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Our Disappearing Baggage

No.310

START AGAIN FROM SCRATCH

Most everyone that I talk to has the same feeling: changes are taking place on every level of life. I cannot agree more. Nevertheless, these words were still only “talk” to me, until the Lord began to set it all in action in my life. It all began recently, with a most distressing dream.

In the dream, I had been visiting my mother-in-law to receive something from her. (Michael's mother passed away years ago). I left from her house on foot, holding a large suitcase (that I had once actually possessed) in my arms like a baby. I had my purse strapped on my shoulder. Absolutely everything that I possessed were contained in these two things. I was on my way home. I stopped at a restaurant along the way. It was filled with lively people talking and eating. The place was brightly lit and welcoming. I soon left again to continue my journey on foot. Quite a ways down the road I realized that I no longer had my suitcase or my purse.

I retraced my steps all the way back to the restaurant. The road back was very rocky and full of holes and ups and downs, nothing like the smooth road of the way out. The restaurant was still very busy with many people talking and eating. The lights were on bright. I found the owner. He was not interested in me and let me know he had very little time for me. I was upset and raised my voice to get his full attention I hollered, “Everything I owned was in that suitcase and purse and now I don't even have a dime to make a phone call!”

I was desperate. Upon that he pulled out a heavy roll of bills from his pocket and pulled out a \$10 bill. He handed it to me and put the rest back in his pocket. He then quickly went to sit at a table talking to other men. I left with only that money, and now I

wondered how to proceed. Should I call the police and see if they could help me? Not sure what to do if anything. I just started to walk again.” End of dream.

When I pondered the meaning of this dream, several interpretations came to mind. The Lord could be informing me of my physical demise, after all I am beginning year 89 now. As I waited on the Spirit, I realized that indeed the word announces my death but it is not my physical death; it is a total stripping of the old way of life.

We have already been stripped of many things. The world and all its glamor holds absolutely no attraction to us. The world of religious activities could not be farther from our heart's desire. Yet, a greater stripping is still at the door. We still have a lot of baggage, and we still hold on to our old identity.

In the dream I had been visiting my mother-in-law. This represents the time I spent in the legalistic literal Word of God. Mother IN LAW represents the church under the law. As Christians, we may know that in Christ we are made free of the law of sin and death, yet as babes, we are still under tutors and governors. We are still under law.

Then we take what we have learned in that realm and carry this baggage with us on the road, until we come to this restaurant with bright lights and a lot of food and activities. Indeed, I spent many years with groups of Christians, sitting at the feet of those who had gone ahead and could feed me a better Word. The light was bright in those places. The Holy Spirit is present. I remember times when we drove miles for a good Word. Going to conventions that thrilled our souls and caused our spirits to soar. The fellowship and the bright noisy restaurant (feasting on the

Word) were part of the walk. But it was time to move on and I found myself on that very lonesome road so I left the fellowship and the delicious spiritual food. I walked away from the bright lights of that restaurant confident that I was holding on to everything I had learned and acquired, (suitcase and purse). But suddenly I found that none of these things had stayed with me. I tried to retrieve them but that was not easy (hard road). My old studies had no life for me anymore. All my old teachings fell flat. I have files of messages that I used to thrill my soul and feed my spirit during my many years of teaching, but I have never yet been able to use any of them in my writings now. They are no longer fresh and alive. The suitcase is gone!

Then I heard the Spirit say, *“Come unto me, all ye that labor 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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”* (Matt.11:28-30)

Indeed, there is a huge difference between His yoke and our own burdens. Even our well meaning prayers for brothers and sisters in Christ or for our family can be our own burdens. Indeed, unless the Spirit of God has placed them on our hearts, they can be too heavy for us to carry.

The purse that I was carrying in the dream, contained the value and the identity of a Christian who has walked with the Lord for many years; even that has to go. Our good name and reputation among the people of God is no longer ours. Our new identity is only Christ. It is like the brother I wrote about recently. He had asked the Lord to show him his name in the book of life. He then dreamed that he opened the book of life and found only one name: Jesus Christ. When we are IN HIM, we are hid in the Rock and we bear His identity. Our name is changed! This is the beginning of the new Day at hand.

This is the Day when the Christ man is arising fully within us. It is the that we move fully under the easy yoke of the new creation within. There is no more striving to be spiritual- No struggling to get all our religious rituals done each day. All is done as He

leads and not as we schedule. It is a deliverance from the old flesh that wants to control us. The carnal mind rules by fear and fear is not pleasing to God. The fear of being deceived is a lack of trusting God; it is the opposite of faith. It is often fear that keeps us from moving to greater truths.

