were corrupt and that they had turned aside quickly out of the way God commanded them. God said He would destroy them and start a new people from Moses. Moses besought and pleaded that they should be spared because of His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Israel (Jacob), and "*the LORD relented of the evil which He said He would do unto His people*" (*Exodus 32:11–14*).

***Relented, meaning God changed His mind.*

(19) When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned, and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain. (20) And he took the calf the people had made and burned it in the fire; then he ground it to powder, scattered it on the water and made the Israelites drink it. (21) He said to Aaron, "What did these people do to you, that you led them into such great sin?" (22) "Do not be angry, my lord," Aaron answered. "You know how prone these people are to evil. (23) They said to me, "Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him." (24) So, I told them, "Whoever has any gold jewelry, take it off." Then they gave me the gold, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!" (25) Moses saw that the people were running wild and that Aaron had let them get out of control and so become a laughingstock to their enemies. (26) So, he stood at the entrance to the camp and said, "Whoever is for the LORD, come to me." And all the Levites rallied to him. (27) Then he said to them, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: "Each man strap a sword to his side. Go back and forth through the

camp from one end to the other, each killing his brother and friend and neighbor." (28) The Levites did as Moses commanded, and that day about three thousand of the people died. (29) Then Moses said, "You have been set apart to the LORD today, for you were against your own sons and brothers, and he has blessed you this day." (30) The next day, Moses said to the people, "You have committed a great sin. But now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin." (31) So, Moses went back to the LORD and said, "Oh, what a great sin these people have committed! They have made themselves gods of gold. (32) But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written." (33) The LORD replied to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against me, I will blot out of my book. (34) Now go, lead the people to the place I spoke of, and my Angel will go before you. However, when the time comes for me to punish, I will punish them for their sin." (35) And the LORD struck the people with a plague because of what they did with the calf Aaron had made."

Over-View:

God met Moses on the Mount, and when he went down from the mountain, upon seeing the calf, he became angry and threw down the two tablets of stone (10 Commandments), breaking them. Then, Moses burnt the golden calf in a fire, ground it to powder, scattered it on water, and forced the Israelites to drink it. When Moses asked him, Aaron admitted to collecting the gold, throwing it into the fire, and said it came out as a calf (*Exodus 32:21–24*).

Aaron is terrified of the repercussions of his sin, as he places blame on the Israelites, as he implied that when he threw the gold into the fire, the calf "*just happen to come out.*" This is the same action that Adam did with Eve—he blamed someone else for his actions. However, Aaron's statement was just a false narrative. *Exodus 32:4* says, "*And he received them from their hand, and fashioned it with an engraving tool after he had made it a molten calf; and they said, "These are thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt!"* Then again, we will see in verse (35) "*And the LORD struck the people with a plague because of what they did with the calf Aaron had made.*"

So, the evidence shows from these two scriptures that Aaron is a skilled craftsman who made the golden image.

Levi stands on the LORD'S side, as God had instructed them to go throughout the camp and kill with a sword, their brother, friend, and neighbor and thus the tribe of Levi becomes the priest and the guardians of the holy things "*sacred furniture*" at the tabernacle and temple. Thus, three thousand idol-worshipping Israelites were slain that day.

When the appropriate season came, God brought a plague of pestilence upon the Israelites for their disobedience.

***Pestilence: a fatal epidemic disease, especially bubonic plague.*

***Bubonic plague: the most common form of plague in humans, characterized by fever, delirium, and the formation of buboes. Also known as a pandemic.*

Back in Egypt—the Bull Named Apis:

When in Egypt, the Egyptians had a deity/god in the form of a bull called "*Apis*" that was worshipped in the Memphis region of Egypt. In Egypt, the bull represented a king who became a god after his death. When the Hebrews (Israelites) made their own calf god, they basically demonstrated "their" belief had brought them out of Egypt instead of the LORD (*verse 4*). The Israelite people are out of Egypt, but as explained, Egypt, which represents bondage and oppression, was still **reflected** in them.

The Sin of the Calf:

In *Hebrew*, Aaron's incident (or actions) with the people is known as the "*Sin of the Calf*." While Aaron and the Israelites were worshipping the calf **image**, God was on *Mount Sini* with Moses engraving His laws on the tablets of stone with His fingertip. The Israelites had no idea that **GOD WAS CLOSER THAN HE APPEARS**.

Throughout the 40 years of wondering, the Israelites had many encounters with God; however, they did not recognize that **GOD WAS CLOSER THAN HE APPEARED**.

The Following Are the Events of Where God Was Located:

*An angel of God and a pillar of cloud and fire guarded the multitude (*Exodus 13:21-22; 14:19*).

*A strong wind made a path for the Israelites through the sea (*Exodus 14:21-29*).

- *The Egyptian's chariot wheels were made to swerve; the army was drowned in the sea (*Exodus 14:25-31*).
- *Bitter waters were made sweet and drinkable (*Exodus 15:22-25*).
- *Manna rains from heaven for bread. Quail are sent to provide meat (*Exodus 16:4,13-18*).
- *Water comes from a rock (*Exodus 17:2-6*).
- *Moses's raised hand allows the Israelites to prevail over Amalek (*Exodus 17:9-13*).
- *God speaks from the mountain at Sinai (*Exodus 19:2-6; 16-21*).
- *The wind brings the quail (*Numbers 11:31*).
- *The ground opens and swallows Korah (*Numbers 16:19-35*).
- *The budding of Aaron's staff (*Numbers 17:1-11*).
- *Water from the rock and Moses's sin (*Numbers 20:2-13*).
- *The bronze snake on a pole (*Numbers 21:4-9*).
- *The crossing of the Jordan (*Joshua 3*).

Over the past several years, especially the past five, I have done many studies on Moses, the wilderness, and the tabernacle. I want to show you a few things that I have learned that connect God's fingerprint to the fingerprint of Christ and the Cross.

Everything in the Old Testament depicts (pictures) Jesus Christ's birth, His life, death—the Cross, and the resurrection. I want to demonstrate and show three different connections between Aaron's rod and the Cross.

In *Exodus 3:1-22*, **THE I AM THAT I AM** (GOD/YHWY) appeared before Moses in the form of a burning bush as He called Moses to deliver HIS people from the hand of the Egyptian slavery. One of God's instructions to Moses was to throw down his rod, and the rod would become a serpent. (*Exodus 4:3-4*) So, Moses and Aaron, his brother, the future high priest of Israel, went and stood before the Egyptian king, Pharaoh, and Aaron threw down his rod, and the rod became a snake (cobra), just as God said. Two Egyptian magicians, whose names were Jannes and Jambres, tried to duplicate that same miracle by turning their rods into serpents (*Timothy 3:8*). But through a strong demonstration of God's power, Aaron's rod swallowed up the magician's two snakes (*Exodus 7:9-12*).

This story is amazing in how it demonstrates the incredible power of the Cross. A rod is a dead branch of a tree. However, the rod of Aaron swallowed the rod of the enemy; just as through Jesus' death on the tree, He swallowed up "death and hell," and the two powerful "serpents" that control Satan's kingdom were defeated. Thus, "*death is swallowed up in victory*" (1 Corinthians 15:54).

Another thing I have learned that relates is when Moses lifted up his rod (representing the Cross) in the air to open the Red Sea. After Israel crossed over it, Pharaoh's army was destroyed in the waters as God swallowed them up (Exodus 14:16-28). When Jesus was raised on the Cross (representing the rod), Satan and his cohorts (military forces) were defeated as Christ "*spoiled principalities and its powers*"; meaning Jesus diminished and destroyed. *Colossians 2:15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*

Later, after opening and closing the Red Sea, Aaron and Hur secure Moses' arms as he held his rod in the air during Israel's battle against Amalek (you may remember Clark preaching on this). As long as the rod was held high, Israel prevailed against their enemies. If Moses dropped his hands, then the Amalekites prevailed (Exodus 17:9-12). In like manner, if we raise our hands and lift up Christ, He will draw all men unto Himself (John 12:32). But if we remove ourselves from the power of the Cross and "drop the Cross," then the enemy gains access into our lives.

The reference to the rod is three-fold (possibly more). Not only does it depict Jesus' swallowing up "death" and "hell," and swallowing up the enemy by the destroying waters, but it also has another significant meaning. When Pharaoh enslaved the Hebrew people (Israelites), the slave-masters would beat them into submission with a rod. So, when God instructed Moses to return to Egypt to free His people, Moses, guided by God, would stretch out the "rod of God" as to say, "The **I AM** is going to beat Pharaoh into submission." And God did, by way of the ten plagues.

****Note:** It's hard to imagine that the Israelite people wanted to **look back** and return to Egypt where they were beaten daily into submission, rather than look forward and keep pressing for the blessed promise. Sadly, this is the same sanario for many Christians. God gives them the hope of a miracle and a land filled with

milk and honey, but the effects of the wilderness turn them away. Therefore, they never receive.

I found this next demonstration very interesting, as I learned the significance. In *Numbers 20:8*, God instructed Moses to speak to the rock, and water would come forth for Israel to drink in the wilderness. Instead, Moses struck the rock twice with his rod; as a result, neither he nor Aaron was permitted to possess the promised land—Cannon (*Numbers 20:9-12*).

****Have you ever wondered why this made God so angry?** Its meaning is more than just Moses being disobedient. There is a significance behind it: The rock was Jesus Christ, who was first scourged (punished and beaten with the cattails) and later crucified; therefore, He endured two terrible sufferings. God's anger was evoked because Moses said, "*Hear now, ye rebels; must we give you water,*" taking the glory for himself and away from God (*Numbers 20:11-12*). Also, since the rod was a picture of the Cross, Jesus would die once, not twice, as Moses demonstrated by striking the rock twice; thus, Moses disobeyed God's commandment.

****The rod is a symbol of the Cross but also a symbol of authority, and Moses abused his by disobedience—striking the rock twice.**

The Israelites become dry, thirsty, and hungry both naturally and spiritually. Furthermore, becoming tired, frustrated, and disobedient, as they wanted to **turn back** to old habits, sin, and bondages, not realizing **God IS CLOSER THAN HE APPEARS**—God was the cloud. God was the fire. God was the wind. God was the chariot wheels. God was the sweet water. God was the manna. God was the bread. God was the quill—meat. God was the water from the rock. God was the earth. God was the budded staff. And, God was the bronze snake (*Exodus 3:14*).

