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If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, or aren't sure and would like to become one, then you need to believe that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God, that he was God who became a man, that he lived a sinless and perfect life, keeping the Law of God perfect in every way, that he kept faith perfectly, and that he was crucified on that cruel cross for your sins, mine and the entire world- he died for our sins! His death on the cross paid the penalty fully, one time for all sins that we have ever committed and that we will ever commit. He died; he went down into the bowels of the earth, even into Hell, and was raised from the dead on the third day in a resurrected, eternal body. He ascended back into heaven, was seated at the right hand of God, and is now Lord over heaven and earth. He is coming again to judge the world, to raise the dead, where he will give an eternal, resurrected, glorified body to everyone that has believed on him as their Lord and Savior, and to establish his kingdom one earth.

You come become a Christian right now as you read this, by personally placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; believing that he is God's only begotten Son, that he died on the cross for you and that he was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. *"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.."* Acts 16:31a And when you do trust Christ, and Christ alone, as your Lord and Savior, then go to God the Father in heaven in prayer and tell him so. Tell him that you have believed on his Son, thank him for his Son, and thank him for forgiving your sins and saving you! *"That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord", and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."* Romans 10:9,10 *"For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."* Romans 10:13 *"Therefore, being justified by faith (declared righteous), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* Romans 5:1

# Understanding The Nephesh

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## Understanding The Nephesh

A. Wicked people are destructive to our souls (*nephesh*), hence they are to be avoided, or be delivered from them. Psalm 17:13

1. They oppress our souls. Psalm 17:9

“From the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies, who compass me about.” Psalm 17:9 -  
מִפְּנֵי רְשָׁעִים, זוּ שִׁדְוֹנָי; אִיבֵי בְּנֶפֶשׁ, יִקִּיפוּ עָלַי.

The first thing we notice is that it is the **wicked**, *rasha*, or the ungodly, who oppress our souls. There are two categories of ungodly; all unbelievers, and those believers who are negative to Bible Doctrine. So, if they are not believers in Christ sitting under the sound teaching of the Word of God, then the Bible classifies them as being wicked.

Some people have the wrong idea about what it means to be ungodly. They equate it solely with being a moral reprobate, which it can be, and other heinous crimes, which it is also. But it is more comprehensive than just those ideas.

Suffice it to say, that the ungodly, in the case of believers in Christ, are those believers who are negative to the teaching of the Word of God, they are not under the true filling of the true Holy Spirit, and are not metabolizing Bible doctrine by faith, which constitutes the spiritual life dynamic. The result of which means that the sin nature resident in the flesh is now affecting their souls causing them to deteriorate thus destroying them. (The destruction of the soul is not the loss or death of the soul, but the loss of its well being). Internally their soul's condition goes from bad to worse in an ever downward spiral to the place that the believer becomes incapable of doctrinal rationale, even rational thought! And, if not corrected, can end up in various forms of mental illness.

That defines what is going on inside of them, but the wicked know no rest, **so in the deteriorated condition of their soul they act out their wickedness and seek to bring others down to their level!** The ungodly seek, whether they are consciously aware of what they are doing or not, to bring other people's souls down to the level of their sick souls. And, at the same time in their deluded pride, can think that they're helping other people out!

The ungodly seek to branch out to impact those around them in society with their mental evil, and depending upon their old sin nature traits, you will find them actively at work in government, economics, religion and other areas. And always in their homes and circle of family and friends.

When a person casts truth aside, then the only thing that will be circulating in their stream of consciousness will be their own flawed rationalism, human viewpoint and Satanic viewpoint. So when they give out advice or opinion, it will be the viewpoint of other people, their own viewpoint, (affected by their mental illness), or the viewpoint of Satan. Obviously the believer is not to listen to them.

If a Christian does listen to their advice, he is doomed to failure, for they are not getting the mind of God on a matter, but the mind of one who is mentally dysfunctional, and more than likely the mind of Satan. You can be sure that whatever advice they have for you will be in direct opposition to what God's will is for your life is and you will not be blessed by God.

Some of the characteristics of the ungodly are, other than rejecting Bible doctrine, their souls are in a state of confusion, agitation and turmoil, and not being satisfied with that in themselves they seek to cause agitation in others. They not only reject the teaching of God's Word, they reject true spiritual authority over them. They are proud, arrogant and usually braggarts. They have much resentment and anger in their souls and seek to tear down the doctrinal believer, who only wants to go on with Lord and his Word. They are willful and stubborn and very much into money and material things. They have no peace or stability in their souls and **the effect of their existence on other people's lives** and society in general, in time, brings about the same disturbed, unsettled, angry, agitated condition of soul that they have. You will find the materialistic types flocking the malls to shop, or there will be those who go after the money, or there will be the party types with booze, drugs, etc., there will be the criminal types, and the crusaders or social reformers, the self-righteous legalists. You will find them in schools, in their homes, in government, in business, in the bars, in every area of society working the evil of their souls out on the unsuspecting and the ignorant.

Remember, that what constitutes the idea of being **ungodly** or **wicked** is not whether they are a believer in Christ or not, but one who has no doctrinal content in their soul, which results in the soul being in a state of constant unrest or agitation as the sin nature continually works on it, and these types are always going about seeking to cause unrest in the lives and souls of others.

They have tremendous **pride**, "*The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.*" Psalm 10:2 They are **braggarts**, "*For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth.*" Psalm 10:3 They are **agitators**, "*There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest.*" Job 3:17 They have tremendous internal **anger** and **plot** against believers who walk with the Lord, "*The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.*" Psalm 37:12

They often have a degree of **prosperity** in the community, and because they are lifted up with **pride** they think they're an expert on everything and are quick to give out **advice**. They feel it is their place to go around and advise other Christians on how to live their Christian lives and on what they can do to prosper to be like them! And because the humble, doctrinal believer is often down at the end of the economic scale he or she will start to listen to them. After all, they say, they must be doing something right because "look how God is prospering them!" These types put themselves above Bible doctrine and above the spiritual authority that God has established where every believer in Christ is to be under the authority and teaching of a Pastor-Teacher. They know all the right words to say, but their hearts are in rebellion against God and his Word.

It was these types that were oppressing David causing his *nepshesh* so much problem. The word for *oppress* is *shadad* and was used by the prophets in a military application to denote the destructiveness of armies, but in the Psalms it refers more to individuals and the damage they cause, not only to our lives and families, but to our souls.

And when we look at the definition of the wicked, the agitation and destruction going on in their souls, their mental illnesses and how they are driven to destroy the lives and souls of those around them, we see more of what David is talking about. David's soul was being adversely impacted by wicked people around him. Now the first rule of order for all believers is to note those type of people, regardless of their relationship to you, and avoid them! And if one can't avoid them, or has failed to avoid them, and sometimes that happens, then one is going to have to call out to God for him to deliver you from them.



### C. The *nephesh* can choose, it can hope and it can exercise faith.

"To the chief Musician, *Altaschith*, *Michtam of David*, when he fled from Saul in the cave. Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast." Psalm 57:1

David says that his *nephesh* trusts, *chasah*, in God. Properly, ***chasah*** means to flee to take refuge. It has the idea that one is under some threat of danger, and he flees to something as a shelter or refuge for protection. The young run back to their mother; the badger to his hole; the animal to a cleft in a rock. One can flee to something in nature for protection, a hole in the ground, a cave, a high rock, a cleft in the rock, into the water, out of the water, into the air, etc.. One can flee to people; to one's friends, one's family, to society as a whole, or to a fort that people have built. One can flee to man made institutions: the government, government programs, community programs, the military, etc.. **It has the idea of fleeing from danger to something that you think will give you safety and protection.** The faith comes in where the individual believes that thing will protect him, or that person. And trust comes in where you are trusting in, relying upon that thing or person to protect you. So it is a metaphor for faith.

So *chasah* has the following ideas in it: 1) one is in a situation that poses a threat, (real or imagined), to the believer; 2) the believer is afraid; 3) he knows that *Yahweh* will protect him; 4) he flees from the situation to *Yahweh* for protection. *Yahweh* is his refuge. A variety of metaphors are borrowed from nature to express this action; but it means to run, to flee, to go to *Yahweh* for protection when threatened, or in danger. The threat or danger is not to be limited to physical threat only, but includes all threats. Whether threats to one's soul, one's body, one's finances, one's health, one's church, one's family, one's nation, to one's business or job, or to one's emotions. Any threat, regardless of the category, is sufficient cause to run to God for protection. **So here we have not the idea of hoping or waiting, but motion! Where the believer is motivated to run to God for protection and safety.** So we see that the *nephesh* can get discouraged and depressed, it can exercise faith and it can hope.

### D. The *nephesh* can be vexed.

"My soul is also sore vexed, בָּהֵל : but thou, O LORD, how long?" Psalm 6:3

*Sore vexed* is the niphal preterite of *bahal*. *Bahal* has the ideas of being afraid, terrified, agitated, to tremble inwardly, to be dismayed, to be troubled, to move in haste, to be excited. Its core idea is one of agitation, that is why the Septuagint uses the word *tarasso* to translate it.

From our studies on the dynamic we see that *tarasso*, translated as *troubled* in the KJV, refers to the inward agitation of the soul as it reacts to external pressure. Agitation of the soul can be best explained by a pool of water stirred up by the wind, versus one that is calm. **Peace** would be where the water is calm, while **agitation** comes about as the result of the wind stirring the water up.

A peaceful soul (*nephesh*) is where the soul is all calm. An agitated soul is where the soul is all stirred up, that is, the soul is in turmoil by a nondescript agitation. In modern terminology the word for agitation would be stress. So pressure on the outside, if not handled by faith in the Word of God on the inside, will result in stress in the soul. Stress in the soul is tantamount in its effect to sin in the soul. And if not handled by the spiritual dynamic, will result in sin in the soul. David's *nephesh* is experiencing tremendous stress, or agitation, over what's going on in his life. But once again, the solution for David and all of us is to recover, in our case, the filling of the Holy Spirit and the faith rest life dynamic. **So the *nephesh* can experience stress!**

## E. The nephesh can be delivered.

*"Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake."* Psalm 6:4

As we see from this, the *nephesh* can be in a bad place, spiritually speaking, but it also can be delivered out of it. Without coming to any conclusions we need to see all the things going on in the *nephesh*, so we can have some idea of what it's like.

The word for **deliver** is the piel imperative of *chalats*. It meant to escape from, to draw out, to take away from, to be rescued from. In the piel stem it relates the idea of the intensity of the situation as it affects David's soul. David's *nephesh* is in a state of high anxiety and stress and so he is asking the Lord to get him out of it. The Septuagint translates it as *rhuomai*.

How the believer in Christ is delivered from stress in the soul today is through confession of sin, claiming the promises and doctrines of God through the faith rest drill and the filling of the Holy Spirit. Stress in the *nephesh* exists because of the absence of the spiritual life dynamic.

## F. The nephesh is vulnerable and can be damaged.

*"Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver."* Psalm 7:2

This passage brings out a couple of interesting thoughts. One, in that the soul can be damaged. And two, no one on earth can do anything for it. It is only God who can do anything for our souls and today it is by living in the spiritual life dynamic.

The only thing that protects the soul and its vulnerability, the only thing that will prevent the soul from being damaged and the only thing that will heal the soul from any damage incurred in life is by living in the filling of the Holy Spirit and occupation with Christ through his Word.

## G. The nephesh can be persecuted.

*"Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust. Selah."* Psalm 7:5

For whatever the reason, it seems that there are those who hate our souls. Now maybe it's because they hate their own souls! Or, perhaps they are possessed or influenced by demons and they hate the souls of Christians. Or, they just hate your soul in particular. But for whatever the reason the believer in Christ will run into these types and they will be bound and determined to give you a hard time.

In the Church Age it is very clear why persecution of Christians and the hatred of their souls exist and that's because these people hate Christ! *"And ye **shall be hated** of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."* Matthew 10:22 *"If the world hate you, (and it does), ye know that it hated me before it hated you."* John 15:18

But once again, the thing that protects our *nepheshes* is the protection of the spiritual life dynamic. The peace we receive from the filling of the Holy Spirit and the claiming of promises by faith not only shields our souls from the pressure of life, thus preventing stress in the soul, but it also shields us from the negative energy of those who hate our souls!

## H. The nephesh leaves the body at death.

*“For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”*  
Psalm 16:10

Although there are many passages in the OT and NT about the *nephesh* leaving the body at physical death, some even put poetically as in Ecclesiastes 12:6, *“Or ever the **silver cord be loosed**, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.”*, this passage deals particularly with the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

What this, and other passages, tell us is that at physical death the *nephesh* left the body and went down into *Hades*, or in the Hebrew *Sheol*. There in *Sheol* the *nepheshes* of men went into two different places depending upon whether they were saved, (righteous), or unsaved, (unrighteous). The saved went down to the place called Paradise, or Comforts, while the unsaved went down to a place called Torments.

But it is very clear that **the *nephesh* exists past physical death and is relocated to a different place.** Where it will then await the day of resurrection from the dead and stand before Jesus Christ to be judged. The only one ever to leave Hades behind was the Lord, Jesus Christ. This as per the promise that the Eternal Father would not leave his soul, his *nephesh*, behind in *Hades*.

The Apostle Peter spoke of this in Acts 2:31, *“He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.”* And also in 1 Peter 3:19, *“By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;”*

There are many references to Christ being raised from the dead, *εγειρας αυτον εκ νεκρων*, *egeiras auton **ek nekron***. *“Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,”* Ephesians 1:20 And what was raised from the dead? His *nephesh* that had journeyed down into Hades!

*Raised from the dead* is *egeiras auton **ek nekron*** and found in the genitive plural of *nekros*, it says, out from the “deads”, or *out from the dead ones*, or *raised up out from among those who are dead* with the idea that the rest of the dead ones are still down there in *Hades*. Now when it says dead ones it doesn't mean that they are dead, but that they have experienced physical death, for their souls are still consciously existing only in a different place.

Christ's *nephesh* journeyed down into *Hades* when he experienced physical death. But three days and three nights later God raised his *nephesh*, his soul, out from among those who are dead, he received a resurrection body and ascended into heaven. But the rest of the dead ones were left behind in *Hades* awaiting the day of the general resurrection, raising up, from the dead. Peter went on to say that even the soul of David was not raised up, neither did he ascend into heaven. *“Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.”* Acts 2:29 *“For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,”* Acts 2:24

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; **he descended into hell (*Hades*)**; the third day **he rose again from the dead**; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

## I. The nephesh can be converted.

*“The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.” Psalm 18:7*

The soul, the *nephesh*, can think, it can choose, it can believe, it is presently trapped in this body in the sense of not being able to move about on its own accord, but that changes after physical death. After physical death the soul can think, it can talk, it can communicate with others, it has mobility to a degree, it can recall things, it has memory, it is able to perceive its bad decisions, it can have regret, as in the case of the unsaved, it is able to experience, pain or pleasure, it can recall its former life when it lived in the land of the living.

And here we see by the use of the Hebrew *shub*, translated into the Greek as *epistrepho*, that the *nephesh* is able to be converted or turned around. *Shub* meant to turn, to turn to, to turn to someone, to return to a place, to return to someone, to turn again to someone. *Epistrepho* has the same ideas of turning to someone, or to return to someone.

We have seen that between the OT and the NT *epistrepho* was developed by the Greek philosophers and poets to denote the idea of turning to the brightest star in the sky. From there they developed it into the idea of the turning the soul to the brightest star in the sky, which then was developed into the idea of the turning of the soul to God, or back to God if one had wandered away from him.

So we have the idea that the *nephesh* of the believer had turned away from occupying itself with God through his Word and got caught up in the things of the world, and/or the things of the flesh nature. So what is needed is for his *nephesh* to turn back to God! And this is done by the believer occupying himself with the *torah* of God once again. And *torah* is not to be restricted to just the Law, but is a reference to Bible Doctrine, or doctrinal teaching.

## J. We cannot keep our nepheshes alive.

*“All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and **none can keep alive his own soul**.” Psalm 22:29*

Man can do things that will enhance his physical body, and he can do things that destroy his body. He can even do things that will end the physical life of his body. But man is unable to kill his soul, nor is he able to cause his soul to live. Only God is able to destroy the soul, as well as the body. *“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul (*nephesh*) and body in hell.” Matthew 10:28*

But there is an option for man by which his soul can avoid destruction and that is by believing on Christ as his Savior. *“Receiving the end of your faith, (faith in Christ as our Savior), even the salvation of your souls.” 1 Peter 1:9*

But tragically, to their own destruction, most people that live on earth spend their time in the accumulation of money and material goods. Their goal is to become successful and then get to the place where they have an abundance of temporal goods. But all during this time they have neglected their souls! And when the end of their physical life comes, their souls go down to Hades.

As God said to the rich man, who foolishly pursued after the wrong things and life, and who foolishly assumed that the life he had was going to go on forever, said that tonight his soul would be required! *“But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy **soul** (*nephesh*) shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?” Luke 12:29* How many young people have foolishly pursued after the things of youth not knowing their lives would soon be over? How many older people have pursued after the ease of retirement, only to have it short-lived?

## K. The nephesh can be restored.

*“He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.” Psalm 23:3*

Here we have the word *shub* again, which is translated as to convert or to turn back. Actually it has many ideas found within it: to turn back, to bring back, to deliver, to recover, to refresh, to rescue, to restore. And we want to note is that it is God who does this in his grace for David. David simply is the recipient and beneficiary of his grace.

It deals with the idea of either the believer in reversionism, or what some call backsliding, or the believer not living in the spiritual life dynamic having been caught up in the world system, or living in the flesh nature and they are restored by having their human spirits renewed. God renews our spirits and restores us back to fellowship with him once again.

## L. The nephesh can dwell at ease.

*“His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.” Psalm 25:13*

We want to note that the soul of the believer living in ease is as the result of the application of the things mentioned before this verse: *“Shew me thy ways, teach me thy paths, Lead me in thy truth, teach me, The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.”*

*Lun*, or *lin*, is translated as to dwell, to tarry, to continue, but it actually meant to spend the night. It speaks of spending the night somewhere and presupposes that there is a place where one spends the night. One could spend the night in a house, in a lodging-place, in the open, in a cave, in the forest and many other places.

In the literal sense, *lin* begins in the evening and ends in the morning. A *malon* was the place where travelers could rest, wash their feet, eat and drink and where their animals could be fed. While *meluna* was also a place where one could spend the night, but it would be out in the open where one would throw up branches to make a temporary shelter.

The ideas found in *lin* are: spending the night somewhere denoting a temporary situation, a presupposing of a place where one spends the night, and the fact that one is traveling and on a journey. The concept of spending the night on one's journey was not only about resting the body, but **being at rest!** That is, one not only wanted to be comfortable, but secure.

So we take that concept over to the soul in the passage and it tells us that the soul, the *nephesh*, is on a journey through this life as we go from death to eternal life, as we go from this place of existence here on earth, to the place where we will finally be with God in his heavenly kingdom. The place where the soul spends its temporary night's lodging is in the body.

*Dwelling at ease* is the word *tob*, which speaks of good, or prosperity. So what it's talking about is the soul spending its temporary existence here on earth in these mortal bodies in a state of prosperity. As one would seek a place to spend the night on his journey back then, a place where one could rest, refresh themselves and get a comfortable and secure night's lodging, so also does God want our souls to spend our time here in peace and a sense of security as well as prosperity.

And we will, if we stay with Bible doctrine the rest of our lives on our journey through life! Peace and prosperity of the soul, the *nephesh*, comes from the intake of the Word of God and its application to our life experience. If we do, then our souls will be prospered. But if we don't, then our souls won't! That's what this passage is talking about for the believer in Christ. Even one of the words for faith in the Hebrew, *batach*, talks about the sense of security and peace of the soul, which prospers the soul, and it is there for us as we metabolize the promises of God by faith. Christ journeys with us and he goes before us and he wants us to spend our time here on earth in peace.

## M. The nephesh can wait on the Lord.

*“Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield.” Psalm 33:20*

The piel preterite of *chakah* brings out the intensity of the action of waiting on the Lord. It's another word for faith, but because the believer has to keep on exercising faith during the length of time of the trial that the idea of faith becomes one of waiting.

***Chakah*** is another word for *waiting*, like *qavah*, and it, too, in the Greek is translated by *hupomone*, *endurance*. It has the idea of waiting, hoping for God to come through to help the believer, with also the idea of confidence. And is found usually in the intensive stem. But there is a difference. **If we had to make a distinction it would speak of waiting for a specific period of time, not awaiting some desired goal. Not unless there is a specific reference to a goal. The emphasis would be more on the concept of waiting.** The idea would be more like this, “I know the Lord's gonna deliver us, but it's going to be awhile.” Here, the believer's not getting his hopes up that deliverance, or whatever it is that he's looking for from the Lord, is going to happen at any moment, but that it's going to take some time. **So, he gears himself up to wait.**

This was a problem that Job had. He knew that God was going to turn it all around for him; he had this as his goal in mind. But when it didn't happen at some point in time, he got discouraged. With Job he should have been more focused on the concept of waiting on the Lord each day, and less on the results he wanted. It's natural that one would want relief from the pain; but when it doesn't come, the believer has no other alternative, but to occupy himself with the Lord through his Word and wait!

Some believers can get so focused on getting out of their predicament, that that's all they see. They're totally focused on the goal of getting back to where they were, or want to be, whatever that is. The problem is, that when relief doesn't come each day, they get discouraged, despondent, even angry at God, because he didn't come through for them. Instead, what they should be doing is **concentrating on the concept of waiting**, making that their focus; **trusting that God, some day, will turn it around for them**. And instead of waiting for the results, the healing, etc., they learn to utilize the time of waiting as an opportunity to know God and learn his precious Word. **Waiting, in faith, has become their new status quo in life**. It's become a participle for them, a practice of their life. In *chakah*, there **are three main emphases: trusting, waiting, and being mentally geared to wait.**

Isaiah 30: 18 is a verse designed to encourage the souls of those believers who are waiting on God, “*Yet Yahweh longs to be gracious to you; he rises to show you compassion. For Yahweh is a God of Justice. Blessed are all who wait upon him.*” This is a reference to those who wait upon *Yahweh*, who actually practice waiting on him as a pattern or principle in their life. This speaks of a class or group of people who know, who are cognitively aware, that they are waiting on *Yahweh*.

Many times we will find ourselves in situations where we don't know what to do. It is during these times that the nephesh is to turn to God for guidance and counsel, but also to be patient as we wait for him to show us what to do. “*But they soon forgot what he had done and did not wait for his counsel.*” Psalm 106:3 The intensive idea of waiting is also used here, because as so often is the case in waiting on the Lord we are in a pressure situation, or one that causes us a lot of pain; and we want relief now and not have to wait. So the waiting becomes harder. Remember, that *chakah* means to trust, to wait, with an emphasis on being **mentally geared to wait**. The nephesh can be very impatient when going through trials because it is so vulnerable to being hurt. It wants things resolved now and it wants the problem to go away now. But one of the most valuable lessons it will learn in life is to be patient and to occupy itself with the Lord.

## N. The nephesh can be redeemed.

*“The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.”* Psalm 34:22

Here we have the qal participle of padah. *Padah* meant to redeem by paying a price, to release, to set free. Also to deliver a life from danger or something that would do harm to it. Here we have the soul of the servants of God being delivered from harmful influences.

In the participial form this tells us that *Yahweh*, as a constant in our lives, is always redeeming the *nepheshes* of his people. It begins with our salvation, where Jesus Christ paid the price to set our souls free from Satan's rule over us. And, then, after we are saved, God is constantly setting us free from people and things that would do harm to our souls. Many times “friendships” and marriages dissolve and the believer is left wondering what went wrong and how much they miss the other person. But unknownst to them, that relationship was harming their souls. And because God loves their souls, he removes that which is harming them thus setting their souls free.

## O. The nephesh can experience joy.

*“And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation.”* Psalm 35:9

The word for **joyful** is *giyl*. It spoke of joy, radiant joy, outward expressions of joy, joy expressed audibly, joy expressed in spontaneous, enthusiastic cries. It can stand alone without any direct reference to the cause or object of joy, or the cause can be mentioned in the passage. Essentially it meant joy over an act of God.

The word for **rejoice** is *siys*. It has the idea of joy that is brought about by a saving act of God, or something good happening to the individual, such as, the joy of a bridegroom. It is the joy that one has finding communion with God after seeking him, or those who find gold after seeking it, or those who after long suffering in a trial come through the other side.

Here we have in the word *giyl* for **joyful** telling us that David is joyful in the sphere of *Yahweh*, that is, *Yahweh* is the basis for his joy here on earth. And with the word *siys* used for **rejoice** it tells us that there is a cause for David's rejoicing. David is being persecuted by the enemy and *Yahweh* comes to his aid and delivers him. The word **salvation** here refers to being delivered from a destructive situation.

## P. The nephesh can be humbled.

*“But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.”* Psalm 35:13

The *piel stem* of *anah* is used here to denote the intensity of the act in **humbling**. It was often used in the degrading of the underprivileged, loss of status, and of being put to forced labor. It was there in that lowered status one's pride began to leave and was replaced with a humility.

Here we have David humbling his soul, which gets into the areas of personal pride versus submission to authority. The Septuagint uses *tapeinoo* to translate *anah*, which deals with the concept of humbling oneself under the authority of God. **When we have a problem with pride the only cure is to constantly remind ourselves that we are under the authority of God and therefore we are to be under his Word and applying it to our lives.**

Q. The nephesh can be healed.

*“I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.” Psalm 41:4*

It begins with David asking *Yahweh* to heal his *nephesh* and he asks him to be merciful to him. Now under the law of, whatsoever a man sows that he shall reap, the misery his soul is experiencing is due him because of his sin. But under the concept of **mercy**, God not only forgives the sin, but will rectify the damage we have done to our souls by our sins!

To **heal**, *rapha*, was to sew together, to mend, to heal a wounded person by sewing up the wound, to repair, to restore, to cure, to use medicine. Its fundamental meaning was to restore or make whole. Martin Luther jokingly called physicians the Lord’s cobblers. The idea of healing dealt with maladies that needed to be healed and defective conditions that needed to be made whole. In reference to a broken clay jar, it needed to be repaired, a fractured limb needed to be treated, a bodily injury healed.

Israel’s false prophets were likened to worthless physicians who only treated the symptoms of the problem, not the underlying cause saying, *“Peace, peace, when there is no peace.”* Jeremiah 6:14; 8:11

*Rapha* was **definitely holistic for it looked at the whole man and not just a physiological problem that had surfaced.** It went beyond the wound, injury, sickness, disease, defect, or weakness, to how the whole man was doing spiritually, emotionally as well as physically. It must be interjected here that physicians did not give health, they only set bones, sew up wounds and recommend herbs for healing. Physical health was and is our responsibility and so is spiritual health!

In sharp contrast to our compartmentalized canon of thinking approach to physicians and health the Bible’s approach, both OT and NT, was and is holistic! Our thought life, our emotions and our spiritual life are all just as much a part of health as is the food we eat, which should be regarded as medicine. Let food be our medicine and medicine our food. *“Their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.”* Ezekiel 47:12b. It is the metabolization and application of Bible Doctrine that brings health and healing to the whole body. Proverbs 4:20,22.

What is interesting is the connection of one’s physical well being to one’s spiritual and emotional life. The mistake that all too many make today is treating the body as if it were separate and removed from the inner life. The physician/healer would treat the body, but he would also probe past that to treat the soul. And he would use herbs and diet correction as well.

So *rapha* is used to describe God healing our souls. Now as to whether we look at sewing up that which is torn, to cure, or to bind up, is not the issue. One cannot see exactly what the soul is, let alone the damage that is done to the soul. But from our studies we see things such as a constricting of the energy channels in the nephesh or leading to the nephesh; porositis - a building up of material on the soul; and mataiotes – the mental illusions of the mind and heart we get as the result of that building up of foreign material.

In the physical world we use physicians, or alternate health professionals, to deal with our bodies many needs and problems. But in the world of the soul, there is only one physician who can treat and heal the soul and that is God! And the *nephesh* needs **spiritual truth**, it needs **prayer**, it needs to have the **negative influences of the world, flesh and devil kept away from it**, it needs **information pertaining to its problem** and it needs the **ministry of the filling of the Holy Spirit.**

## R. The nephesh desires God.

*“To the chief Musician, Maschil, for the sons of Korah. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?” Psalm 42:1,2*

David borrows an analogy from nature how God's creatures so desperately need water to live on to say that his soul needs God as his body needs water. Man can live without food for around thirty days, but he can only live without water for around three days. **But the nephesh needs God!**

The *nephesh* needs God and we do harm to it, when we keep it from God! Christ died to save our souls, God loves our souls, our souls belong to God, but when we keep them away from the only one in the universe who loves them, then we do harm to them.

