

God's  
eternal  
purpose

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Understanding the favour of God

Our part to play.

## **Introduction**

Does the Lord God have an eternal purpose from which everything else devolves?

When one reads the writings of Christian authors it is difficult to find any common ground, there seem to be many many purposes – and while there are many things that God intends, is there one main purpose?

Now we are going to examine the one and only place in the New Testament that explicitly states His eternal purpose:

*'To the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.'*  
Ephesians 3:10-11.

And we will see how this is worked out through God's favour.

## Chapter 1

### In the beginning .....

In our undertaking to establish this eternal purpose of God we need to go back to what we call 'the beginning,' as recorded for us in the very first verses of the bible – the opening scene:

1 *'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.'*

2 *'The earth was (NOTE - more accurately – 'became' ) without form and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep.'* Geneses 1:1-2

Much teaching treats the two verses as if they state the whole position as if it was either just a short period of time or countless millions of years. When we compare with other scriptures we can see that something took place between verse 1 and verse 2: *'For thus says the Lord who created the heavens, who is God, who formed the earth and made it. Who did not create it in vain\*, who formed it to be inhabited.'*  
Isaiah 45:18

\* this is 'tohuw' in Hebrew – the dictionary gives the meaning without form, to lie waste, a worthless thing. From this we can see that scripture teaches that, in the very first act of creation, the earth was not without form and void and covered in water and darkness.

When the Lord was speaking to Job He said, *'Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell me if you have understanding who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.'* 38:4-7

The point is that when the earth was first formed it was not formless and void, rather it was so glorious that the angels in heaven were rejoicing. So what happened?

### **Lucifer's domain**

Lucifer was one of the highest ranking angels. Ezekiel sees him in 'Eden, the garden of God,' where every precious stone was his covering and he walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. (This sees the earth as a mineral garden of precious stones and as Lucifer's domain.) *'You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you.'* Ezekiel 28:15

But then Lucifer's heart was lifted up, (became full of pride) because of his beauty and his wisdom became corrupt. He was cast out and renamed 'satan.' (Here it is worth noting that 'Lucifer' means light bearer. Light is totally associated with truth, so when satan's wisdom became corrupt - that is he left truth and believed a lie, his light was extinguished and he fell into darkness and his domain fell into darkness with him. Hence we find earth in darkness in verse 2 of Genesis chapter 1.)

## The earth in darkness

Now we can see how the earth came to be formless, covered in darkness and void. The Lord God is light – He could not have initially created the earth in darkness. It fell into darkness because of Lucifer's fall.

We saw Lucifer *'walking too and from amongst the fiery stones.'* This idiom, indicating dominion, is repeated in Job. Satan is presenting himself before God in heaven and is asked, *'From where do you come?'* Satan replies, *'From going too and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.'* Job 1:7

Satan is in effect saying to God, the earth is mine and I control it.

But .....

## **Chapter 2**

### **God has a plan.**

The earth is revisited by the Lord over 6 periods described as 'evenings and mornings' – strongly suggesting literal days. Step by step the earth is made ready for occupation by man. This is God's plan - the earth will be taken back from satan's dominion and the dominion will be given to man (Genesis 1:26)

It was necessary that man be fully obedient to the Lord God (the opposite of satan's disobedience.) so there was just one rule for man to obey. Do not eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil - if you do dying you will die.

It is a familiar account in Genesis 3. Satan deceives Eve ('has God really said?') and Adam chooses to sin by taking the forbidden fruit she now offers him. Man has fallen into sin and there are consequences.

#### **Free will.**

The Lord knows the end from the beginning and the beginning from the end - nothing surprises Him.

Free will is absolutely vital, because we would not be human without it - we would just be 'robots.' For there to be 'love' there has to be free will to choose - for 'agape' is love which chooses to put others first. That is what God did in sending Jesus to die for us. Without free will there is no choice.

Free will is 'dangerous' for the Lord - in giving His creation free will He takes the risk that, just like satan and just like Adam, we will make the wrong choices. As God's eternal purpose unfolds we will see that He knew all about that and His plan will succeed.

Satan's proud 'bubble' is burst when God challenges him - 'Have you considered my servant Job?'

Job was the opposite of satan in that he was blameless and upright and he feared God and shunned evil. He was vastly rich being very greatly blessed of God. All that was Job's was protected by God. Job was *'a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil.'* (Job 1:8)

Satan challenges God saying that Job's righteousness was only because of the Lord's blessing - 'take away your protective hand and then see what Job will do.'