THE **I AM THAT I AM** not only sent Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egyptian slavery, but the **I AM'S** fingerprint, over 40 years, was evident through the markings of His **character**.

We should never underestimate the power of God, ignore or not take into consideration (*invisibility*) the inability to see the **character** of God's fingerprint. **Looking back** or **viewing by turning side to side** will prevent us from seeing God's

clear **image**. Peter with the knowledge of Christ, instructs us to keep looking with eyes straight forward and forgetting those things which are behind us and reaching forth for those things which are before (Proverbs 4:27; Philippians 3:13).

The fingerprint of God is mirrored even in the wilderness season, and He is saying, **“Don’t look back but magnify Me because “I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR.” I AM only one promise away.”**

The Fingerprint of God: Series 3—Part 4 "I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR"—GOD



2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the LORD."

***Reflection: an image seen in a mirror or shiny surface; an image of light on a surface.*

Never underestimate the power and **imagery** of God; He might just surprise you!

Jesus Breathes on His Disciples:



**John 20:1-31, (1) The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. (2) Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the LORD out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.*

***Mary Magdalene was the woman whom Jesus delivered that had seven demons. After Jesus freed her, she stayed and walked with Jesus and the disciples*

during the time of Jesus' ministry. Mary Magdalene was also at the crucifixion— she was very devoted to Jesus.

***The other disciple mentioned in the scripture that was at the tomb is referring to John, the one whom Jesus loved. This is the same John (son of Zebedee) that took Mary, Jesus' mother, and adopted her after Jesus' death. There is only one reference in the Bible of the one "disciple that Jesus loved," and it is found in the book of John.*

(3) Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. (4) So, they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. (5) And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. (6) Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, (7) And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

***Does anyone know what the napkin placed over Jesus was covering? Answer: His face. Do you see any similarities of why Satan wants to cover our mouths with a mask mandate? It's a sign or form of being silenced.*

***If you remember, we discussed this in the Cinderella Analogy. What does the folded napkin mean? Answer: I'll be back. Although Satan had plans to silence and cover Jesus up, Jesus had different plans established...I'll be back!*

(8) Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. (9) For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. (10) Then the disciples went away again unto their own home. (11) But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, (12) And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. (13) And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because, they have taken away my LORD, and I know not where they have laid him. (14) And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. (15) Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him,

and I will take him away. (16) Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

***Earlier, Jesus had predicted that He would die and rise again (Mark 9:32). However, when the stone was removed, and the tomb was empty, none among His followers comprehended that He had been raised from the dead. **JESUS WAS CLOSER THAN HE APPEARED** as Mary Magdalene did not recognize Him; she thought He was the gardener. But Jesus spoke her name, and knowing His voice, she turned around and said, "Rabboni, which means Master (Verses 15-16).*

(17) Jesus saith unto her, Touch, me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. (18) Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the LORD, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

***The phrase "touch me not" in Greek means, "do not cling to me." Mary could not connect herself to Jesus because He had just come from the place of defeating sin, which He is now holy and sanctified. Mary had a sinful nature, and Jesus could not be touched with sin.*

Let's Look at This Meaning Deeper:

In Moses's tabernacle, the blood was to be sprinkled on the mercy seat right after the death of the animal of sacrifice. Now, Christ, the innocent Lamb, is, of course, our substitute. He was slain for us upon the Cross and entered into death for us.

On the morning of the resurrection, He meets Mary at the tomb. As soon as Mary recognized His voice, it's possible she could have prostrated herself and would have kissed His feet, OR she would have wrapped her arms around His legs and clung to Him, but Jesus says to her: *"Touch me not"; and then He proceeds immediately to give the reason why Mary is not permitted to touch Him at all. "For I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God" (John 20:17).*

The Lord Jesus Christ said, "Touch me not; for I now am about to ascend unto my Father." If you remember, after he had offered the sacrifice in the tabernacle, the

high priest was to enter the holy of holies, before he did anything else, with the innocent blood. No one was allowed to approach YAWYH except the high priest to sprinkle the blood on the mercy seat. Everyone was closed off until the process was complete. With the meeting with Mary and Jesus, we fulfill this type. Here Mary meets her great High Priest, who was just previously the sacrificial Lamb, and who had now risen from the tomb, but before He had entered the holy of holies (heaven) with the reconciling blood. And so, He says to her, "TOUCH ME NOT."

**Hebrews 9:12, "But by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."*

***After speaking with Mary Magdalene, Jesus ascended back to His Father in heaven. Then, in the following scripture, we see the same day, in the evening, Jesus returns to meet with the disciples.*

The following scriptures (19-23) are our focus as we complete the lesson.

(19) Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. (20) And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the LORD. (21) Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. (22) And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: (23) Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. (24) But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. (25) The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the LORD. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. (26) And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. (27) Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. (28) And Thomas answered and said unto him, My LORD and my God.

Thomas and the other disciples were allowed to touch Jesus' scars at this time because He had already been to His Father in heaven, applying the blood on the mercy seat—The Throne of Grace.

(29) Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. (30) And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: (31) But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

***Thomas is known as "doubting Thomas" because he would not believe Jesus was alive until he touched the scars on Jesus' wrist (hands) and side.*

**John 20:22, "And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."*

After His resurrection, Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene on the morning of the first day of the week. Later that night, Jesus appeared to the disciples. On this night, in His second appearance, after the resurrection, He breathed the Holy Spirit on His disciples. Yet, Thomas was not there with them at this particular time. It was eight days later that Thomas encountered Jesus.

As I was studying the accounts of this event, I found it very and informative as I learned many things. However, I want to mention that although the Holy Spirit was present at that time, as the disciples were inspired by the Holy Spirit and worked miracles through the Holy Spirit, they were not "filled" with the Holy Spirit {at this time}. They received the "feeling of" the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. So, what does the scripture mean when it says, "*Jesus breathed on the disciples, and they received the Holy Spirit?*" Let's dig deeper into the context to show you what I have learned.

Let's Look at Each Step of Jesus' Second Appearance.

1. Jesus said to the disciples, "*Peace be unto you.*"
2. Jesus showed the disciples the scars in His wrist (hands) and His side.
3. Again, Jesus said to the disciples, "*Peace be unto you.*"
4. Jesus said to the disciples, "*As the Father has sent me, even so, I am sending you.*"

5. Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, *"Receive the Holy Spirit."*

6. Jesus said, *"If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."*

Jesus' first words to the gathering of the disciples were, *"Peace be unto you."* He said this twice. But, between his two voice expressions of *"Peace be unto you,"* Jesus did something to demonstrate His existence. He showed them His wrist (hands) and the scars on His side. The disciples and Mary were in the presence of Jesus, and yet they did not recognize Him. For **JESUS WAS CLOSER THAN HE APPEARS**, and sadly in order for them to believe, Jesus had to show the disciples His crucifixion scars.



Thomas was not at this gathering of the disciples, at Jesus' first or second appearance. So, eight days later, Jesus appeared a third time. This time Thomas was present. When Jesus arrived, He said, *"Peace be unto you."* And Jesus said to Thomas, *"Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side."* Again, Jesus uses the phrase, *"Peace be unto you,"* with the showing of Jesus' scars.

Isaiah 53:5 says, *"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes, we are healed."* Jesus is showing the disciples the fulfillment of this scripture as He is letting them touch the nail prints in His hands and revealing to them His pierced side.

Jesus spoke the words *"Peace be unto you"* to the disciples, but those words bring together the revelation of the act that brought peace to the disciples. Jesus' pierced side and nail-scarred wrist (hands) brought peace to humanity because of

forgiveness, which we will see as we continue to reveal the whole meaning of this portion of the scriptures.

Having shown the disciples the evidence of His wounds, which brought them peace, Jesus said, *"As the Father has sent me, even so, I am sending you."* The first time that the gospel of John speaks of Jesus being sent is in *John 3:34*. *"For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure."* The scripture means, Jesus was sent to speak the words of God and give His Spirit without measure and any limitations.

****Who is the Spirit?** We have learned in past lessons that the Spirit of the LORD is the third person of the Godhead, the mind of Christ and God's character— Personification, the Fruit, knowledge, counsel, wisdom, understanding, strength, and the fear of the LORD. However, in this lesson, we will learn that He is the breath, life, and the peace of Jesus.

****The Greek word for Spirit is pnevma (pronounced p-nev'-mah) (Strong's Concordance and Greek translator), which has a similar meaning to the Hebrew word ruach (pronounced roo'-akh ("h" is silent). Pnevma (p-nev'-mah) means to breathe, blow, and primarily denotes the wind.**

Let's Look at Some Scripture and Prove This Statement:

**Romans 8:6 says, "To set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace."*

**John 6:63 says, "It is the Spirit who gives life."*

**2 Corinthians 3:6 says, "The Spirit gives life."*

**Romans 14:7 says, "For the kingdom of God is...righteousness and peace and joy and in the Holy Spirit."*

**Galatians 5:22 says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is...peace."*

**Ephesians 4:3 says we should be "eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."*

**Genesis 2:7 Then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being.*

**1 Corinthians 15:45, "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." – Jesus is "the last Adam" who "became a life-giving spirit."*

Adam's disobedience resulted in death for man, both spiritually and physically. Jesus' death resulted in peace and everlasting life for those that repent and

submit to Him—demonstrating two sides of the **mirror**. And just as we have borne the likeness of Adam, the earthly man, so shall we, one day, take the likeness of Jesus, the Word that was sent from heaven and took on fleshly man (*1 Corinthians 1:49*).

Jesus Christ, the last Adam, freely offered Himself as atonement for man's sin and purchased eternal life for all; however, we must first repent. Therefore, being forgiven by God.

So, God the Father (Abba) sent His son Jesus to give life and peace without measure and limit. Now, from the scriptures, Jesus tells the disciples (and us) that He is sending them the same way the Father sent Him. Jesus then breathes on the disciples and says, "*Receive the Holy Spirit.*" Jesus, as the Son of God, is breathing into all men.