The problem comes about when we become distracted by the things of this life, enamored by the things of the world, preoccupied with the lusts, pleasures and emotions of the flesh, or become caught up, or addicted to various things found in this world, in these flesh bodies, that we ignore the soul as we go about seeking to gratify one aspect of the flesh or another. The *nephesh* needs God and communion with him over his Word in the filling of the Holy Spirit is the only thing that will satisfy it.

## S. The nephesh can pour itself out.

*“When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.” Psalm 42:4*

The word **pour out**, *shaphak*, was used in the pouring out of blood in a sacrifice, in the act of taking vengeance out on someone else, to pour water out of a pitcher and similar ideas. It was also used in the believer “pouring his heart out to the Lord”, as we would say. It has the idea of a surrender of the ego and a total offering of their inner self unto God.

## T. God redeems the nephesh from Hades.

*“But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.” Psalm 49:15*

What we have here is a very powerful and doctrinal statement. David is saying that *Elohim* will redeem his *nephesh* from the power of *Sheol*. The word for **redeem** is the qal future of *padah*. The future sense tells us two things. One, that it is absolutely certain that God will redeem David's *nephesh*. And two, that it will be at some point in time in the future.

Now we notice what is in view here and that is David's soul and that his soul, after death, is in *Sheol*, or the Greek *Hades*. We also want to note that it is going to take something, a ransom payment of some kind, that will release his soul from *Hades*.

The Septuagint translation uses the verb *lutroo* for to **redeem**. Now there are two words for redeem, *exagorazo*, which is not the actual redemption, but the price paid with a view toward it. And *lutroo*, which looks at the actual redemption, or setting the person free. David knows that both the price will be paid to free his soul from *Sheol* and that one day his soul would be set free from it.

## U. The nephesh can be satisfied.

*“My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips.” Psalm 63:5*

To **satisfy** is the qal future of *saba*. Actually to satisfy in the strict and original sense is to provide that which is necessary to one's needs. It is the word that is normally used when hungry, where food is provided thus satisfying one's hunger. It is used in all sorts of ways, such as, to fill one's belly with food, which normally goes beyond that which is needed because people often stuff themselves.

When you think about it, the body has all sorts of needs due to its many functions. These needs are expressed in hunger pains, as we say. But what the body is saying is that I need **nutrition!** So the body is craving nutrition that it only gets from a proper diet suited to the individual. Now when the individual eats whatever the food it is that he needs, then the individual is satisfied.

Now the Word takes those common expressions to show a parallel concept going on in the soul. The soul needs certain spiritual phenomena to keep it running at the optimum state that it was designed for. When it has its needs sufficiently met, then it is satisfied. And this satisfaction of the *nephesh* is expressed in things such as praising God, as we have here.

And the only thing that will satisfy our souls is Bible Doctrine that we have metabolized by faith and the filling of the Holy Spirit. The soul was designed by God and made by God to have fellowship with God and nothing less will satisfy it, even though many try to seek satisfaction elsewhere. Some seek it in the opposite sex, drugs, alcohol, money, fame and success, only to find that their souls are empty. Man made religions, entertainment, emotions and all the rest will never satisfy our souls.

## V. The nephesh of the righteous follows after God.

*“My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.” Psalm 63:8*

To **follow** in the KJV is the qal preterite of *dabaq*. But *dabaq* has the idea of clinging to something or someone, as the Geneva Bible has it as to cleave. It was used for the soldering of scales on a breast plate, the scales of a crocodile joined together, the warrior's hand on his sword, etc.. It was used of the clinging of a husband and wife to each other, but not in the sexual sense, and the clinging of two friends to each other to denote a deep and strong friendship.

I guess they translated it as *to follow after* because of the use of the word *achar* after it, but still the idea of clinging to is still there in the word. The Amplified Bible translates it as, *“follows hard after You and clings closely to You,”* to bring out both ideas.

Theologically it is used of the believer's relationship and walk with God. I like the modern idiom of “to **stick**”, my soul sticks to you like glue, as we would say when describing our bond with those we love. David loved the Lord and knew that his soul needed him. Without God's Word and the filling of the Holy Spirit where would our souls be today?

David knew that only the Lord had what his soul needed. Something that many on earth have never understood. He knew that only through fellowshiping with the Lord over his Word would provide the spiritual phenomena that his *nephesh* needed for spiritual health. So his soul clung to the Lord everyday of his life. As David said, *“When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.” Psalm 27:8*

## W. The nephesh can become implacable.

*“In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted.” Psalm 77:2*

To **refuse** is the piel preterite of *ma'en*. *Ma'en* was used in a variety of ideas, but it speaks of a total obstinacy to do something, of absolute unwillingness, to dig in one's heels, to absolutely refuse to do something, of solidified negative volition.

To be **comforted** is the niphal infinitive of *nacham*, which had its idea back in its root meaning of to be content, calmed, pacified, therefore comforted.

Many of God's people have spent many hours of their lives trying to figure out what in the world is going on inside them. Their minds know what they want, the peace of God and fellowship with him. Their wills choose to have fellowship with God and enjoy his peace. But for some reason there is something inside them that refuses to do so.

It's like the *nephesh* has a mind of its own and sometimes refuses to be comforted by having sweet communion with God. The best analogy that I can think of is that it's acting like a little child that didn't get its way, therefore it refuses to be comforted. It is implacable.

And the verse that comes to mind is Psalm 131:2, *“Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul (nephesh) is even as a weaned child.”* The *nephesh* is acting like a child who is being weaned and is pitching a fit. One just has to “ride out the storm” and eventually it will come around.

Asaph went through this when he had become embittered over other people. He was totally out of it, until he went back to the Word and then he recovered. *“When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you.” Psalm 73:21,22*

## X. The nephesh can become full of trouble.

*“For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.” Psalm 88:3*

The word for **troubles** is *ra'a*. The Septuagint translates it as *kakos*. *Ra'a* is the antonym of good. There is that which is good and there is that which is bad. *Ra'a* encompasses all that is bad. Now people, then and now, were classified as being morally good or evil. But here we are looking at the soul. Now when we are considering the soul, we are looking at the **disposition** of the soul.

Ideas such as trembling, tumultuous, malicious, bitter, angry, jealous, proud, mean, etc., fall in here for it's describing a soul where it is overrun by negative emotions. When the believer in Christ is living in the spiritual life dynamic, then peace, love, joy and all the other spiritual virtues will be the dynamic operating in his soul. But when we get away from that, when we get our eyes off Christ and his Word and turn them toward the world, the things of the world and the people of the world, then we lose the spiritual life dynamic, the flesh takes over and soon the sinful elements of the flesh, the lusts, emotions, pleasures, and scar tissue of the soul, start flooding our souls until we become overcome in negativity and bitterness. Drawing near to the grave, actually drawing near to *Sheol*, or *Hades* in the Greek, is a figure of speech for death. One can get so negative in their souls that they can prefer death over life.

## Y. The nephesh can faint.

*“Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.” [Psalm 107:5](#)*

To **faint** is the hithpael future of *ataph*, which is both intensive and reflexive. In the hithpael stem it meant to feel faint, to languish, to be wrapped in darkness and was used for both the heart and the soul.

Now when considering the context, one could conclude that the soul became faint as the result of wandering in the desert with scarce provisions of food and water. And it is certainly true that the physical condition of the body does play some part on the health and attitude of the soul.

But we see a reversal of the situation come about, not as the result of finding food and water, but by seeking the Lord's face once again. *“Then **they cried unto the LORD** in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses.” [Psalm 107:6](#)* Where we see God satisfying the hungry soul. *“For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.” [Psalm 107:9](#)*

Some refer to this as a “blackout of the soul”, which would certainly fit the idea of *ataph*. When the believer keeps his *nephesh* away from the light of Bible doctrine in the soul, the soul does become dark and can get to the place of a blackout. *“The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.” [Psalm 119:130](#)* The only remedy for that is through confessing one's sins to God, then focusing his soul once again back on the faith rest dynamic and concentration on the Bible Doctrine.

## Z. The nephesh can experience rest.

*“Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.” [Psalm 116:7](#)*

The *nephesh* can experience God's rest and it can get away from it. But it also can get back to that place of rest once again. The idea is to stay in it!

*Mnoach* spoke of rest. As there is rest for the body, so is there rest for the soul. When we think of physical rest, such things as quietness, comfort, security, being refreshed, harshness and rigors kept away, no more demands being made on the body, all of which are needed for physical rest.

Rest for the body can be found in such places as the home, but not in all instances, for the home today in many families is not a place where family members come to for peace, quiet and rest, but a place of battle made up of people seeking to gratify their lusts. For the weary traveler on the highways a hotel or motel becomes a place of rest.

And one of the applications of Bible Doctrine is to create an environment of peace and tranquility in your home and wherever else you can. A place where noise, harshness and ugliness are kept away, where there is quiet and calmness surrounded by beauty and serenity. A place that is not only restful for the body, but also conducive to rest for the soul.

But what is being referred to here is not physical rest, but rest for the soul! And God has provided rest for our souls, but this rest, this place of quiet and calmness, **only** comes through the faith rest dynamic of believing the Word and promises of God. If we do, our souls will be at rest stable and peaceful. But if we don't, if we refuse to believe God and his Word, then our souls will suffer with stress, becoming controlled by the emotions and scar tissue garbage in the soul. *“So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.” [Hebrews 3:11](#)*

AA. The nephesh can be quieted.

*“Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, [my nephesh], as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul [nephesh] is even as a weaned child.” Psalm 131:2*

To **behave** is the piel preterite of shavah. *Shavah* meant to make equal, to level, to smooth, to even out. It was used of the farmer leveling and smoothing out his field. The piel stem looks at the intensity of this action of smoothing out the soul. “Smoothing out the soul” is removing all the things in our soul that impede the work of Christ. Such flesh concepts as: dealing with the flesh's emotions, its lusts and pleasures, scar tissue garbage in the soul, the rebellious will, pride, etc.. *Surely I have leveled, or smoothed out, my nephesh*.

To get some sort of idea we need to look at a **cultivated field** versus one in the **wild**. In the wild you have stumps, rocks, brambles, thorns, briars, uneven terrain, etc.. One can say 'that's nature' and nature is good. True, but it benefits not the farmer, nor does it serve any real constructive purpose as far as food is concerned.

Nature in its natural setting also refers a person's soul before they were saved and without any Christian growth. It also refers to the control of the natural elements of the flesh in our bodies versus new nature control and growth. Land in its wild setting, without the farmer, versus cultivated land by the farmer looks at our souls before Christ came into our lives versus afterward. Before Christ there was a wild unproductive land. After Christ and his Word came into our souls, all the debris, rocks, briars and thorns and junk has been removed and now there is a level, smooth, cultivated field with furrows that is beautiful and productive.

The word **quieted** is the poel preterite of damam. The basic meaning of *damam* is to close the mouth, to not speak, to be silent, to be still, to be quiet. It basically has the idea of being quiet, of refraining from speaking. Its usage in a passage determines its meaning, but it does have the idea of silence in it. It has the idea of a quiet expectation that a change of things is coming. It could be a calamity or judgment that is going to come, or deliverance by *Yahweh*.

The believer has been impressed either by *Yahweh* speaking to him in the Old Testament, or by having the full assurance of faith in his Word, that something is going to happen, that things are going to change. It does mean to believe, to trust, to wait on Yahweh, only now one does it in quietness, both of speech and heart. He is able to do so, because he now knows, he has been strongly impressed in his heart or spirit by faith that a change is coming; that something is going to happen; and he knows that God is the one who is going to be doing it.

It's a way of looking at faith from the perspective that **one is going to get through the trial that he is presently in**, because he believes that God is going to do something. You don't know **when** he is going to do it. You don't know **how** he is going to do it, but you are comforted by your faith that God is going to do something, and that things are going to change for the better. So you have *quieted* your soul.

Inside you are relaxed about the whole thing; your soul has quieted down; it's still, no more worrying and wondering, and "what ifs"; or, "what can I do about it"; or, "something's got to be done"; no more running around and telling everybody about your problem, (probably not interested anyway); and no more going back to God in prayer over it. Why? Because you have finally resolved the matter in your heart with faith and you know that God is going to handle the matter. You are now fully assured in your faith, that God is going to work it all out now, so you're quiet, calm, still and relaxed on the inside.

We go back to David again in Psalm 37, where he is talking about the problem that doctrinal believers have living in a society where wicked men and women are on the increase spreading their wickedness wherever they go. This presents two problems for the doctrinal believer. **One**, the activity of the wicked believer does have a profound and negative impact on the society, for it affects a nation, politically, religiously, economically and socially. And if not curbed, it will drag a nation down into destruction. Which, to some degree, affects believers as well for they live in it also.

**Secondly**, it affects the doctrinal believer's mental attitude. They get angry, often very angry, bitter; they fret, they stew and worry about things. And they too can get under the operation of their own old sin natures and go down hill too. Not to mention how both of these things affect their families. Often their children are caught up in the evil of the society and this certainly is distressing to their families.

Now David deals with their mental attitude problems by telling them to refrain from anger; **turn from wrath**; do not fret, etc.; so that they're not reacting emotionally and negatively out of their flesh natures to the wickedness going on in their society. And he also tells them not to worry about the whole situation, for *Yahweh* is going to handle it, "*Be still [damam] before Yahweh and wait patiently for him, do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.*" Psalm 37:7.

Here David uses the word *damam* concerning the mental attitude that the believer is to have in his faith toward God, as God handles the matter. In fact, he commands them to "*be still*", imperative mood of command, which tells us that the believer is to handle the matter by faith fully believing that God, somehow, is going to turn the whole evil thing around and judge the wicked in the land. He's going to handle the wicked, and he's going to take care of the doctrinal believer, **and so the believer is now able to be calm, relaxed and peaceful in his soul. This type, or characteristic of faith, calms the soul; it quiets the soul giving it the rest that it needs**, "*Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him.*" Psalm 62: 5. David knew that the rest that his soul needed could only come from God; so he commands his soul to find rest in God using the qal imperative of damam.

David also knew how hard it was to quiet the soul. Its inner turmoil, its wranglings; all the things that go on inside of us are very similar to the crying and trouble of a baby. Always wanting, always unsettled, pitching a fit when it doesn't get it's way, or get what it wants; especially the child being weaned from its mother's breast. The idea is to get the child to the place where it is content to just be with its mother, to be by her side, without it always wanting the mother to give it something, or be doing something for it. The *nepshesh* can be quieted, it is to be quieted and **the only thing that will quiet it is the faith rest exercise of trusting in the Lord and believing his promises!**

There are those believers who are always pitching a fuss about something; they're sick, they're unhappy, they're always making a noise or a commotion. They want you to pay attention to them, answer their questions, talk to them. They're not really content to just be with people, **they want to be made over like a little child**. Their behavior is indicative of the status of their souls. They clamor for attention; they want things done for them; they take from other people; it's all self-centered, without any quietness in their souls. **What they need to do is quiet the soul, so that it's content to just exist before God and to just exist with other people!** But, it's an intensive concept to get to that place. It is accomplished by faith in the Word of God occupied with Christ through his Word. And it speaks of waiting in faith on the Lord; something that a childish soul does not want to do. It wants things now! Just like the infant wants its bottle now! But David said, "*But I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with it's mother; like a weaned child is my soul within me.*" Psalm 131:2. In the original, we have an intensive passive concept describing the action. What all of this tells us is that, to quiet our souls, we must exercise faith in God's Word, while we are waiting on him!

BB. The nephesh can be strengthened.

*“In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.”*

Psalm 138:3

This theme of God strengthening his people in their *nepheshes* is found all the way through the Bible both the OT and NT. *“But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”* Isaiah 40:31 *“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”* Philippians 4:13

The strengthening of the soul comes only through the dynamic of the believer exercising faith in the Word of the Lord and his promises and in trusting him. In Isaiah 40:31 the word for **waiting** is *qavah* and it has the ideas of waiting, faith, endurance and expectation. It is usually translated as waiting for the Lord. But it also has the ideas of: **1)** that the believer is in a bad situation that causes him pain, fear, discomfort, threat, or some other such thing; **2)** he can't get out of it or resolve it in his own strength; **3)** he looks to God, or goes to God in prayer asking him to solve the problem or get him out of it; **4)** he now must wait upon the Lord to do it, which, obviously, introduces a time factor; **5)** while he is waiting, he must endure the unpleasant situation; **6)** in the meantime, he must learn and utilize all the grace provisions that God has supplied to him to sustain him while he is **waiting** on the Lord: faith in the promises, prayer, the Word, fellowship with God, with other believers, confessing his sins to God, going to Church, the filling of the Holy Spirit, etc.; and, **7)** expectation, which is the confidence that the believer has that God will answer his prayers, help him, deliver him, etc.. The seven points of *qavah*.

In Philippians 4:13, where Paul is talking about the Lord **strengthening** him, he uses the word *endunamoo* to tell us that Christ gives us power, *dunamis*, but that **this power is infused inside of us in the nephesh!** And that this power comes to us through the exercise of the faith rest dynamic and that this power in our souls gives us the strength to prevail over whatever it is that we are going through!

To **strengthen** is the hiphil future of *rahav*. *Rahav* has been hard to pin down in its exact meaning, so it takes on its definition more from the context of the passage. It has the ideas of to strengthen, to embolden, to encourage, and because of the idea of power in the word, to be courageous.

*“In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul”*, KJV.

*“When I called, you answered me; you greatly emboldened me.”*, NIV. The second word for **strength** is *oz* and it has the ideas of power, might, strength, firmness, and has also been translated as, *“When I called, you answered me; you made me bold and **stouthearted**.”*

What we have here is the idea that the Lord has so strongly encouraged him, and this would occur through the exercising of faith in the Lord, that he became revitalized in his life as the result of his *nephesh* being strongly encouraged and strengthened. And this is what Isaiah is talking about in Isaiah 40:31, where even the youths can become faint and weary and the young men fall. A description of believers so overwhelmed by their life or predicament to the place that they languish. What they need is to be so revitalized that they can go on in their journey in the Lord's plan for their life!

And this revitalization begins with turning to the Lord in **prayer**, as we have here. David turned to the Lord for help because he knew of his grace and truth and that the Lord would hear him, which he did, and strengthened him in his soul. *“I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness, (grace – chesed), and for thy truth, (emeth): for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.”* Psalm 138:2

## CC. Does anyone care for our nephesh?

*“I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.” Psalm 142:4*

To **care for** is the poel participle of *darash*. We have to see here what is going on in the context for that will set the definition for the word. We see David in trouble and he is pouring his heart out to the Lord. His spirit is faint in him, people have set a trap for him, noticeably there is **no one at his right hand**, which is to say, the right hand for men is one's friend who has your back, especially in a time of trouble. No one is concerned for him, he has no refuge and no one cares for his soul.

*Darash* is used for asking, seeking, paying attention to, but one does that because they care about whatever it is that they are asking about or seeking. So it was used figuratively to denote the idea of caring about something. And we see this come very clear in the passage by David describing his spiritual condition before the Lord, and especially combined with the idea that there was no one at his right hand. Which tells us that there was no one on earth that would stand by his side in his hour of need and no one that really cared about him.

Something that many believers are all too familiar with. Which should never be a cause for getting upset with people and their failings, for this is the nature of all humanity, even doctrinal believers. But to remind us that the Lord will always be by our side! **There is only one who truly knows our souls and truly loves our souls and that is Jesus Christ!**

## DD. God has a nephesh.

*“Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.” Isaiah 1:14*

Now some will try to say that this is just another way of referring to oneself. But we notice that God says that their feasts, etc., *are a trouble unto me*, and then the switch to the first person singular of *I am weary to bear them*. So there is a distinction between the I speaking and the *nephesh*.

In Genesis 1:26 we see that man was created in the image and likeness of God. *“And God said, Let us make man in our **image**, (tselem), after our **likeness**, (demuth): 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.”*

In this creation was the creation of the *nephesh* on the inside of man. In Genesis 2:7 we see that after the man's body was manufactured out of the chemical compounds of the earth, God then blew into his nostrils the breath of lives which gave life for two things, the breath of life for the body causing it to come alive physically and the breath of life for the *nephesh*. *“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”*

From the time Adam and Eve were first created, until the moment they sinned against God, their souls, their *nepheshes* were in union with God's *nephesh*. But when they sinned against him, their *nepheshes* were no longer united to his. Only in salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior, are our *nepheshes* once again reunited with the soul of the living, eternal God.

EE. The nephesh can become bitter.

*“Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul;” Job 3:20 “Therefore I will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.” Job 7:20*

Both verses have the word *marah* used for **bitterness**. Bitterness is the *nephesh's* negative reaction to something unwanted, unpleasant, or hurtful. It is a function of the mental attitude of pride and the very beginning of the five next stages of the anger complex. Bitterness is the soul's reaction to external stimuli and makes the connection to the old sin nature's control of the soul.

There will always be those things in life that we do not want to have in our lives and there will always be those things in life that we want to do, but do not get to do. These are the external stimuli in life. But just because they're there and just because we are exposed to them does not mean that we have to react to them. If we don't, then they go by like clouds in the sky. But if we do, then our reaction to them is what bridges the gap, like closing a switch on an electric circuit, and once the two points are bridged, then we have bitterness in the soul.

And once bitterness is in the soul, then anger and wrath follow closely behind. And so will arguments, screaming, cursing, name calling and the like, and if not curbed, will end up in an acting out in one form of physical violence or another. Or if repressed, then this bitterness or anger will fester away inside of us and can go on for many years, even our entire lives! Many believers have fallen short of God's grace plan for their lives because of a root of bitterness. *“Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;” Hebrews 12:15*

We can become bitter over things that have had recently, and we can become bitter over things that happened years ago in our childhood that we never got over. Plain and simple, bitterness is the reaction of the soul over not getting its way, or not getting to do what one wanted to do, over being hurt by someone, or just about anything in life that is at cross purposes with our wills.

Bitterness is like a splinter that one has in the flesh that stays there and festers. It swells, becomes sensitive and inflamed. Sometimes these things stay there for years causing a person problem and there is no relief until it finally comes out. So it is with bitterness. To have relief from it you have to go to the very beginning of the event where one reacted and deal with it according to the spiritual life dynamic that God has supplied.

Which, for the believer in Christ, is to identify the emotion of bitterness, acknowledge it to God according to 1 John 1:9, *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* thereby recovering the filling of the Holy Spirit.

It is only as we live in the filling of the Holy Spirit that we will be able to live in the spiritual life dynamic that God has provided for all believers in Christ, and by so doing we will be able to live outside the control and influence of the flesh from which bitterness comes.

Many of God's people have had their bouts of bitterness at some time in their lives here on earth: Asaph, Job, Hannah to name a few, but in all cases to escape bitterness our souls have to turn back to God once again and appropriate his sweet grace and forgiveness so we can go on in life

FF. The nephesh can become weary of life.

*“My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.” Job 10:1*

The word **weary** is the qal preterite of *naqat*. Naqat has been translated both as to be weary of, or to loathe. Context gives us a better idea of what is happening and it brings out the idea of being bitter of soul, or the nephesh.

Usually when things, or one's life, doesn't work out according to what one has planned, or what one has wanted out of life, the normal reaction of the nephesh to it all, due to our fallen natures we inherited from Adam, is one of bitterness. But, if one's life has been hit by one devastating blow after another, then the soul can get to the place of loathing life altogether.

This was the situation with Rebekah concerning Isaac. As a mother, she had invested her life into her sons to bring them up to be the kind of men that God wanted them to be. But Esau rebelled against his training and went off and married Hittite women. Now when it came to Isaac, and if he followed after his older brother, she remarked that if he married these Hittite women also her life wouldn't have been worth living. *“Then Rebekah said to Isaac, “I’m disgusted with living (life) because of these Hittite women. If Jacob takes a wife from among the women of this land, from Hittite women like these, my life will not be worth living.” Genesis 27:46*

Job had lost everything that he owned. He had lost his business, his employees, his “equipment he used in his business”, he had lost his reputation, his place in the community, all ten of his children and finally his health! Obviously life was not turning out as he thought, hoped, or planned it would be. It is easy to see how one can not only be bitter about things and end up loathing one's life.

GG. Bible Doctrine is pleasant to the nephesh.

*“When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;” Proverbs 2:10*

The word for **knowledge** is *da'ath* and is related to the word *yada*, which is translated into the Greek as *oida*. Now when it speaks of knowledge it isn't referring to just general knowledge that one finds in society, but the knowledge of God as revealed to us in his Word. And because of the word *yada* > *da'ath* > *oida*, we know that it is referring the knowledge of God's word that has been learned, understood and metabolized by faith.

The word for **pleasant** is the qal future of *na'em*. *Na'em* has many ideas associated with it: lovely, good, friendly, joy, love, something attractive, a song, singing, melody, well-being and health. Mostly used in poetry and the Wisdom literature it is found in the language of love to communicate an idea. So, **when Bible doctrine is metabolized by faith, one will have a singing nephesh, or a melodious nephesh, a happy healthy nephesh.**

To understand this statement we need to preface it with the conclusion of verses 1-9 and we end up with, “[If you apply what has been said and seek after and accept the words of wisdom, Bible Doctrine, if you do that], .... *understanding will come into your heart, and knowledge, (the Word of God that has been metabolized by faith), will delight, make happy, bring health and well-being to your nephesh.*” It is the word of God in our souls that makes them happy, healthy, like a melody in the soul.

## HH. Rejecting Bible Doctrine harms the nephesh.

“*But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.*” Proverbs 8:36

נְחַטְאִים נִפְשׁוֹ; כָּל-מִשְׁנֵי נְאִי, אֶהְיֶה בּוֹ מָוֶת

We begin with the word *me* in the passage, which refers back to the *wisdom* mentioned in verse one. *Chokmah* is the word for *wisdom* and is the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek word for wisdom, *sophia*. So we have, “*But he that sinneth against me – wisdom.*”

Now the Biblical concept of wisdom is not the same as the world's idea of wisdom, which gets into human viewpoint and all the sciences of rationale, etc.. Biblical wisdom is the Word of God that we have learned, understood and believed. Having gone through that process it now becomes a part of one's soul. But up to that place, it still is only knowledge that one has metabolized by faith and is now a part of one's soul. **But for knowledge to become wisdom, it must be applied to life experiences!** The believer in Christ, who lives by the Word of God, is a wise man or woman.

The word for *sinneth* is the qal participle of *chata*. Simply put *chata*, or to sin, meant to miss the mark. It's sort of like shooting an arrow at the target, but missing it. The Word tells us to do this or that, if we do, then we are “on target”. But if we don't, then we have missed the mark. So it's to miss the mark by not applying what the word tells us to do.

But *chata* in the Hebrew had another idea connected with it and that is the connection between one's decisions, actions and consequences. So *chata* meant to not only do what is wrong, or to fail to do what is right, but also the associated consequences. If a man drinks too much wine, then he will end up with the consequences of a hangover, or much worse! If a man spends his time drinking the day away, then he will waste his life on alcohol and end up being poor! The action of sin followed by its consequence.

Here we have spelled out for us what the problem is and how it will end up for the believer in Christ. *He that sinneth against me* refers to the believer in Christ, who **fails** to get under the teaching of Bible doctrine and apply the Word of God to his life, or **refuses** to apply the Word to his life, that's his sinning against wisdom, **that believer will do harm to his nephesh!**

To *wrongeth* is the qal participle of *chamas*. Now the translators have translated *chamas* as wrongeth, but we will see that this is probably the weakest word that could have been used. Only by looking at the wide range of usages of *chamas* will we be able to have some idea of what damage will be done to our *nepheshes* by missing out on the Word of God.