In the dream, I panicked when I saw that my suitcase and purse were gone. I went back and it was a hard walk. All I got for my efforts was a \$10 dollar bill. The entire suitcase and purse were replaced by a ten dollar bill. It denotes a certain period of time allotted by God. When they arrived in Babylon, Daniel and his companions were tried for TEN DAYS to see if they could survive on their own simple meals of pulse and water, instead of the kings meats and wine. (Dan.1:8)

The overcomer is given ten days of tribulation to obtain the crown of life. *“Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation TEN DAYS: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.”*(Rev.2:10:11)

We are now beginning to be tested on the final lap of our journey in Christ. As the old ways are taken away from us, and only Christ in us remains, we will find that all that we have previously relied upon has been replaced by HIM. The familiar words that Paul taught us will now be a reality. *“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”* (Gal.2:20)

The dream marks the time when these truths become reality in our lives. Now is the beginning of the new dawn. It is also the time when all the lessons that we have learned, all the knowledge of the Word of God that we have accumulated, all of the “in part” things are now being replaced by that which is PERFECT. And the good “name” that we had acquired among the brethren? That was in the purse too- it is GONE. He is now our new name. This is not a fantasy, the

great unveiling of our transformation is beginning to take place in us. In the dream, I tried to retrieve my baggage. I made my way back to the lively and brightly lit restaurant. Trying to go back to the Word of the past, but as great and full of light as it was, we must move on and be tested in the more excellent way.

We are on the walk of the Overcomer. He that overcomes is the new creation of Christ in us. It is our new being. All old things are passing away. They are disappearing from our consciousness. This is truly DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

“Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” (Matt.23:38) These were the words Jesus spoke to a nation who had rejected Him. Desolation is the total withdrawal of God’s Spirit. This is what happened to Israel, and what is happening to the world’s nations today.

“But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing where it ought not...” (Mk.13:14a) Jesus was warning His beloved disciples of things that would take place after His resurrection and ascension. He quoted the prophet Daniel, *“And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up...”* (Dan.12:11a)

Jesus had told the Pharisees, *“Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city.”* (Matt.23:34)

Because they lusted after power to rule and control the people, the Pharisees who were the politicians and rulers of that day, continually came against and even killed anyone sent of God. Such were threats to their positions of power. When Jesus came on the scene, He was too much for them. They riled against Him, and their disdain and anger rose to the point that they killed Him by crucifixion. This is the “abomination that makes desolate.” It is what Daniel

had prophesied and what Jesus was talking about.

The abomination of desolation is the crucifixion of the Son of God. It took place at Calvary, and it has been repeated each time God sent one of His anointed. The writer of Hebrews makes mention of those who fall away and cannot find repentance because *“...they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”* (Heb.6:6)

When Paul was thrown off his horse, Jesus said to him, *“...Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?”* (Acts 9:4) When this Saul, who became Paul, was persecuting the Christians, he was actually persecuting Jesus Himself. When he ordered that Stephen be stoned to death, He was crucifying the Son of God afresh.

The abomination of desolation has been repeated over and over and is coming to its peak in these last times. We see it in its full-blown form as men and women of power are rising up, grinding their teeth in fierce, hateful determination to kill anyone that is sent of God, especially one whom God has raised with power.

Just as the actions of the Pharisees brought about the murder of Jesus Christ, so the Pharisees of today (politicians in power), are out to kill and destroy anyone who is sent to reveal their wickedness. Their hearts and minds are desolate (totally void of God), and they can only plot together to find ways to kill God’s purpose and plan for the world.

As a result they are leaving a trail of desolation. Jesus told the Pharisees. *“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do...”* (Jn.8:44a) Today, this has not changed. Those who hate God’s anointed are doing the works of their father the devil who rules their minds and hearts.

Daniel teaches us that it is God who sets up kings and rulers, and it is God who takes them down. The politicians of our day have made themselves gods. They change laws to accommodate themselves, but they are not in charge as they might think; they are coming to the end of their rope and of their rule. The devil knows that his time is short.

In the past, those who were sent of God were slain

and taken out of the way. It was to be that way then, but a new day has dawned. This is the day of Christ's appearing and it cannot be hindered or stopped. Who can stop the sun from rising each morning? And who can stop the day of His appearing? So the drama is unfolding. God will keep His anointed ones in their places of power and strength. Those who were in power in Jesus' time had no idea that by His crucifixion He would return in many sons and would forever destroy the seed of the serpent from the earth.

What we are witnessing in the world, and in our own government today is God's way of destroying the works of the devil and of establishing His kingdom in the earth. The enemies of God have been ambushed and trapped in their own wickedness. The battle is the Lord's and is already won! Thus says the Lord!