I mentioned this verse earlier, but the first time we see God breathing into men is in *Genesis 2:7*, which says, "*Then the Lord God formed the man of the dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.*"

God breathed in the man He formed from the dust, and Adam became a living creature. "*Thus, it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit" (1 Corinthians 15:45).*

In like manner, Jesus is breathing into us to become the same *life-giving* spirit just as He was sent to be a *life-giving spirit*—a spirit that brings peace to us through His wounds. So, *what is the meaning of this scripture?* Christians are to be Christ-like; therefore, we are to become the **image** of Jesus, the *life-giving spirit*. We are to give life and peace without measure and limitations. And, as Jesus did through His wounds, we primarily give life and peace to others, from our response to the wound's others inflict upon us. This is what Jesus was telling the disciples as He breathed on them the Holy Spirit of God.

Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, "*Receive the Holy Spirit.*"

The word *breathed* appears four times in the gospels (*Matthew, Mark, and Luke*). All four are the action of Jesus, and all are connected to the Holy Spirit. In each of the following three verses, the *Greek* word for "*breathed*" is *ekpneo* (pronounced

ek-p-neh'-o). It means to *expire, to breathe out, to exhale*. In the King James Version and the Strong's, Concordance reads to *give up the ghost, but its meaning is the same*.

**Mark 15:37 says, "And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost."*

**Mark 15:39 says, "And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly, this man was the Son of God."*

**Luke 23:46 says, "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."*

On the crucifixion Cross, the last thing Jesus did was breathe out. *What did He breathe out? Answer: The Holy Spirit.*

****What did Jesus say shortly before He breathed out the Holy Spirit?** *"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34)*. So, Luke connects the breathing out of the Holy Spirit with the forgiveness that Jesus gave to those who were carrying out His death.

Mark connects the two, as well. *Mark 15:37 says, "And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last."* The Greek word uttered in this verse is *aphiemi* (pronounced *ah-fee'-e-me*). *Aphiemi* has several meanings, but the most common translation is *forgiven, forgive, I let go, and I release*.

By understanding the scripture in more depth, it is possible to have the understanding that Jesus, *forgiving with a loud cry, breathed out the Holy Spirit?*

So, while on the Cross, Jesus forgave us and **breathed OUT the Holy Spirit**. The next and last time breathed is mentioned in the gospels (*Matthew, Mark, and Luke*) is our passage and the reference in the lesson. *"And when he had said this, he breathed **ON** them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."*

However, breathed is a different Greek word here. Here the Greek word for breathed is *emphysao* (pronounced *em-ph-sow*). *It means to breathe into, breathe on, or blow in. (Greek Strong's Concordance)*

*****This is significant: Jesus breathed OUT (*aphiemi—a-fee'-mee*) His Spirit on the Cross. But, after the resurrection, Jesus breathes His Spirit INTO us (*emphysao—em-ph-sow*).**

So again, we see, Jesus forgave us and breathed **OUT** His Spirit, who is life and peace. Then, after Jesus resurrects, He speaks peace showing us His wounds, followed by breathing **INTO** us His Spirit, who is life and peace. And, Jesus does this because He is sending us the way His Father sent Him – as a *life-giving spirit* to give the Spirit, who is life and peace, without measure, without any limit.

Therefore, when Jesus tells the disciples to "*Receive the Holy Spirit,*" He gives them a specific instruction: "*If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.*" A better understanding of this scripture is: if we forgive others, Jesus will forgive us. If we do not forgive others, Jesus will not forgive us.

***Note: Many people have difficulty forgiving themselves for past sins or situations they have allowed themselves to be a part of or forced to do. However, we must forgive ourselves, as well.*

Bringing the Whole Passage into Context:

*Jesus forgave us; then He breathed **OUT** His Spirit. Now, Jesus breathes His Spirit **INTO** us because He sends us as the Father sent Him. Then Jesus tells us to bring life and peace to everyone by forgiving their sins.*

When others wound us, and we forgive them, Jesus' death is at work in us because it brings life and peace to others; and us, as well, as we are released from the effects of the wounds.

Jesus instructs us; if we forgive others their sins against us, then He will forgive our sins against Him. However, if we hold on to unforgiveness, He will also withhold forgiveness from us. The *Greek* word for "*withhold forgiveness*" is *krateo* (pronounced *kra-te-o*). It means to seize, arrest, be strong, take possession of, and have power. It's the same word to describe what the Jews and Romans did to Jesus. It has the idea of taking control of someone.

Over the years of teaching, I have often said that we forgive others, not for them but because it frees us from the bondage that rape and abuse place us under. However, as I learned more in dept of the scripture's knowledge, I realized I was wrong. Look what Jesus is saying: We can forgive and free others from their sins and give peace as He gives it. OR, we can take hold of others, control them, and keep them bound in their sins.

Knowing God's word in this newfound truth, if I/we hold on to unforgiveness, then I/we continue to control others as it is an act of violence, disobedience, and a stronghold of the enemy that should be broken and destroyed. *John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* It's not just the truth that we know but also the truth that we do that sets us free.

****Why do I say violence? Answer: Because withholding forgiveness is the same act that the Roman soldiers and the mob had against Jesus as it was an act of control.**

When Jesus spoke, "*Peace be unto you,*" to the disciples, this statement had a two-fold meaning (two views into the mirror). In other words, He was also saying, "*(1) Forgiveness be unto you, AND/OR (2) I forgive you.*" Then, He breathed the Holy Spirit into them. Likewise, when we ask Jesus' forgiveness, He says, "*I forgive you,*" then He breaths His Spirit into us. In like manner, when we forgive others, we breathe the Spirit of God into them—peace and life.

In the garden, the place of the resurrection, and in the house of the disciples, Jesus was the pure **reflection of light**. **JESUS WAS CLOSER THAN HE APPEARS** as Mary, the disciples, and Thomas did not recognize Him as they stood in the presence of the risen Savior.

When we have sinned against God or others have hurt us, it may seem as though God is far away. However, the fingerprint of His truth's **reflection** is that **JESUS IS CLOSER THAN HE APPEARS**—He is only one breath away. And when we demonstrate forgiveness, we are God's **reflection** manifested through a breath of fresh air called *peace*.

The fingerprint of God is mirrored in His peace and forgiveness, and He is saying, "Magnify Me because "I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR." I AM only one choice away."

The Fingerprint of God: Series 3—Part 5 "I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR"—GOD



2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the LORD."

Last week we completed the lesson on how peace is related to forgiveness and the breath of Jesus, but I want to continue the topic of peace and take a deeper dive into its meaning.

Peace—Shalom:

Peace is a word that can be used in various ways. One everyday use is to represent the absence of war or conflict. For example, when warring countries sign a treaty and are at peace. Another way *peace* is used when arguing friends', family members or co-workers forgive and become at peace with each other.

Peace also refers to rest. The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines *peace* as "*a state of tranquility or quiet*," while the *Oxford Dictionary* defines it as "*the state of being calm or quiet*." Such as when describing a place (the beach or the woods) as peaceful or saying your mind is at peace.

However, *peace* in the Bible is a bit different. Biblical *peace* is more than just the absence of conflict or a state of rest. It means *completeness or wholeness, and it points to the presence of something or someone else*.

For further understanding of biblical *peace*, let's look at the original *Hebrew* and *Greek* words.

Peace in Hebrew:

The word *peace* appears 237 times in the Old Testament with its first appearance in *Genesis 15:15*, "*as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age.*"

The *Hebrew* word translated as *peace* is ***shalom*** (*shaw-lome'*), and according to *Strong's Concordance*, it means *completeness, soundness, and welfare*. It comes from the root word *shalam* (*shaw-lame'*), which means making amends or making *whole or complete*.

Shalam (*shaw-lame'*) is often used in terms of making *restitution*. Take *Exodus 22:4*, for example; "*If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; he shall restore double.*" OR, in other words, "*if a man stole an ox or a sheep from his neighbor, under the law, he was to restore double or shalam what he had taken.*"

Therefore, having *shalom* means being in a state of wholeness or completeness, without any deficiency or lack. *Shalom* is frequently used in the *Old Testament* in reference to the wellness of others. Sometimes it is translated as well-being or welfare, such as in *Genesis 37:14, 43:27, 1 Samuel 17:18, 2 Samuel 11:7*, and other scriptures. So, let's look at these four passages:

**Genesis 37:14, "And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So, he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem."*

**Genesis 43:27, "And he asked them of their welfare, and said, Is your Father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive?"*

**1 Samuel 17:18, "take along these ten cheeses to the commander of their unit. See how your brothers are and bring back some assurance from them."*

**2 Samuel 11:7, "And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered."*

In Jewish culture, *people used shalom* in greeting expressions such as *Shalom Aleichem* which means "*well-being be upon you,*" or "*may you be well.*" Jesus and *New Testament* writers often greeted one another and said farewell with peace.

John 20:19, "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." Note: We spoke about this scripture in previous lessons so, don't forget that peace is also translated and related to forgiveness. If you remember, when Jesus spoke to the disciples, He was saying, "Peace, I forgive you." So, this scripture can have a two-fold or **mirror image meaning. "Shalom—May you be well, AND I forgive you."*

Peace in Greek:

The word *peace* in the *New Testament* is from the *Greek* word *eiréné* (i-ray'-nay). According to the *Greek Strong's Concordance*, *eiréné* means *one, peace, quietness, and rest*. It originates from the root word *eirō* (e.ro), which means to *tie, join, fasten, string together into a whole*.

Therefore, *eirene* (air-n-ay/my translation: air-N-A) also means *one-unity; it brings multiple parts together to form a whole or set it as one again*. For example, two friends who reconcile after a fight make *eiréné* (air-n-ay/my translation: air-N-A); as they come back together, and make their relationship whole. As we learned in previous lessons, this is Jesus' will that people forgive and be at peace with each other, just as He has forgiven.

Eirene (air-n-ah/my translation: air-N-A) first appears in the *New Testament* in *Matthew 10:13* "And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you." It appears 91 other times in the *New Testament*, and 24 of those are found in the gospels (*Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*) and is located in every book except *1 John*.

Mark 4:39 says, "And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, *Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.*" The *Greek* word for "*Peace! Be still,*" used in the verse is not *eiréné* (air-n-ah/my translation: air-N-A) but *σιόπαό* (see-o-pah'-o/my translation: see-o-pow), which means *to be silent or silence*.