To do wrong to, to do violence to, *chamas*-hatred, to wrong the powerless, brutal exploitation of helpless aliens, orphans and widows, an assault on the life of one's neighbor who lives peaceably beside you, a physical assault on a woman or child, the raping of a virgin in the city, to destroy by force, to do physical violence to, wicked scheming to do violence to someone, *ish chamas* – a wicked or evil man, exploitation of the socially helpless, false accusations, hatred exploding in *chamas*, the mouth can do *chamas* by words leading further astray into evil conduct, a city or country can be filled with *chamas*, a household can be filled with *chamas*, the doing of *chamas* can become second nature. Brutality, violence, harm, destruction to those who are unable to defend themselves, **all those ideas are associated with what happens to the *nephesh*, when the believer in Christ fails or refuses to get Bible doctrine for their souls.**

## II. People who don't care about their nepheshes reject Biblical instruction.

“He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.” Proverbs 15:32 פֹּרֵר עַ מוֹסֵר, מוֹאֵס נַפְשׁוֹ; וְשׁוֹמֵר עַ תּוֹכַחַת, קוֹנֵה עַ

To **refuse** is the qal participle of *para*. It was from an older root that was hard to pin down and had the ideas of letting loose, letting one's hair fall down loosely, as versus being pinned up on the head. *Para* had the ideas of to neglect, to ignore, to dismiss. In the hiphil stem it was used of people running wild, (as we see in America today), and of leaders causing things to get out of control. The participial form tells us that the practice of these believers is to neglect, reject, or ignore the Word of God.

The word for **instruction** is *musar*. *Musar* took its meaning from the instruction and correction of children by their parents. In it was found the ideas first of doctrinal instruction, then admonition and finally discipline, if it was needed. So what we have here is a believer in Christ, who will either not get under the teaching of the Word of God, or if they are, will not respond to correction, admonition and finally the discipline the Lord will supply. They will either neglect it, ignore it, or dismiss it altogether.

To **despise** is the qal participle of *ma'as*. *Ma'as* meant to esteem or regard lightly and had several variants such as, to disregard, to disrespect, to regard lightly, to regard of little value at all, to reject, to despise, to abhor, to think nothing of, etc., covering everything from where one thinks little of something or someone all the way to despising it.

It was used in a variety of contexts such as, one's attitude toward God and/or his Word, where one thinks little of it all the way to despising it; one's attitude toward inhabitants of another nation; one's attitude toward certain inhabitants of his own nation; one's attitude toward his fellow man. **There is a close connection between one's disregard of human beings and one's rejection of God!**

Its secular usage really helps explain what the mental dynamic of *ma'as* was all about, especially with the mason who was erecting a building. When construction workers selected stones for their buildings, the determining factor was a stone's usefulness and appropriateness in that they needed it to be a stone fitting for the place the mason had in mind. In that selection process certain stones were chosen, those considered of value, and they were set aside for use. But the selecting process also took stones that they considered of no value and these stones were cast aside as being worthless. This is precisely what the religious leaders did concerning Jesus Christ, who thought he was worthless concerning their religion. “*The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.*” Psalm 118:22

When anyone rejects the instruction of the Word of God, whether it is the unsaved rejecting the gospel of Christ, or the believer in Christ rejecting doctrinal instruction, what it shows is that they do not value their souls! **They do not consider their souls as of having any importance at all**. Which is especially **both sad and tragic because Christ poured his soul unto death to save their souls!**

**Christ poured out his nephesh unto death to save our nepheshes!** Obviously this shows that Christ views our *nepheshes* of tremendous importance, even though people don't, because he paid the ultimate sacrifice to save them! **There is a parallel between people's rejection of Christ and their rejection of their own nephesh**. If they care not for their own *nephesh*, then it is easy to see why they care not for Christ! **In a sense, Christ's nephesh becomes the archetype for all nepheshes, which is what takes place in salvation where he poured out his soul for our souls and by faith in him our nepheshes are brought into union with his nephesh!**

## JJ. Doctrinal living preserves the nephesh.

“*The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul.*”

Proverbs 16:17 מִסֵּלֵת יִשְׂרָאֵל, סוּר מִרָע; שׁוּר מִרָע; נֶצֶר דֶּרֶךְ כּוֹ

To **keep** is the qal participle of *natsar*. *Natsar* meant to watch, to guard, to preserve, to keep, to defend and was used in a variety of situations. Such as, to watch over a vineyard, to keep watch in a watch-tower, to keep the covenant, to keep, that is, observe the Law, commands, or instructions of one's parents. Here it's to keep one's way, **to be observant about the path one is taking in life.**

**His way** is *darko* from *derek* with the masculine singular suffix. Now *derek* could refer to a path, trail, road, or highway that one was walking on, the individual walking on that path, the individual's walk on that path, the direction that the path is taking, the destination of that path and was used figuratively for one's journey in life and the aspects or nature of their journey.

Modified by **his way** it emphasizes the uniqueness of each believer's journey through this life as he lives his life unto the Lord, walking by faith, and doing the Lord's will for his life. It is a life of faith in the Word as he lives his life in trust each day in the Father's plan, power, provisions, etc..

After an individual believes on Christ as his Savior, he now embarks on a journey throughout this life. A journey that will take him through many situations, some good, some bad, and it will end up one day in him standing before the Lord. The dynamics of his journey will always center around faith in the Lord and the Word of God. Grace and truth acting as the borders of his path, with him walking by faith in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now it says that we will have to **keep our way**, that is, to watch over the path that we have taken, to be sure that it is the right path, and to be sure to stay on that path. To stay on that path and do not veer off to the right or the left. And what is the path for us? It is one that centers around the sound and accurate teaching of Bible doctrine, to be guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit, and to be sure to stay within the parameters of God's grace as the principle we live by.

Now it says that if we do, then we will **preserve** our *nephesh*! The word for **preserve** is the qal participle of *shamar*. *Shamar* meant to keep, to preserve, to preserve intact, to protect, to keep safe, to watch over something for the purpose of protecting it. The **object** of *shamar*, that which one is watching over, can be anything of value, whether spiritual or material. **It is a system of defense to protect that which is valuable, or that which one values.**

Here the object of *shamar* is the *nephesh*! This tells us that the *nephesh* is extremely valuable and that it is our responsibility in life to watch over it, to make certain that we take the proper path in life so that it is not harmed. This path is centered around Bible doctrine and living in the spiritual life dynamic, and at the same time, **keeping away from things that would harm our souls!** “*Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;*” 1 Per 2:11

Tragically most people living on earth do not place any value on their *nephesh* at all. But to give some idea of just how valuable it is, Christ poured out his *nephesh* on the cross to pay the debt of our sins so that our souls would not be destroyed in the lake of fire! And remember, there is the quality of vulnerability and helplessness associated with the *nephesh*. It can be easily hurt and damaged and has no ability to protect itself, like with a small child, hence the need for it to be protected. This is where our responsibility comes in to make the right decisions concerning it.

KK. The nephesh can love another person.

*“By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.” Song of Solomon 3:1,2*

This passage tells us that the *nephesh* has the capacity to love (*ahab*) another person. Now the word for love, *ahab*, covers the concept of loyalty all the way to having a soul love, as we have here. But as to why two people love each other in this capacity is quite a mystery at times. Sometimes I think that in some cases it goes back to what God has predetermined, at least for some individuals.

In the case of *phileo* love, which is a love based upon the doctrinal capacity of soul, two doctrinal believers can love each other as friends because they share some things in common, others can have a soul love for each other because there is something about the other believer's soul that attracts them to each other, while others can have a soul love relationship based upon mutual respect of each other and one another's love for the Word.

I know that in most cases men and women are attracted to each other, especially in the case of men, based solely upon the body; this is physical attraction. Which is not to put that concept down, but physical attraction is not soul attraction! Soul attraction is where there is something about that person's *nephesh*, which can be unbeknownst to the conscious mind, that attracts your *nephesh* to their *nephesh*.

If we go back to our study on my Online study, “Dealing With The Emotions”, we will have a better idea of what “love” is. The expression “**falling in love**” really looks at that aspect of two souls being **attracted and drawn to each other**, kind of like what happens with magnets. We even use that expression, “I was drawn to her or him like a magnet”.

“**Being in love**”, or **loving** someone, looks at that aspect where the two souls have not only been drawn to each other, but have come together and now exist in a state where they have bonded to each other. There is a union of the souls. The next step would be marriage, and then sexual intercourse, where the two bodies are joined to each other as a reflection of their two souls.

**Grief** is the pain that the *nepheshes* experience when that bond that existed between the two *nepheshes* has been torn apart. This occurs when there is a death, divorce, or breaking up.

We like to talk about love from the standpoint of poetry or romance, but few look at it from the perspective of psychic energy. The *nephesh*, even though we cannot see it, is still there none the less inside of us and it is real. In fact, it is presently locked up in our bodies and sometimes it can feel like it is all alone in this world. And perhaps, in some sense, it is.

“**Love**” describes that dynamic where our *nepheshes* are attracted to the nephesh of another human being. We “**bond**” with them and now we are no longer alone. When our *nepheshes* bond with someone of the same sex, then we call that **friendship!** We have the bond of friendship love. We can also bond with someone of the opposite sex with a different part of our *nepheshes* and we still have the bond of friendship love. And so this *nephesh* love can operate in other categories, such as, our bond with our parents, our fathers, our mothers, our sons, our daughters, relatives, etc.. But when we come to this category of love between a man and a woman that is not friendship love, then we have something altogether different. It is a love that totally encompasses the soul and intertwines different areas of each other's souls to one another.

## LL. The nephesh of the wicked.

“*The soul of the wicked desireth evil: his neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes.*” Proverbs 21:10

One can't tell anything by looking at the outside of people as to what kind of a soul that they have. Is it good? Is it evil? Is it a soul of light? Or is it a dark soul? We can't tell anything by appearances, but we can tell what kind of a soul that we are looking at by its desires and actions. Here we find that the *nephesh* of the wicked **desires that which is evil**.

We will begin with the word **wicked** – *rasha*. *Rasha* refers to a *nephesh* that has rejected the spiritual life dynamic that God provides through the metabolization of Bible doctrine, through faith, and the true filling of the true Holy Spirit in the inner man. This creates a spiritual phenomena whereby the spiritual light and energy that is found in God's Word circulates throughout the human spirit giving life, light, strength, joy and every other wonderful spiritual dynamic resulting in spiritual health.

But the wicked have rejected all that. And without that dynamic operating within their souls, their *nephesh* now lies vulnerable to the outside pressure and evil of the world system and the corrupting influence of their own sinful nature that lies resident in the fleshly body. Without the protection of this internal spiritual dynamic, the sinful nature caves in on the soul spreading its evil, toxic venom throughout the *nephesh* and the health and condition of the *nephesh* deteriorates.

But this deterioration, *diaphtheiro*, does not stop there. It continues to go downhill into various forms of mental illness. The external pressure and evil of life flood into the soul, stress is now in the soul, emotions begin to dominate the soul, then all forms of mental and emotional sinning begin to dominate not only that individual's soul, but their life and surroundings as well.

But it doesn't stop there. The wicked are called by that name because they are wicked! Their souls are wicked with only a continuous desire for things that are wicked. But what makes the wicked the wicked, other than having an evil soul, is that they are not content with just being wicked themselves and leave it at that, they have to go out and spread their wickedness throughout society!

People make the mistake of thinking that evil refers to some gross form of sinning, when its emphasis is on the thinking, ideas and viewpoints of people. People can be evil to the core in every sense, yet still be moral individuals. But **what makes a person a wicked individual**, *rasha*, **one**, is that the thinking of their soul is evil, **two**, the condition of their soul is sick, diseased and disgusting, and **three**, they go around spreading their evil to everyone around them and society in general!

Here we find something else about them and that is **they desire that which is intrinsically evil**, *ra'ah*. The Bible tells us that we're not only to not desire evil, or be involved in evil, but that we're to even avoid every appearance of evil! “*Abstain from all appearance of evil.*” 1 Thessalonians 5:22 But the wicked desire evil continually.

The word for **desire** is the piel preterite of *avah*. *Avah* when used of the *nephesh* is always found in the intensive stem telling us just how strong this desiring is. This is not just a desire for this or that, but an overwhelming desire for that which is evil. It's all-consuming to these types of people. They may appear to be nice outwardly, but inside they have an evil heart that only desires that which is evil and desires that which is evil to be done around them. In essence these types are destroyers. Their souls are destroyed, but not happy with that **they will not stop until they destroy the souls and live of others** around them. And at the same time, they are so deluded that they think they are doing something good!

## MM. Avoiding the life of the wicked.

*“Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward: he that doth keep his soul shall be far from them.”*  
Proverbs 22:5

We begin with the word **way**, *derek*, which refers to the path in life that we have chosen to take. As we all know there are many things that we will encounter on the path that we have taken in life, some good, some bad. But we also need to remember that these things already exist on the path! They aren't magically conjured up out of our minds; they already exist on that path! This is why it is extremely important that we choose the right path in life and stay on it!

And the passage tells us what lies on the path that the froward has chosen to take, not babbling brooks, pleasant meadows, or oases in the desert, but thorns and snares! The word for **thorn** is *tsen*, from the root *tsanan*, and referred to something prickly, sharp, such as a thorn. Which gets into the idea of things such as cacti and all thorn bearing bushes.

Obviously there is a direct reference here to the original curse by God on the earth, *“And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; **Thorns** also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;”* Genesis 3:17,18

There are several ideas that are brought out here by the use of **thorns**. **One**, is that the path that the froward have taken has been cursed by God. They are not operating under the blessing package of God, but under a curse. **Two**, they are not living life under the principles of the spirit filled life, but are still operating under the principle that all Adam's flesh operates by. **Three**, the path that they have chosen to take will be difficult, going against the grain, always having to fight to gratify the lusts. **Four**, it will be characterized by sinning and living around sin and sinful people. **Five**, it will be full of things that constantly irritate the individual. **Six**, it will be unfulfilling. Even if one gets every material possession that they have been lusting for, there will be no satisfaction for their souls.

The word for **snares** is *pach*. *Pach* referred to the traps, pits, snares and nooses that were used to trap wild game and birds. One could dig a pit, put sharpened stakes down its bottom, cover the top over and place bait overhead and that would be a *pach*. Or a *pach* could be where one laid nooses along a game trail to catch smaller game. And it also referred to the fowler who used nets with bait on the ground and when a bird came in to eat the grain, the net would be triggered thus snaring the bird.

The **snare** metaphor is used throughout the OT and the NT as something for God's people to avoid. If the believer did not avoid these things, it always led to disastrous results for the believer where their life could be destroyed, their soul could go into ruin, even death, or slavery! Joining foreign nations, associating with the wrong kind of people, getting entangled with the wrong man or woman, all these things become snares for the believer's feet.

When a believer gets lifted up in pride, neglects living in the spiritual life, goes against the authority of the Pastor-Teacher, etc., and starts following after their lusts and the things of the world, they will fall into a trap that the devil has laid, he will capture them as a prisoner of war and now they will be doing his will, not the will of the Lord. *“In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the **snare of the devil**, who are taken captive by him at his will.”* 2 Timothy 2: 25,26

But what we've got to see is that thorns and snares are on the path. The froward didn't choose to have thorns and snares. He chose the path! But unbeknownst to him these things were already on that path awaiting the next hapless passerby. And so it is with life. God stands at the crossroads of our life and points out the path he wants us to take. A path that will have blessing, service and fulfillment. Some believers take that path, while others choose to other path. Only what they did not know, (because one can never see the end from the beginning, nor see what lies on it), is that on the path that they have chosen to take is a path cursed by sin, with untold snares waiting there to get them. They may get lucky and avoid the first ten, twenty, or hundred traps, but there are plenty of others and **it only takes one!**

The word for **froward** is *iqqesh*. Froward in the English means willfully contrary, not easily managed, obstinate. But the word *iqqesh*, as its root meaning in the Hebrew, is crooked, perverse, twisted, perverted, dishonest and was used in a variety of contexts. It was used of the **heart** as having a twisted and perverse heart. Of the **lips or mouth** where one's speech was dishonest, lying, deceptive, twisted, which is to say, that they twist words and meanings, they distort the truth. It speaks of false, deceitful, or misleading speech.

To put their dynamic in simple terms they make crooked everything that is straight! As **believers, we are to be under the teaching of God's Word and apply it to our own souls, our own personal lives, to our own families and churches and to society around us. By doing this we are taking that which is crooked, twisted, or perverted and making it straight. But not so the *iqqesh*, they do just the **opposite!** **They take that which is straight and make it crooked!****

*Iqqesh* not only referred to certain aspects about a wicked person, (believer or unbeliever), but also to the whole person, the type of path that they took in life, and to what they do around them on the path they are on in life, that is, **they make everything about them distorted, crooked, twisted, perverted.** Their hearts are twisted and evil and their mouths and actions reflect that.

If one gets into a debate with them, everything that comes out of their mouths will be distorted. If you say things to them, they will take your words and twist them around to mean something else. They will take words, twist them out of context and give them different meanings. They will take that which is good and pervert it to that which is evil. And they will take evil and twist it into being good. They will take laws based upon what's right and wrong and twist them around to just the opposite to the place where people are punished for doing what is good and rewarded for doing evil!

To **keep** our soul is the qal participle of *shamar*. Now we see right off the bat that keeping our souls has to become a way of life for us, a daily practice. *Shamar* meant to watch, to guard, to keep, to stand guard, to be on the lookout for and it always implied that the object that one was watch out for was of great value, which in this case, is the important thing on earth – our souls!

**To protect our souls** we must give attention to both the internal dynamic and external protection systems as well. That is, we must be sure that our souls have a constant input of the life giving, life preserving doctrines of God's Word under the filling of the Holy Spirit. But we also must have our attention directed outward to be sure that we are not making the wrong choices in life, heading down the wrong path, veering off the right path, or associating with the wrong kind of people.

If we do, and the choice is ours, then these thorns and snares will be far from us! *Shall be far* is the qal future of *rachaq*, which meant to be far, far away from us, at a great distance. And in the future tense it is a guarantee. If we watch over our souls and our lives, and if we make the right decisions to stay on the right path, these thorns and snares will be far from us. **Why? They are on the other path!**

NN. The nephesh can think.

“For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.”

Proverbs 23:7 כִּי, כָמוֹ שֶׁ עָרַב בְּנֶפֶשׁוֹ-- כֶּן-הוּא

In the original the word, *leb*, is found as the second word for **heart** in the passage, but the first word in the Hebrew for **heart** is actually *nephesh* and refers to the soul. *As he thinketh in his nephesh, so is he.*

The word for **thinketh** is *sha'ar* and it meant to estimate, to calculate, to set a price. Obviously thinking is involved here, but more in the sense of being able to calculate and evaluate numbers. So the *nephesh* is able to think, evaluate, compare and calculate numbers, costs and situations.

But what's interesting is the doctrinal principles that are being taught in the passage. What is in view here is socializing with those who are stingy or miserly and this passage deals with the principle of **not accepting the hospitality of a stingy man**. Eating and drinking with him is as if one swallowed a hair. Do not introduce him to your circle of friends, nor sit down to dinner with him. If he invites you out to dinner – don't go!

The passage is, “Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an **evil eye**, neither desire thou his dainty meats: For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee. The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words.” Proverbs 23:6-8  
The expression **evil eye** refers to someone who is stingy.

This type of person is stingy and if and when they invite someone out to dinner, or over to their house to eat, they are always thinking about what it's going to cost them! So, if they are cheap at heart, don't really want to spend any money on you, and when they do they're always counting up what it costs them, then the question is **why are they doing it?** You may never know the real answer, but one thing you'll know for sure and that is they're up to no good! Stay away from them.

OO. The nephesh can become proud.

“He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat.” Proverbs 28:25 רַחַב-נֶפֶשׁ, יַגְרֶה מְדוֹן; וּבִטְחַת עַל-יְהוָה יִדְשָׁן

Once again we see that the translators used the word heart in their translations, but it's actually the word *nephesh* which is the word for the soul. With the use of the *maqeph* the two words proud and heart are now connected together as being one in idea with the emphasis on the heart. The stiff-necked-people of God defines what God's people were like. Not just his people, but an arrogant nation.

Here we have an arrogant soul. An arrogant soul stirs up strife. The word for **proud** is *rachab* and it had the idea of being broad, open, or large as its root, but took on the idea of being *inflated*. It was used in two ways. **One** of being proud, haughty and arrogant, having an inflated ego and opinion of oneself. And the **second** is being selfish and covetous, always wanting more and contentious with others.

**Stirreth up** is the piel future of *garah*, which tells us right off the bat that this is an intensive action. It meant to agitate, to incite, to provoke, to excite or arouse feelings of passion, often anger, to cause trouble, to cause dissension, to cause discord among people, to bring about disagreements, to inflame the emotions so as to excite people down the wrong path, such as inciting a mob to riot or to create discord in a body of people.

There are two things that stand out about those who stir up strife, whether in OT Israel, the Church today, or in society as a whole, and that is the one who does this is both proud and angry! “*A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.*” Proverbs 15:18 “*An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.*” Proverbs 29:22 Discord is one of the things that God hates the most. “*A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.*” Proverbs 6:19

The word for **strife** is *madon* and is translated as, depending on the context, strife, contentiousness, nagging, quarrelsome, angry, argumentative. It has the idea of, first of all, of one who has a mental attitude of pride, who is negative to Bible Doctrine and the true spiritual life dynamic of the Christian life, then from there they are governed by the anger complex, and next you will see it manifested in them starting arguments, or starting trouble with others. These are they types who can go among people who are basically settled down in their lives and work and then they will go in and get them all worked up and angry.

They can come into homes and split family members; they can come between friends; they will weave their evil in churches using their mouths causing people to leave a church, or the church to divide into various factions; and they can also bring about riots and revolutions in nations! It was a small faction of scorers and complainers in Israel that initially brought on the whole onset of complaining about the provisions of God. “*And the mixt multitude (rabble) that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?*” Numbers 11:4

They accomplish this through whisperings, (they have to keep below the radar), by their complaining to others, by their constant complaining to their mate about things, (usually blaming him), by sowing seeds of discontent among the brethren, by pointing out the faults of others, by baiting people to arguments and by many other means as their pride triggers their emotion of anger, and the evil in their heart is now directed to those around them, usually against biblical authority.

It is found many times in the OT. “*Frowardness is in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually; he soweth discord.*” Proverbs 6:14 “*A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends.*” Proverbs 16:28 “*It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling (madon - argumentative) woman in a wide house.*” Proverbs 21:9 “*It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.*” Proverbs 21:19 “*Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease.*” Proverbs 22:10 “*Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?*” Proverbs 23:29 “*It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house.*” Proverbs 25:24 “*Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth. As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife.*” Proverbs 26:20,21 “*A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike.*” Proverbs 27:15

Everybody has a problem with pride! It's a part of the flesh nature and we will never be free from it until we go to be with the Lord. But it can be effectively checked by remaining in the filling of the Holy Spirit, living in the new nature, submitting oneself to the authority structure that God has instituted: the husband as the head of the home, being under the doctrinal teaching of the Word, submission to the Word of God, etc.. But the proud-heart mentioned, or actually the proud-soul, have a different problem. They are locked into pride. They have been in rebellion for so long that being lifted up with the mental attitude of pride is now the condition of their soul!

PP. Man became a living nephesh.

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” Genesis 2:7

וַיִּצְרֶה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל, עָפָר מִן-הָאֲדָמָה, וַיִּפְחֶה בְּאָפָיו, נֶשֶׁמַת חַיִּים; וַיְהִי הָאָדָם, לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה

And *Yahweh Elohim* formed Adam from the dust of the ground. The word for formed is *yatsar* and it is **the only word used specifically for the creating of the man’s body, not the woman’s**. It is not used in the creating of the heavens or the earth. It is used for the creating of the man’s body, and also the bodies of the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. Genesis 2:19.

Its significance is on the **shaping or forming** of an object into something. Usually it has the idea of shaping raw materials into a formed object. The potter shapes the clay into a certain vessel; the carpenter carves wood into the shape of an idol; the stonemason sculpts stone into the shape of a pomegranate, statue or idol. It doesn’t speak of creating something, but of **shaping, forming, molding something out of existing materials into a desired shape or form**.

**The process which one employs is determined by the material that one has to work with and what is the desired goal.** One does not use hand saws and drill bits on soft clay. For that he uses his hands. But he does not use his hands to form stone. For that he uses chisels, hammers and polishing compounds. And for more delicate work he uses finer tools. So the **tools**, the **goal** and the **materials** all have to be considered in understanding the idea of the **process involved** with *yatsar*.

**The significance of *yatsar* in the creation of Adam’s body**, (and the bodies of the beasts of the field and the birds of the air for that matter), was the sculpting, forming, shaping, molding of a material **into the desired form** that God wanted it to be. **But nothing is said of the process that God used to do this!** Great care went into the creating of Adam’s body, while with the woman, great care went into its beauty! And remember, *yatsar* is a “**hands-on**” concept.

Now God wanted to create a man’s body, (and the bodies of birds and animals), and the rough process, we are told he used to accomplish this is by forming, molding or shaping it. The building material he used was the “**dust**” of the earth.

So we start with the **raw material** that God had to work with and this will **determine the process that he had to use to arrive at the desired goal**. Obviously chisels, hammers, saws, drill bits, etc., are out of the question. Remember, the raw material determines the process and the tools. But it still is a job and a process that calls for the use of hands. *Yatsar* is a hands-on word that molds or shapes something; something like the clay in the potter’s hands. But clay cannot be used because it is an inanimate object incapable of movement or life. While the desired goal for man was to have a body that was capable of physical and soul life, movement and function, with living flesh made up of many things: bone, hair, flesh, muscles, skin, organs all functioning. There is also the difference that **inanimate objects are made to be, while animate objects are to grow into what they are to be!**

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground”, refers to the physical creation of the man's body now we want to look at the raw material that God had to work with to accomplish this.

The raw material was the “*dust*” of the earth, but what does the word “*dust*” mean? There are three words that we need to consider in understanding this: *eretz*, *adamah* and *apar*. They all refer to the earth, but go from the general to the more specific.

The first one, *eretz*, is the more inclusive word and can refer to the whole world, or planet as we would say, down to the territory that a nation sits upon, or the land that the farmer tills. It can refer to **land**, or the whole earth and everything that sits upon it.

But to be more specific, then we would use the word *adamah*, which refers to **soil**. If a farmer wanted to refer to all his property, say he had 640 acres, he would say, “All this land, *eretz*, is mine.” But if he wanted to talk about the soil itself, he would say, “And 400 acres of it has the best soil, *adamah*, in the valley!” *Adamah* also referred to the soil/humus that would absorb water in contrast to rock.

And if we wanted to go even finer, more specific, we would use the word *apar* to speak of the **dust** of the soil, the **finest particulates of the soil**. Which would become airborne in dust storms, as in the dust bowl days of the Midwest, when half of a state would blow away. But we have something else in view here, when it says that God formed Adam out of the dust, *apar*, from the soil, *adamah*. We find that **dust**, *apar*, is used **technically**. It is the **dust**, *apar*, [taken] from the **earth**, *adamah*.

The word dust, *apar*, was a technical word that **referred to the smallest elements of the soil and referred to the basic chemicals of the earth**. If we break down matter, the matter of the planet, we go down to the chemical elements that make up all matter. **These chemical elements are the building blocks of all life on earth. So the reference to the “dust” of the soil refers to all the basic elements of the earth. These are what God made Adam’s body out of and all animals found on earth.**

**So what was the process that God used to form Adam's body?** And remember the **desired goal** and the **raw materials determine the process** that one uses. A physical human body was the desired goal. The raw materials he had to work with were the basic chemical compounds from the earth. So what was the process involved in *yatsar*?

Adam's body did not instantly appear. It did not come out of a mud slurry. It was not a piece of wood, or block of stone worked upon with hammer and chisel. It was a living physical organism and like all physical organisms it had to be grown! And this is where we get into DNA concepts. So did bio genetic engineering create Adam’s body? Where God took the DNA structure of the chemical compounds of the earth and caused them to grow, albeit rapidly, into a male body? Mind-boggling? Perhaps, but what’s really mind boggling is that he could start from scratch and build, make, form a human body from all the things found here on earth regardless of the process that he chose to do it. He created all the plant life on earth, but then he went and planted a garden in Eden. What’s the difference?

We know that plants, animals and people come from what preceded them, and all this is passed down from the seed of the plant, animal, or person. But if you begin with just dirt, then where do you get your seed? The only common theme in all this is the DNA in every living thing, so God began everything with its own DNA, which he got from the basic chemical compounds of the earth!

But that's Adam's body. His *nephesh* he received from *Yahweh* when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, actually **lives**, plural, in the original, *chayyim*. Adam received soul life as well as physical life when God breathed life into his nostrils. And Adam became a living *nephesh*. So our *nephesh* came directly to us from God and not from a DNA forming process as with the body.