The Lord allows satan to attack all that Job was, and had, except satan is not allowed to take Job's life. (It is worth noting that Job did not know what was going on and even if he knew that it was satan attacking him, there was nothing he could do about it - it is only in the New Covenant that believers have authority over all the works of the devil.)

Although Job suffers enormously he also gains huge insight into the character of God. Job proclaims that previously *'I have heard of God by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You.'* 42:5.

His deep understanding causes Job to repent of his weaknesses and as he prays for his friends he is restored and with double his former fortune.

Satan has been 'given notice' that he is not actually the ruler of earth - it is no longer his domain. But we know Satan does not 'go down' without a fight. God's plan is for man to multiply and fill the earth. Satan's plan is to frustrate this plan of God as we shall see in the coming chapters.

God's eternal purpose will be fulfilled.

**Job believed in the Messiah to come.**

Part way through the account of Job, when he is broken (17:1) we find him telling Bildad, *'I know that my redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold and not another. My heart yearns within me.'* (19:25-27)

Job placed his trust in the redeemer to come - that is in Jesus, and so was born again according to John chapter 3 which tells us Jesus is the redeemer, and that those who believe in Him will not perish but have eternal life.

## **Chapter 3**

### **The plan Stage 1**

God made man in His image and we are therefore eternal beings designed to be in fellowship with the Lord. In that state of fellowship with Him, the Lord intended that we multiply and fill the earth in obedience and righteousness. Thus mankind would demonstrate to satan and the principalities and powers God's manifold wisdom.

In the first stage man dwelt in the Garden of Eden and fellowshiped with the Lord on a daily basis. Adam was greatly favoured by the Lord. However, when man disobeyed the one and only instruction that failure, his sin, had consequences.

Man could no longer dwell in the garden in case, in his fallen state, he took of the tree of life and was eternally doomed. So man was ejected from Eden.

Another consequence was that now he would have to work hard to be able to eat - 'by the sweat of his brow.' (Genesis 3:17-19)

At one level Adam had died. Not at the physical level because we are told that his body and soul lived on for 930 years. However we can work out what had happened.

Man is made up of spirit, soul and body - that is stated for us in Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, chapter 5 verse 23.

Adam had been warned that when he ate the forbidden fruit 'dying you will die.' Adam's body and soul did not die immediately so we conclude it was his human spirit that died first - hence the need to be born again

Jesus taught that it is essential to be born again - Spirit to spirit. So we can safely conclude that our human spirit must be born again if we are to be able to perceive the Kingdom of God - that is exactly what Jesus taught.

According to 1 John 3:14 we know that we have passed from death to life - clearly not (yet) our physical beings. So we can conclude it is our human spirit that has been made alive in Christ, (1 Corinthians 15:22), being transferred from the kingdom of death to the kingdom of light and life.

Man was removed from the Garden of Eden and then produced generations of children. But now mankind could only bring forth flesh, as Jesus explained to Nicodemus in John chapter 3. In order to see the kingdom of God man's human spirit would need to be born again - and that can only be accomplished by the Holy Spirit. It is flesh begets flesh, Spirit begets spirit.

However, as time went by man became more and more sinful:

*'then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the Lord said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth.'* Genesis 6:6-7

**A note about death.**

Death is not annihilation as many would think. Rather death is a holding position waiting for the final judgement as expressed in Revelation 20. Here we are taught that death gives up all those it is holding and that they then appear before the Great White Throne for the final judgement - called the second death. So when we say we are transferred from death to life it means we are no longer in that holding position and there is no second judgement or second death for us who have placed our trust in the sacrifice of Jesus at Calvary.

BUT - Noah found favour with the Lord and mankind was saved through him and his family. (We read the full account in Genesis chapters 6 - 8.)

**First stage - conclusion**

Man was left to his own devices and became seriously wicked. Total failure!

Now we are going to move to the second stage where we will see the Lord choose a nation to be His special people.

God's eternal purpose, that man will demonstrate His manifold wisdom to principalities and powers, will be fulfilled... so we move to stage 2

## Chapter 4

### The plan Stage 2

Fifty eight years before Noah's death Abram was born – later he was to be called Abraham.

The Lord speaks to Abram, *'Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you.'* Genesis 12:1

The Lord chose Abram at age 75. The Lord has chosen Abram though most of his forebears are still alive. Only Peleg and Nahor have passed on by this time. Shem, Noah's son, and seven of the generations that followed are all still alive.

The Lord makes a wonderful promise to Abram – *'I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse those who curse you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'* Genesis 12:1-3

The Lord calls and Abram obeys. His obedience is very important – it is showing satan and the principalities and powers the right thing to do.