***Note: All these Greek and Hebrew meanings may be hard to comprehend and difficult to remember, but I thought it is worth mentioning, as peace has multiple meanings. It is a fascinating study if you have an interest in learning more. You*

can also look up the Greek translator to learn how to say the words. The way I hear it in the parenthesis is not the correct translation.

***Note: When praying, when I need peace, or when I pray for others for peace, I often ask God for the Spirit of Shalom to come and rest upon us, as Shalom is complete and wholeness.*

Putting It All Together:

The peace of God is different from the peace of the world. Biblical peace is more than just the absence of conflict; it is taking action to restore a broken situation. It's more than a state of inner tranquility (*calm and rest*); it's a state of wholeness and completeness.

Biblical peace is not something we can create on our own; it is a fruit of the Spirit. God is the source of peace, and in *Judges 6:24*, His name is Yahweh Shalom, which means the **LORD Is Peace**. *Judges 6:24*, "So Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and called it **The LORD Is Peace**." Jesus is the **Prince of Peace**, and *Isaiah 9:6* says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, **The Prince of Peace**." Jesus gives us His peace in three ways.

1. Peace with God:

Jesus is our peace with God: *Romans 5:1* says, *Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*. Due to our sins, we were far from God and were separated from Him. *Ephesians 2:13* says, *Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*." Jesus restored our relationship when He was the substitute for our sins and died our death on the Cross. *Ephesians 2:14* says, *"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us."*

***In these two scriptures, can you see how the word "peace" is translated as "one" or "unity" --eiréné (air-n-ah/my translation: air- N- A)?*

Jesus provided us a pathway for reconciliation with God, and now we are joined to Him, as we can read from *Romans 5:10*. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we

shall be saved by His life. I want to mention that when we are not with God, He says that we are enemies of Him. We are either for Him or against Him. *Matthew 12:30 says, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."* If we are with God, we have an open invitation to fellowship with Him at any time, as shown in *1 John 1:3. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

***The King James Version definition for fellowship is to have a relationship, company, partnership, and communion.*

2. Peace with Others:

Jesus is our peace with others. In Him, we have reconciliation with others, live at peace with them, fellowship with one another by living with others in unity and one accord through the bonds of peace. Jesus empowers us by His Spirit to be peacemakers with our family, friends, neighbors, and enemies. In other words, everyone.

**Ephesians 4:1-3, (1) I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, (2) With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; (3) Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

***Unity: the state of being united or joined as a whole; a thing forming a complex whole; the state of forming a complete and pleasing whole; the number one.*

As we can see from the scripture, peace is founded on love, but what is the meaning of the "*bond of peace*"?

Unity is a bond with God and others, and when we live in unity, we should live in pleasing peace; therefore, the place "*in the bond of peace*." Peace is a theme that Paul mentions multiple times in this letter to Ephesus. (*Ephesians 1:2; 2:14, 15, 17; 6:15, 23*) Christ is our peace. He made peace, preached peace, gave unity in peace, and offered the gospel of peace. Peace is a portion of the fruit of the Spirit (*Galatians 5:22*) and is a significant **characteristic** for every Christian. *Romans 5:1 says, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*

Paul calls peace a "*bond*," which is an interesting choice of words, as it is possible that Paul was wearing "bonds," in the form of prison chains on his hands and feet when writing this letter. Paul demonstrated the true peace of God as he shared his knowledge with us.

3. Peace with Ourselves:

Jesus is our peace within. One of the hardest things for a person to do is to forgive themselves for their past sins; therefore, being in a continuous state of bondage (**looking back**) and developing a stronghold to hold back the fullness and blessings of God. However, we must understand that in Jesus, we are a new creation. 2 *Corinthians 5:17* says, "*Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*" Jesus is making us whole and complete in Him (*Shalom*). *Thessalonians 5:23-24* says, "May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our LORD Jesus Christ. (24) The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it." And when trials come to destroy, or Satan brings up our past, Jesus is our peace that keeps us bound together and our mind at rest. *John 16:33*, "*These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*"

Real peace only comes through Jesus Christ—the Anointed One. So, if we want to live a life of perfect harmony, we will have to join our hearts to His heart by reconciliation with Him, others, and ourselves. Our **character's image** of ourselves and others has to be in clear focus with the **mirror's image** of God.

Choosing peace is our part. Giving peace is God's part. Peace is a **reflection** of God's defined nature and His extraordinary **character**.

The fingerprint of God is mirrored in His Shalom, and He is saying, "Magnify Me because "I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR." I AM only one choice away."

The Fingerprint of God: Series 3—Part 6 I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR—GOD



2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the LORD."

***Reflection: an image seen in a mirror or shiny surface; an image of light on a surface.*

Saul On the Damascus Road:



Acts 9:1-19, (1) Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest (2) and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. (3) As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. (4) Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" (5) And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads." (6) So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." (7) And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing

a voice but seeing no one. (8) Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. (9) And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank. (10) Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." (11) So the Lord said to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. (12) And in a vision, he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight." (13) Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. (14) And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name." (15) But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. (16) For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake." (17) And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." (18) Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized. (19) So, when he had received food, he was strengthened. Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.

I'm sure we all know the accounts of Saul and his conversion, as we have heard many teachings and preaching over the years. And although the scriptures we just read are self-explaining, I could not escape this lesson description as I was studying for this lesson series. So, I want to take a closer look at Saul and what is actually happening.

Saul was born in the Gentile city of Tarsus, in Cilicia (*Acts 22:3*); he had studied in Jerusalem under a Pharisee named Gamliel, one of the outstanding Jewish rabbis of the day (*Acts 5:34*). He was a brilliant student (*Galatians 1:14*) and a zealous representative of the Jews persecuting the church. The violence of his persecution is described in (*Acts 26:10-11*). He aimed to compel Christians to deny their faith on the penalty of imprisonment and death.

In our day, the high priest would be called the president of the Sanhedrin, who had jurisdiction over Jews throughout Palestine. Saul received and secured from the priest letters of extradition to the synagogues at Damascus to bring any

Christians who had fled there back to Jerusalem in bonds and throw them in prison.

Acts 9:1-2, (1) Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder (slaughter) against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest (2) and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Paul was the leader of the persecutions of the Church, and he went to the high priest asking for names of people who were of the Christian faith. The term "The Way" is a phrase used to describe the "Christian faith."

(3) As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. (4) Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" The flash of light appeared to Saul near noon (Acts 22:6; 26:13), but the light was brighter than the sun. The voice from the midst of the light spoke to Saul in the Hebrew (KJV), or Aramaic (NIV), dialect (Acts 26:14). Although most Jews spoke Greek, Saul's parents spoke Aramaic and taught him this language (Philippians 3:5). This was the language of instruction in the rabbinic schools in Jerusalem. Note: Jesus also spoke in Aramaic, as we have previously learned. The voice informed Saul that in persecuting the Christians, he had been persecuting Him (Christ). This is a lesson we should all take note of. When we persecute Christians in word or deed, then in all actuality, we are persecuting Jesus Christ.

We see in verse three that Saul came near Damascus. This refers to as he came near the entrance into the city. Damascus is approximately 175 miles from Jerusalem.

(5) And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads." It is possible that Saul did not know who was speaking to him because in the Greek translation, "Lord/lord" often means "sir." However, in my opinion, I believe he knew precisely who was speaking to him as the voice identified Himself as Jesus, the one whom you are persecuting.

Also, in verse five, Jesus says it's hard for Saul to "kick against the goads." This references to sharp goads which were placed behind the oxen and were attached

to the plow. Consequently, when the oxen kicked and for whatever reason, their feet and legs would hit these sharp goads, which had a strong tendency to stop them from their actions. Jesus was saying that in persecuting Christians, Saul was hurting himself by his own corruption.

(6) So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." (7) And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one. (8) Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. (9) And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

In verse six, *Jesus tells Saul to go to the city, and when he gets there, He will say to him what to do.* In verses seven through nine, we see that a caravan of men accompanied Saul, and they stand speechless as they hear a voice coming from the bright light, yet they do not see anyone. Saul had fallen to the ground. I believe he fell to his knees because the power of God was so strong that he simply could not stand. When he stood up, he opened his eyes, and by God's power, he was stricken with blindness. Saul had to hold the hand of men to be led to Damascus. It's pretty ironic how he was going to Damascus to lead the followers of Christ to prison, but now he is the one being led. Jesus has a way of turning events around.

Saul was blind for three days, and during this time, he did not eat or drink. The reason is not told why, but it could be because the experience was so traumatic, OR in my opinion, he was fasting. In verses ten and eleven, we find that the disciple Ananias is instructed by the Lord in a vision to go to the street called "*Straight*," and he will find Saul of Tarsus praying at the house of Judas. So, it could be that Saul did not eat because he was praying and fasting.

***Note: the long, narrow street called "Straight" ran through the heart of Damascus and still exists today.*

In verse twelve, the Lord tells Ananias that Saul has had a vision. "*And in a vision, he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight.*" (13) *Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem.*

(14) And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name." So, here we see in verses 13 and 14 that the ravages by Saul against the Christians in Jerusalem had reached Damascus.

***Note: Saints is a word used to reference "believers."*

(15) But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. (16) For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake." Up until the time of Saul's enlightening conversation with Jesus, he had persecuted the Christians. Now, we see that Jesus makes a prophetic statement as the tables will be turned in the future, and Saul, whose name will change to Paul, will suffer for Jesus' sake.

(17) And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Ananias obeyed the instructions of the Lord and went to the house of Judas. Ananias lays his hands on Saul, as he calls him, "Brother Saul." Because he references Saul as a brother, Saul has repented and now is a born-again Christian.

(18) Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized. (19) So, when he had received food, he was strengthened. Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.
A flakey like substance fell from Saul's eyes, and he immediately received his sight; then, following, he was baptized. After he was baptized, he ate, and his body received strength. Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.

Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." God has a desire for us, and with His plans, they involve serving and disciplining for Him. Although God never intends for evil, for this is the work of the enemy; however, He knows what it will take for us to have a change of heart and a great result in the end. With Saul, it was a bright **Light encounter resulting in temporary blindness. However, the moral of this lesson is that we cannot be so far from God that He can't reach, change, and use us for His glory. It doesn't matter what we have done in the past or what we are doing in this present moment—even*

persecuting the Christians and His son Jesus Christ. Salvation is as close as our next conversation with Jesus.