QQ. The nephesh departs the body.

“And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin.” Genesis 35:18    וַיְהִי בְצֵאת נַפְשָׁהּ, כִּי מָתָהּ

The word for **soul** here is *naphshah*, which is *nephesh* with the feminine singular suffix, her *soul*. The story here is one of what happens to people at the moment of death, or what happens to their soul or the *nephesh* inside them. This passage centers around Rachel, who was in great pain and travail in her giving birth to Benjamin and died as the result of it.

The word for **depart** is the qal infinitive construct of *yatsa*. Now *yatsa* was used hundreds of times in the OT in a variety of applications. When it was translated into the Greek, they used such words as *erchomai* – to come or to go, *exerchomai* – to come out of, *poreuomai* – to journey and *ekporeuomai* – to journey out of, or to come out of and go on a journey.

*Poreuomai* was the Greek word used to denote the journey that Christ's soul made upon his death. At physical death his *nephesh* departed from his physical body and journeyed down into the compartment in Hades known as “Abraham's Bosom”. “By which also he went (*poreuomai*) and preached unto the spirits in prison;” 1 Peter 3:19 We also want to note that it is the soul of Christ that is identified as being Christ, not his physical body, which was in the tomb.

When Rachel died, that is, experienced physical death, her soul, she, Rachel the individual, went down to the place in Hades called Comforts where all the other righteous dead were. We also want to note the event in which all this took place; it was at her physical death. This is brought out by the Hebrew word, *kiy*, which is translated as *for* or *because*. “It came to pass, as her soul was departing”... **Why** was her soul departing? *Kiy*. **Because she had died!**

There are two views on this matter. **One**, is that when the soul is taken from the body, and because of that, the body dies. And **two**, the body dies thereby releasing the soul from its habitation in the body, where it now journeys to one or two places. To heaven to be with God in case of the believer in Christ. Or down into Hades to the place called Torments, where it awaits the resurrection from the dead, judgment by Christ and being thrown into the lake of fire. This passage seems to indicate that the soul departs from the body **because** of physical death. But either way, the soul departs the body at death.

RR. From the loins?

“And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt already.” Exodus 1:5

This passage states that seventy souls, *nephesh*, came out of the loins of Jacob. The word for **loins** is *yarek*, something soft, fleshly, which refers to the male regenerative organ. The word for **come out** is *yatsa* again showing the origin of these souls.

Now the word soul could be used to refer to a person, but there is also the idea of the soul format. And the soul format would come from the DNA pattern of both the father and the mother, which is why we're so like our parents in our personalities in many areas, but the soul life, the *neshamah* – breath, would come to us at physical birth with God breathing life into our soul formats.

SS. Save his soul.

*“And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.” Job 2:4 “And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.” Job 2:6*

The word for **skin**, *or*, is also the word for leather or hide and we even use this expression today, that a man will do just about anything to save his own hide. The word for **life** in both verses is *nephesh*; a man will give anything that he has to save his own soul, that is, to keep body and soul together.

The word **for**, *skin for skin*, is *be'ad* and denotes the idea of exchange. Skin for skin, a man will trade anything he has, or even trade someone else's skin, to save his own skin. This sounds very much like a wager being out forth, or at least it opened the door, legally speaking, for the idea of settling a legal matter by wager.

Satan is before the court of heaven declaring that God has to buy the loyalty of man. So God singles out his servant Job as his proof in the heavenly court to disprove the devil's allegations. God rules the universe fairly and justly and he must hear all cases brought before him, which is what the devil is continuously doing. *“And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the **accuser** of our brethren is cast down, which **accused them before our God day and night.**” Revelation 12:10*

Now in this legal proceeding Satan brings out a point of law, hitherto before was never brought out. He brings out the concept of **skin for skin** and the idea of the **soul**. Now he's the one that introduced these two concepts in court, thereby establishing a legal precedence. And he also introduced the idea that if one can have skin for skin, you also can have the idea of **soul for soul!**

Basically what God said in chapter one was a question along the lines of, what have you been doing and Satan explaining to him about his travels to the earth. Then another question, have you considered my servant Job? To which Satan replied in essence take away everything he has and he will curse you to your face. Then when the angels assembled again, Job's name was brought up again and that's where Satan brought out the idea of ***skin in exchange for skin***, and also the idea of the **soul**, a man would do anything to save his own soul.

So here we have the idea of a wager at law, where two things are brought out to settle a legal matter. We also have the idea of a legal framework being established, whereby God could substitute the soul of Jesus Christ for the souls of men! Now when you think about this, whose soul would the devil like to have under him as his slave? The billions of souls of men that meant nothing to him? Or the soul of Jesus Christ?

When Adam sinned against God, his soul and the soul of every human being from him ended up under the dominion of Satan, not only in their temporal existence in the flesh, but even after they died, where their souls went down to Hades, which he had control over. But what would induce him to release those souls? He already had control over the earth, so that wouldn't do it. Money? He had no need for that. Power? He already had that. Worship? He already had that from the unsaved people on earth. What would really induce him to release those souls? The one thing that he didn't have is the Lord Jesus Christ in his grasp. Christ became our substitute in exchange for us, skin for skin, soul for soul. But the one thing he didn't count on was Christ paying the penalty for our sins, thereby securing our release, and Christ being released from Hades because he was righteous and innocent.

TT. The nephesh can become weary of life.

“My soul is **weary** of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.” Job 10:1 נִקְטָה נַפְשִׁי, בָּתַי יִי

To be **weary** is the gal preterite of *naqat*. *Naqat* meant to be worn down by something, to be tired of it, all the way to loathing it. Job had to deal with the emotional factors of the loss of all his children, the financial factor of the loss of his wealth and business; he had to deal with the loss of his reputation and standing in the community; he had to deal with his wife, who was less than supportive of what he was going through; he had to deal with the factor of tremendous pain; and he had to deal with his relationship with his God and the question **why?** Why am I going through this??

Having to deal with all of these factors left him completely worn down to the place he was weary of the whole thing; he was weary of **his** life, nay, he loathed it. The word for **life**, *chay*, has the first person singular suffix **my** on it, telling us that he had nothing against life itself, as a matter of fact, he rather enjoyed his life up to this point. But now, he loathed his life!

UU. God redeems the nephesh.

“The LORD **redeemeth** the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.” Psalm 34:22 פִּדְּהוּ יְהוָה, נַפְשֵׁי עַבְדָּיו

To **redeem** is the gal participle of *padah*. The meaning of *padah* was somewhere between to redeem and set free, usually reserved for deity. There was a term used for setting free, *ptr*, or *pataru*, but these words had the idea of magic or force. This would bring in the ideas that the deities of the world would set their servants or worshippers free by using force or magic.

But the passage does not use these words, instead it uses *padah*. *Padah* came from the field of contract law and it meant to buy something by paying a price. True it meant to release or to set free, and it meant to set free from a legal obligation with respect to a third party, but to do so by paying a price!

In this matter of redeeming we have God who is the one doing the redeeming. We have what he is **redeeming** the *nephesh*. A legal obligation of debt that had to be paid is brought in, **death**. That debt is due to **sin**. The payment of the price to satisfy the legal debt was paid by **Jesus Christ's death on the cross**. So what we have in view is 1) the redeeming of the *nephesh*, that is, paying the price to set it free, 2) the price that had to be paid, and that 3) God is the One doing this.

There are some more points here that we need to understand with *padah*. **Only Yahweh can redeem a nephesh**. One person cannot redeem another person's soul, not even by paying any price. One cannot redeem their own souls regardless of what price they offer. Only God can redeem the soul.

“But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.” Psalm 49:15 The word for **power** is *yad*, *hand*, and it referred to the power and dominion of Sheol over the nepheshes of all the departed righteous ones belonging to God. How are they going to get free from *Sheol*? Not by force, for that word is not used here. They are going to have to be set free legally. Which God did by securing our legal release by paying the price under contract law.

## VV. The nephesh trusts in God.

*“To the chief Musician, Altaschith, Michtam of David, when he fled from Saul in the cave. Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: **for my soul trusteth in thee**: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.” Psalm 57:1 כִּי בְרִחָה סִיָּה נַפְשִׁי*

David is asking God to be merciful to him, then he goes on to give the reason **why** by the use of the word *kiy*. He says, **because** my *nephesh* trusts in you. Once again showing that faith in God is the basis for us receiving grace and mercy from God to help us in our time of need. To **trust** is the qal preterite of *chasah*. And we want to note here that it is the *nephesh* that is trusting in God.

Properly, *chasah* meant to flee to take refuge. It has the idea that one is under some threat of danger, and he flees to something, such as, a shelter or refuge for protection. The young run back to their mother, the badger to his hole, the animal to a cleft in a rock. One can flee to something in nature for protection, a hole in the ground, a cave, a high rock, a cleft in the rock, into the water, out of the water, into the air, etc.. One can flee to people: to one's friends, one's family, to society as a whole, or to a fort that people have built. One can flee to man made institutions: the government, government programs, community programs, the military, etc.. **It has the idea of fleeing from danger to something that you know will give you safety and protection**. The faith comes in where the individual believes that thing, or that person, will protect him. And trust comes in where you are trusting in, relying upon, depending upon that thing or person to protect you. So it is a metaphor for faith.

So *chasah* has the following ideas in it: 1) one is in a situation that poses a threat, (real or perceived), to the believer; 2) the believer is afraid; 3) he knows that *Yahweh* will protect him; 4) he flees from the situation to *Yahweh* for protection. *Yahweh* is his refuge. A variety of metaphors are borrowed from nature to express this action; but it means to run, to flee, to go to *Yahweh* for protection when threatened, or in danger. The threat or danger is not to be limited to physical threat only, but includes all threats. Whether threats to one's soul, one's body, one's finances, one's health, one's church, one's family, one's nation, to one's business or job, or to one's emotions. Any threat, regardless of the category, is sufficient cause to run to God for protection. **So here we have not the idea of hoping or waiting, but motion! Where the believer is motivated to run to God for protection and safety.**

In Psalm 25:20, Even though David had certain sins in his life, he was in a bad situation where his enemies were seeking to destroy him. So David's prayer is that God will protect his precious *nephesh* and that his enemies will not triumph over him. So he tells *Yahweh* that he has made him his refuge; he is going to *Yahweh* for protection from his enemies. *“Guard my life (nephesh) and rescue me; let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.”*

**This provision from God is open to all believers in Christ regardless of their status in life or their situation**, whether prince or pauper, young or old, rich or poor. *“How priceless is your unfailing love! Both high and low among men find refuge in the shadow of your wings.” Psalm 36:7*. God's protecting grace is open to all believers in Christ.

Nahum1:7, *“Yahweh is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him.”* A **refuge** was a fortified place, a fortress, a defense. Times of **trouble** meant to be oppressed, persecuted, threatened, threatened in an horrible manner. And the word for **trust** here is *chasah*. If the believer finds himself in such a predicament, regardless of the source or category, he is to flee to *Yahweh* in faith for the protection of his soul, body, family, everything that poses a threat to him.

WW. The nephesh needs God.

*“A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah. O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;”*

Psalm 63:1 צָמָאָה לְךָ, נַפְשִׁי י

**Thirsteth** is the gal preterite of *tsame*. *Tsame* was a common word used for a perfectly natural biological function of thirsting after water. Water is absolutely vital to the body, without which we would die in three days. If we were in the desert, which places an even greater demand on the body, we would die in around one to two days without water. Water is so important that we are not to withhold it from any animal or human being, even if that person is our enemy!

David uses this expression of thirsting to show how much his *nephesh* needs the Lord, (as all of us do), and even compares it to one being out in the desert desperately needing water to survive as he did in Psalm 42:1, *“To the chief Musician, Maschil, for the sons of Korah. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.”*

Thirsting was also used as a sign of God's punishment on those under God's judgment. *“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed:”* Isaiah 65:13

As it was for those who refused to submit themselves to the Word of God, but then one day when they wanted it, they would not be able to find it! *“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.”* Amos 8:11,12

XX. God takes the nephesh away from the body.

*“For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?”* Job

27:8 כִּי יֵשׁ לְ אֵלֹהֵי נַפְשׁוֹ

To **take away** is the gal future of *shalah*. The word for **God** is *eloahh* and was the name for God or deity. The word for **hypocrite** is *chaneph* and referred to the impious, to the one who posed as being a worshiper of God, but wasn't. It's looking at the idea of one posing as a recipient of a deity's grace, or a worshiper of some particular deity, but who wasn't. What is he going to do when that deity takes his *nephesh* away?

*Shalah* meant to take away by drawing something out, such as a drawing of one's foot out of sandals, or a sword out of its sheath, which was easily done by the warrior who wielded the sword and who had the right to do so. And he could do so in a quick and violent manner, which gives us some idea on how this is done. One also needs to note that the sword is not a part of the scabbard. It is in the scabbard, the scabbard is its resting place, but it isn't a part of the scabbard. So is the *nephesh* in the body.

When God takes the *nephesh* out of the body, he draws it out as one would draw out the sword from its scabbard. It doesn't have to depart under violent means, but there is the sense that it has to be wrenched away from the body possibly because of some attachment there is to the body. Perhaps there is the **idea of some resistance to leaving the body, but overcome by God taking it out**.

YY. The nephesh can seek God.

“The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.” Lamentations 3:25

טוֹב יְהוָה לְקַוֵּי, וְלִנְפֹשׁ תִּדְרֹשׁ נַפְשׁוֹ

The word for **wait** here is *qavah*. *Qavah* has the idea of twisting, binding, stretching, then the idea of tension in waiting on someone. You are enduring a situation, while you are waiting on someone. Translated by the Greek, *hupomone*, which means to endure a bad situation. But as we have seen with *hupomone*, which we simply translate as "abiding under a trial", really speaks of the believer exercising his faith in the promises of God, while he is in the bad situation. He utilizes the various provisions of grace, while he awaits the deliverance of the Lord.

The ideas of waiting, faith, endurance, expectation are all in *qavah*. And is usually translated as waiting for the Lord. But it also has the ideas of: **1)** that the believer is in a bad situation that causes him pain, discomfort, fear, threat, or some other such thing; **2)** he can't get out of it, or resolve it in his own strength; **3)** he looks to God, or goes to God in prayer asking him to solve the problem, or get him out of it; **4)** he now must **wait** upon the Lord to do it, which, obviously, introduces a time factor; **5)** while he is waiting, he must endure the unpleasant situation; **6)** in the meantime, he must learn, and utilize, all the many grace provisions that God has supplied to him (and all believers) to sustain him while he is waiting on the Lord: faith in the promises, prayer, the Word, fellowship with God, with other believers, confessing his sins to God, going to Church, the filling of the Holy Spirit, etc.; and, **7)** expectation, which is the confidence that the believer has that God will answer his prayers, help him, deliver him, etc.. **The seven points of *qavah*.**

Now connected to the idea of waiting on the Lord is **seeking** God. “Yahweh is good to unto them that **wait** for him, to the nephesh that **seeks** him.” The word used here for **seek** is the qal future of *darash*. *Darash* meant to seek, to ask, to investigate a matter. It was used of animals who sought after food, of the wife who sought after wool and flax so she would always have these at home; it was used in the legal field where there was an investigation of the exact facts in a matter, and in many other areas.

Here it is used of one who seeks after God. In doing so the individual must know the truth about God, not what others in their religions have to say about him, but the truth about God and his Son as revealed in the Word of God. So in this matter there will be a lifelong inquiring and seeking into the Word of God and its many doctrines so we can develop a knowledge of God and his Son.

But there is another area in which we seek God and that is to have **communion** with him! We notice here that **it is the nephesh that seeks after God.** And why wouldn't it! It was God who created it! Our *nephesh* will never know peace, joy, or love, or ever have that sense of oneness apart from having that fellowship of our soul with his soul! There are many distractions and temptations in this life, but there is only one thing that will ever satisfy our souls and that is communion with the One who made them!

We want to note the context of this book written by Jeremiah. This is after the Babylonian army had swept down into Jerusalem and brutally destroyed just about all life that was there. Men slaughtered, women raped and murdered, children killed, the city burned down; it was total devastation. Yet here Jeremiah was still alive as he observed all this. Talk about having to endure a crisis by faith, *qavah*, as used here in this context, and something else – the ***nephesh seeking after God!*** God had wiped out the evildoers in the land, but he promised something good, *tob*, to those believers who were trusting in him as a way of life, qal participle of *qavah*, to those believers whose souls were seeking him.

ZZ. All souls belong to God.

*“Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Ezekiel 18:4*

הַנְּפֹשֹׁתַי לִי הֵנָּה, כְּנֶפֶשׁ הָאָב וְכְנֶפֶשׁ הַבֵּן לִי-הֵנָּה: הַנְּפֹשׁ הַחַטָּאת, הִיא תָּמוּת

*“All the nepheshes, they, (belong) to me; as the nephesh of the father, so also the nephesh of the son, they, belong to me: the nephesh that sins, it shall die.”* The word for **sinneth** is the gal participle of *chata*. The soul that continues on is sin without receiving God's forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ, that *nephesh* will die.

The souls of men have been given to them by God. He has created them, they are his property and they are accountable to him. And one day they will be judged by him. The soul that continues on in sin without faith in Christ, who is the Savior of our souls, will be judged and thrown into the lake of fire. Our souls are the most precious thing that we have, seeing that they have been given to us by God, and we do not have the right to do with them as we please. We will be judged by God for what we have done in this life and if we have believed on Christ as our Savior. *“I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work.” Ecclesiastes 3:17* *“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” Ecclesiastes 12:13,14*

Even though the body of the son comes from his father, not so the soul. The soul of the father and the soul of the son, each one is separate from the other, each one comes from God, each one individually belongs to God. And the judgment that awaits one will not be imparted to the other. That is, each soul will be held accountable to God for what **it** has done and will receive accordingly. And the sins of the father will not be visited upon the son. There will be righteous fathers in heaven and unrighteous sons in hell, and there will be righteous sons in heaven and their unrighteous fathers in hell. *“The soul that sinneth, **it**, (that soul), shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.” Ezekiel 18:20*

When Jesus Christ returns to earth to establish his kingdom, he will destroy the Beast and the False Prophet in the lake of fire and will imprison the devil in the bottomless pit. *“And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.” Revelation 19:20*

But he will do something else when he returns to earth and that is raise the dead to stand before him in judgment, both the righteous dead and the unrighteous dead. *“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:” Matthew 25:31*

He will separate them before him the sheep and the goats, the righteous believers in Christ, and the unrighteous who refused to believe on him and receive his gracious gift of salvation, forgiveness and eternal life. *“And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Matthew 25:32-34*

### AAA. Man cannot kill the soul. *Psuche*

*“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” Matthew 10:28 και μη φοβηθητε απο των αποκτεινοντων το σωμα την δε ψυχην μη δυναμενων αποκτειναι φοβηθητε δε μαλλον τον δυναμενον και ψυχην και σωμα απολεσαι εν γεεννη*

Concerning the soul this passage teaches: **one**, that man is able to kill the body; **two**, that man cannot kill the soul; **three**, only God has the power to kill the soul and only God can kill the soul; **four**, the soul is destroyable; **five**, therefore because the soul is destroyable, it is not immortal; and **six**, it is the lake of fire that will destroy the soul, along with the body.

The lake of fire was not created for man, but for the devil and his angels. But, if man refuses God's gracious gift of forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ and still identifies himself with the devil, Lucifer, Satan, or whatever name people call him, then he will have to share in the devil's doom in the lake of fire! *“Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, **prepared for the devil and his angels**.” Matthew 25:41*

God created the soul, the *nephesh*, to be able to exist forever. The bodies that we now have in their current condition are not able to do that. Only the resurrection body will be capable of eternal life. But our souls were designed to live forever. But for this to happen, they will have to be made righteous. God is righteous, his kingdom is righteous, his eternal rule is righteous, therefore if one is to share eternity with God his soul has to be righteous.

Enter into the judgment of God. The judgment of Jesus Christ will determine if one is righteous or not. If he or she is, then their body and soul will go into the eternal state. But if they aren't, then not only their body will be destroyed, but also, that which one thought was capable of eternal existence, and that which was created for eternal existence, the soul, will be destroyed!

We see a command here for the Christian to stop being afraid of man and what man can do. Man can be brutal and violent beyond human comprehension, and so it is easy to see why believers become fearful of what men can do to them, either men individually, or men as criminals, or men and their armies, or the governments that men create. Consciously, or unconsciously, we have all had some fear concerning what men can do to us. But the thought that Christ has given us that should give us comfort, peace and strength is that they cannot kill our souls! Our souls will live on forever into the eternal state!

It is these men that should be afraid. They should be afraid of what God can do to them both in their bodies and their souls! He has the power to destroy their bodies, and souls painfully so, in the lake of fire! *“The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” Matthew 13:41,42*

So we see that even though the soul was designed to live forever, it inherently is not immortal. It can be destroyed, and unsaved souls will be destroyed, for only God is immortal! *“Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.” 1 Timothy 6:16 There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when the unsaved are faced with the prospect of their souls being destroyed in the lake of fire.*

### BBB. Discovering the soul's oneness in Christ.

“He that findeth his life (soul - psuche) shall lose it: and he that loseth his life (soul - psuche) for my sake shall find it.” Matthew 10:39 ο ευρων την ψυχην αυτου απολεσει αυτην και ο απολεσας την ψυχην αυτου ενεκεν εμου ευρησει αυτην.

We have a parallel concept going on in Revelation 12:11, “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives (souls) unto the death.” The soul of every individual is the most precious thing that they have. It is the identity of that person, their inner self, the true personality.

Many people, however, neglect their souls and go on following after worldly pursuits: money, careers, material possessions, houses, toys, furniture and the pursuit of pleasure and fun. While many others pursue after chemical stimulants and mind-altering drugs in an attempt to escape their reality. Sadly, they do not value their souls.

But, at the same time, there are countless numbers of people who spend their lives attempting to find out, through psychoanalysis or techniques of the New Age movement, who they are so they can find their true self, the inner person, the inner child, the true personality that lies buried under so many layers of self defense mechanisms. But in so doing they lose their soul!

“Findeth his soul” is the orist active participle of *heurisko*, which is to find or discover something after seeking for it. So we have he, after having discovered his soul or *nephesh*, will lose it. But the second part of the verse with the orist active participle of *apollumi* tells us, “and he after having lost is soul for my sake shall find it.”

So what's going on here? We have someone, like so many, begin on a path to discover who they truly are in regards to their own unique identity in the universe and they may even actually come to the place of self discovery and self realization! But only to lose what they have found. The problem is they have been seeking the reality of their soul's existence apart from their union with Jesus Christ. We have put our focus on **ourselves**, on **our** souls, but not on Jesus Christ. There's an old saying that is quite appropriate in this matter. *The issue is not **who** I am, but **whose** I am!*

The word *eneken* here has been translated as *for my sake* and meant on account of, because of, for this reason. It explains **why** an action has been taken. The action is losing one's soul, losing one's soul on account of Christ, which in context has the idea of not seeking to discover the soul, and if one gives up on the pursuit of self discovery and pursues knowing Christ, then they will discover their soul.

The one approach is self-absorbed, focusing on oneself, while the other approach is solely focused on Jesus Christ! **The one wants to know himself, while the other wants to know who Jesus Christ is!** The one leads to failing to attain to the goal of what he actually wants, self discovery - knowing who he is, while the other actually attains to his goal of discovering who he truly is. But this only comes as the result of seeking to know Jesus Christ and who he is and our oneness in Him!

If we look at the context of this passage, Christ is addressing this to his twelve disciples. It is only natural that people are occupied with themselves; we've been doing this since we have been infants. And it is only natural that we would want to discover who we are in our souls. But the only way that we will ever have that realization is by losing ourselves in Christ and his Word. It is only there when we realize that our souls are in union with his soul, that we be able to realize our distinctiveness.

CCC. There is a rest for the soul.

*“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”*

Matthew 11:28,29 δευτε προς με παντες οι κοπιωντες και πεφορτισμενοι καγω αναπαυσω υμας αρατε τον ζυγον μου εφ υμας και μαθετε απ εμου οτι πραος ειμι και ταπεινος τη καρδια και ευρησετε αναπαυσιν ταις ψυχαις υμων.

Make no mistake about it, life can be stressful. The more responsibilities we have, the more pressure we are under, all become sources of great stress. Christ has told us that we will have much pressure in this life. *“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have **tribulation** (pressure): but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”* John 16:33 As the Apostle Paul also wrote in Acts 14:22, *“Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much **tribulation** enter into the kingdom of God.”*

But there is a rest for the children of God, even during their labors, trials and responsibilities that we have to go through and endure in this life, but it is found in fellowshiping with Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. And it begins with an exclamatory exhortation by Christ to come to Him! *Deute* is the plural of *deuro*, so it is addressed to everyone to come to Christ to find rest for their souls. In the English it would be, *“Come here to me”*. And with the preposition *pros* it speaks of being face to face, so to speak, or person to person.

To **labor** is the present active participle of *kopiao*. Now *kopiao* does not speak so much of the actual physical exertion one is subjected to, or the pressure of heavy responsibility, but to the weariness of mind and body that is present. It refers to mental or physical exhaustion, usually mental exhaustion. It speaks of the mental, and/or physical exhaustion that comes from continuous work, pressure and responsibility without a break from it, nor being able to get away from it.

The term that reflects the closest to that today is “burn out”. Burn out is a psychological term for the experience of long-term exhaustion and diminished interest. Emotional exhaustion is a chronic state of physical and emotional depletion that results from excessive, on going job demands and continuous stress. It describes a feeling of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work. It is manifested by both physical fatigue and a sense of feeling psychologically and emotionally drained.

**Heaven laden** is the perfect passive participle of *phortizo*. Now the KJV uses the word laden here to express the idea. To lade is the verb of putting a load on someone and to be laden is the load that one has. But interestingly enough the word laden belongs to the world of the cargo one puts aboard a ship, or the load one puts on a horse or mule. Which is what *phortizo* refers to also.

Now with the grammar of the perfect passive participle it tells us that we have received the action of the verb, that this burden was laid on us, and that it is an ongoing condition, a way of life - our life! It isn't to be restricted to slaves building the pyramids, although that would be true, but speaks of what we have to deal with in our life. It may be the weight of the finances needed to take care of the family that are on our shoulders, or the weight of heavy responsibility, or some physical problem, or having to continually take care of an ill, injured, infirm, or elderly family member. And to add to it all, **we can't get away from it!** People who have children with disabilities can get to the place of being exhausted and worn out by constantly having to take care of them, or elderly parents, or having to work because there is no other choice. Day in, day out it's the same with no relief in sight. In such cases of being burdened down believers can experience burn out – total mental and physical exhaustion.

DDD. The soul is worth more than the world.

*“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”* Matthew 16:26 τι γαρ ωφελειται ανθρωπος εαν τον κοσμον ολον κερδηση την δε ψυχην αυτου ζημιωθη η τι δωσει ανθρωπος ανταλλαγμα της ψυχης αυτου.

The word for **profit** is *opheleo* and **profit** is what one gets out of something, or an endeavor, above what he put into it. A man invests \$1,000 into a business investment and receives \$1,200 back. That \$200 is his profit above his business investment. But if a man invests \$1,000 into a business venture and has to spend 100 hours of his time working at it just to make \$1,200, he really hasn't made \$200 profit off his investment; he's been working for \$2 an hour! So why bother.

To have profit you have to get more out of it than what you put into it. Some people like having pets for fun, companionship, etc.. The fun, companionship, etc., apparently is their profit. They don't mind all that comes with having pets because what they get out of it is more than what they have to put into it. While other people look at the work, the detail, the responsibility, the vet's bills, the noise and the mess that pets make and it's not worth it to them. There's no profit for them.

You're invited out for dinner by friends or family, but every time you're around these people there's strife, anger, arguments, loud voices and poor behavior. It always ends up in an unpleasant situation. And even though they are going to pay for the meal, the whole event is uncomfortable. So where's the profit to you? There is none because the free meal you receive does not compare to what you had to put into it, which is your time and company around boorish people.

People today are investing their entire lives just to get a home, job, material possessions, money, retirement; their little slice of the world's pie. But at what cost? And where is the profit? The Lord said, *“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”* *“If he shall gain”* is, maybe he will and maybe he won't, but if he does, where is the profit? **Gain**, *zemioo*, is the gain or increase above one's investment, which becomes his profit.