NOTHING BUT LEAVES!

There was a day when Jesus, walking with His disciples, passed by a fig tree. He was hungry and looked for fruit; He found nothing but leaves. We are told that this fig tree had no fruit at all because it was not yet the time for figs. The fig tree is symbolic of the nation Israel under the Law of Moses. It was not time for Israel then to bear fruit. And yet Jesus cursed that tree. The fruit that Israel will someday bear will not be the fruit of the Old Covenant under the Law. It will be new in Christ.

God had other plans for the nation Israel. In his letter to the church at Rome, Paul names himself as an example as he explains, "*I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.*" (Rom.11:1) This tells us that some Israelites are also part of the people that God foreknew and predestinated.

When Jezebel, King Ahab's wife, ordered all of God's prophets to be killed, Elijah cried out to God, "*Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.*" (Rom.11:3) Elijah thought he was the only prophet left in Israel. "*But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal.*"

(Rom.11:4) Paul continues to explain that even though God had cast away his people Israel, they were not all cut off. God had reserved a remnant for Himself too. "*Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*" (Vs.5)

Indeed, the first apostles were Israelites and many Israelites have been followers of Christ since. We know that in Christ "*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*" (Gal.3:28) Howbeit, from the day that Jesus cursed the fig tree forward, Israel has never again been God's nation as it once was. Its priesthood was gone, its position as God's wife was never restored. When the Lord addressed the fig tree and said, "*No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard him.*" (Mk.11:14) it was so forever.

Jesus's dealing with the fig tree that day was about the nation that God had cast away. It will never be restored as it once was; it will be made new in Christ. Its history has become the glorious symbol of the true Israel of God that is formed in Jesus Christ.

Israel's season for fruit had run out that day. Jesus said this, "*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.*" (Matt.24:37)

"*And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it.*" (Lk.19:41) Oh the tender love that made Jesus weep over that city! This was the God of the Old Testament weeping through the Son! This was the God who time and again forgave them for their stubborn disobedience. And now God had sent His Son to them and they were going to kill Him.

Jesus knew that His time had come; as much as His heart would have loved to, He could not be Israel's Protector, and so He made this declaration, "*If thou hast known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee*"

in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because THOU KNEWEST NOT THE TIME OF THY VISITATION.” (Lk.19:42-44)

After He spoke that heart-wrenching prophecy, Jesus proceeded to go into the courts of the temple and cast out the money-changers saying unto them, *“It is written, My house is the house of prayer but ye have made it a den of thieves.” (Lk.19:46)*

From that day forward, Israel had lost their place under the shadow of the Most High. They became vagabonds and wanderers roaming the world looking for a place to call home. They stand as a nation but they live each day in constant fear, under the threat of being annihilated. And yet, God preserved their seed. Today Jews are found, scattered in almost every nation of the world.

Paul understood Gods’ love and great mercy. He explains, *“I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches OF THE WORLD, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness?” (Rom.11:11-12)*

He continues to explain, *“For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?” (Rom.11:15)* Israel has been twice dead but Christ will raise them up from the dead. In the meantime, Jesus Christ has raised up His Israel from above under a new covenant. The time of the old covenant is over. It is dead and buried. In Christ, God has ratified a new and more excellent covenant. He will never revive the old.

There is only one Israel and one temple of God. It is the Israel, the Jerusalem from above that has been formed in Christ Jesus. Be not confused or deceived into thinking that God is about to rebuild the temple on the Mount in Jerusalem, this is an abomination to our God. The true temple of God is Jesus Christ the head, and His body that He has raised by the power

of His Holy Spirit in the earth today.

We are the church of the Living God. There is only One temple of God. We are the temple of His body. We are Jerusalem from above. The old has past away, all things are become new.

The old covenant with its temple made with hands, and its sacrifices of bulls and goats, will never be revived. In Christ, there are neither Jews nor Gentiles, *“For as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal.3:27-28)*

ADAM AND EVE’S GARMENTS

When Adam and Eve found out that they were naked in the garden, they took out their needle and thread and sewed themselves garments of fig leaves. *“And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.” (Gen.3:7)*

It was no coincidence that the moment they saw their nakedness, they reached out to a fig tree. God had made the ‘fig tree’ available to them even while they were in the garden. As we saw, the fig tree represents the nation Israel under the covenant of Law. And so their fig leaves covering, already spoke of the covering of the Mosaic Law which included the temporary atonement for sins through the animal sacrifices.