*The fingerprint of God is mirrored in His shining **“Light,”** and He is saying, **“Magnify Me because “I AM CLOSER THAN WHAT I APPEAR.” I Am only one bright light away.”***

The Fingerprint of God: Series 3—Part 7

The Looking Glass:

My Testimony—



2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the LORD."

Today, I am not going to hand out papers, because I'm going to give my personal testimony. However, I am going to give my testimony a title—the same title from the second lesson of this series as it plays a significant role in my healing process concerning being raped: ***The Looking Glass***.

My Testimony:

I want to start from the beginning, so I instantly go back to the time when I was having some physical problems, which made it difficult to be with Clark intimately. I went to a gynecologist to see why I was having so much pain. During our conversation, he offered other ways I could be intimate. I informed him that I just didn't feel comfortable doing these things. He became curious and asked why I couldn't be with him in this fashion. It soon became apparent that I had been raped, and he suggested that I seek professional help. I was given a prescription and sent on my way. As I was driving home with my mom, I began to tell her what had been discussed in the doctor's office. She called Clark and informed him that I had a difficult visit and should be patient with me.

The following Sunday, God had been speaking to Scott, one of our deacons, during his prayer time before our morning church service. Soon after, Scott walked into the church, looked at Clark, and said, "*This is Tamara's day.*" Through Satan's attempt to destroy my marriage with Clark, God saw the opportunity for

me to seek help. What Satan means for evil; God uses for good. Seek help is precisely what I did.

We had an amazing service that morning. During our praise and worship, the Holy Spirit of God moved into the church unlike He had never done before. As I stood with my hands raised, worshipping and praising God, the Holy Spirit began to move upon me. I felt Him urge me to go to the altar to pray for my health and the many emotions that had now manifested from the visit with the doctor. Before I knew it, I was lying before the Lord under the power of the Holy Spirit. I will never forget what happened to me that day. God began to work on me as if I were in some surgical procedure. It was just the Great Physician, Jehovah Rapha, and me in that place at that moment. I was not conscious of my surroundings or the praying people around me giving spiritual support. As I lay there, I began to choke and vomit. Nothing actually came out of my mouth, but God allowed me to see in the spiritual realm, a thick, black venom on the floor. God spoke to my heart and began to tell me that the poisonous venom was all the demonic deception that Satan had oppressed in my mind and life over the years. Then, God began to speak again, instructing me to breathe in and out, over and over again. While I was breathing, my body began to burn within me. The more I breathed, the hotter I got. It was like fire consumed my body from the top of my neck to the bottom of my feet. I had laid on the floor that Sunday until two-thirty p.m. as God performed healing in my body. I never had the same physical problems again, and that was the beginning of my healing process.

(Note: we just learned about the power of breathing in and out and it was fully demonstrated in me, that day.)

As just mentioned, I never had the same physical problems again, and God also did work through the process of vomiting a black, poison venom concerning the rape itself. However, through the years, due to the lack of knowledge I had concerning the Word of God, I had left an open door for the enemy to reenter and continue to oppress my mind, where he had left off years earlier. Satan began deceiving my thoughts, allowing me to think that the rape was my fault and that I had consented to it. Due to the guilt and past experience, I did not want to talk to anyone about it because I thought they would vilify my way of thinking and agree that I had not actually been raped or that his actions were my fault. It's alarming how Satan can twist our thinking, and though it makes no sense, in reality, he can

make it sound so reasonable: On the one hand, I knew I had been raped. I was there and experienced the entirety of the devastating actions. Then, on the other hand, I felt guilt for which led up to his actions—getting in the car in the first place.

One day, I finally got tired of feeling such an overwhelming sense of guilt. I bought myself a black composition notebook and began to write down everything I remembered about the rape, the abuser, and the details afterward. It was the hardest thing, I believe, I had ever done. It took me several weeks to complete, but I felt as though a heavyweight had lifted from my mind when I was finished. This was the second part of my healing process. My written expression allowed me to release some of the many emotions and issues that came with guilt. Even though I did not vocalize what had happened to me, God saw and heard my cries as I wrote all my fears onto paper. And as the scripture says, *“He was my refuge and strength in the time of my trouble.”*

Satan does not give up, for he is persistent in his manipulations. For a survivor of abuse, I believe guilt is one of the major players in Satan’s deceit; therefore, building a mighty fortress of strongholds in a person’s mind. Years passed, and although I had written my fears and emotions down on paper years earlier, guilt stilled played the most decisive role in Satan’s deception. At this time, I had enough courage that I thought I could talk with someone. I had a friend, Becky, in whom I could turn. Although it was somewhat challenging, I opened up and told her of my guilt. I will never forget the words she said to me, *“It’s not your fault; you did what you had to do under the circumstances. You could not have escaped, and you made the best of the situation the only way you knew how.”* Hearing those words was all it took. It was at that moment, sitting in my office at church, that I was finally free from Satan’s made-up guilt trip. After many years of deception, all that was needed was the courage to speak out and someone to listen by not casting judgment while understanding what I had gone through. Finally, the doorway to guilt was once and for all closed. Sadly, I had allowed deception to turn into strongholds, and the defenses held up the fortress of walls that blocked the knowledge; therefore, depriving me of God’s will for my life. If I had only known at that time what I discovered years later, I would have been freed from guilt a lot sooner.

I was NOW free of guilt, and thought I was completely healed at this time in my life. However, I forgot two important things: *forgiveness and love*. I began to see my abuser in public places. I had not seen him in fifteen years so that you can imagine the emotions Satan began to torment me with. One evening, I was sitting in a church service, and I saw him sitting in the front row. The Holy Spirit began to speak to my heart, allowing me to know that Satan had blinded him through deception, and he was in complete denial of the rape, as referring to it to be consensual. Satan was working on both ends—my end and his as deception is lies believed.

As I sat on my seat watching him sing and raise his hands to worship and glorify God, I began to feel angry. After some time, my anger only increased so, I decided to walk down to the altar and pray. I knew in my heart that there was no place in God's house for my attitude and that the emotions of my anger were only going to hinder the move and work of the Holy Spirit. As I prayed, Holy Spirit began to inform me that even though the enemy deceives him, my abuser had been forgiven of the sin of rape because he had given his heart and life over to Jesus since I had last seen him.

As I prayed for what seemed to be a long time, the load of anger began to lift. However, it wasn't until Clark and I was driving home that I was looking in the side view mirror of our truck, thinking about what God had spoken into my heart, that I was indeed able to forgive.

As I was looking at my **reflection** in the mirror, I said these words, "*Lord, help me love him the way You love him. Help me forgive the way You have forgiven and help me see him through Your eyes.*" When I prayed those humbling words with a pure heart of intentions, there were no time laps; deliverance instantly came. As we drove home, I thought I was looking in the **looking glass** of the side view mirror, but I was actually glancing in the **looking glass** of the Word of God.

It took eighteen years before God could completely heal and deliver me, bringing me to the place in my life where He intended for me to be—the place of surrender. Surrender is a powerful position that reflects the **looking glass** of God. Surrender showcases the love and forgiveness that Jesus displayed for us as He hung on the Cross with arms stretched out wide. And surrender is what I did when I spoke the words, "*Lord, help me love him the way You love him. Help me*

forgive the way You have forgiven and help me see him through Your eyes.” I didn’t realize it at the time, but those words were the clear **image** of Jesus’s fingerprint, and Jesus’ print was engraved and manifested in my life as I looked in the **looking glass** of His Word.

I had been healed in many areas of my life over the years concerning the rape, and the devastation left from it, but now I was free from all the remaining bondages and strongholds Satan had me bound to. I can now say that I have Christian love for my abuser; I can associate with him and freely talk about him and not cast judgment. For I have found and received complete deliverance through the fingerprint of Love—Jesus Christ.

I have never had another encounter with him since that evening at church, and I don’t know if he is still living for Jesus or if he is still being deceived. More than likely, he will never apologize for his actions, but I can honestly say, *“that’s okay.”* You see, my forgiveness comes from the relationship between God and me. And because of my relationship with Jesus, I was willing to set him free from bondage as Jesus has set me free from mine.

God has always proven faithful in my life, and I can never repay Him for the debt I owe, but I will always love and serve Him in all my ways. Through my experience, God has called me to teach, and to teach this class is a great honor and a bigger responsibility. I desire to help and encourage you, never making you feel less than who you are—*an overcomer through the blood of the Lamb and the by the word of your testimony*. I have never told the entirety of my testimony in this class, but I pray that hearing my testimony will encourage you to encounter the “Word” and share yours.

The fingerprint of God is in the character of His humility, love, forgiveness, and surrender, and GOD IS CLOSER THAN HE APPEARS—He is only one *looking-glass* away.

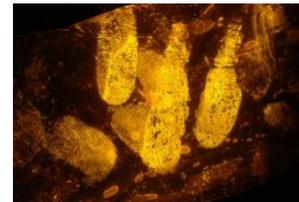
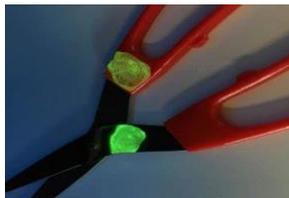
The Fingerprint of God: Series 3—Part 8 I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR—GOD



2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the LORD."

Today's lesson "introduces" the conclusion of our three-part lesson series on **THE FINGERPRINT OF GOD**. I want to end it the way it all began, and that is by analyzing the biblical fingerprints. This series has been many months long, so as a reminder of the three types of prints, I want to review them and their definitions.

Three Types of Fingerprints:



1. Patent prints are visible prints that occur when a foreign substance on a finger's skin comes in contact with another object's smooth surface. These prints leave a distinct ridge impression visible with the naked eye without technological enhancement of any kind. The tried and true "blood on his hands" evidence is an example of patent prints recovered from a crime scene or scene of interest to investigators. These foreign substances contain dust particles that adhere to the fingers' ridges and are easily identifiable when left on an object. An example would be leaving a marking on a window with sweat, blood, paint, ink, dirt, or mud on the hands.