Now what is profit? Profit is what one gets out of something above what he had to put into it. In the passage the thing that one gains, *kerdaino*, a concept connected to investment and profit, is not just a little sliver of the world's pie – but the entire world! But again, what is profit? Profit is what one gets out of something **above** what he had to put into it to get it. The man gained the entire world; he now owns the entire world! But at what cost?

You see, in this matter of gaining the entire world, or even his little sliver of the pie, he had to invest not money, but his time, his life, his soul! So the **investment** is his time, his life, his soul and his **gain** was the entire world. So where's the profit? There is none! Why? Because his soul was worth far more than the world!

*“Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”* The word for **exchange** is *antallagma* and it refers to the price that is received as an equivalent of the item. Whatever is involved in the exchange of one thing for another, there must be equivalency between the two. But what equivalency is there between the soul and anything else? There is none! What is equal to the soul? Nothing! It took God, the Creator, becoming a man to die on the cross for our souls paying the penalty for our sins. There is nothing that is equal to our souls in value and to invest our time and life in pursuits of meaningless things in this life is a waste of our lives and our souls. Our only profit is investing our souls in Christ.

EEE. Christ gave his soul in exchange for our souls.

*“Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”* Matthew 20:28 ὡςπερ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἦλθεν διακονηθῆναι ἀλλὰ διακονῆσαι καὶ δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντι πολλῶν.

In understanding this matter of equivalency, as we have just seen in Matthew 16:26, will become very important for us in understanding Christ's death on the cross for our sins. The one thing that is to be exchanged for another must be of equal value. And because we have seen that the soul of one man or woman is worth more than the entire world, or the universe for that matter, it brings us down to the question, then just what is of equal value to or souls?

We want to notice that Christ gave his soul, *psuche*, for the many. Only the soul of Christ is of at least equal value and more to our souls. Christ pouring out his soul in atonement for our souls was brought out by the Prophet Isaiah, *“Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”* Isiah 53:12

The passage has *“a ransom for many”* from the Greek *lutron anti pollon*, λυτρον αντι πολλων. The word for **many** is *pollon*, the masculine plural genitive of *polus*. And, as we have seen, *polus* does not refer to everyone, or even the majority of people, but only to many people. So Christ gave his soul as a ransom for many people.

In 1 Timothy 2:6, where it says that Christ *gave himself up as a ransom for all*, we have αντιλυτρον υπερ παντων used. The word **all**, *pas*, would refer to all kinds of people without distinction. All kinds of people will be found in this group of people. Revelation 5:9, *“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;”*

Under a synecdoche of genus *pas* would not refer to every single individual, or even to a group of people, but to every kind of human being out there. There would not be any class of man excluded from his grace! No racism, no racial superiority and no sexism with God. Rich and poor, bond and free, smart and stupid, prince and pauper, male and female, every race, every nation and every tribe are all included. The synecdoche of genus would also tell us the identity of the all by specifying or implying them in the passage.

In the two gospel passages we have *lutron anti*, but in Paul's letter we have the one word *antilytron* used. In fact this is the only place in the New Testament where it is used. By combining the noun *lutron* with the preposition *anti* into one word we are left with something stronger than *lutron anti*. Which suggests **a ransom that has been completely paid for and is still in effect!** The preposition *anti* would emphasize the idea of the exchange.

There were **three ideas found** in *anti*. One, the idea of **equivalence**, where one thing is considered to be equal in value or more to another item. Two, **substitution** where the one thing has been substituted for the other. And three, the **actual exchange** where you have the actual exchanging of the items. All three of these ideas are found in all three of these passages concerning the ransom. So, because of the tremendous worth of a human soul, whose value far exceeds anything on earth or the universe, Christ's soul was the ransom payment that was made in exchange for our souls.

FFF. We're to love God with all our souls.

“Jesus said unto him, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*” Matthew 22:37 ο δε ιησους ειπεν αυτω αγαπησεις κυριον τον θεον σου εν ολη τη καρδια σου και εν ολη τη ψυχη σου και εν ολη τη διανοια σου.

The word for **all** here is *holos*. The word *holos* actually means the whole of something. It brings out the idea, first of all, that there is something that is made up of individual parts and it is these individual parts that constitute the whole. In our case here there is the idea of the whole, but there is no concept of the whole unless all the parts of the whole are complete and involved in the action.

The action here is to **love** God, but we're to love God with **all** our hearts, with **all** our souls and with **all** our minds. Just like we are to trust the Lord with all our heart, which is to say, that there can be no part of our hearts that trust in and derive security from anything else than God! “*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*” Proverbs 3:5

GGG. The soul can become sorrowful.

“*Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.*” Matthew 26:38 τοτε λεγει αυτοις περιλυπος εστιν η ψυχη μου εως θανατου μεινατε ωδε και γρηγορειτε μετ εμου.

This is where Christ and his disciples went to the garden of Gethsemane to pray. It was then that his soul became heavy and sorrowful. The word for **sorrow** is *lupe*, which is to feel pain of soul, be it grief, or an indescribable heaviness.

Then he goes on to tell the disciples that his soul was **exceedingly** sorrowful, even unto the point of death. The word for **exceeding** is *perilupos*, which meant to be grieved all around, or intensely sad, or sad through and through. It has the idea that in times of our sadness we can have times where a bright ray of hope can shine through and we have some relief from it.

But in Christ's situation there was not a moment of relief, no lessening of the grief, no bright ray of hope shining through the clouds, just this constant heaviness of soul where he had nothing but continuous grief. And we want to note that Christ was sinless, his soul was sinless, yet here he is experiencing the deepest of grief as he was facing his death on a cross.

So what did he want his disciples to do? Well obviously there was nothing they could do about what he was going to have to go through because of the Father's plan for his life, but there was something they could do man to man, friend to friend, disciple to teacher and that was remain there with him and pray! And that's what he asked from them.

**Tarry** here is the orist active imperative of *meno*, which means to abide, remain, or stay here, as we would say. And to keep **watch** is the present active imperative of *gregoreo*, which means to keep watch. **With me** is *met'emou* and the word *meta* meant to be in someone's company. Christ wanted his disciples to be by his side while he was going through all this; he wanted them to pray with him; and he wanted them to keep watch with him. And this has the idea of being mentally and spiritually alert so one could be spiritually prepared for anything that could come along.

HHH. Christ came to save our souls.

“For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's *lives* (souls - *psuche*), but to save them. And they went to another village.” Luke 9:56 ο γαρ υιος του ανθρωπου ουκ ηλθεν **ψυχας** ανθρωπων απολεσαι αλλα σωσαι και επορευθησαν εις ετεραν κωμην.

To **destroy** is the aojist active infinitive of *apollumi*, to destroy. And to **save** is the aojist active infinitive of *sozo*, to save. Both are in the *infinitive* and the infinitive denotes the purpose behind the action. The action is Christ coming to earth the aojist active indicative of *erchomai*, to come. And here he is telling us the reason **why** he came to earth. **The purpose of his appearing on earth to man was not to destroy the souls of men, but to save them!**

That invisible part of us that we cannot see, that which is covered by our aging bodies, that which is us, our true identity. It is that which Christ loved, loves and died for. Soul for soul. Christ exchanged his soul for our souls paying the penalty of death for our souls, which is that separation from the Eternal Father, so that our souls could live eternally. But Christ cannot force anyone to come to him for his forgiveness. They, of their own free will, must willingly come to Christ in faith in him to be forgiven and saved.

III. God can take our souls at any time.

“But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul (*psuche*) shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?” Luke 12:20 ειπεν δε αυτω ο θεος αφρον ταυτη τη νυκτι την ψυχην σου απαιτουσιν απο σου α δε ητοιμασας τινι εσται.

Luke 12:16-20 is such a familiar story of so many people that have lived on the earth. They had these types back then and America is full of them today. It's a story where they finally make it in life; the money is coming in and they can now get a bigger house, buy more goods, have a place to store those goods, even be so set up financially that they can retire, hit the golf course and take it easy.

They lived their lives, as if there was no tomorrow, and they lived them as if there was no God that they are accountable to. They, and their wives, worked hard for so many years, many retire at an early age, they have one or more retirement incomes coming, they have their health insurance, houses paid off, money in the bank, they move to retirement communities, now they want to take life easy, they want to golf, fish, go shopping – they want to **enjoy life and have fun!**

But they forgot one thing; they forgot the most important thing and that is God has the power over their souls and he can demand their souls and ours at any time! This is why Christ called the rich man a fool. The word **fool** is *aphron* and it comes from two words, a – negative, and *phroneo* - to think. So it has the idea of non-thinking. The individual is so focused on getting ahead, the gaining of money, the accumulation of things and getting himself to the place in life where he can kick back and take life easy that he has never thought about his soul and what is going to happen to his soul when he dies!

But there is something else, and that, in his non-thinking, is he has never taken God into consideration! And this is why the term **fool** was used of those who deny God in their thinking and his right over our souls. The word for **require** is *apaito* and it meant to demand back what is yours! **So God is demanding the rich man's soul back, because his soul, and our souls, belong to God!**

### JJJ. Possessing our souls in patience.

“*In your patience possess ye your souls.*” Luke 21:19 εν τη υπομονη υμων κτησασθε τας ψυχας υμων.

The word to **possess** is the present middle indicative of *ktaomai*. But before we get down to the significance of this passage, we need to see what Christ has said that leads up to it. He's describing some very serious, life-threatening events that, by way of a double reference, refers to what is going to happen to Jerusalem in 70AD and at the end of the Age. Events that are going to be going on all around them, outside the country and what many of them may have to go through.

Many false Messiahs, wars and commotions, nation rising against nation, kingdom against kingdom, earthquakes om different places, famines, pestilences, fearful sights and great signs from heaven, persecution, imprisonment, being betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends some being out to death and hated by all men.

Now, in light of believers having to go through even some of these things, as we have seen down throughout history and the early Church in Israel, it becomes easy to see why one could become terrified and fall apart on the inside. If we hit the “panic button” just because we don't have the money to pay the electric bill, then how much more severe the impact of these situations will be on us?

That's why the Lord tells us, “*In your **patience** possess ye your souls.*”. The word for **patience** is *hupomone*. Now *hupomone* has several ideas involved in it. First, it tells us that the believer is going through some sort of trial. Second, he is bearing up under the trial. He doesn't panic; he doesn't run away; he stays under the trial. Third, there has to be something else going on inside of him that gives him the strength to bear up under the pressure and that something is living in the spiritual life dynamic consisting of faith in Bible doctrine, under the filling of the Holy Spirit. Fourth, and by enduring the situation each day, he is able to make constant progress forward, so it gives him forward momentum.

The word used here for to **possess**, *ktaomai*, has been translated as to purchase, to acquire, to obtain, to possess, but it really speaks of having control over something. So it's to gain control, or to retain control over the soul.

When the believer in Christ starts living outside the spiritual life that God has provided for him, which consists of prayer, the true filling of the true Holy Spirit, the exercising of faith in the Word of God, living by faith, occupation with Christ through Bible doctrine and living in the new nature and not the old one, then they will come under the control of the flesh nature.

The pressures of life, which in this case are severe and ongoing, will translate into stress in the soul, the result of which will turn into sin in the soul, with the first sins coming from the emotional complex of the soul. The first emotion that is generally activated is fear, followed by anger. Then other soul sins will follow to the place where the believer will start having problems with scar tissue garbage of the soul, then dalliance or involvement in false doctrine, and then the soul will start to have problems with fragmentation, then polarization and all sorts of psychological disorders.

It's very easy to see how, in time, because one has not been living in the spiritual life dynamic supplied by God, that the believer will lose control over their soul life activity, as it plunges into many and severe problems. But by enduring the pressure situations of life, then or now, through faith in the Word and the filling of the Holy Spirit, we will have the strength and peace to retain control over our souls!

KKK. Christ laid down his soul for the sheep.

“As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my **life** for the sheep.” John 10:15 καθως γνωσκει με ο πατηρ καγω γνωσκω τον πατερα και την **ψυχη** μου τιθημι υπερ των προβατων. Verses 11,15,17 all use the same verb, *tithemi*, for giveth, or lay down.

As we can see the word for **life**, once again, is not biological life, but *psuche*, the word for the **soul**. **Christ laid down his soul for the sheep**. And the word **for** is *huper* and there are four ideas found in *huper*: protection, causal, representation and substitution, with the three proceeding from the original idea of protection. First came the idea of protecting someone, then causal, representation and substitution.

All four of these ideas, although separate in activity, are connected to together, for there is another idea found in *huper* and that is there is **a close relationship that exists** between the two parties, or that there is **love on the part of the one toward the other**.

There is another idea involved in *huper* and that is there is always a purpose involved for the person, who is being protected, therefore the protection of that person is paramount! That is, the one who is doing the protecting has a purpose for the one he is protecting.

Another idea found in *huper* is that there is always a **person** involved. **It never is used for inanimate objects, business matters, or concept involving principles**. It always has a very personal dynamic going on between two people.

So what we have so far is that when *huper* is brought into the equation we have an entirely different world opened up before us. ***Huper* always has an activity in view, substitution, representation, protection, etc.**, but it goes way beyond that! It tells us that **two people are involved**, that what is being done is **a very personal matter between these two people**, that **one is doing an action for the other person; the decision to perform the act could be spontaneous, or it could have been planned out in advance**, that **love and/or a close relationship exists between the two people**, because of that love or close relationship, **the one party is caused to perform an action for the other party**; it also tells us that the party performing the action also has a **purpose for the person** he is doing the action for, that the action he is performing is **to protect the other person**, and that the action being performed **can be to protect the other person, represent the other person, or substitute himself for the other person**.

## 1. Protection

Originally *huper* had the idea of over, of standing over, or bending over like a shield, that gave it the idea of protection. Where one would stand over, or bend over someone else in defense of someone, to use their body as a shield to protect them. We're familiar with the concept of how soldiers used their shields to protect their bodies from the blows of swords, arrows, spears, etc..

It's this idea that is found here, but instead of using a shield to protect the other person, one used their entire body to protect them. From this idea of protection by shielding came substitution, causal and representation. Now picture the sinner and the wrath of God. In God's wrath he demands satisfaction in his judgment. But remember, Christ laid down his soul to protect **our** souls!

We can see the wrath of God ready to be taken out on the sinner, but Jesus Christ comes between us and this holy, righteous God and covers us with his body. He is now shielding us from the blows of God's wrath! He is now taking all the blows of God's wrath on himself and he dies.

This is *huper*. But remember all the other concepts found in *huper*, for they are also there at the same event when he shielded us from the wrath of the Father: Christ's personal involvement with the other person, his great love for that person, the purpose of his heavenly Father that exists for that person, him being caused to do what he did because of these things.

## 2. Causal

*Huper* also has the idea of **causal** in it, where one person's actions are being caused for another person's sake. Where an individual is caused to do something on behalf of someone else, and we end up saying that he did something **because** of so and so. You could ask the individual why he was doing an action and he would say, "I'm doing it **because** of: my wife, my family, my country, etc.."

*Huper* always has a personal object in view, that is, a real live person; and it also has the idea of a **love** for that person, a **purpose** for that person, or a **relationship** with that person. Having said that, now the other person embarks on a certain course of action that will benefit that person, or persons. **He is being caused to do something that will protect and benefit that person.**

When the **causal** side of *huper* is being looked at, we would say a certain action is being done because of another person, and sometimes we would translate the idea as, "*for the sake of*". Under the **causal** idea we have these things in view: for another person's benefit, for his sake, for his advantage, for his well being, for his safety, for his protection, for his future, that there is a purpose for the person. The act always denotes that there is an underlying purpose for that person for whom an action is being done.

In this there is always an act that is being performed, a specific individual or individuals in mind, a love and/or relationship with the individual and a purpose for the individual. The causal sense of *huper* is **not centered around a principle, but around a person**.

For example, a man goes out to the front line of battle to engage an enemy that threatens his family and country. We know **what** he is doing; he is fighting to protect his family. Or we could say that he is fighting for the sake of his family and country. **So it is his love for his family and country that causes him to go out on the firing line.**

Men and women get up every morning to go to work, and often at jobs that they do not enjoy, and for not enough pay. Many work at two and three jobs just to make ends meet. Why do they do this? For a principle? No! They do this because back home they have hungry mouths to feed. They do this **for the sake of** their loved ones back home.

*Huper* tells us that there is an action being performed, but in the causative sense it also tells us **why** this action is being done. It tells us that there is some specific person or persons in mind as the reason why it is done. We know what Christ did; he died on the cross for our sins. But **why** did he do it? Why did he bear all of God's wrath on himself; the wrath that we had coming? What **caused** him to do such a thing? Was it for a principle? Was it for a practical matter? Or was it **because he had specific people in mind**? So now we come down to Christ bearing our penalty for sin on the cross. Did he do this simply as a principle to satisfy the justice of God? Or was there something more personal in mind? Remember, *huper* centers around the personal element.

Christ died for **us** actually says that Christ died **for our sakes!** We'll get into the *our* later as to **who** the *our* refers to. In the causal sense of *huper* we see that Christ was caused to die **for our sakes**, that is, for the purpose of saving us from God's judgment on our sins.

And for the purpose of saving us is not to be taken in the sense of that there might be the potential of saving us, or the possibility of saving us, or that we might get saved, but with **the full purpose that we would get saved and for his eternal purpose he had in mind for us!** Christ's death on the cross secured our salvation! His act had a purpose behind it; we are benefited, but he has his own reasons.

The one thing that really stands out, along with all the other aspects of *huper*, is the **personal element.** The personal element means that there is a specific individual in mind, and a specific purpose concerning that individual for whom one is doing these acts. Whether they are acting as the **representative** of that person, or acting as their **substitute**, or being **caused** to act for the safety, well being, or benefit of that person. It always has the idea of a strong personal relationship between the two people, with the one acting in various roles for the other.

**Huper is the word that is only used in conjunction with the elect** explaining to us who Christ died for and why! The real purpose behind Christ's death on the cross was to save the elect. Christ was caused to die on the cross for the elect's sake. Even though Christ paid the penalty for all sin, (we'll get into that later), he did it specifically for the sake of the elect. Salvation might be potential for the rest of the world, but it was secured for the elect at the cross. It was mission accomplished for us. Christ was caused to die for the sake of the elect because the Father had given them to him.

*Huper* has in it a **close personal relationship between two individuals.** Proceeding out of that comes the basis for **protection.** From the idea of **protection** is developed the three ideas of **causal, substitution** and **representation.** **In *huper* the relationship existed before the act not after it!** It is this relationship that is the causative agency behind all the acts performed on behalf of the other person.

You say, no relationship existed between us and God prior to our salvation though! But what about **God's great love that he had for us since eternity past?** What about **God choosing us in his eternal purpose in eternity past?** What about **God giving us to his Son as a gift?** We will be covering the many passages in the NT that tell us not only **who** did Christ die for, but **why** he did it.

### 3. Representation

As we have seen, because *huper* has in it the idea of a close relationship that existed between two individuals, it led the way to this relationship expressing itself in the one protecting the other, defending the other, doing things for the other person's sake, etc., and came out in such areas of: business, commerce, law, government and religion.

For example, when the **causal side** of *huper* is being brought out, one would be saying they are doing something "**because of**" some person, or "for their sake". "I'm here **because** of my wife". Or, "I'm doing this **for their sakes** not yours". They are telling us **why** they are doing something, that they're doing it for somebody else's sake, and that the other person will be benefited by their actions. But if they say, "I'm here **on behalf of** this person", then they are telling us that they are the **personal representative** of another person or organization. Let's say that a king, a president, or even a head of a corporation needs to go, or wants to go to another place to conduct business or the affairs of state. But for some reason, he is unable to go, or unwilling to go "*in person*".

He can instead, in his stead, or in his place, **not as his substitute**, but as his **representative** send another person to represent him. That person now becomes his representative; he acts "*in the person of*" the one who sent him. Now the king is not there "*in person*". If he wanted to be there "*in person*", he would have to personally show up!

So, because of age, or health, or security reasons, the king does now want to go to this meeting or whatever it is. Instead, in his place, as his representative he sends another person, an envoy, ambassador, etc.. So when his envoy shows up at the meeting he says, "*I am here **on behalf of the king***" This means that he has been appointed and commissioned by the king to represent him in certain matters pertaining to the affairs of state. He is also saying that the king could not show up "*in person*", but he is there "*in his person*" as his representative. Representatives of one form or another exist all around us today; we just don't think of them in their legal manner. We may have been representatives ourselves of some company or organization.

This was the role of the envoy, a person sent by a government to another country to sign treaties, or conduct the affairs of the state. He was that country's representative. Businesses also have representatives, salesmen, etc., who act "*on behalf of*" their company in conducting business.

Lawyers also fit into this category for they represent their clients only "*at law*". They have a close relationship, which is expressed only in the area of law. So when the attorney appears for his client before the judge he says, "Your honor, I am acting *on behalf of*", then gives his client's name.

*Huper* has in it all the ideas of a **close personal relationship**, a **purpose**, **acting** for the **benefit** of the other person, **causal**, **substitution**, **protection** and **representation**. And can be found expressed in every area of life: personal relationships, work, on the battle field, business, politics, religion and law.

This is the present ministry of Jesus Christ in heaven for all believers in Christ. He is our **representative** and is acting "*on our behalf*" in the two areas of law and religion, if you will. In the **religious area** he acts as our High Priest representing us in our priesthood before the Father. In the **legal area** he acts as our defense attorney before the bar of God's justice. "*My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:*" 1 John 2:1 The word for **advocate** is *parakletos*.

It isn't necessary for us to be there "*in person*" for Christ is already there speaking for us, representing us **in our person**; he is acting "*on our behalf*". That's what *huper* is all about. That's one of the great things about having a representative, you don't have to appear "*in person*", you can have someone else do it for you.

Now how did all this come about? It happened when we believed on Christ as our Savior. When we did, he automatically became our defense attorney to represent us in all legal matters before God. This is what it means to be "*in Christ*", *εν τω χριστω*. It means that you are legally identified with him before the Father. When people believe on Christ he not only becomes their Savior, but he also becomes their representative before God; he now acts in a legal capacity representing them. And when it means that he is "*acting on our behalf*", it means that he is acting **to benefit us!** Most Christians are aware of the idea of representation for it is all around us. Our congressmen, whether we voted for them or not, are our representatives; we see salesmen everyday who represent some company; we see ambassadors from other countries; and we see lawyers in the courthouses representing their clients.

But most Christians don't realize that they have a heavenly representative, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is legally representing them before God! This really comes into play when a Christian dies and goes to heaven. What he is met with is **a legal trial brought against him by Satan to bar his entrance into God's kingdom!** “*And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the **accuser** of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.*” Revelation 12:10

#### 4. Substitution

Another aspect of *huper* is **substitution** where one person is substituted for another. This is where **one does not merely act in another's place, but takes his place!** An attorney will *act in your place* as your representative, but he will **not take your place**, that is, he will not take your punishment.

The **representative** side of *huper* covered a wide arrangements in life: business, law, government, marriage, religion, etc., but the **substitutionary** side of *huper* was found mainly only in the area of religion.

When we translate the different aspects of *huper* out into the English, depending upon the context, we have three different ideas being brought out. If the idea is **causal**, then we would say that Christ died for the sake of the elect. If it was **representative**, we would say that Christ acts on behalf of the elect. If it was **substitutionary**, then we would say that Christ took the place of the elect.

In the Old Testament it says that “The soul that sinneth shall surely die”. If a man sinned, he deserved to die, and death was his sentence. But an animal was brought in to take his place. It was to die instead of him, or *in his stead*, (*instead of*), or in his place. That animal did not represent him, but was killed in place of him.

And when it came down to the time of Christ, he was brought forth as the sacrifice for our sins. The sacrifice that would completely satisfy the righteousness of God the Father. He was substituted for us, or died in our place. It would be the same as if we were being led out to die, having the sentence of death on us, and as we were going out to meet our death, he came forth to die in our place, or as we say, instead of us.

Now as to whether a passage is emphasizing the aspect of **representation**, **causal**, or **substitution** by the use of *huper*, which can be determined by the context of the passage, the one thing that will always be there is the **personal element**. Whatever Christ is doing, he is doing for a person or persons. Whether it is an individual, or a group of people, Christ is acting for their benefit.

There are those who say that Christ died solely to satisfy the justice of God, and that if there is anyone out there who will exercise positive volition and come to Christ in faith, he will save them. But *huper* tells us that whatever the action is that is involved is not an action centered around a **principle**, but an action that is centered around **individuals!**

A mother uses her body to shield **her children** from harm. A man puts his life in jeopardy **to protect his** family, friends, or buddies. *Huper* is bending over to shield a person from harm, to take the harmful thing into your own body to protect the ones you love! **It's a very personal concept**. *Huper* doesn't just tell us **what** Christ did, but **why!** And not only **why**, but for **whom!** **And here we see for whom Christ laid down his soul, his soul to protect our souls, and that it was for his sheep!**

LLL. Christ's soul went down into Hades.

*“He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in **hell** (Hades), neither his flesh did see corruption.” Acts 2:31 προιδων ελαλησεν περι της αναστασεως του χριστου οτι ου κατελειφθη η ψυχη αυτου εις **αδου** ουδε η σαρξ αυτου ειδεν διαφθοραν.*

The Reformers were very clear about the fact that Christ's soul descended into *Hades* at death. Part of the Apostle's Creed reads as: “Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; **He descended into hell**. The third day He arose again from the dead;”. Christ's physical body was laid in the tomb, but his soul went down into *Hades*.

This was prophesied by David, who was not only a king, but a prophet. In the Davidic covenant that God had made with him, *Yahweh* promised him that a descendant of his would not only suffer and die, but also that He would raise him up from the dead to sit on his throne. *“Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;” Acts 2:30* In the original it actually says *ton christon*, not just *christon*, and with the definite article it should read, *“he would raise up **the Messiah**”*, not just raise up Christ.

When Christ went down to *Hades*, he went and preached to the spirits in prison, who had rebelled against God in the antediluvian age by cohabiting with women. *“By which also he **went** and preached unto the spirits in prison;” 1 Peter 3:19* The word for **went** here is *poreuomai*, which means one is going on a journey someplace for the purpose of conducting business, affairs of the state, or for some other reason that has bearing, importance and significance.

We also want to notice that the concept of resurrection, which is the idea of raising up, deals with **Christ's soul being raised up out of Hades!** The expression of *the dead*, or *the dead ones*, is always tied in also with the word *Hades*. So, whenever it says that Christ was raised from the dead, or Christ was raised up from Hades, or Christ was raised up and out from among those who are dead, it is always referring to this one concept that when Christ died, his body was placed in a tomb, **his soul** journeyed down into *Hades*, but that **his soul was raised up from Hades**, out from among those who are dead. Thereupon the surface of the earth it joined his eternal body, which he exists in forevermore.

When people say that Christ came back to life, or that he was raised from the dead, looking only at what transpired in the tomb that day, they are ignoring what really took place that day. His physical body was laid in the tomb, that's true, but what happened to Christ? His person? His consciousness? His personality? His soul? It was not there dead in the tomb with his body; it was someplace else! And the Scriptures are very clear in this matter that his soul, his *nephesh*, went down into the bowels of the earth to a place called *Hades*. *“For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” Matthew 12:40*

What a sad commentary by Peter concerning the nation of Israel, when he said that they wanted a murderer and not the Author of life! *“But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the **Prince** (archegos) of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.” Acts 3:14,15* *Archegos* referred to the Originator of something, the One who began it, and here we see what Christ was the originator of and that is life! But they loved death so much that they chose a man who took an innocent life, instead of the man who created life! And they not only loved and chose death, but they also killed the One who created life and gives eternal life!

MMM. Three thousand souls were saved.

*“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand **souls**.” Acts 2:41* οι μεν ουν ασμενωσ αποδεξαμενοι τον λογον αυτου εβαπτισθησαν και προσετεθησαν τη ημερα εκεινη **ψυχαι** ωσει τρισχιλιαι.

As mentioned before, it is our souls that are saved. Christ gave his soul in exchange as the sacrifice to save our souls! These bodies will not be saved, for they have been thoroughly corrupted by the sin nature dwelling in the flesh and are incapable of eternal life. If we are going to live forever in eternity, which we will, then we are going to have to have a body that is capable of eternal life. That kind of body we will receive at the resurrection. We note that it is the soul that is added to the universal body of Christ, also known as the Church.