We can trace the result through the pages of scripture. At Genesis chapter 17 the Lord enters into a covenant with Abram and in so doing changes his name to Abraham. The covenant speaks of great multiplication, many nations descending from Abraham and the promise of the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession for Abraham and his descendants.

The sign of the covenant is circumcision – for him and his descendants. By this time Abraham has given up on producing a son through Sarai (name changed to Sarah at the same time Abram becomes Abraham). So he has taken Sarai's maid, Hagar, and she has given birth to Ishmael.

But God's intention and His promise was a son through Sarah. Although she is past child bearing age we see that this is fulfilled in chapter 18. It is a miracle.

When Abraham is 100 years old Isaac is born. When Isaac has grown into a man the Lord requires Abraham to take him to the land of Moriah and sacrifice him there. (As a type of the Messiah to come Isaac was probably 33 years old) As the promises of God were to be fulfilled through Isaac, Abraham faces a major challenge. Abraham is willing because he reckons the Lord God could raise Isaac from the dead. (Hebrews 11:19)

No need – the Lord provides a lamb at the last minute. Abraham's obedience is complete as he takes the knife with which he was about to slay Isaac to slay the lamb instead.

At age 40, three years after Sarah has died, Isaac takes a wife, Rebekah, only to find that she was barren. Another miracle is required to fulfil the Lord's promise to Abraham and as Isaac pleads with the Lord Rebekah conceives. (Genesis 25:21)

Rebekah gives birth to twins, Esau and Jacob. Esau famously forfeits his birthright as the older for some red stew to satisfy his immediate hunger

By subterfuge Jacob also receives the blessing from their father, Isaac, when it is time for Isaac to pass on. Reading chapter 27 we see that Isaac's blessing and the forfeited birthright made Jacob master even though he was not the first born.

Jacob is now the leading figure in the family. Jacob is deceived into marrying Leah – the deceiver himself deceived! He thought he was going to be given Rachel in marriage after 7 years servitude to their father. So he serves a second 7 years to receive Rachel, the younger of the two sisters as his bride as well.

Rachel, Leah and their handmaids produce 12 boys for Jacob whose name is changed to Israel. These 12 boys become the leaders of the 12 tribes of Israel.

(According to Genesis 30 it seems that Rachel also could not conceive – but her prayers prevail and eventually she has Joseph.)

God's eternal purpose will not be frustrated. To preserve the line He has had to open the wombs of three generations of women. The way is now open for us to see the nation the Lord has chosen as His special nation - Israel.

God's favour over Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is profound - without His favour each of the wives would have remained barren and there would be no Israel.

God favours Israel because He chooses to, not because of any inherent goodness. God's favour is pictured for us in Romans 11 where Israel are described as natural branches of the Olive Tree. The root of the Olive tree is the fatness of the favour of God.

## **Failure**

Regardless of the favour of God, and the promises of immense blessing for following His ways, Israel wavers between obedience and disobedience over the following generations.

Israel has fallen so far away from the Lord that when the promised Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, is born at exactly the prophesied time, He is not recognised. After three and a half years of miracle ministry and teaching He is completely rejected and crucified.

God's eternal purpose, that man will demonstrate  
His wisdom to principalities and powers will be  
fulfilled... so we move to stage 3

Daniels' prophecy of 70 'weeks' exactly specified  
the time of Jesus birth. This was recognised by the  
Magi who came to see the King of the Jews and  
bore Him gifts, but not recognised by Israel.

## Chapter 5

### The plan – Stage 3

Man left to his own devices failed to demonstrate God's wisdom to principalities and powers. The chosen nation, Israel, even though promised immense blessing, was disobedient and failed to demonstrate God's wisdom to principalities and powers.

The Lord has a plan. Sin has to be judged and dealt with so that righteousness can be fulfilled. The Father puts the sin of the entire world on His Son. Jesus sacrificed Himself for the joy that was set before Him. (Hebrews 12:2) That joy is those who would recognise Him, believe in the effectiveness of His sacrifice, and place their trust in Him, thus becoming His bride.

It was the power to overcome sin that was missing in mankind in stages 1 and 2. Now every believer is born again – the human spirit, born again, is brought back to life. Now, in the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in our born again human spirit, never to leave. We, in the New Covenant, are indwelt by God Himself in the person of the Holy Spirit. Now we have received the gift of righteousness, that is we have been put into right standing with the Lord.

The power of sin has been broken. By putting His own Holy Spirit in every believer the Lord has paved the way for His eternal purpose to be fulfilled.