2. Plastic prints are visible, impressed prints that occur when a finger touches a soft, malleable surface resulting in an indentation or mold. Some surfaces containing this type of fingerprint are freshly painted or coated or those that include wax, gum, blood, or any other substance that will soften when handheld and then retain the finger ridge impressions. These prints require no enhancement to be viewed because they are impressed onto an object and are easily observable. An example would be getting paint all over our hands then washing them with hand soap. The color left behind our print indentions on the bar. Or the spitting out of chewed gum and squeezing it between fingers.

3. Latent prints are fingerprint impressions secreted on a surface or an object and are usually invisible to the naked eye. These prints result from perspiration, which is derived from sweat pores found in the ridges of fingers. When fingers touch other body parts, moisture, oil, and grease adhere to the ridges so that when the fingers touch an object, such as a lamp or window, a film of these substances may be transferred to that object. The impression left on the object leaves a distinct outline of that finger's ridges; however, these fingerprints must be enhanced or sprinkled with powder to be visible.

A shorter description is that the prints can't be seen; they are invisible to the eye, take extra processing, and may need to be swept with a brush and powder.

When I prepare for a lesson, I gather all the information that I can find that corresponds with the lesson's title description. An example would be when learning about the three types of fingerprints; I researched the public information website of the police and FBI to help me explain the points that I wanted to reference. In other words, you can say that I got *creative* (remember this word).

By analyzing biblical fingerprints, we have to look into the *mirror*—the *looking-glass* of the Word of God. When I look for detailed biblical truths, I explore and research all the analytics (data, charts, maps, commentary, I listen to teaching and preaching on the topic, and search for other sources of information made available) that I can find. Then, I process what I believe to be false or true evidence (this comes through the Holy Spirit and prayer). Outside of the Spirit and prayer, the most helpful resource that I can utilize comes from the *Strong's Concordance*. So, what exactly is the *Strong's Concordance*?

Strong's Concordance: The purpose of Strong's Concordance is not to provide content or commentary about the Bible but to provide an index to the Bible. This allows the reader to find words where they appear in the Bible. This index allows a student of the Bible to re-find a phrase or passage previously studied. It also lets the reader directly compare how the same word may be used elsewhere in the Bible.

This introduction is not intended for you to memorize a lot of *Greek* and *Hebrew* words and definitions (because I don't remember them all). However, it is to show how one can effectively study the Word of God, and for those who have never used the *Strong's Concordance* to introduce to you a new and better way to engage in the Word. For those interested, you can purchase the book (**Note to me: show them mine**), find it on the computer website, and/or download the app on your smartphone or iPad (**Note to me: demonstrate the app's function**). I mainly use three out of the four: computer, my phone, and iPad app because it is faster and easier to navigate.

So, I am going to take a specific word from our upcoming conclusion lesson, copy and paste that word from the *Strong's Concordance* and demonstrate how I get the *Greek* and *Hebrew* translation, definition, and word origin (to be explained). Therefore, showing how I receive all the *Concordance* material—the biblical fingerprint for my lessons.

****Example: James 1:22, “But be ye doers of the word, and not hears only; deceiving your own selves.”**

I wanted to know what the *Greek* for “doers” is. Several things show up when I typed in the *Greek* word for “doers” in my computer search bar. However, I chose the following website and clicked on it.

<https://biblehub.com/greek/4163.htm>

[Strong's Greek: 4163. ποιητής \(poiétés\) -- a maker, a doer](#)

INT: but the **doers** of the law will be justified. James 1:22 N-NMP GRK: Γίνεσθε δὲ ποιηταὶ λόγου καὶ NAS: But prove yourselves **doers** of **the word**, KJV: But be ye **doers** of **the word**, and INT: be you moreover **doers** of [the] **word** and. James 1:23 N-NMS GRK: καὶ οὐ ποιητῆς οὗτος ἔοικεν NAS: of the ...

After clicking on, “*Strong's Greek: 4163*,” the page opens up. The following information page has been copied and pasted from the *Strong's Greek* webpage.

***Note to me: Explain that the yellow highlighted areas are not highlighted on the Strong's website; however, they are the areas we will discuss.

◀ 4163. ποιέτης ▶

Strong's Concordance

ποιέτης: a maker, a doer

Original Word: ποιητής, οὔ, ὁ

Part of Speech: Noun, Masculine

Transliteration: poiétés

Phonetic Spelling: (poy-ay-tace')

Definition: a maker, a doer

Usage: (a) a maker, poet, (b) a doer, carrier out, performer.

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

from [ποιέω](#)

Definition

a maker, a doer

NASB Translation

doer (3), doers (2), poets (1).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 4163: ποιητής

ποιητής, ποιητου, ὁ (ποιέω);

1. a maker, producer, author (Xenophon, Plato, others).

2. a doer, performer (Vulg.factor): τοῦ νόμου, one who obeys or fulfils the law, [Romans 2:13](#); [James 4:11](#); 1 Macc. 2:67 (see ποιέω, II. a.); ἔργου, [James 1:25](#); λόγου, [James 1:22, 23](#).

3. a poet: [Acts 17:28](#) ((Herodotus 2, 53, etc.), Aristophanes, Xenophon, Plato, Plutarch, others).

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

poet, doer

From [ποιέω](#); a performer; specially, a "poet"; --doer, poet.

The Fingerprint of God: Series 3—Part 9

I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR—GOD



2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the LORD."

Our lesson topic today comes from the book of James. James is the half-brother of Jesus (*Galatians 1:19*), and his nickname was “*The Just*,” because of his great righteousness. James did not recognize Jesus as “*The Christ*” until after Jesus’ resurrection. James does not call himself an apostle (although he was, but not named with the twelve), but a “*servant*” of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. James’ ministry was centered in Jerusalem and he writing a letter to the twelve tribes which are “*scattered abroad*” throughout the region of the Gentile nation. James’ concern is that the lives of those who claim Jesus as Savior honor Him. James begins with a standard *Greek* salutation, “*greetings*.” He speaks concerning many issues, but our focus is on the topic taken from *James 1:21-25*.

James 1:21-25, (21) “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. (22) But be ye **doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. (23) For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass (mirror). (24) For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. (25) But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”*

***The word “doer” in the Greek is defined as, one who acts out or performs what he or she is told, as in a skit, performance, or a theater. It also comes from the*

word “*poieó*” (*poy-eh'-o*) and it means to creatively do something. It is where we get the word “poet.” A poet is one who has a unique and creative side of expressions. So, to put this word into context, we could say that James was saying (beginning from verse 21), “Put away your filthiness, grow, and shoot up in the in the word; this will save your soul. Don’t wait, but act out creatively to perform (do) what God commands you to do.”

James urges to be “doers” of the word and “not hearers only.” A hearer only listens and never intends to *act* (or implement) upon what they have heard. A good example would be: a person who attends a drama course to become an actor or actress. They listen to the instructor’s demonstrations of the proper acting skills; however, when it’s time for them to act out the scene of what they heard, they do not perform. Another example that we may be more familiar with is one who follows their favorite “preacher” or “teacher” around the country (a groupie) listening to all his sermons, but leaves the church service and does not implement what they have heard. By “*hearing only*,” the person looks into a **reflection**, but by “*not doing*,” he walks away and soon forgets what he saw in the **mirror**. So, we see that James says *that we are to act and do whatever it takes to obey what we hear, even if it means we have to get creative with the **looking-glass** (Word).*

Just as God reminds us that there are two sides of a mirror, if we analyze the fingerprints of this scripture a little further, we can see that James tells the twelve tribes (and us) there are two types or sides of Christians. Firstly, one who is a “doer” of the Word of God by *acting out* whatever they can do creatively to perform it, and secondly, one who hears, stays silent and does nothing.

*Let’s look at verse 22 again: (22) “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, **deceiving** your own selves.” James continues to say that anyone merely hearing the word and having no plans to put it into practice is “deceiving” themselves. The term “deceiving” in Greek is *paralogism* (*par-al-og-id'-zom-ahēe*). It means to reckon wrong; miscount; to deceive by false reasoning. In other words, to make a miscalculation.*

So, what James is saying is, “If you think you are going to be a great Christian just because you “hear” the Word, you have made a dangerous miscalculation—your analysis (*an-al'-oo-sis*) is wrong. Yes, it is imperative (a must) that you hear the Word of the Lord, yet that is not enough. You must find a way to put it into

practice creatively. It is in the “doing” of the Word that springs forth from the root and begins to operate in you and save your soul.”

*James continued in verse 23, saying, (23) For if any be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man **beholding** his natural face in a **glass** (mirror).*

***The word “beholding” in Greek is the word “katanoeo” (kat-an-o-eh'-o) (my translation: ka-tan-o-e-yo) which means to perceive, remark, observe, understand; to consider attentively, fix one's eyes or mind upon; contemplated.*

***Glass in Greek is the word “esatron” (es'-op-tron). In term, it is a metallic {hand} mirror (not made of glass). Ancient mirrors (merely made of polished metal) only produced an indistinct image (reflection). So, to get an accurate picture (reflection), the viewer had to look from several different angles (“standpoints”). This means that the glass hand-held mirror could only be used to look at a tiny area at a time.*

I want to mention something I said in the first lesson of this series as a reminder: “Although God sees all things, great and small, the flip side of the **mirror** magnifies our **image** of imperfections that we normally can't see. Therefore, bringing to the surface all the **character's** impurities. In the process of magnifying, the king of Tyrus and Lucifer became prideful as they were looking through the **mirror** of the vanity. However, for the Christian, it is in the make-up of the magnifying that we can grow spiritually. To develop, we must first look in the **looking glass** and see where our **character** needs to change and advance in our spiritual looks. Likewise, when we magnify God through worship, God will reveal the bright and radiant **Light** of His Glory—just as He did through the angelic being, Lucifer.”

As God's Word is our hand-mirror to show us our imperfections, the Holy Spirit is like unto the ancient mirrors. The Holy Spirit does not reveal to us all our imperfections and **character** flaws at one time. Instead, He shows us one small surface, then moves the mirror over and shows us another, and He continues the process until we have *acted upon (doers and not hearers only)* His Word. When we *act* according to God's prompting, the **highlighted blessings** of God's Glory always follow.