But our eternal bodies will not be just resurrected, eternal bodies like the rest of all the OT believers in Christ, but glorified bodies like the glorified body of Jesus Christ! *“Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned **like unto his glorious body**, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”* Philippians 3:21

When Christ was raised from the dead and received his resurrected, eternal body, it was an eternal perfect human body. But when he ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of the Father, he received the glory that he had before his incarnation and that is his glorified body, which is what our bodies will be like! *“And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with **the glory which I had with thee before the world was**.”* John 17:5

NNN. The soul can be strengthened.

*“**Confirming** the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.”* Acts 14:22 επιστηριζοντες τας ψυχας των μαθητων παρακαλουντες εμμενειν τη πιστει και οτι δια πολλων θλιψεων δει ημασ εισελθειν εις την βασιλειαν του θεου.

To **confirm** is the present active participle of *episterizo*, which has the idea of stabilizing, supporting or strengthening. The word confirm is from a Latin root meaning to stabilize. How this is done is by the teaching of the Word of God to them, whereupon they add their faith to it and thereby their souls are strengthened or confirmed.

The particular doctrines that are mentioned in this passage are to **continue in the faith**, which meant to keep with the teaching of the Word of God, living by faith, prayer, and the filling of the Holy Spirit. The second one is that **we will have to go through much pressure in this life** as we journey into the kingdom of God, which pressure we will leave behind on that day we go to be with the Lord. His mode of communication here is *parakaleo*, which had the idea of both exhortation or encouragement depending upon the target audience. The words and tone of the passage indicate encouragement.

The strengthening or confirming the souls of the people of God is found throughout the OT and NT and it is done by communicating to them the Word of God. *“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”* Philippians 4:13 *“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”* Romans 15:13 *“But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”* Isaiah 40:31

OOO. The soul can be troubled.

*“Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have **troubled** you with words, **subverting** your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment.” Acts 15:24 επειδη ηκουσαμεν οτι τινες εξ ημων εξελθοντες **εταραξαν** υμας λογοις **ανασκευαζοντες** τας ψυχας υμων λεγοντες περιτεμνεσθαι και τηρειν τον νομον οις ου διεστειλαμεθα.*

The first word we have, **troubled**, is the orist active indicative of *tarasso*. Now *tarasso* has the idea of agitation. Instead of the soul being all calm and peaceful it is all stirred up, or agitated. The modern word for this would be stress and it refers to a nondescript agitation going on inside of us. It isn't something that we can put our finger on, such as, fear, guilt, anger, etc., but an inward agitation.

Now we see that it was **words** that was causing this agitation – non doctrinal words as taught by legalistic, non grace men. And these words they were teaching, these doctrines that were causing these believer's souls to become agitated were the doctrines of legalism! Specifically that they had to keep the Law of Moses and become circumcised. And the men responsible for this were legalists, who had been associated with the apostles and went out bringing others under their legalism and control.

Point of doctrine is that the accurate grace teaching of God's Word brings peace, calmness and healing to the soul, while the teaching of legalism **agitates** the soul. Instead of us being left with the sense that Christ has accomplished all for us and now we can rest in faith, it puts us under a brand of works **leaving us with the sense of there is something left that we have to do**. This sense there is something we have to do **creates unrest and agitation in our souls!**

The next word, **subverting**, is the present active participle of *anaskeuazo*. *Anaskeuazo* meant to upset, to unsettle, to tear down. It was used in a military sense of invading and dismantling an entire town. Only what we are looking at here is not a town, but a believer's soul! The false doctrines of legalism, any form of teaching of legalism, tears believer's souls down instead of building them up! The teaching of grace and the true doctrines of Christianity edifies the believer's soul, heals the soul, and brings the soul together in a cohesive unity. But false doctrine first of all agitates, upsets and disturbs the believer's soul, then it dismantles, or tears down, the soul.

In this situation it was brought about by communicators, who obviously had not been approved of by the Apostles, who were combining doctrine of Christianity with the legalism of Judaism trying to put new believers back under the Law of Moses. But it could be any form of legalism that will do the same thing! Whether it be the tabooism of 'touch not, taste not, handle not', observing days or diets, circumcision, or anything else.

Legalism always tries to add something to grace, faith and the truth, and it always tries to bring in some form of works, that is, some activity that the believer has to do. It either directly states, or implies by innuendo, that the work of Christ was not finished on the cross and that the believer has to do something in addition to it. Or in their post salvation experience it tries to have the believer doing something, rather than simply living by faith in the Lord and his Word.

But whenever there is the slightest innuendo that the believer has to do something, or has left something undone, then their souls become unsettled, disturbed, fearful and it all begins to unravel from there to the place where the soul starts to come apart. It came together and was built up by grace, faith in the Word and the filling of the Holy Spirit, but legalism dismantles it.

PPP. Doing God's will from the soul.

“Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;” Ephesians 6:6 μη κατ οφθαλμοδουλειαν ως ανθρωπαρεσκοι αλλ ως δουλοι του χριστου ποιουντες το θελημα του θεου εκ **ψυχης**.

“Not with **eyeservice**” comes from the word *ophthalmodouleian*, which denoted a servant, or an employee today, who only performed their service under their master's eye, or while the boss was watching, but neglected it when he wasn't watching. Everybody is familiar with this concept. When the boss, owner, or manager is in the room everybody becomes busy at their desk, station, or bench, but when they walk out of the room people go back to what they were doing before.

The problem is employees are being paid for their time and performing the service they were hired to do. Their time on the job is not so they can surf the Internet, or text on their cell phones, or shoot the breeze with their fellow employees. They're being paid to work. For the Christian the work that they do should be as unto the Lord and the Lord is always watching.

Most places of employment have a variety of characters working for them. There is the **know-it-all** – the self-proclaimed expert on the job. The **gold-bricker** – the one who does just enough to get by on and keep the job. The **hot-dogger** – he's really good at his job, the trouble is he knows it and is always showing off. The **good old boy** – gets along with everybody, ready to crack a smile and a beer, not too good, not too bad at what he does. **Tessie-the-Teaser** – above average looks, drives the ugly men crazy, always marries the last one you'd expect. **Winnie-the-Wise** – crusty old gal full of sage wisdom. **Fred the Frantic Foreman** – goes a mile a minute, because he's afraid of losing his job, likes to yell at the employees. **Space Cadet** – gung-ho twerp that rubs everybody the wrong way. **Lance** – the self-proclaimed lover. **Way-out-Willie** – the resident stoner on the job, definitely not all there, but somehow manages to muddle through and keep his job. And the **Brown-Noser** – which is what a man-pleaser is. Out of all these he is the least favorite.

**Menpleasers** is *anthropareskoi* and it referred to someone who studied someone to find out what the boss liked and disliked, then do the one while avoiding the other. The problem is that they aren't concentrating on doing the best job that they can do on the task that they were assigned to do, but acting in such a way to please the boss. The term today is being a “brown noser”. We should do what we do in life, not to please other people, but to please the Lord.

Paul is giving Christians a code of conduct that we are to live by while we are here on earth. **Children** in the home are to obey their parents; **we all** are to honor our fathers and mothers; **fathers** are not to provoke their children to anger, but raise them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and **servants** are to obey their masters and do their work as unto the Lord. Now if servants are to behave that way with their masters, then how much more are **employees** to behave accordingly!

Paul reminds us that, regardless of our station or position in life, we are all servants of Christ. And as servants of Christ, we belong to Christ, and we are publicly identified as belonging to Christ, therefore there is a code of conduct that all members of the royal family of God are to live by, which he brings out in this passage. And in the matter of working, or whatever we do in this life, we are to do it as unto the Lord! *Doing the will of God from the heart* is literally doing the will of God from out of the totality of the soul, psuche, which entails the mind, the heart, the will, etc.. And this, because it's in the present active participle of *poieo*, to do, tells us that this is to be done on a daily basis regardless of what it is. It is to be our daily practice in life. Whatever we do we are to do heartily as unto the Lord.

QQQ. We are tripartite beings.

*“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole **spirit and soul and body** be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* 1 Thessalonians 5:23 *αυτος δε ο θεος της ειρηνης αγιασαι υμας ολοτελεις και ολοκληρον υμων το **πνευμα** και η **ψυχη** και το **σωμα** αμεμπτως εν τη παρουσια του κυριου ημων ιησου χριστου τηρηθειη.*

The spirit and the soul and the body constitutes all believers in Christ. When we are born into this world, through natural birth, we are born body and soul. Every human being on earth is made up of a soul and body. Every human being has soul life and physical life. Physical life comes at the moment of conception in the womb, but soul life comes from God at the moment of physical birth.

Even though **physical life** begins in the womb at the moment of conception, the OT words reveal that **soul life** is given to people at the moment of physical birth, when they exit the womb. And **spiritual life** begins at the moment when people believe on Christ as their Savior!

**Physical life** continues on until the moment of physical death, which most refer to simply as death where the life force in them ceases to exist. While **soul life** continues on past physical death. There are two schools of thought on this matter. There are the **Traditionalists** who say that the **soul life** of the unsaved exists past physical death, past the judgment and continues to exist in everlasting conscious torment in the lake of fire.

While the **Conditionalists** maintain the same up to a point. They say that physical death, where the body dies, does not have an effect on the soul and that **soul life** exists past physical death, through the judgment, but that the soul is eventually consumed in the lake of fire. We have examined all the passages on this matter and the Scriptures are very clear in this matter that the soul is eventually consumed by the type of fire found in the lake of fire.

But when it comes to believers in Christ, we find something different altogether. They have a body, true; they have a soul, true also; but they have something that the unsaved don't have and that is a human spirit! The **body** is temporal, the **soul** is conditional, but the **spirit** is eternal! And the reason why the spirit is eternal is because it comes to believers in Christ directly from God himself.

We receive this spirit at the moment of our salvation, when we believed on Christ as our Savior. At that moment, when the Holy Spirit enters into our bodies he creates an entirely new person in us. It is not just that we are new creatures in Christ, but that we are a new species of humanity altogether! Our souls are regenerated, we now have a human spirit and the Holy Spirit, which is the spirit of Christ, dwelling within us forever.

We want to notice that the apostle Paul is talking about the sanctification of the believer here in saying that his desire is that God would sanctify us completely. That our spirits, souls and bodies be preserved blameless until the return of Christ to earth. Amemptos doesn't mean that people won't be ascribing blame or fault to us about how we live our lives, (that happens all the time), but that we will be living blameless lives and any fault ascribed to us by others will be groundless. And we will, if we live our lives as unto the Lord seeking to please him.

And even though we will leave these bodies behind at physical death, and receive new bodies at the resurrection, we will be responsible for the acts we have committed in these bodies. Therefore there is the imperative that we live our lives in such a manner so as to be blameless before the Lord.

RRR. Christ is our soul's anchor.

*“Which **hope** we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;”* Hebrews 6:19 ην ως αγκυραν εχομεν της ψυχης ασφαλη τε και βεβαιαν και εισερχομενην εις το εσωτερον του καταπετασματος.

The word for **hope** is not in this verse, but is supplied by the preceding verse. The feminine singular of which links **which** back to the word **hope** in the preceding verse. *“That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon **the hope** set before us:”* Hebrews 6:18

So what is this hope he is speaking about? Well it deals with eternity, with heaven, with living forever, but **it speaks directly of Jesus Christ!** He is our hope, our refuge; he is the One who has entered into the inner sanctuary behind the veil, *“And which entereth into that within the veil;”*.

In verse 18 it talks about fleeing to a person, a place, or to a religious altar or temple for refuge, which alludes also to the cities of refuge that existed in ancient Israel and other cultures as well. To **flee** is *katapheugo* and spoke of a man running away from prosecution, or persecution, to a city, or an altar in a temple, whereupon he would hold on to it tightly and now be safe.

For the believer in Christ our hope, our refuge, the thing that we flee to is not a city, nor an altar, but Jesus Christ himself! He is the One who has entered into heaven; he is the One who has gone behind the veil into the inner sanctuary where the Majesty on High dwells. And note the idea of *katapheugo*, to flee to Christ from prosecution, which in the case of mankind is to flee from the divine wrath of God, which wrath will be poured out on the day of judgment!

We have here the objective use of hope, which tells us that regardless of how we are feeling on any given day, regardless of whether our faith is up or down, objectively speaking, outside of us we have Christ in heaven, who has secured our salvation and eternity for us!

And here Christ is used figuratively as an anchor, an anchor, once again, for our souls! And remember, it is the soul that is the issue here. Christ poured out his soul on the cross to pay the payment to redeem our souls. Soul for soul! When we die, the physical body goes back to the soil from whence it came. But what happens to our precious souls? If one has believed on Christ they go to heaven to be with him for he is our anchor at the other end of the line.

The word is *anchura* and it is the normal word for **anchor**, which we are all familiar with. But we know that he is not a literal anchor, but that he is **like** an anchor! So what does an anchor do? First of all, there is a body of water, the water itself, the land mass under the water, a boat, an anchor, and a line. The boat floats on the body of water, which will shift due to: the wind, the waves, the tide, the current of the sea and from storms.

The boat, in itself, has little or no stability and so it must rely on something else, because it's only contact is with the water, which is constantly moving. To have stability and security in a constantly moving environment the boat must attach itself, through the water, to something that is stable, which is the land underneath the water. The device that is used to do that is the anchor. So here we have the idea of penetrating a medium that is in itself unstable, (the water), to attach itself to something on the other side to something we cannot see, the bottom of the sea. A real world idea we are all familiar with is being used to help explain a spiritual phenomenon in the spiritual world.

We have the **boat**, which is the believer in Christ's soul; the **water or sea**, which is the material world in which we presently live; the **connecting line**, which is the Holy Spirit; the **anchor**, who is Jesus Christ; and the **land**, which is heaven and the throne of grace. (It will aid in our appreciation of this truth by drawing a picture of a boat on the water, with its anchor at the bottom of the sea; and a picture of the believer on earth with a line going all the way through the Cosmos to Christ in heaven).

We have this analogy that refers to the believer's relationship to Christ. Christ is the anchor for the believer's soul. Christ is in heaven and the believer's soul is somewhere here on earth. And separating the two of us is the sea of space and time of this life, with his Spirit dwelling in us. We can think of it as a line that stretches across the universe going from us to Christ and is our spiritual union with Christ. And at the other end of the line is Jesus Christ himself anchoring us firmly on heaven's shores. Not to heaven itself, but to Christ, who is firmly seated in the heavenlies.

*“Both sure and steadfast”*. The word for **sure** is *asphales* and denotes that which is firm, secure, safe, unshaken, unfailing, steadfast, something immovable, something that is firmly fixed. Something like the foundations of the earth.

**Steadfast** is *bebaios* and refers to something which is anchored to a foundation, therefore it can't be moved. In the legal world it referred to an unbreakable contract, or any other legal document. Here in California it reminds one of the building codes where great measures are taken to firmly anchor the structure of a building to its foundation because of the earthquakes.

What these two words tell us is that Christ is our anchor in heaven and he cannot be moved. We are tied to him and he is firmly anchored in heaven at the right hand of the Father on high. We live in a body of flesh at the present time and in a world that is constantly changing. The changes in life, the changes in our life are like being out at sea being tossed up and down by the sea. But our souls are tied to Jesus Christ, who is our anchor in heaven.

He lives in a world that is unseen to us, much like the bottom of the sea was unseen to the sailors above in their boats. But in the world above Christ is unchanging, permanent, eternal, while we live in a world of changing flesh, relationships, matter and world dynamics. And if we should die, as it appointed unto all men to die, then we have the confidence that our souls will not be lost. For all redeemed souls are tied to the same heavenly anchor, Jesus Christ.

And it says that he has entered into the holy of holies in heaven, into the very presence of the Father himself, *“and which entereth into that within the veil;”*. The preposition eis, into, plus the word *eiserchomai, to enter into*, tells us that it was Christ's goal from the very beginning to enter into this place; his movement was always in that direction, and he finally entered into it.

There were two words that were used to describe the earthly temple of God: **one**, the *kalumna* which referred to the curtain that was at the entrance of the temple, and **two**, the *katapetasmatos*, which was the curtain that separated the outer holy place from the inner holy of holies, or the outer room from the inner room.

Christ did not enter into the holy of holies in the temple in Jerusalem, (which was but a copy and shadow of the heavenly temple), for he was not of the tribe of Levi, but Judah. His priesthood is in the Order of Melchizedek and he has entered into the very holy of holies of *Yahweh*, who dwells in the heavens. And because he, our anchor, is there, so are we who have believed in him!

SSS. The soul can become wearied.

“For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your **minds (souls)**.” Hebrews 12:3 αναλογισασθε γαρ τον τοιαυτην υπομεμενηκοτα υπο των αμαρτωλων εις αυτον αντιλογιαν ινα μη καμητε ταις **ψυχαις** υμων εκλυομενοι.

The author here is trying to get us to focus on our race of faith, not on what we're **going through**, not on how we're **getting older**, not on **other believers** in the race, not on those who **have given up**, not on the **hostility of those in the crowd** we are running through, nor **anything else**, but to stay focused on the **race!** And he gives us Jesus Christ as our example to consider. “*Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*” Hebrews 12:2

He tells us to **consider** him using the aoist middle imperative of *analogizomai*, which tells us that this is an action that they aren't presently doing, so they are to start doing it. Start considering the one who endured such contradiction against himself. And we do that by getting our minds off of other people and our problems and by getting them back on Bible doctrine, especially concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ.

*Logizomai* thinking was the thinking of the analyst or accountant. His thinking was purely on hard facts, not on emotions, not on the imagination, not on wishful thinking, not on assumption, but solely upon the facts. Combined with *ana* it tells us that we are to do it over and over, to let the facts about Jesus Christ go over and over in our minds and not be thinking about what we are going through, nor about other people, nor about the negativity of the nay-sayers!

The word *analogizomai* is translated as to **consider** and it can be translated as to contemplate, which is to think fully and deeply about a matter. In the middle voice it tells us that we will be benefited by doing so. The **principle** is that if we have our minds on what we're going through, other people, the hostile attitudes and actions of those around us in life, we will become discouraged in our faith. But if we have our eyes on Christ, his faith, his running of the race, what he went through and his victory, we will be encouraged in our faith and be blessed in every way, especially our mental attitudes!

It tells us that he *endured such opposition from sinful men*. To **endure** is the perfect active participle of *hupomeno*. Now *hupomeno* meant to abide under a pressure situation, to endure a trial, but it's to go through these things in life by faith in the Word in the filling of the Holy Spirit. Christian endurance is not “gritting our teeth” so as to somehow get through the whole thing by some strength we possess, but **to utilize and rely on the spiritual provisions that God has supplied to his children here on earth: the filling of the Holy Spirit, Bible doctrine, faith, the promises of God and confession of sin.**

The perfect tense looks at the entire action from its beginning to its end where the action did come to an end. Christ came to earth for the express purpose of doing the Father's will. And in so doing there came a point in time where he started having hostility directed at him by those here on earth. **The perfect tense tells us that there was a beginning of this hostility from sinful men, but it also tells that there was a point in time where it all came to an end!** Christ ran through this gauntlet victoriously!

Christ is no longer enduring opposition from sinful men! He did when he was here on earth, which he was victorious over, but after he died, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, he no longer is! It was when he identified himself by doing the Father's will here on earth that was when all the hostility was directed at him **and by those who claimed to be doing the will of God!**

The word for **opposition** is *antilogia*, **such opposition** is *toiauten antilogian*, such a kind as this, or opposition like this. *Antilogia* is to refute, to contradict, to argue against and accompanied with the idea of anger and hostility! **It's to be openly opposed to an idea, plan, or project, not just with one's words, but also with one's actions.**

Just about every time the Lord opened his mouth to make a statement of truth on something, or to state what the Father wanted him to say, or to express divine viewpoint, the people of Israel would contradict him, deny what he said, argue the point with him, try to trip him up, try to discredit him, lie about him, malign him, or even try to kill him! *Antilogia* is about opposition to an idea combined with extreme anger, but it is also a function of pride, anger and extreme negative volition to the truth.

Some of the passages recording this are, “*And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him,*”, John 5:16a; “*Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him,*”, John 5:18a; “*because the Jews sought to kill him.*”, John 7:1b; “*Why go ye about to kill me?*” John 7:19b; “*Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?*”, John 7:20b; “*thy record is not true.*”, John 8:13b; “*But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth,*”, John 8:40a; “*and hast a devil?*”, John 8:48b; “*Then took they up stones to cast at him:*”, John 8:59a.

This is a picture that will go down in history forever. The Creator of heaven and earth, the very God of Israel, the One who is truth incarnated going to his very own people with the truth and they would contradict him, argue with him, try to trip him up, call him names, blaspheme him, call him a liar, call him a bastard, say he was demon-possessed, even try to kill him to shut him up! Sinful beings arguing with God, with the only One, who was speaking the truth!

“*For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself,*”. The word for **sinners** is *hamartolos* and is an interesting statement. Israel had its share of prostitutes, murderers, liars and thieves, but **the ones that opposed him the most were the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees!** They were the religious leaders of the nation of Israel. They were the ones who were supposed to be leading the nation of Israel into the truth, but instead, they were not only leading the people away from the truth, but they were attacking the only man to ever walk on the earth who was the truth incarnated!

It was these men that God called the sinners. In their self righteousness, arrogance and extreme negative volition, they only viewed other people as being sinners – but **never themselves!** Yet with all the prostitutes, murderers, liars and thieves walking around in Israel, they were the lowest of sinners. Even today we have so many people, who look down on drug addicts, prostitutes, criminals of all sorts, and view them as being sinners. Yet in the eyes of God we are all sinners!

“*Lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds (souls).*” The word for **weary** is the aorist active subjunctive of kamno. The subjunctive mood used with hina introduces a purpose clause. The writer is telling us to consider Jesus Christ and what he went through for the purpose of **preventing us from becoming weary in our souls, or if we are weary, it's telling us how to get out of it.**

We also see that the believer's soul can become weary and that weariness of soul can lead the believer in Christ to becoming discouraged. “*For the purpose that you will not grow weary losing heart.*”. The one deals with mental exhaustion and the other deals with wanting to give up, a letting go. Standing for truth in the midst of trials, pressure, apostasy and the attacks of negative people can wear the believer down to the place of exhaustion and wanting to give up, but we are to consider Christ and what he went through. And as we get our souls turned back to the Word and what our Savior went through, they will become strengthened once more so we can keep moving forward in our faith.

TTT. Pastors watch over the souls of their flock.

*“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they **watch** for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”*

Hebrews 13:17 πειθεσθε τοις ηγουμενοις υμων και υπεικετε αυτοι γαρ **αγρυπνουσιν** υπερ των **ψυχων** υμων ως λογον αποδωσοντες ινα μετα χαρας τουτο ποιωσιν και μη στεναζοντες αλυσιτελες γαρ υμιν τουτο.

**First** of all, this shows that God has placed leaders in the Church for the purpose of ministering to the souls of the believers he has assigned to them. And **secondly**, those believers are commanded to **obey** their leaders in the matters concerning the spiritual life. The word used here for **obey** is the present middle imperative of *peitho*, which is a command to keep an action going, and in the middle voice, it shows that those believers, of their own free will, will be benefited in doing so.

*Peitho* means to obey, and it also means to be persuaded. It has the idea of being persuaded, that is, to be shown the benefit in doing something, then to obey. It is closely related *pisteuo*, to trust, and it brings out the idea of obedience produced by persuasion and trust. Which tells us that the sheep, whom God has assigned to a local church under the care of a Pastor-Teacher, do not blindly obey their Pastor, nor do they place their trust in him, but that they are shown from the Word of God on these matters, are convinced of them and submit to the authority of their Pastor in matters concerning the Word of God, Christian living and the spiritual life dynamic.

*“Them that have the **rule** over you”* is the present middle participle of *hegeomai*. There is no reference to any spiritual gift here, because God can and does, at different times, for different reasons and in differing situations, place certain men over a particular local church. These are men, (and it is always men, never women), who have a degree of spiritual growth and maturity in the Christian life. And in the present participle it tells us that this is what these men do as a way of life as unto the Lord.

A man with the spiritual gift of evangelist may be brought in to lead people to Christ and get the church to a certain level of growth and then a man with the spiritual gift of Pastor-Teacher will be brought in to take them to maturity. Or a church will be without a pastor for awhile and then God will bring in some man with even a non communication spiritual gift to preside over the church in a pastoral position, until a Pastor-Teacher can be called and installed. The believers there are to submit to these leaders.

The word *hegeomai* has the idea of leading before the mind and is reminiscent of the shepherds of sheep, who would keep careful watch and count of the sheep that were assigned to them. As the sheep went in and out of the sheepfold, he not only would count them to make sure they were all there, but he would also look them over to make sure they were OK. And so the Pastor-Teacher is in the local church, only he is inspecting their souls as to how they are doing.

They had certain men over them throughout the years; some moved on to other churches, some went on to be with the Lord. Whatever the case may be, the believers there, and here, are to respect the authority of the men that Christ has placed over them and submit to them. But verse seven is a key verse in what is going on here. All the believers in all the local churches are to **mimic their faith!** *“Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: **whose faith follow**, considering the end of their conversation.”* Hebrews 13:7

The issue is not what their spiritual gift is, nor their mannerisms or personality. The issue is their love for Bible Doctrine and the faith rest life that these men are living. Believers are to note their leader's faith and then to live their lives by faith as these men do!

To **submit** is the present middle imperative of *hupēike*, which means to submit, to yield to, to give way to. The idea is where if you have two people, who hold to differing views or opinions, one has to give way to the other. The one who is supposed to give way to the other is the believer in the church yielding to the authority of the one whom God has placed in authority.

And why not! These are the men that God has placed in the church, they are the ones that Christ has given the authority to minister to the believers in that church, and he has placed you in that church. So it is only fitting that the believer submits himself to their authority. Especially when you hold in view that they are there to minister to your souls and you will be blessed by their ministry! But many believers today have an authority problem, which ends up being detrimental to their souls and growth.

“*For they **watch** for your souls,*”. The word for **watch** is the present active indicative of *agrupneo*, which meant to be awake, to be sleepless because you're watching for something while you watch over something. Obviously this would bring in the idea of soldiers watching out for the enemy, but in the context, **it refers to shepherds staying up at night watching out for the predators who would seek to eat their flock**. It doesn't refer to the literal idea of being up at night because of their flocks, although that does happen, but to the intense care that pastors have for their churches.

The present indicative denotes the ongoing daily reality of what it's like to be a true minister of Christ in a local church. It's not a nine to five job, it's not a career, it's not a profession, it's not something that will bring fame, or glory, or money, despite the spectacles one might see on TV or in their local area, but an all consuming existence of teaching Bible doctrine and caring for the flock assigned to you.

But they do it willingly as unto the Lord. Remember they are servants of Christ, not of the people, nor of the denomination that they might belong to. And as they minister to the flock they are serving the Lord. This is brought out by the use of the active voice, which tells us that they do this of their own free will. But there is something else, they will be held **accountable** to Christ for their service.

It's the leaders of the local church, it's the Pastor-Teachers in the local church, it is they that watch over the believer's souls and it is they who are held accountable. No one else. And authority is the legal right to exercise power over others and must always be handed down from a superior to one under him. It is also restricted to an area with the boundaries clearly defined. Concerning pastors in local churches the authority they have is granted to them by Jesus Christ, it is over a specific church and is confined to the spiritual area of teaching the Word of God and the running or overseeing of the church itself.

“*Do it with joy, and not with grief*” is interesting because what we have here are two things that constitute the life of the Pastor, joy or grief. Believers who submit to their authority, who have positive mental attitudes, who are positive to the Word, who chip in and help with the ministry, who pray and basically apply Bible doctrine to their lives, are a joy to the Pastor.

But if they don't, if they are fighting their authority, have lousy mental attitudes, don't apply the Word, are apathetic concerning the church, negative to doctrine, then the Pastors **groan** – *stenazo*. **Groaning describes the emotions of the one who resumes a thankless job, often with opposition, that causes him physical and/or emotional suffering**. Other factors that can come into play in groaning are: painful, thanklessness, unappreciated, futility, pointless, wearisome, what's the point, discouragement, feeling trapped “*Unprofitable for you.*”, *alusiteles*, which is not taking advantage of the expenses paid out. A night's lodging and dinner has been paid for, but the individual does not take advantage of it. The sacrifice these men have made to bring forth the Word is wasted on these types.

UUU. The flesh's lusts war against the soul.

“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly **lusts**, which war against the soul;” 1 Peter 2:11 αγαπητοι παρακαλω ως παροικους και παρεπιδημους απεχεσθαι των σαρκικων **επιθυμιων** αιτινες στρατευονται κατα της ψυχης.