In His great love and mercy, God provided them with a shield from their own wicked and murderous hearts. Jeremiah cried out, *“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jer.17:9)* Jesus did not commit Himself to any man for he knew their hearts. *“But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew ALL MEN, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.” (Jn.2:24-25)*

Even as they were cast out of the garden, Adam and Eve were covered by God’s Law. But more than that, God also covered them with coats of skin. *“Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.”(Gen.3:21)* The

leaves of the fig tree speak of the covering of the Law to protect their lives here on earth but God went a step farther and covered them with skins. These not only spoke of the bulls and goats that would be slain and offered under the Law; it was also a prophecy of the blood of Jesus Christ, God's pure Lamb, whose sacrifice would redeem not only Adam and Eve but all who would come out of their loins.

This "more excellent sacrifice," opened the way to the Tree of life, and life eternal. *"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the pattern of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."* (Heb.9:22-23)

Under the Mosaic law, sacrifices of bulls and goats were sufficient to atone for the sins of the flesh. However they could not change the sinners. But the blood of Christ does not only atone for the sins of the flesh, it also washes away the sins of soul and spirit. This brings about the complete change of nature. When we are in Christ, we are no longer sinners saved by grace, we are new creatures. Old things pass away, and all things become new.

The "heavenly things" that were purified with better sacrifices than bulls and goats, are none others than our souls and spirits. By His Spirit, Jesus has entered the Holy Place within us. He has been exposing the powers that have controlled our emotions and actions. He is making us free from tormentors such as fears, unruly desires of the flesh, superstitions, false doctrines, diseases and much more.

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh AND SPIRIT, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (II Cor.7:1) Now when our tormentors rise up in us, we recognize them and have the power of His Spirit to put them down immediately.

We know that God finished the works from the foundation of the world, and now they are coming to pass in the earth, as we walk them out. Jesus the Lamb of God, was slain from the foundation of the

world, and through Him, God covered His precious creation and saved them from complete destruction. God kept Israel of old through the sacrifices of bulls and goats, and now He saves His entire creation through the supreme sacrifice of His Lamb.

The skin covering that God gave to Adam and Eve also describes the natural bodies which the sweet Psalmist of Israel said are *"fearfully and wonderfully made"*.(Ps.139:14).

Adam and Eve had been dwelling in Eden. This was the realm of total bliss where they first found themselves. They were innocent and had no awareness of their "selves".. They did not know they were naked; they did not possess mortal bodies and no carnal understanding. When they were cast out of Eden, they put on flesh and the mind of the flesh. They lost access to the invisible world of spirit and became aware of their needs and their nakedness.

The shocking truth is that what happened to that innocent couple was all orchestrated by God. God put the tree with the wicked temptor in front of Eve. He knew that she was going to yield; it was the plan. The serpent was not a snake of your garden variety; he was the one that Jesus called a thief and a murderer from the beginning. Jesus told the Pharisees that they were of their father the devil. So the serpent is the father of the antichrist spirit that has been in the world from the beginning. He is the father of man-made religions.

The word "Satan" means "adversary." The Bible calls the serpent or the devil Satan, the adversary or enemy. *"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan. Which deceiveth the whole earth, and his angels were cast out with him."* (Rev.12: 9)

The confusion comes when Lucifer and the serpent are linked as the same. There is a close tie between them, for Lucifer whose name means "Light Bearer" fell from his high position, but he was never an angel. Satan has "angels" or messengers working for him, but he was never a cherub or a class angel. He came on the scene as the deceiving serpent. A close study of the Bible will reveal that Lucifer was never

called Satan and Satan was never called Lucifer. They are two separate entities. Everything that took place in the garden was set-up by God. It was done with much love; it is a faultless and impeccable plan. This set-up was necessary to bring about the transformation of the man of dust into the man who bears the image of the Son of God.

TWO ADAMS- A BIG DIFFERENCE

There can be confusion when we lack understanding of the two first chapters of Genesis. The word Genesis means “origin or mode of formation; source, root, seed.” We need to see that the first chapter is God’s creation in the Spirit. God finished all the works in His “Logos” or “Word”. And then the Word spoke and began to form all of the creation it contained. So, all that was in the Logos, will materialize in visible form.

God called His creation “very good.” In the first chapter, He introduces His Son- the man in the image of God. *“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things have been created through Him and for Him (Christ). (Col.1:15-16)* Man in God’s image (the Christ man) was already finished in the invisible realm of Spirit, (heavenlies). He is the Lord God, the Son of God.

The second chapter brings the invisible creation man into the visible earth. *“Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the Lord God had not yet sent rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground.” (Gen.2:5)* All of God’s creation was still in the form of seeds, and man had not yet been formed from the ground.