Now, let's look at verse 24: (24) *For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway **forgetteth** what manner of man he was.* After viewing oneself in the mirror and seeing what needs to change, he “...**forgetteth** what manner of man he was.” *Forgetteth in the Greek is epilanthanomai (ep-ee-lan-than'-om-ahee) (my translation: ep-ee-lan-thon-o-my). The definition of the term is I forget, neglect. The Strong's Concordance word studies contain: properly, to overlook, especially the effects that go with failing to notice.* Sadly, many Christians today are following this same pattern. God speaks and shows them the areas in their spiritual make-up that needs to be applied, but they *overlook* and do nothing about it—they sit looking at their natural face.

Those who are “*hearers only*” of the Word **view** the application as complex (lazy, conflict of interest, complicated, not easy to analyze or understand.). Seeing what needs to be applied to their **character**, they begin to dilute the Word; therefore, deceiving themselves as their appearance doesn't look half-bad or that God will accept them just the way they are. Furthermore, this can be in contrast to having no comprehension of the significance of the liquid foundation—the Holy Spirit. This way of thinking can be classified as vanity—too proud to “*act*” and *do* nothing about it—a proud person never admits wrong and does not change his way of thinking. As a reminder, I want to emphasize this is an abomination to God. However, James tells us that we must be “*doers*” of the Word and not “*hearers only*.” It is the creative “*act*” that sprouts up from the roots and matures Christianity.

The phrase “*looketh into*” is a translation of the Greek word “*parakupto*,” which is a compound of the word's “*para*” and “*kupto*.” We can find these words in the “*word origin*” of the *Strong's Concordance*. “*Para*” means “*alongside*,” and “*kupto*” means “*to stoop or lower one's self*.” When these two words are put together, the word “*parakupto*” is formed. It means “*to stoop lower to take a closer look or to investigate deeply*.” The definition is a picture of *one peering deeply into a mirror to take a close-up **view** of what the **looking-glass** is showing—magnifying.*

A person who has a sober (clear vision) of concern about their spiritual looks will *stoop lower to take a closer look, glaring, continually, into the **reflection** of the **looking-glass** until they understand how to make the necessary modifications.* Then, “*acting*” to change what the Holy Spirit magnifies. *This is the definition of*

what **“Continueth therein”** (*parameno*) means; to remain next to, to remain alongside of, or persevere.

The Christian who is a “*doer*” of the Word keeps glaring into the **looking-glass** of “*the perfect law of liberty.*” By “*continually preserving and looking,*” we are “*acting*” upon what the Holy Spirit magnifies. Therefore, by magnifying God, He will **reflect** His truths **reflection** of **Light** and set us free from the strongholds of sins slavery.

In that same verse (25), James went on to say that the Christian who is a “*doer*” of the Word” shall be blessed in his deed.” *Makarios* (*mak-ar'-ee-os*) is the Greek word for blessed. It means to be in a position of receiving God’s favor or His grace (benefits); become large—supremely blessed.

This concludes the breakdown of *James 1:21-25*.



However, there are two more sides of the mirror that needs to be seen: A “*doer*” of the Word is a description of one who “*acts.*” However, a “*doer*” is not the only actor. In *Matthew 23:14*, Jesus addresses the Scribes and Pharisees and says, “*Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore, ye shall receive the greater damnation.*” Seventeen times, “*hypocrites*” appear in the Gospels (*Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*) and three times in the *Sermon on the Mount*.

History tells us that the city of Sepphoris, which was about three miles from Nazareth, was where Jesus’ grandparents lived (Joachim Mary’s father, and Anna her mother—*The Lost Books of the Bible*). Sepphoris was the provincial capital of

Galilee and the city where the villagers took care of their official business. Sepphoris had a theater that seated about 3,000 spectators. Each actor who took the stage was called a “hypocrite” *Hypokrités* (*hoop-ok-ree-tace*). The Greek describes a stage player and a person who wears a mask (a person with two faces). In those days, actors wore masks to pretend they were someone else. The actors could be compared to modern-day Broadway. The position they took was not who they really were; they were pretenders playing a part with the stage name of a great “hypocrite.”

For this reason, is why in *Matthew 23:14*, Jesus called the Sadducees and Pharisees “hypocrites.” They were like actors playing the part of godly men when in reality, they were ungodly men putting on a good *theatrical performance*. They knew all the right lines to rehearse and say, but the attitude of their hearts was not in line with God’s script—Torah.

James 4:23, “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. The hour has come, and Jesus is calling all Christians to *glare* in the **looking-glass** of His Word and examine our face. Are today’s worshipping Christians acting because we are “doers” of the Word, or are we “acting” because we are what Jesus calls a *hypocrite*—one who has two faces?

Some people may say that my teaching style is *theatrical* and there is no need for detailed lesson scripts, demonstrations with prompts, or using the *Hebrew* and *Greek* word translations, but my teaching style is what James describes. A “doer” will “*creatively act*” out to “*perform*” and do whatever it takes to relay the Word of God. *The theater* is memorable; therefore, making a production scene (or, in my case, a lesson) harder to forget. I want my teaching to **reflect** the Holy Spirit’s *creativity* so that we will never forget the storylines taught. Also, I want my life to **reflect** *2 Timothy 2:15*, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” I am grateful that God has placed a desire in me to perform His *creative* Word. By doing so, I have been blessed beyond measure—just as His Word promises.

The remaining and final side of the mirror that needs to be seen; the is that the “Word” never *acts* (*performs*) alone. The “Word has to” must be combined with the “*faith*” of the Christian.

***Faith in the Hebrew is Pistis (pis'-tis). It describes one who is solidly persuaded and conveys the idea of one that is faithful, reliable, loyal, and steadfast. It pictures one who is trustworthy, dependable, confident, and unchanging. The root of "pistis" (pis'-tis) is peitho (pi'-tho). It means to persuade, be persuaded, to have confidence, which supplies the core meaning of faith (divine persuasion). It is God's warranty that guarantees the fulfilment of the revelation He births within the receptive believer (1 John 5:4 with Hebrews 11:1). The Lord persuades the yielded believer to be confident in His preferred- will (Galatians 5:10; 2 Timothy 1:12). It involves obedience, but it is properly the result of (God's) persuasion.*

James 2:17-20, (17) "Even so Faith, if it has not works, is dead, being alone. (18) Yes, a man say, You have Faith, and I have works. (19) You believe there is one God, you do well: the devils also believe and tremble. (20) But you will know, O vain man, that Faith without works is dead?" James is saying, "there has to be "actions" put on the Word or it is not a "performing" work, rather it is a mouth full of empty words (a corps/no life/void). A "real" faith has an illustration of actions to back it up or it is a "fake" faith—a two-face mask (hypocrite)—profiting nothing but a theatrical play. Therefore, a play not pleasing unto God.

James 2:17-20, (17) "Even so Faith, if it has not works, is dead, being alone. (18) Yes, a man say, You have Faith, and I have works. (19) You believe there is one God, you do well: the devils also believe and tremble. (20) But you will know, O vain man, that Faith without works is dead?" James is saying, "there has to be "actions" put on the "Word" or it is not a "performing" work, rather it is a mouth full of empty words (a dead corps/no life/void). A "genuine" faith has an illustration of actions to back it up, or it is a "counterfeit" faith—a two-face mask (hypocrite)—profiting nothing but a theatrical play. Therefore, a play not worthy of the red carpet and a description not pleasing unto God.

Matthew warns, "beware of wolves in sheep's clothing." False Prophets were his focus; however, we know that Satan is the primary wolf who is "disguised" and "masquerades," seeking to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10). Sheep's clothing is his two-face mask, and James knew this fact. So, James is quite blunt in his words, but and some probably thought harsh; however, he is trying to relay the truth behind the **looking-glass**.—putting their (our) faith in the **light** of the center stage. . Many times, Christians (including me) don't like to look beyond the natural face. They like what they see and enjoy what they are doing. However, the purpose of this vision, "**I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR,**" is that God wants us to look into the

looking-glass of His Word and magnify Him. Through our humble worship, He will bring our **character's** impurities to the mirror's surface. God's clear vision for us is that we all take on His **character's** mind and duplicate it, therefore, through our breastplate, bringing Him glory as we shine His **character** jewels—His Holy Spirit—the fruit of the Spirit.

The Fingerprint of God is defined in the looking-glass of His Word, and God is saying, "stoop lower, and take a closer view because "I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR." I AM only one glaring act, away."

The Fingerprint of God: Series 3—Part 10 "I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR"—GOD



2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the LORD."

This is our final lesson on **"I AM CLOSER THAN I APPEAR."** I have given my testimony, along with discussing a variety of **characters**, to shine a **light** on the **imagery** of God and how to display His **reflection** in our own life. **Looking back** and **turning from the right and left** are not an option; we have to stay **focused** on the path that God has laid in front of us. Our enemy, the adversary, is out to steal, kill, and destroy our God-given *vision*, as he is raging war against us daily. So, to stay focused, we will have to put on our **night goggles** and fight in one-on-one combat.

The Night Goggles:

***From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia: A night-vision device (NVD), also known as night optical/observation device (NOD) and night-vision goggles (NVG), is an optoelectronic device that allows images to be produced in levels of light approaching total darkness. The image produced is typically monochrome green because it was considered the easiest color to look at for prolonged periods in the dark. Night goggles are a device that allows one to see his enemy in the darkness of night. Therefore, bringing the enemy into focus developing a clear **image** for execution.*

The first night vision device was created in the 1930s by AEG, a German electrical equipment producer. It was the first-night vision equipment developed and used in Germany during World War II.

During the same period, the US Military brought their own night vision tool named 'sniper scope' with infrared night sighting devices. The purpose for this information is to show that the **night goggles** were invented for battle and war purposes. (For more information go to *AGM Global Vision website*).

Again, the purpose of the **night vision goggles** is to bring the enemy into *view* for a clear shot for execution. As God has spoken this word and brought this lesson to my attention, I will unveil the hidden message within the scripture concerning such glasses (*a latent print*). So, let's look at *Ephesians 6* and bring the scripture into a clearer **image**.