The word for **dearly beloved**, also translated as **dear friends**, is *agapetoi*. Now it was used in those times for one who was a friend to you, but more than that it was a covenant term for those whom God had poured out his love in saving them and bringing them into a covenant relationship with him.

**I beseech you**, or **I urge you**, is the present active indicative of *parakaleo*, which we notice is not in a command form, or even as a rebuke, but of an encouragement. It's to urge, or to encourage someone to a particular course of action. It's a much more gentle mode of communication showing love and an understanding of the difficulties that we have in trying to live our lives in a manner pleasing to God while we live in this world in these bodies of flesh, which continually lust after things.

In urging them he brings to mind their true status as sons of God, that they are aliens and strangers in this world. We may have been born into this world through our mothers and fathers, but we have been born into another world through the new birth, through faith in Jesus Christ, resulting in the fact that we are now aliens and strangers in this world!

He called them, (and us), **aliens** and **strangers**, *paroikos* and *parepidemos*. The **alien**, *paroikos*, was someone of another race, who had come from another nation, in which they had their citizenship, to live alongside you in your country. Only we are **now** the aliens who are living alongside a foreign people, in a foreign land. Which is how we are to regard our present status now in this life.

Aliens had several classifications. **Alien** – one born in another country, who belongs to that country, who has citizenship in that country. **Alien in transit** – one belonging to another country, who is passing through your country. **Resident alien** – 1) aliens residing on a temporary basis; 2) aliens residing on a permanent basis.

**Domicile** versus **residence**. One's **domicile** is one's permanent legal residence. **Residence** is where one is permanently, or temporarily living. One has his **domicile** in one country, but can **reside** in many other countries, either on a temporary or permanent basis. One has only one domicile, but can have many residences over the years.

Christians have this **earth** as their residence, their **permanent residence**, permanent that is, as far as their life span goes, but their domicile is heaven! And on this earth they can have many residences, that is, many different places that they will reside, either on a temporary, or semi-permanent, basis.

**Stranger**, *parepidemos*, speaks of the same person, the alien, but denotes that place in which they are temporarily residing is a strange place, a place totally foreign to them. Similar to the idea of an American moving to some far off village in the Andes, or Asia, where are a people, who are not of their race, who have a different language, different culture, food, looks, etc., where everything is totally foreign, different and strange to them.

And so it is of all believers in Christ, who are **living in this world**. Everything about this world is strange to us: the people, the language, the customs, the morals, the values, the goals. **It is their world and we are the strangers in it!**

Now with that as our background, the Apostle Peter gives us the instruction to abstain from sinful lusts or desires. Living according to one's lusts, following after one's lusts, being driven by one's lusts might be the *de rigueur* of the times, fashionable or cultural; it might be the driving force behind the lives of people and the society in which they live, but not for Christians. In fact, just the opposite! **We are to abstain from the lusts which come out of the flesh nature in which we temporarily live.**

To **abstain** is the present active infinitive of *apecho*, which meant to hold oneself back from doing something. In the middle voice it tells us that the believer in Christ is responsible for doing the action, only he can do it and that he will be benefited by doing so.

The expression **sinful desires**, *sarkikon epithumion*, is literally, **fleshly desires**. Which tells us that these desires, or lusts that we have, (the word **lusts** is from the Old, or Middle English meaning desires), come out of our fallen, Adamic, flesh natures. The flesh lusts. That's all it wants to do; that's all that it can do. And it has over 25 categories of lust.

Now what Peter is telling us to do is for us to **abstain** from them, **keep away from them**, to **hold ourselves back from doing them**. There is the desire to do something, then there is the doing of it. But just because there is that impulse or desire to do something, doesn't mean that we have to do it! So there is the desire to do something, the doing of it, then there is the doing of it over and over again.

What we have to do is hold ourselves back from doing them and the **mechanics** of **how** we do that is by **deciding** not to, but the **power** we need to not do them is provided by the filling of the Holy Spirit! “*This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*” Galatians 5:16 The word for **fulfill** is *teleioo* and it means to complete.

As we get older in life old lusts may fade away, only to be replaced by new and different lusts. Even the mature believer in Christ will still have a problem with lusts because lusts are a part of our flesh nature! The flesh lusts! That's all it can do. That's all that it wants to do! And it is these lusts that, if we allow ourselves to live in them, that will keep us from living in the spiritual life dynamic. “*For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*” Galatians 5:17

And Peter tells us that these lusts **war**, *strateuo*, against our souls! The word for **war** is the present middle indicative of *strateuo*, which was the word for military service, to serve as a soldier, to serve in the army, to carry on a war. The idea being of men in the army carrying on a campaign of war against the enemy. **Only the lusts we have here are the soldiers, (who serve the flesh body), who are the ones carrying on a campaign of war against our souls!**

The flesh does everything that it can to keep the soul from living in the spiritual life of peace, love and joy. It does everything that it can to destroy the soul, not kill it, (for it would, if it could), to keep the soul from enjoying its communion with God. It does everything it can to destroy, to tear down the well being of the soul and **it uses lusts to do that!**

The soul needs a cohesive tension to hold it together. And only by living in the spiritual life of faith in the Word of God and his promises and the filling of the Holy Spirit can the soul receive the spiritual phenomena that holds it together, without which the soul starts to come apart. So it uses lusts, as its evil little soldiers, to get our eyes off of the Word and the spiritual life unto the many desires of the flesh. Desiring things, and even acquiring these things will never bring our souls the health, healing and joy we so desperately need, which are only found in having that daily communion with God.

VVV. We can purify our souls.

“*Seeing ye have **purified** your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:*” 1 Peter 1:22 τας ψυχας υμων ηγγικότες εν τη υπακοη της αληθειας δια πνευματος εις φιλαδελφιαν ανυποκριτον εκ καθαρως καρδιας αλληλους αγαπησατε εκτενωσ.

The word for **purify** here is the present active participle of *hagnizo*, which really gets into the idea of **separation**; the separating of one thing from another, so as to have purity, for the purpose of serving God. The doctrine of separation deals with removing ourselves from those things and people, who are negative to the Word, negative in general, not living by faith, anti grace, anti truth, living by the flesh nature and who are caught up in the world system.

Why we have to do this is not only to honor the Lord and be a testimony for him, but also to **protect our souls!** When people are angry, legalistic, works oriented, self righteous, carnal, materialistic, worldly, bitter, have negative mental attitudes, etc., etc., they will radiate those negative vibes around them, and the closer we allow them into our lives **the more they will affect us – negatively so!** At the very least their effect will disturb and agitate our souls, but we can be even so affected that we can join in with their evil!

We know the importance of strengthening our souls, (an inner strengthening so as to protect them), with the metabolized Word of God, faith and the filling of the Holy Spirit, but we also are responsible to keep negative concepts away from us and us from them. By living a separated life unto God we are keeping harmful influences **away** from our soul. “*See then that ye walk **circumspectly**, not as fools, but as wise,*” Ephesians 5:15 “*Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye **separate**, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,*” 2 Corinthians 6:17

Living a separated life **consists** of separating ourselves **from** the things of the world, the things of Satan and the things of the flesh nature, which we do by living in the new man under the filling of the Holy Spirit. In the concept of separation there is always the **from**, the **to**, and the **for**. We are separating ourselves **from** these negative concepts, **unto** God, **for** the purpose of serving him, pleasing him and fellowshipping with him.

And how we do this is by obeying the truth. Throughout the OT and the NT there has always been this command from God to his people to live a separated life, as we have just seen in 2 Corinthians 6:17. And again in 1 Peter 1:16, “*Because it is written, Be ye **holy**; for I am holy.*” This matter of being holy, that is, living a separated life, isn't a suggestion, but a command! God is commanding us to live separated lives and he tells us the reason **why! Because he is holy!**

A **pure heart**, or a purified heart, later on in the passage, deals with an inner cleansing dynamic, which is what the word *katharos* is about. While the first word for **purifying the soul**, *hagnizo*, deals with a practical, mechanical idea of putting a distance between oneself and the negative things of the world, flesh and the devil, and from those who are constantly involved in those things and that also entails separating ourselves from people who are non faith, negative, bitter and angry!

An **unfeigned love**, *anupokriton*, is a non hypocritical love, a love that is not faked, or phony, which we see so much of. True love, *agape*, is produced in the souls of believers in Christ only by the filling of the Holy Spirit. Anything else is phony. My Online study of Positive Mental Attitude Dynamics gets into the matter of why separation from negative things is so important to our souls.

WWW. Christ is the soul's Shepherd and Bishop.

*“For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”*  
1 Peter 2:25 ητε γαρ ως προβατα πλανωμενα αλλ επεστραφητε νυν επι τον ποιμενα και επισκοπον των ψυχων υμων.

**Wolves, dogs, sheep and pigs.** These are the words used by God to classify different categories of people. The **wolves** refer to those men, (and women also), who are unsaved, and who portray themselves as Christians, (the sheep), as Christian leaders, ministers, pastors, evangelists, apostles, etc. in the Church. You will find them in churches, on radio and TV and involved in all sorts of “christian” activities. They are the false apostles, false prophets and false pastors spoken of in the Bible. They were around then and they are certainly around today!

The **dogs** refers to **men** who are unsaved. *“But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The **dog** is turned to **his** own vomit again;”* 2 Peter 2:22a The difference being is that the term **dog** refers to unsaved men, while the term **wolf** refers to unsaved men, who are in a position of teaching and influence over Christians, the sheep.

The word **sheep** refers to only one thing and that is true believers in Jesus Christ. And Christ knows his sheep and his sheep know the sound of his voice. *“And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.”* John 10:4,5,14

Now there are those who mistakenly believe this passage refers to Christians who can lose their salvation, but it doesn't. The term **dogs** refers to unsaved men and the term **pigs** refers to unsaved women! *“And the **sow** that was washed to **her** wallowing in the mire.”* 2 Peter 2:22b Wolves, dogs, sheep and pigs. **Dogs** is in the masculine, his, and **pigs** is in the feminine, her.

Now when we look at the actions of the **dog** turning to his own vomit again, and the **sow** that was washed to her wallowing in the mud, they are both in the active voice, which, the active voice, tells us that the subject produces the action of the verb! The unsaved dogs and the unsaved pigs both turn to what they were involved in – it's their nature! The dogs go back to their vomit and the pigs go back to their wallowing in the mud, **because they are still dogs and pigs!**

But when it comes to the **sheep,** *“For ye were as **sheep** going astray; but are now **returned** unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”*, the passive voice is used, which denotes that the subject receives the action of the verb! The sheep do not simply return to the Shepherd, nor do they return themselves to the Shepherd, but are **returned** to the Shepherd! The dogs and pigs are not returned to the Shepherd, because they don't have a Shepherd, and that's **because they are dogs and pigs, not sheep!**

It is in the nature of sheep to go astray, but it is in the nature of dogs to eat their own vomit and for pigs to wallow in the mud. *“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”* Isaiah 53:6 They go back to following after what their nature is, but the sheep, even though they go astray, are returned to their Shepherd.

And once again, what is the focus of all this? What is Christ the Shepherd of? **Our souls!** He died to save our souls, our souls belong to him, our souls are in union with his soul, and even though our souls tend to wander off in things not good for us, he brings them back to communion with him.

XXX. We're to entrust our souls to god.

*“Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.” 1 Peter 4:19* *ὥστε καὶ οἱ πασχόντες κατὰ τὸ θελημα τοῦ θεοῦ ὡς πιστῶ κτιστῇ παρατιθεσθῶσαν τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν ἐν ἀγαθοποιᾷ.*

**Wherefore**, *hoste kai*, connects us back to the thought of verse one. Seeing that Christ suffered while he was here on earth in the days of his flesh, so will those who belong to Christ. *“Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;” 1 Peter 4:1* And, because we belong to Christ, we will share in his sufferings. *“But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.” 1 Peter 4:13* And because suffering is designed to bring us to maturity as his sons and to complete our souls, we are therefore to entrust our souls unto God in these matters.

**Them that suffer**, the suffering ones, *hoi paschontes*, is the present active participle of *pascho*. The present participle tells us that suffering is a way of life for believers in Christ. It comes in various sizes and shapes and covers many categories, but it is all suffering none the less. Grief, sorrow, loss, crushing disappointments, rejection, ostracism; the list goes on, but it's all suffering.

But our suffering is to be **undeserved**, that is, that it comes about not because of our wrongdoing, which is self-induced misery, nor as the result of divine discipline. But where we suffer, even though we are doing the right thing before God. *“But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.” 1 Peter 4:15,16*

Christ suffered in the days of his flesh here on earth, but many Jews could not and would not accept a suffering Messiah, even though it was prophesied by Isaiah. *“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.” Isaiah 53:3*

And many Christians today have a problem with suffering themselves! They reason if they are saved, if they have been forgiven, if God loves me, then why do they suffer?? The answer is that we have been appointed to not only believe on Christ, but also to suffer for his sake. *“For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;” Philippians 1:29* Besides, it takes Bible Doctrine, faith, the filling of the Holy Spirit and suffering **to complete our souls!**

**“According to the will of God”**, *kata to thelema tou theou*, tells us that the sufferings we go through in this life are according to the standard of what his will is for us, or, according to his plan for our lives. As it says in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, *“In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”*, we are to give thanks to God for everything.

Our bodies, (and our souls), suffer because of the changes we go through in life; they suffer because of the aging process; we suffer because of sickness, disease, injury and death. We suffer because of the elements, the heat, the cold, because we have to earn our food by the sweat of our brow. We suffer because of loss, rejection, disappointment and sorrow. There are so many reasons why we suffer, but they all go back to living in these sin-cursed bodies of flesh, living on a planet of sinful people and all its harsh elements, and a planet ruled by demons. We suffer because of concept of growth and we suffer because of our relationship to Jesus Christ. But in all this, **God wants us to trust him!**

To **commit the keeping of their souls to him** is the present passive imperative of *paratithemi*. The first thing we see is that it is a command for us to keep on doing all throughout our lives, and especially **while we are suffering!** Paratithemi is to hand something over to someone, to place something in their hands, to give someone something for safekeeping.

But more than that is was also a term in the legal world used to denote the depositing of something into the hands of someone else for safekeeping. In this there was the **Trustor**, who is the believer in Christ; the **item named**, the believer's soul; which is **deposited** into the hands of someone who will keep it and protect it; and the **Trustee** is God the Father!

In this there was an agreement made between the Trustor and the Trustee where an item would be left in deposit with the Trustee for safekeeping for a certain period of time, where it would then be returned to the Trustor by the Trustee safe, free, undamaged and in good condition. If one was going on a trip, (or for some other reason), money, valuables, or other valuable items would be left with someone you trust, and when you returned they would be returned to you, all accounted for and in good condition.

To **entrust** is a good term used to denote that act, but what we are to entrust to God is the most valuable thing that we have – **our souls!** And it is our souls that are the most vulnerable thing about us. No one likes pain of any kind, but the worse pain is what our souls experience. So we do everything that we can do to protect them!

The body has skin, muscles and bone to protect its inner vital organs. We layer clothes on us to protect us from the harsh elements. If we are in combat, we protect our bodies with various kinds of armor. And the soul also uses various self defense mechanisms to protect them. We protect ourselves by families, friends, money, insurance of all kinds, fences around our homes and security systems. So it is no wonder that when we go through suffering of any kind, we feel vulnerable, insecure and become afraid. We're afraid of what that suffering is going to do to us on the inside, to our souls!

But commands us to entrust our souls to him for safekeeping. If there is anyone in the universe that we can trust with our souls, (or with anything else for that matter), it's God! One reason we can trust him with our souls is because he is **omnipotent**. There is no one who can overpower God and harm us. And the other is because **God loves our souls!** He had his Son die on the cross to save our souls!

Now as to the length of time as covered by the term of the trust agreement in which the **Trustor**, the believer in Christ, is to place his soul in the hands of the **Trustee**, God, is brought out in the passage by the use of the grammar. We are commanded to entrust our souls into the hands of God for safekeeping **while we are suffering!** Or, **while we are going through suffering**. This certainly would cover the period of time of our suffering, but also, because we go through much pressure and many sufferings in this life, it pretty well **encompasses our lives here on earth!**

But there is something else, and that is whatever that has been entrusted to the Trustee must be returned in as good as condition as when you left it with him! But with God, he restores our souls back to us in **better** condition than what they were when we left them with him! Let's say that someone was going on a trip and all they had was an old clock that didn't work, but to them it was a "valuable" heirloom. So they left it with someone for safekeeping. But when they came back, they found it completely restored and in perfect working condition! They certainly surpassed what was expected of their trust. And so it is with God, when we go through various sufferings in our lives. We hand our souls over to God for safekeeping for the purpose of protecting and preserving them from damage or harm. But what we find is that **he hands our souls back in much better condition than they were before!**

YYY. The soul can be vexed.

“*And delivered just Lot, **vexed** with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, **vexed** his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)*” 2 Peter 2:7,8 και δικαιον λωτ **καταπονουμενον** υπο της των αθεσμων εν ασελγεια αναστροφης ερρυσατο βλεμματι γαρ και ακοη ο δικαιος εγκατοικων εν αυτοις ημεραν εξ ημερας ψυχην δικαιαν ανομοις εργοις **εβασανιζεν**.

We have two words for **vex** in this passage. In verse seven we have the present passive participle of *kataponeo*, and in verse eight we have the imperfect active indicative of *basanizo*. Now the grammar of the present active participle shows us that in verse seven the action of being vexed was an ongoing daily thing with Lot, **while** he was living among those wicked people. But in verse eight the imperfect tense is used to denote an action that was ongoing in the past that had come to an **end**. Which tells us that Lot's soul was being vexed **while** he was living among the wicked in Sodom, but after he **left** the area, and that under God's forceful hand, it **came to an end!**

The passive voice of **vexed** in verse seven tells us that Lot's soul **received** the action of vexation due to him being around those types of wicked people! (Something that believers today should learn a lesson from). Just being around negative people, angry people, wicked people, just living in close proximity to them in our communities will vex the soul of a righteous man or woman. But in verse eight we have the use of the active voice, which tells us, because it is the voice of choice, that **Lot's volition** had a hand in the matter! Which tells us that **Lot, of his own free will, his own decision, subjected his own soul to being tormented on a daily basis because he chose to live around them!**

Lot did not choose to live in Sodom because it would be a good place to raise his daughters and have a quality family life centered around the Lord. Lot did not move to Sodom because it would be a location that would enhance his taking in the Word of God and living a peaceful, spiritual life. Lot moved there because of the business opportunities it would present for him; a place where he could make money and have the material things of this life; and a place where he could get involved in the community, maybe even rising to the top of the political structure of the area! It mattered not to him at all about how wicked the people were who lived there. **But there are consequences to our decisions. There are always consequences to our decisions, whether good or bad!**

The word for **delivered** is the aojist middle indicative of *rhuomai*, which meant to deliver out of situation that is either threatening, harmful, or destructive to one's life or soul. The word rescued conveys that idea quite well. Living in Sodom was not a life threatening situation for Lot and his family; they had been living there for a long time. But it was going to become very life threatening to all concerned in a very short time.

Now the dangerous situation that God was going to rescue Lot out of was the destruction that he was going to rain down on Sodom, one of the five cities in the area. “*And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest, unto **Sodom**, and **Gomorrah**, and **Admah**, and **Zeboim**, even unto **Lasha**.” Genesis 10:19*

Most Christians are aware of the judgment of God brought on Sodom because of their wickedness, but many fail to see the application of the lesson of Lot's situation to their own. How many believers have imperiled the souls of their families by living in areas where there is no teaching of the Word of God, in places where the lifestyles of the people in those areas are destructive to the well being of the souls of the people in their families?

Now there are two ways that our souls can be vexed by those around us. **Directly**, because of the evil they are doing to us personally, or **indirectly**, because we have to live around them and see their evil going on all around us in society.

There has always been a problem with evil doers in society from the beginning. David had it going on around him in his kingdom, when he was alive, a situation that causes doctrinal believers to become aroused to anger. “*A Psalm of David. Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.*” Psalm 37:1 “*Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.*” Psalm 37:8 “*The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.*” Psalm 37:12

It's only natural for doctrinal believers to become angry at what the wicked in life do, but we are commanded to stay away from anger and let the Lord handle them in his justice. “*Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*” Romans 12:9 Vengeance is God's justice in action.

Paul had evil doers in his day and he told us that in the latter times of the Church Age, into the last days and on into the Tribulation itself there will be a rise in evil doers that overtakes, not only our own communities, but the entire world! “*But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*” 2 Timothy 3:13 πονηροὶ δὲ ἄνθρωποι καὶ γοητεὶς προκοποῦσιν ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον πλανῶντες καὶ πλανώμενοι.

The concept of **evil** encompasses all human sin, but it goes beyond that to include human good as well. The Hebrew word for evil, or sometimes the ungodly, or the wicked, is *rasha*, as we have in Psalm 1:1, “*Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the **ungodly**, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.*”

To begin with an evil man or woman is one who has rejected the doctrinal truths of God's Word and the spiritual life dynamic which it provides for the soul. Once one has rejected doctrinal truth, then their soul starts to go downhill and deteriorates. The soul continues to keep on deteriorating, until it is destroyed. Not in the sense that it dies, but in the sense that it has lost its well being.

**The soul keeps on losing its well being and will get to the place that it comes apart.** Mental instability, emotional instability, mental illness, loss of the ability to think doctrinally, or even rationally, being overrun by every sort of mental and emotional sins, accumulating more scar tissue on the soul, even to the place that one can lose their sanity altogether. And we haven't got into the matter of demon possession for the unbeliever, or demon influence for the believer.

But the **evil doer**, the ungodly, or wicked is never satisfied with that. **Their evil impels them to go out out and destroy the lives and souls of those around them in society!** They are called evil doers in the NT, **because their activities in life are evil!** **Even if they do some human good, it's only so they may eventually cause evil to come about!** In the OT the word *rasha* had both ideas in it, that both their souls are evil and all their actions are evil.

We find evil doers in churches, who work to destroy the ministries of good men. We find them in the legislature, where they pass laws that are evil, destructive and against the divine institutes of God. We find them destroying families through drugs and alcohol, breaking up marriages, of taking children away from their fathers. They have destroyed souls and are found in every aspect of society and actively go about seeking to destroy the souls and lives of others.

It is these types that vex the righteous souls of believers in Christ, we let them. They are not just immoral degenerates, but are moral degenerates as well! Now we had seen that in verse seven the present passive participle of *kataponeo* was used the word for vexing Lot's soul.

*Kataponeo* meant to wear down with toil, to exhaust by never ending labor, to be worn out. In the physical sense it would be used for working a slave so hard that he couldn't go on any more, where whips would then be employed to spur him on. In the metaphorical sense it speaks of the mind or soul of the individual, who is being subjected to something so tiring, that he gets worn out, even to the place of giving up, or wanting to give up.

Any parent, who has raised rebellious children, know what it means to become so wore out that they just give up on them, as we have seen with Rebekah in dealing with Esau. “*And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?*” Genesis 27:46 “*Then Rebekah said to Isaac, “I’m disgusted with living because of these Hittite women. If Jacob takes a wife from among the women of this land, from Hittite women like these, my life will not be worth living.”*” NIV

What wore Lot's soul out was from having to live around people who lived filthy lives, “*filthy conversation of the wicked*”, *tes ton athesmon en aselgeia anastrophe*. The word **conversation**, *anastrophe*, denoted the manner of one's living, their behavior, their conduct, how they lived their lives, or as we say, their lifestyles. The word **filthy**, *aselgeia*, spoke of an absence of restraint, lasciviousness of all kinds, all forms of indecency. And every other form of shameful behavior, it also carried with it an insolent disregard for decency! It speaks of an individual that is not only involved in the grossest forms of immorality and perversion of the natural order of life, but does so arrogantly flaunting it in direct antagonism to common decency.

The word for **wicked** here is *athesmon*, which comes from *a* – negative, and *thesmos* – law. Normally the word used for law in the NT is *nomos*, and lawless would be *anomos*. But *athesmos*, used here and in 2 Peter 3:17, “*Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.*”, is a much stronger word. It was used of a divine ordinance, a fundamental law laid down by the God of the universe.

What this is saying is that these people were not just doing something unlawful, they were not just sinning in one area or another, but that **they were going against the natural order of things! A natural order that was laid down by God in the beginning as a divine ordinance for all mankind! And they were doing so arrogantly and without any regard for human decency!**

As Paul said in Romans 1:26,27, “*For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.*” God never designed, nor ordained that men lie with men and women with women. This is unnatural and a violation of the highest law and most fundamental ordinance for mankind.

Even ancient Israel got into this practice, even parading it throughout Jerusalem and the country. “*Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom; listen to the instruction of our God, you people of Gomorrah!*” Isaiah 1:10 “*The look on their faces testifies against them; they parade their sin like Sodom; they do not hide it. Woe to them! They have brought disaster upon themselves.*” Isaiah 3:9

In verse eight it tells us that Lot's righteous soul was **vexed** because of their unlawful deeds, “*vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;*”, *psuchen dikaian anomois ergois ebasanizen*. Here we had the imperfect active indicative of *basanizo*. Which told us that this vexation was going on **while** he was living among them, but ended after he left.

Now while the other word for **vexing**, *kataponeo*, meant *to wear one down*, this word for vexing, *basanizo*, actually meant to torment someone! It was the word used when people were actually and tortured, an evil practice that this government is now involved in, where intense physical pain is inflicted on the hapless sufferer. It was also used of the physical pain of the sick and the pain, or torment, that the rich man was experiencing in Hell!

But his wasn't pain on Lot's body that he was experiencing, but pain in his soul! And why was that? Because he chose to live around these wicked people and his soul suffered as the result. But not only his soul, but the souls of his family as well. Whether directly, or indirectly as we have here, the souls of righteous people do suffer as the result of living around wicked people.

An interesting note on this, this wicked behavior did not bother the souls of the Sodomites. In fact, **they lived for the purpose of being able to go out and gratify their unnatural and evil lusts!** Wicked behavior does not torment, or even bother the souls of wicked people! In fact, their wicked behavior is nothing more than the natural expression of their inner wickedness! Wickedness, whether due to the believer's involvement in it, or having to live around it, causes pain to the believer's soul! And if the believer in Christ continues to subject their souls to activities that hurt and wound the soul, then their soul is going to start developing all sorts of problems – all of them destructive to their well being.

The imperfect tense of *basanizo*, to torture, which speaks of a continuous activity in the past that ended was used to define what Lot's soul was experiencing while he was living among them, but when God took him away from them it stopped! Now, after the torment had stopped, he could begin his healing. The question is why didn't he leave sooner?

It says, “*that righteous man dwelling among them*”, and the word used for **dwelling** is the present active participle of *enkatoikeo*. *Enkatoikeo* was a triple compound and has the words: *oikeo* – to dwell, or inhabit a house, *kata* – to settle down in one place and make it your permanent home, and *en* – among other people, or among other people who are not your kind.

While Abraham chose to dwell in tents. *Kataskenoo* meant to dwell in tents on a temporary basis and it wasn't a choice for Abraham out of necessity, or desire, but manifested what his mind set was about life. Just as living in Sodom on a permanent basis making it you home manifested what Lot's mind set about life was. **Lot** was making Sodom his permanent home and he was looking forward to all the financial prosperity that awaited him there! While **Abraham** lived in tents testifying that the city of God was going to be his permanent home and the place of his eternal prosperity.

Lot made his choice putting money, material possessions, home, security, political influence, etc., ahead of doctrinal principles and his walk with God, but it cost him dearly. **First** of all, his soul was constantly vexed, tormented and worn out by just living around this type of people; the damage to which lasted past him leaving the area. **Secondly**, everything he had worked for in life money, home, furnishings, flocks, etc., perished in the fire. **Third**, he lost his wife. Fourth, he lost his future son-in-laws, (whether good or bad, probably bad). **Fifth**, his two daughters got him drunk and committed incest with him, they got pregnant creating two inbred nations, the Moabites and Ammonites. Like so many others, who spend their lives to accumulate things, only to lose them in a catastrophe.

ZZZ. The soul can be unstable.