The Lord God was swift to change that situation, *“Then the Lord God formed man of the dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” (Gen.2:7)* The breath of life made the man of earth, a living soul. The soul life connected man with his earthly surroundings; it made him aware of his own being and

his potential, but soul life is a temporary life. It is sustained by external means, air, water, food grown from the earth and from the beasts of the earth. Soul life is earthy and corruptible. It has no eternal value.

“And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is from the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.” (I Cor.15:45-47)

Adam as we meet him in Eden, is in a state of innocence. He has no sin and He is sustained by the life that is renewed each morning when God visits him. A good night sleep is vital to the soul life; it renews the strength of the breath of life within man. The earthy Adam has no wisdom, no understanding of the things of God. He is not yet the man after God’s image; he is not finished.

Eden presents a peaceful, delightful scene, but it is not what God had purposed for His creation. God has purposed for His man to be in the likeness of His Son. *“And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” (I Cor.15:49)* We should have no problem accepting the fact that in the first Adam we are earthy. Our own bodies, made up of hydrogen, oxygen, carbon, calcium and phosphorus along with about 60% water and other earthy chemicals and minerals proclaim loudly that we are made of earth and EARTHY.

In explaining the process of “resurrection”, Paul explains, *“And that which you sow, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body just as He wished, and to each of the seeds a body of its own.” (I Cor.15: 37-38)*

The seed of the Adam man can only produce an earthy, body of corruptible flesh. The soul life of this corruptible body is sustained by external means. To have a change of body, one must have a change of seed. Peter explains that we must be born again of a new seed. *“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which*

liveth and abideth forever.” (I Pet.1:23) The seed that formed these earthy bodies was produced by our natural fathers, but the incorruptible seed of our new birth comes from the Holy Spirit who is our true Husband. This all sounds complicated, but actually, it is our Father who has sent the Holy Spirit of His Son into us, to plant His seed in our hearts and minds so that we might be born again from above.

As the new seed brings forth new life, we are transformed through the miracle of new birth. The written Word of the Bible is an important tool to keep us on track and to lead us to the living Word. But the written word does not give life. Memorizing every verse or any verse can give great comfort and knowledge, but it does not give life unless it is quickened as the living word.

This is what Jesus was explaining to the Pharisees, *“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”* (Jn.5:39-40)

The word “scriptures” comes from the Latin for “writings.” The Pharisees of Jesus’ day did not have the New Testament; they were searching in the Old Testament writings. Since Jesus came, we have been searching in the New Testament as well. This is our book of new writings or “scriptures” that testify of Him. The written words of the Bible, lead us to Jesus but it is only when His Spirit quickens the words to our hearts that they become life to us.

The golden promise is that “as we have born the image or soul-body of the earthy seed, we will also bear the body of the heavenly seed.” The body of Adam in the garden was not from the heavenly seed, or he would not have believed the lie. Until Christ is fully formed within, the Adam man has an “external God.” The Christ creation has life from within. Man in God’s image possesses the mind of Christ with all wisdom and understanding. In this way, man is able to make decisions that are in line with the Father’s will.

To get to that place, man has to lose his connection with his external God (man’s religion) and find the

true God through Christ, his hope of glory.

The most coveted thing that man has endeavored to do, without success, is to live forever. Eternal life comes from eating of the Tree of Life; there is no other way. Jesus said, *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.”* (Jn.6: 53)

The Tree of Life is the Word made flesh. The written Word, the Law, the preaching of the Word are instruments to bring us to Christ. But it is only as we eat of Him, as we take into our spirits the Living Word, that we begin to have eternal life.

It is the work of God’s Holy Spirit to bring us to that table. It is not through any works of our own, but by yielding ourselves and persevering through experiences and suffering that the Word that we eat becomes flesh in us. It is like the process of digestion in the natural. The Word has to be chewed (pondered), swallowed (believed) and digested (sent to the blood or to the waste).

The Tree of Life has always been in the garden within, but man has lost access to Him. We return to the access through the flaming swords, the suffering and death of Jesus on the cross. *“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth, we should not serve sin...Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ.”* (Rom.6: 6,11)

Reckoning ourselves DEAD on the cross means that we no longer serve the sinful nature; we enter into the life of the Spirit. Death of the cross is our way back to the Tree of Life. Man knows that this earthly life is very short. Death and the grave are not acceptable to his ways of thinking and so he has imagined a blissful place called heaven, where he will live forever with his loved ones. God in His mercy has allowed this fancy delusion, but it comes short of the glorious truth of His purpose for creation. How blessed is he or she who has ears to hear, eyes to see and a heart to understand.

Because of His love, *Jackie Caporaso*