Let's read the full passage then break it down:

**Ephesians 6:10-18, (10) "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. (11) Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. (12) For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. (13) Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

Verse 10: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

In the book of Ephesians, Paul introduces and speaks about several topics and then proceeds to say, "**Finally**." The word "*Finally*" is translated in Greek as "*from now on,*" "*beyond that,*" "*henceforth, for the future,*" and "*Finally, to the last and most important matter at hand.*" "*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might*" (*Ephesians 6:10*).

Greek Word Meanings:

****Brethren** (*adelphos*) (*ad-el-fos'*): *a fellow believer in the faith—brothers in battle.*

****Strong** (*ischuros*) (*is-khoo-ros'*): *strong (originally and generally of physical strength); derived from isxys, "engaging, combative strength"; strong; mighty is one who is empowered with supernatural strength.*

****Power** (*dunamis*) (*doo'-nam-is*): one with miraculous power, might, and strength—depicts the forces of an entire invading army, forces, or host—power that can be visibly seen, such as on the Day of Pentecost, energizing force.

****Might** (*ischus*) (*is-khoos'*): is defined as strength (absolutely), power, might, force, ability—domination.

****Notice the wording:** “...in the power of His might.” Power and might are not the same; they are two different God abilities. When we combine God’s strength, power, and might to our fight, we are an unshakable and unstoppable energizing force. Therefore, winning our battle and becoming victorious over Satan’s wrath.

Paul doesn’t ask the Ephesians if they want to “*be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might;*” he commands. Therefore, he tells the Ephesians to “*put on*” and be clothed in them. However, we must realize that supernatural strength, power/energy, and *might* can only be obtained from the Lord—there is no other way.

Paul not only says to “*put on*” God’s strength, power, and *might* but also (11), “*Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*”

Greek Word Meanings:

****put on** (*enduo*) (*en-doo'-o*): to clothe or be clothed with (in the sense of sinking into a garment).

****whole armour** (*panoplia*): a complete set of defensive and offensive armor (weapons), everything needed to wage successful warfare; (figuratively) the full resources the Lord gives to the believer so they can successfully wage spiritual warfare. In this way, they do not fight for victory – but from His victory!

****able** (*dunamai*) (*doo'-nam-ahee*): to be able, to have power; I am powerful, have (the) power; I am able, I can.

****to stand** (*stékó*): to stand, stand firm; I stand fast, stand firm, persevere. To stand firmly, with confidence, knowing who we are in Christ Jesus, and knowing we have already won the battle.

****against** (pros): properly, motion towards to "interface with" (literally, moving toward a goal or destination). Notice the words "interface with." This literally means that we will come face-to-face with Satan in an active exchange during opposition/conflict. When we stand to "interface with" Satan, this means our eyes are eyeball to eyeball, and our shoulders are shoulder to shoulder.

****wiles of the devil** (methodeia): craft, deceit (a way of search after something, an inquiry; a method), scheming, craftiness, deceit, tricks. Notice the words: this tells us that Satan has a crafty, deceitful method (approach/strategies) to scheme—he has a well-thought-out plan!

****the devil** (diabolos) (dee-ab'-ol-os): slanderous, accusing falsely; (diabolos) in secular Greek means "backbiter," an accuser, calumniator (slanderer). (diábolos) is literally someone who "casts through," making charges that bring down (destroy); The devil is more of a place of position rather than a name.

The devil's goal is to steal, kill, and destroy (*John 10:10*), and his attacks and blows are constant and never-ending. He hopes we will get so tired and worn down that we will throw down our weapons, throw up our hands, and surrender. However, if we are aware of the devil, his devices, and how to fight against him, we will be able to keep standing firm in our stance and continue warring until we win victoriously.

Paul tells the Ephesians, (12) *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

Satan has a rank and order of demonic opposition. Notice the order in which the words are placed in the scripture: *principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, spiritual wickedness*. So, let's review who they are and what their role is:

#1 Principalities (arché) (ar-khay'): rule (kingly or magisterial); has the priority because ahead of the rest ("preeminent"); those who have held the highest seats of powers since the beginning/starting point.

#2 Powers (exousia) (ex-oo-see'-ah): roaming spirits with authority, control, conferred power; delegated empowerment ("authorization").

#3 Rulers of darkness (*kosmokratór*) (*kos-mok-fat'-ore*): ruler of this world, that is, of the world as asserting its independence of God; used of the angelic or demonic powers controlling the sublunary world. Properly, world-ruler, referring to Satan (demons) influencing the lives of worldly people (used only in Ephesians 6:12). It is a disciplined demonic power, a term used to describe military-trained and dispatched forces sent to attack.

#4 Spiritual wickedness (*croneros*): pictures something causing detrimental harm and evil, intending to trap with treacherous and violent activity.

We can see that Satan is *committed*, *organized*, and *disciplined* with these definitions in mind. Along with the four types of demonic spirits, this is what we are up against. However, God has equipped us with the military armor needed to protect and defeat. Verse 11, “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” And 1 John 4:4 says, “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

The word “**able**” in Greek is (*dunamai*) (*doo'-nam-ahee*). It means to be able, to have power; I am powerful, have (the) power; I am able, I can.

When we have “put on” and equipped ourselves in the armor, we will be “able” to stand firm, unshaken, and unstoppable with the power of God against all the principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, and spiritual wickedness in high places.

(13) Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

****evil day:** The “evil day” is not set for a particular time, but rather “every day” that the devil attacks with his evil planed-out schemes.

Verse 14, “Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; (15) And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; (16) Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. (17) And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:”

****full armor** (*panoplia*) (*pan-op-lee'-ah*): full armor; complete armor, panoply—
The complete arms and armor of a warrior. The “full armor” pictures a (Roman)
soldier fully clothed from head to toe, dressed for battle.

Paul tells the Ephesians to be fully clothed in the armor of God. The armor list is of seven pieces:

#1 Truth: The first piece of armor Paul mentioned is the “*loin belt of truth*,” which represents God’s Word. Out of all the Roman soldiers’ armor pieces, the *loin belt* was the least attractive; however, it was the most essential. Firstly, it protected the loin area of the soldier’s body. Secondly, the *loin belt* held all the other pieces in place. The soldier would not be able to fight affectively if the armor pieces were not fastened secure and tightly. Thirdly, the *shield* rested on a clip on one side of the *loin belt*, and on the other side was another clip in which the soldier held his *sword* when it wasn’t in use. Furthermore, on the backside of the *loin belt* was a pouch that contained a “*lance*.” A “**lance**” is a pole weapon designed to be used by a mounted warrior or cavalry soldier (*lancer*). Lances were often equipped with a *vamplate* – a small circular plate to prevent the hand from sliding up the shaft upon impact. The lance was used to attack his enemy from a distance by throwing it. (Wikipedia)

Just as the *loin belt* is the most crucial and most effective, so is the *Word of God*. The *Word of God* holds all other pieces secured tightly and in place, and without it, we are standing in front of our enemy, half-dressed or even naked.

#2 The Breastplate of Righteousness: Out of all the armor pieces, the *breastplate* was the heaviest piece of equipment that the Roman soldier owned. It covered the soldier's front and back and was referred to as a “*coat of mail*.”

Due to the breastplate covering the vital organs, it was considered a defensive armor piece. However, it is never taught that it was also could be considered as an offensive weapon because it shined radiance. As the Roman soldiers would march side-by-side on a bright and sunny day, the sun would *reflect* off the shined and polished *breastplate* by glisten, it created a blinding glare in the eyes of their enemy.

With the Roman soldier’s *breastplate* in mind, my thoughts take me back to the *breastplate* of Lucifer and how he shined God’s radiant Glory. Likewise, with our

breastplate of righteousness, we, in like manner, shine the glaring **light** of God's Son. It is within the glare of the **looking-glass** that our enemy, the devil, is blinded and defeated.

#3 Shoes of Peace:

The third piece of armor that Paul instructs to “*put on*” is the *shoes of peace*. The shoes were a vital part of the equipment as they served multiple purposes. Firstly, the shoes had long leather straps wrapped around the legs to keep them tightly secured on their foot, preventing slipping or falling off. On the leathered bottoms were spikes called *hobnails*. *The hobnails served two purposes: to keep the soldiers standing firm and steady on the battlefield, preventing them from falling when the enemy attacked. And secondly, the hobnails served as a deadly weapon as the sharp nails would trample over the fallen enemy.*

In like manner, we are to strap the *shoes of our peace* on tightly, dig our feet in the ground, stand firmly, and when the enemy tries to knock us down, we refuse to be shaken or moved.

The *shoes of peace* are our pathway to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ, and as we walk, Satan will try every scheming plan to derail, divert, and throw us off our course. His goal is to make the road rough and rocky preventing us to accomplish the purpose that Jesus has called to do. However, God has a piece of equipment for that purpose. It is not spoken of when talking about the armor; however, it is considered part of the footwear. This piece is called a “*greave*.” *It is a piece of brass or bronze that wraps around the soldier's lower leg. Beginning at the top of the knee, it extended down past the calf of the leg and rested on top of the foot. Its purpose is to protect the tibia from attack. The tibia, or shinbone, is very close to the skin and is highly vulnerable to just about any kind of attack.*

Furthermore, a successful attack on the shin results in that leg being rendered useless, significantly hampering one's ability to maneuver in any way. Greaves were used to counteracting this. Greaves usually consisted of a metal exterior with inner padding of felt. The felt padding was essential because any blow would transfer directly from the metal plating to the shin without it. (Wikipedia)

Furthermore, because the curved pieces of metal covered the lower legs of the soldier and touched the top of the shoe, the Roman soldier's shoes looked like

boots made of brass or bronze. The greaves protected the soldier's legs as he marched through rough, rocky, and thorny terrain.

Real peace (*Shalom*) comes from God, and He provides us with the necessary calm, but it is our choice whether we put on the combat boot, tighten up our straps, and keep marching in His peace.

#4 The Shield of Faith:

Furthermore, before the Roman soldiers "*put on*" their *shield*, they would oil and water it down before going out on the battlefield. The purpose of the water was to prevent damage to the heart from the blow of the enemy's fiery darts.

Faith will extinguish all the fiery darts our enemy aims to target us.

*(18) Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and **watching** thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;"*