*“Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; **beguiling unstable souls**: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:” 2 Peter 2:14 οφθαλμους εχοντες μεστους μοιχαλιδος και ακαταπαυστους αμαρτιας **δελεαζοντες ψυχας αστηρικτους** καρδιαν γεγυμνασμενην πλεονεξιας εχοντες καταρας τεκνα.*

Peter begins his study talking about the false prophets and teachers, who had given themselves over to total living in the flesh nature and the merchandising of people, even believers, for the purpose of making money off them. *“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.” 2 Peter 2:1,2*

The word for **merchandise** is *emporeuomai* and it referred to merchants, who traveled from place to place selling their wares, doing business of all sorts, all to make money. Only here we see that it is these false prophets and teachers who were **making money off Christians!** *“And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make **merchandise** of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.” 2 Peter 2:3* A practice that is going on today throughout America with millions of Christians being duped by them and giving them their money!

Now it says that they **seduce** the unstable believer, or literally, *“beguiling unstable souls”*. The word for **seduce** is the present active participle of *deleazo*. Now there are three words used for deceiving someone. *Apatao* – to deceive, or fool, someone by giving them a false impression. *Paralogizomai* – to deceive by false reasoning. *Deleazo* – to catch by using bait!

This tells us **how** these false teachers get the unstable believer in Christ to come under their ministries and power and that is they **catch** them! So what do they use as bait? When you think of bait, which is what you use to catch fish, you use what the fish feed upon. And what they feed upon is what they want! So all these guys do is use those things in life that gullible believers are looking for, what they are wanting, promise it to them, and then they hook them and reel them in!

A second blessing, an emotional experience, a separate, distinct and superior spirituality above other believers, money, healing of one thing or another, husband or wife, success, job, material things, power, etc.. The false teachers have many lures in their tackle box they can use to catch believers, **but the only believers they can really catch are those with unstable souls, unstable because they lack doctrine!**

The word for **unstable** is *asteriktos*, which is from the *sterizo* word group that deals with being stable, grounded, attached to the ground, therefore stable and sure. But with the *a* – negative prefixed to it, it means that it isn't grounded, therefore unstable. For a house to be stable, it must be firmly attached to a foundation, which is in turn firmly attached to the ground. Or for ships out at sea without any cargo in the hold. They need cargo to keep them grounded and stable in the water, lest with all that buoyancy they will bounce around like corks in the sea.

Stability of soul for born again believers in Christ only comes from being grounded in the Word of God. Which also requires that they are under the doctrinal ministry of a Pastor-Teacher out of a local church, who is teaching sound doctrine. *“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;” Ephesians 4:14*

AAAA. The soul can be prospered.

*“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” 3 John 2 αγαπητε περι παντων ευχομαι σε ευδοουσαι και υγιαειν καθως ευδοουται σου η ψυχη.*

The Apostle John wrote, Brethren, *“I pray that you may prosper and be in good health, even as your soul is prospering.” 3 John 2* It begins with the **prosperity of the soul**, good mental health, then it goes to the **prosperity of the body**, good physical health, and then it goes to the **prosperity of one's life**: finances, friends, social life, job, home, career, etc.. But it all begins with Bible Doctrine in the soul and living in the spiritual life dynamic.

The good mental health that comes from metabolized doctrine in the soul resulting from faith in the Word of God, not only speaks of overcoming and being free of mental illnesses, but also demon influence in one's life. Satan's army of demons may attack the body, those around you and even what you have, but he won't be able to destroy the mind or its stability. Bible Doctrine metabolized in our souls by faith will strengthen and stabilize the mind from all Satan's attacks.

Living in a sin-cursed world under the control of Satan and his army of demons, and living in these bodies of flesh corrupted by the indwelling sin nature, has a damaging effect on our souls before we were saved, and even after. The result of which is that the soul can contract many soul diseases, scars, or what we call garbage in the soul. But by living in the filling of the Holy Spirit and being under the consistent intake of Bible Doctrine, which we are to metabolize by faith, the believer's soul can be healed of all its diseases! *“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;” Psalm 103:2,3 NIV*

The word for **prosper** here is the present passive infinitive of *euodoo*, which meant to have a good journey, or if one is on a business trip, a prosperous journey. What it's looking at is the believer's journey through life. *Hodos* is the path that we take through this life, which will end up one day in heaven with the Lord.

If we follow the Lord's will for our lives, if we take in and apply the teachings of God's Word to our lives, if we live in the new nature, the filling of the Holy Spirit, if we walk by faith, then our journey will be a good one. But if we follow the ways of the world, then it won't. So what John is saying is that brothers I pray that **your journey through this life will be a good one**.

Now there are certain things in life that one would hope for to make their journey through this life a good one: **one**, financial prosperity, which doesn't mean that one is rich, but that one has enough in life, so that their needs are met and that they are comfortable; **two**, physical health, which doesn't mean that we are tremendous athletes, but that we enjoy good health; and **three**, a healthy soul, or good mental health, which gets into the area of going through life without all the scar tissue garbage in the soul.

Now when one went on a business trip, of course they hoped it would be a profitable one for them. But if they just made enough money to take care of the family, they would be happy with that. That's the idea of the first part of the verse. The second one actually deals with the idea of health. *Hugiaino* dealt with physical health, with the concept of wholeness, being healthy in all parts of the body. And the last one tells us what it's all linked to, according to, *kathos*, having a healthy soul. **Healthy soul, healthy body and a healthy life means one has had a good journey through their life.**

BBBB. The martyred souls of God's elect under the altar of God.

1. “*And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:*” Revelation 6:9 και οτε ηνοιξεν την πεμπτην σφραγιδα ειδον υποκατω του θυσιαστηριου τας ψυχας των εσφαγμενων δια τον λογον του θεου και δια την μαρτυριαν ην ειχον.

To put this in context we must begin with the **first seal** of Revelation 6:2, which says, “*And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.*”, which talks about the antichrist, who is now going out to conquer the entire world. He is seated on a **white horse**, the white horse being the symbol of victory, and he is carrying a **bow**, and both the horse and bow were symbolic all throughout history as a sign of military victory, which tells us that he will control a military, or the armies of the world. Both the verbs “*he that sat*”, *kathemai*, and “*had a bow*”, *echo*, are in the present active participle.

But then it says that he “*was given a crown*”, the aoist passive indicative of *didomi*. Now the passive voice shows that the subject, who is the antichrist, at some point in time had been given a crown. But the word for **crown** here is not the crown of rule, which would be the *diadem*, but the wreath of victory, the *stephanos*! Then it says that he went forth conquering and to conquer. The NIV has it as, “*I looked, and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.*”

“*He went forth conquering*”, as the KJV has it, or, “*he rode out as a conqueror*”, as the NIV has it, is *nikon*, the present active participle of *nikao*. While the next word for conquering, “*to conquer*” in the KJV and “*bent on conquest*” in the NIV is the aoist active subjunctive of *nikese* used with *hina*. Now *hina* with the subjunctive mood introduces a purpose clause, which tells us that the antichrist, who is now a conqueror, and has the wreath to prove it, is now going out all over the world for the **purpose of conquering the entire world to bring it into subjection to his father, the devil!**

The problem is that he was given a victor's wreath before he goes out conquering the world. The problem with that is that the victor's wreath wasn't given until **after** one had won a victory! Now some say that the giving of the wreath first was **anticipatory** of the victories to follow, which may be true, but it could be in all likelihood that he had won some major local, or national victory first, then given the wreath of victory and now he goes out as the conqueror, that he had now become over some nation, to conquer the rest of the world! The *large sword, machaira*, speaks of him being given a large army.

It would appear that we have so far, that the antichrist will be in some position having authority over a nation and/or its military, by the use of which, he will conquer that very nation. From that point he will be given a victor's wreath, and all the authority that he needs to go out and conquer the rest of the world! At this present moment the only nation that he could possibly do that from is the United States of America, which would imply that he subdues the USA, its citizens, patriots and Christians first, then from there go out and conquer the rest of the world.

Now the fact that he is seated on the white horse tells us that there was time that he wasn't, then he was. It also tells us that the white horse was in existence before he sat upon it. The white horse would symbolize military power, an army and navy of some nation, or possibly the United Nations, and all this tells us that there will be a point in time, when the antichrist takes control of, takes the reins of this vast military strength and goes out and conquers the world! This is the **first seal**.

2. “*And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.*” Revelation 6:4 και εξηλθεν αλλος ιππος πυρρος και τω καθημενω επ αυτω εδοθη αυτω λαβειν την ειρηνην απο της γης και ινα αλληλους σφαξωσιν και εδοθη αυτω μαχαιρα μεγαλη.

Now we have the opening of the **second seal** and with it we see **war**! But not localized war in some area, or country, but **worldwide**! We see the theater of this war of one covering the entire earth. But there are several ways that one can war against a nation, or people, other than just the clash of arms.

The first one would be **legal**. Using laws, and in this case the law of the high seas and its international jurisdiction, would be to subjugate people under various laws imposed on them, as we presently see with America and its people, along with all the other nations. The vehicle used for this is the United Nations, which imposes its laws on all its member states.

The second one would be **social** by using peer pressure and political correctness. Approval and disapproval by the majority on other people is a very effective way of getting people to go along with the consensus of the majority. No one likes to feel that they are “outside the group”. Even in America we have the saying, “You’ve got to go along to get along”.

The third one is **economic**. There is obviously the economic pressure of, if you do what they want, you will prosper, but if you don't, then you won't. Then there is the pressure of having to conform to all the laws governing economics under the Uniform Commercial Code, UCC, which governs all trade on the face of the earth. But there is also the pressure of an economic **blockade**, where if a nation doesn't comply with the world body, then that nation will not be able to do trade with any other nation that is a part of the world body.

The fourth one is **war**. War is the final stage of imposing the will of the world body on individual nations. And now it's down to being under the control of the antichrist. If a nation and its people won't obey the international laws imposed upon them, for whatever their reasons are, then the next step of peer pressure will be brought in to work on their greed, or emotions, or whatever. And if that fails, then maybe an economic embargo will bring them to their senses. And if all else fails, then war will be waged against them. Their infrastructure will be destroyed, the people conquered and brought under the tyranny of the world body, now ruled by the antichrist!

The antichrist has taken over the reins of power and is in control of either the most powerful nation on the face of the earth and its military, which would presently be the United States of America, or in control of the United Nations “Peacekeeping” force. Either way, he is going out to conquer the entire world and bring it under his tyranny and he will do so by waging war.

It says that he will take **peace** from the earth, but literally in the Greek the definite article, *the*, is used and brings our attention to a specific kind of peace. This brings in the idea that there has already been some kind of peace that will be in existence, the so-called “peace” that the international body under the UN has been working on for years to bring about, and it will be this “peace” that he does away with as he brings in his despotic, satanic rule over the world.

All opposition to his reign will be crushed, but most definitely the thrust of his war will be against believers in Jesus Christ. “*And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.*” Revelation 13:7

3. “And when he had opened the **third seal**, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a **black horse**; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.” Revelation 6:5,6

The color **black** represented evil, judgment, famine, death, those sorts of things. Here it refers to famine, and death as the result of famine, all caused by a breakdown of the infrastructures of the world caused by war. To understand this we must put this all in perspective. The antichrist is going to send his army throughout the world to destroy all opposition to his will. In all this there will be those on his side and those on earth who will be opposing his murderous tyranny. This is the making people kill each other, *verse four*, “to make people kill each other”.

But we need to think about the results of war. Bridges and roads will be bombed; electrical generating plants destroyed; nuclear power plants wiped out releasing radiation for hundreds of miles; sewage treatment plants wiped out; millions of corpses littering the streets; homes, villages, cities destroyed; farmland laying idle; shipping, trucking and transportation non existent; currencies wiped out, or inflated beyond all measure, just to name a few.

When war hits people will not be planting crops like they did before the war; there will be no electricity to harvest or process the food; no electricity to store it; no shipping or trucking to transport it; whatever foods that are available will be outrageous in cost, and then the inflating of the currency. **The result of all this will be outrageous prices for just the necessary food staples, such as, wheat and barley.**

The KJV has it as “*A measure (choenix) of wheat for a penny (denarion), and three measures (choenix) of barley for a penny (denarion)*”. Both wheat and barley were ground down to flour to make bread, with barley being considered as inferior to wheat. A **choenix** was the equivalent of the daily ration of bread that a working man consumed each day, somewhere between one and two quarts. A **denarius** was the equivalent of what a working man earned in one day! Normally a denarius would buy then 12 choenixes of wheat, in the third seal it will down to 1/12th of that.

So what this tells us is that there will be tremendous increase in prices for food driving the price of food up to the place where **a working man will have to work all day long just to buy enough food for the day!** There will no meat, no luxury items, no fruit, no car payments, no rent payments, etc., just enough bread to live on for the day. This will be due to: **one**, a breakdown of infrastructure; **two**, scarcity of food itself; **three**, inflation of currencies; **four**, natural disasters, such as droughts; and **five**, the war.

But there is something else going on here by the statement of, “*and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.*”. **Oil** is *elaion* and **wine** is *oinos*; *elaion* referred to olive oil and *oinos* referred to actual wine. This brings in the added element of worldwide drought. Wheat and barley are shallow rooted crops, as in distinction to the more rugged deeper rooted crops such as grape vines and olive trees, which can grow wild without the cultivation needed as with other crops.

The **third seal** also ushers in a worldwide drought that is severe enough to affect the grass seed crops, which are dependent in most places on annual rainfall, but not severe enough to affect the olive trees and vineyards. This worldwide drought could be as the result of increased solar activity, which is what we are seeing presently, and at the same time, due to the war which would affect areas where wheat is grown using pumped irrigation, as so many wheat growers do throughout America and other nations. All will contribute to the downturn in available wheat and barley.

4. “And when he had opened the **fourth seal**, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was **Death**, and **Hell** followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.” Revelation 6:7,8

The word for **pale** here is *chloros* and it actually had the idea of being pale green, similar to the green of young grass, or a slightly yellowish green. It is the color associated with sickness and death and we even have an expression that one is “green around the gills” to denote being sick.

Whenever God judged his people in the OT, or other nations, it was always with these four judgments: the sword, famine, plague and wild beasts. The fourth horseman is aptly named “**The Death**”, for he brings death and **Hell** follows closely behind him. For the unsaved, when they die, they go directly to Hell. “So will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee. I the LORD have spoken it.” Ezekiel 5:17 “For thus saith the Lord GOD; How much more when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast?” Ezekiel 14:21

The word **followed** with the preposition meta used in the passage, *with*, “and Hell followed with him”, is the *imperfect active indicative* of *akoloutheo*, which meant to accompany, or goes along with. And Hell went along with, or accompanied death. The imperfect tense denotes a continuous activity that went on in the past that came to an end.

The antichrist will be given the authority to rule over the world and will take the reins of a military capable of doing that. From that juncture he will go out conquering the world killing with the sword, that is, killing people through the use of this powerful military. The result of this will be a breakdown of the world's food production, not to mention a worldwide drought that will be going on at the same time, also as the result of the breakdown of the infrastructures of the world, which all will bring about worldwide famine and disease.

Whenever there is an armed assault on a nation by a military power, one of the first things that are hit, beside military installations, are the fuel depots and electrical power plants of that nation. No electricity means no pumps to pump water and no pumps to treat and dispose of sewage. Without the basic means for hygiene in a nation plagues and disease follow quickly; and death follows that. Without fuel industry does not run, there is no transportation and no way to heat homes in the northern climes. No money, no food, no clean drinking water, no health services all mean disease and death.

The word for **sword** here is *rhomphaia* and it referred to a broad sword. It was first used of the weapons of the Thracians including spears and the sabers of the cavalry, but was also used of all those who lived outside of Rome. It speaks of violence and gives the idea that the antichrist will bring war to the world and in the course of that hostilities will break out among those who live on the earth, which will affect one fourth of the earth.

So the **first seal** has a rider on a **white horse** having a bow and the authority to go out and conquer the world. The **second seal** has a rider on a **red horse** being given a large military to do the job. The **third seal** has a rider on a **black horse** holding a scale referring to worldwide famine. The **fourth seal** has a rider on a **pale green horse**, whose name is Death, who will be killing a fourth of the earth with violent hostilities, famine, hunger and the beasts of the field.

The **first seal** describes the official handing of power over to the antichrist to rule the world and subjugate everything under his power. The **second seal** describes the aftermath of violence caused by his war against all those who stand up to him. The **third seal** describes the famine which will affect the world caused, not only by his war against those who resist him, but also because of a worldwide drought. The **fourth seal** describes the ruin and destruction caused by a world gone mad in the wake of the antichrist's military action.

In the fourth seal it was given to Death and Hell *“to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.”* The word for **sword** here is the *rhomphaia*, as mentioned before, and the term was used to refer to the sword of the foreigner, not the Roman army, to judgment, to the hostilities that break out among men and to judicial execution. It was the word used to describe the flaming sword used to block the way back into the garden of Eden after Adam and Eve sinned. *“So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”* Genesis 3:24

It is also used with Jesus Christ when he returns to earth. *“And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.”* Revelation 1:16 *“And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;”* Revelation 2:12 *“Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.”* Revelation 2:16 *“And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.”* Revelation 19:15 *“And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.”* Revelation 19:21

Now we know that the antichrist will receive a wreath, be given the authority over the largest standing military on the face of the earth and from that juncture go out to conquer the world. And we know that two of the main reasons for receiving wreaths in those days were for being a victor in the games, or a victor in a war or battle. But there is more to be said concerning the antichrist receiving a wreath. There had to be **some event and/or turning point in his life that was worthy of him receiving a *stephanos*!**

The *stephanos*, related to *stepho* – to encircle, was where one or two twigs were tied together and put on the head. Listed are some of the other reasons for receiving a *stephanos*:

The circling idea denoted that one was now complete in their inner person or soul.

It stated that the blessing of the deity was on its bearer.

It was a sign of salvation or the protection of that deity.

It was a sign that one had been illuminated by the sun deity.

It was a sign that one had reached apotheosis; where one had been elevated or transformed into a god.

Excellence in every area was acknowledged by a wreath.

The priests of Zeus wore wreaths when sacrificing.

It was also a sign of victory over death.

All of these ideas can be found in the antichrist receiving a wreath. He had reached a state of completion or perfection. The blessing of the deity, Satan, was on him. He was under the protection of Satan. He had been illuminated with knowledge by Zeus/Satan. And that he had been victorious over death, where an assassination attempt had been made on him, he died, but was brought back to life. Even his massacre of millions could be regarded in his evil mind as a sacrifice to his father, Satan.

*“And when he had opened the **fifth seal**, I saw under the altar the **souls** of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” Revelation 6:9,10*

There are three references to the altar that is before the throne of God, other than the one mentioned here. **One**, is the golden altar of incense before the throne of God. *“And another angel came and stood at the **altar**, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne, (enopion tou thronou).” Revelation 8:3*

The **second** appears to be the same one only it says before God. *“And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the **golden altar** which is before God, (enopion tou theou),” Revelation 9:13 And the **third** one is in Revelation 14:18, *“And another angel came out from the **altar**, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.”**

In all four verses there is found the definite article, *the, the altar*, in the singular denoting that there is **only one altar before God and his throne**. But there is something significant going on with this altar and that is under it are found the **souls** of those who have believed in Christ and died for his sake. It says that had been slain because of the Word of God and the testimony which they held to!

In the OT the animals were slain and their blood poured out as an offering for sin, for in the blood was the life of the animal. But here the blood of these believers is being poured out, not as an offering for sin, for it was Jesus Christ who did that when he poured out his soul for our sins! *“Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath **poured out his soul (nephesh) unto death**: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” Isaiah 53:12*

Paul said that he was about to be poured out as a drink-offering to God in 2 Timothy 4:6, *“For I am now ready to be **offered**, (spendo), and the time of my departure is at hand.”* The pouring out of a drink offering was common in those days. Usually it was the blood of an animal, or in some cases, a drink offered to honor the gods, or what we call a libation. It was a common practice among the pagans and among Christians as well, only with Christians what was poured out in honor to our God was our lives in the sacrifice of service to God, not our sins.

The passage tells us exactly what the two things are that they will be murdered for: **one**, because of the Word of God, and **two**, their testimony concerning Jesus Christ! In both cases *dia* is used with the accusative case to denote the reason why something happens. They were murdered not because of any wrongdoing that they had done, but simply due to the reason that they held firm to the Word of God and because they maintained their testimony about Jesus Christ!

These believers will **not** take the mark of the beast, they will **refuse** to worship or pay any obeisance to the antichrist whatsoever, they will refuse to take part in his economic system, they will hold firmly to the Bible and its doctrines and they will continue to hold fast to their witness about Jesus Christ, who he is, what he has done for us, what the Bible has to say about him and our faith in him! And because of that they will be murdered by the antichrist's beast system, whether due to the antichrist's war against them, judicial execution, or general hostility directed at them.

These believers in Christ paid the greatest price for their faith in Christ and their holding to the Word of God – their lives! But this has been going on ever since the Church Age began right up to the present time where millions of Christians in the Sudan have been murdered because they are Christians!

But we need to notice something here. **Their souls are under the altar of God!** These beasts may have killed their bodies, but they did not and **could not kill their souls!** As the Lord said **we are not to fear man, who can kill our bodies, but to fear God who can, and will, destroy both their bodies and their souls in Gehenna!** *“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”* Matthew 10:28

This certainly makes a statement about the veracity of the Bible, God and his Son, Jesus Christ. We want to note the diabolical hatred that the world and its inhabitants have for Jesus Christ and the Word of God. They hate it so much, as their master Satan and his son, the antichrist does, that they will murder countless millions of innocent people just to get rid of it!

**They may kill our bodies, but they can't touch our souls!** For now we see them safely tucked away in heaven before the throne of God, under his protective love and care, who is now getting ready to pour out his vengeance upon the earth on all those who have hurt us! **They may hate us, but that's because they hate our Savior, Jesus Christ!** *“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.”* John 15:18; *“If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.”* John 15:19; *“Do not be surprised, (to be shocked, amazed, surprised), my brothers and sisters, if the world hates you.”*, and it does. 1 John 3:13

These believers, as today, will hold to the truth that the Bible is the literal Word of God. They will maintain that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God, that he died on the cross for our sins at the hands of cruel men, that he was raised from the dead in an eternal body, that he ascended into heaven and is now seated at the right hand of God, that he is the Messiah of Israel, the Lord of the universe, the only Mediator there is between God and men, the Savior of all men, that forgiveness of sins and the only guarantee of eternal life comes only through faith in him, that there is a literal Heaven, Hell and the Lake of Fire and if man rejects Jesus Christ as his Savior, then he will be thrown into the Lake of Fire.

How big is this altar? We can only guess. But if we were to take people standing in rank and file five feet apart, then we could roughly put one thousand per rank and one thousand per file with a total of one million people per square mile! Now if there are one hundred million believers under the altar, then the altar would cover one hundred square miles!! That's an enormous altar. This speculation helps give our minds a perspective of just how vast this whole scene is and how enormous is the throne of God.

Then there was a moment when all these souls cried out in a loud voice of how long will it be for him to avenge their blood! *“And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?”* Revelation 6:10 The reply was that it was going to be a little while longer.

Because **loud voice** is in the singular, *phone megale*, it indicates that they all called out in **unison**. Which, in itself, is an amazing concept that would indicate an interconnectedness that exists between all these believer's souls. Then there is the concept of how loud this must be to have countless millions of believer's souls calling out in unison to the Father for vengeance! The word for Lord here is *despotes*, which denotes that God is the absolute sovereign authority over all believers in Christ.

CCCC. Our soul's triumph over the world, the flesh, our sins and Satan!

*“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.” Revelation 12:11 και αυτοι ενικησαν αυτον δια το αιμα του αρνιου και δια τον λογον της μαρτυριας αυτων και ουκ ηγαπησαν την **ψυχην** αυτων αχρι θανατου.*

We begin with the concept that Satan has now been kicked out of heaven. Apparently there was one last push that he had made to take the throne of God away from him and set up his throne and rule over the universe. In Revelation 12:7 it says that there was a war in Heaven, *“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,”*.

The word for **was** is the aorist middle indicative of *ginomai*, which signifies a change of state or condition. Which tells us that there was a time when there wasn't war, but that war came to be, or the idea that the action of war has broken out. And we see this on both sides, God and his angels headed up by Michael against Satan and his angels. Michael and his angels warred against the dragon and the dragon and his angels warred against Michael.

With Michael and his angels coming first in the sentence we have the indication that Michael initiated the war against Satan and Satan fighting back, but to no avail because he loses and is kicked out of heaven. This also indicates that Satan does not voluntarily leave heaven, nor does he intend to do so, so Michael has to expel him from the heavenlies. Now, having no place left for him in heaven, there is only one place for him to go and that's to the earth! The result of which brings about rejoicing in heaven, but woe to the earth.

Whenever there is a war there is an **aggressor** and there is a **defender**. The aggressor is the one who initiates the hostilities, while the defender is the one who defends against their hostilities. So we have here either Michael is the initiator of this war, with Satan being the defender. Or we have Satan as the one who initiates the act of war and Michael being the one who defends the throne of God and who ends up being the ultimate victor over the the devil!

But in addition to the act of war with the attacker and defender, there is always a **reason** as to **why** the war breaks out. There's a reason why one initiates that action and there is a reason why one defends against it. And it's the same thing here in heaven. Now we either have Michael and his angels initiating the act of war against Satan and his angels, with Satan fighting back. Or we have Satan and his angels initiating the action of war, with Michael and his angels defending!

Now we go down to the possible reasons why. If God sets forth a decree that Satan and his angels must leave his heavens forever, the devil may very well refuse to do so, and then Michael and his army must **use force to expel them from heaven**, with the devil and his army fighting back. So, in that case, Michael would be the initiator of the war, with Satan fighting back. Or, under the same decree for Satan to leave heaven, Satan would not only refuse to go, but **initiate an attack against God and his throne**, with Michael fighting back as the defender and ultimately victorious!

Or we could have a situation where Satan tries to place his son on the throne of God in attempt to depose the Father and the Son, the result of which would trigger a war by Michael and his angels against Satan and his attempted coup. The result of which would be that Satan will fight back in defense, but ultimately lose the war. There will be some major event, though, that takes place in heaven that will trigger this war between Michael and his angels and Satan and his angels!

Now it says that, *“And they overcame him”*. The **they** mentioned here refers to believers in Jesus Christ. It is born again believers in Jesus Christ who were victorious over Satan. Now this is interesting because in Revelation 13:7 it says that it was given to the antichrist to make war against the saints and to be victorious over them! *“And it was given unto him to **make war with the saints**, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.”* Why the difference? Because one deals with a tactical situation here on earth where Satan's man does conquer them, for awhile, but the other one deals with our ultimate victory over the devil!

And what is the basis for our victory over Satan? **The blood of Jesus Christ!** *“By the blood of the Lamb”* with the preposition dia gives us the reason for this victory. It was Christ's atoning death on the cross, where he paid the full penalty for all our sins, his victorious resurrection from the dead and ascension into heaven where he now functions as our faithful High Priest that guarantees our victory, not only over the world, and our sins, but our victory over Satan as well!

Remember, whether directly because of the antichrist's war against believers in Christ, or indirectly due to the general hostilities that break out against believers by the people of the world caused by the antichrist's war against believers, these believers have died as the result of all that, *“dost thou not judge and **avenge our blood** on them that dwell on the earth?”*, Revelation 6:10b

Satan has killed and will kill God's children down here on earth. Especially during the tribulations age. So it may seem that he has won for the while, but it's not over! We note under the altar are the souls of God's people, alive and well, and who are going to live forever with eternal bodies.

Next we have, *“and they loved not their lives (souls) unto the death.”* The word here for **lives** is souls. Now our souls are the most important thing in life that we have. What shall it profit us if we gain the whole world and lose our own souls? There are those who don't care about their souls, as they go off in pursuit of lust gratification. And there are those who devote countless hours to self discovery in trying to find out who they are, that is, self realization of their own souls.

But what we have here are people, young and old, who believe on Christ as their Savior, who do not hang on to life for the sake of their souls, but place themselves second to their love for Jesus Christ. It is these people who pay the ultimate price for their faith in Christ and that is to die for him. Do they love their souls? Yes! But they love someone else more.

Satan will prevail for awhile, until the Ancient of Days pronounces in our favor. *“I beheld, and the same horn, (the antichrist), made war with the saints, (believers in Christ), and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. And he shall speak great words against the most High (blasphemy), and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time, (3 ½ years). But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.”* Daniel 7:25-27 It is normal for the flesh to fear what is going to happen to it, but for the believer in Christ we know that our eternity and our soul is secure with God for he holds us in the palm of his hand. The death mentioned here is the death of their bodies. The soul they cannot touch.

Pastor Mike