Now we have the power to overcome sin. It still requires us to choose holiness in day to day life – to make the right choices rather than the wrong ones. Like our forbears we can fail. But now that the price has been paid for sin we can confess our sins and when we do we are cleansed from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9.

The believers are together called ‘the church\*\*’ and are destined to be the bride of Christ when He returns.

The church is meant to demonstrate God’s manifold wisdom to the principalities and powers as we read in Ephesians chapter three. How that is accomplished is the subject of the next chapter.

\*\* The Greek word ‘*Ekklesia*’ would literally mean ‘called out of’ (that is *ek* being ‘out of’ and *klesis* ‘a calling.’) Perhaps it would be better translated ‘assembly’ or ‘gathering’ or ‘congregation’ – in Christianity it relates only to born again believers.

God’s plan is powered by GRACE and not by man’s merit.

GRACE is poured out in our fundamental release from sin and GRACE is poured out in the leading of the Holy Spirit. God’s plan does not rely on man’s effort – though He uses us as we are led by the Holy Spirit. Nothing God speaks to us is impossible for Him.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Fulfilment - part**

Satan rebelled against God. He was disobedient to his calling and his position as one of the highest angels created to serve the Lord. Satan exercised choice and he chose badly. His fall resulted in his domain, earth, falling into darkness. God had a recovery programme.

God's recovery programme requires His manifold wisdom to be demonstrated to satan and his cohorts. The first two stages showed that mankind was unable to accomplish that - man easily fell into sin, being deceived by satan and by making the wrong choices.

So God needs to indwell mankind, by His Spirit, in order to empower him to a level where he can overcome all the wiles of the enemy and the lusts of his own flesh.

That empowerment comes in two stages. The first stage is the indwelling Holy Spirit given at the moment of conversion. Then there is another level of empowerment when the believer is baptised in the Spirit - usually evidenced by speaking in tongues. (For full explanation see 'Inherent Power.')

## **But still choices have to be made**

Now every believer faces choices every day. That is we have the choice to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with the Lord in holiness. That is the opposite of satan's behaviour. We all fail to one degree or another but the Lord has provided complete restoration for us every time we fail, through repentance. ( 1 John 1:9)

Every time we choose holiness, (as described above from Micah 6:8) in our actions we are demonstrating God's manifold wisdom to the principalities and powers. Our behaviour and lifestyle is a very important part of God's plan - it demonstrates to satan, to principalities and powers, exactly where they have gone wrong in their disobedience.

## **Power**

However, there is another level of demonstration - that is the exercise of power.

## **Jesus comes to destroy the works of the devil**

*'He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.'*

1 John 3:8

## **And commissions us**

*'Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.'* John 14:12

The Apostle John teaches that *'He that is in us is greater than he that is in the world.'* (1 John 4:4) We have power over all the works of the enemy because of the completed work of Jesus and the resulting gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Jesus gave His disciples delegated power to heal, and over all the works of the enemy - recorded in Luke 10:19. (The Spirit not being given to indwell until much later - John 20:22)

Jesus delegated His power to His disciples because the New Covenant did not come into effect until His blood sacrifice was complete. How much more power then for us, now, who have the Holy Spirit dwelling inside - the wonderful fact of the New Covenant - *'Christ in you the hope of glory.'* Colossians 1:27 part.

When we exercise power over the works of satan and his demons we demonstrate God's manifold wisdom to them - exactly as He intends.

This chapter is entitled *'Fulfilment - part'* because man's choice to act in holiness is required. As we have seen, both before and after the Lord God chose Israel, mankind made and makes the wrong choices. This is still the case today - believers sometimes, maybe often, make wrong choices. That is properly called *'sin.'*

Fortunately we are the beneficiaries of the New Covenant and all our sins are covered by Jesus blood. We keep ourselves in close fellowship with the Lord, and in the right frame of mind, by repentance.

*'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'*

1 John 1:9

To some degree the church has fulfilled the eternal purpose of God. To some degree the manifold, that is many coloured, much variegated, wisdom of God has been demonstrated to the principalities and powers.

The church will be removed in what is called 'the rapture.' Satan will be bound for the next one thousand years whilst Jesus reigns in person.

### **When Jesus reigns on earth in person**

We are still in partial fulfilment of God's eternal purpose during the millennial reign of Jesus. Children will be born to those who have become believers\*\* during the period known as the 'tribulation' and survived. According to Revelation chapter 20 Jesus will reign for 1,000 years - so many children will be born into this era.

As in every period we have looked at so far, each one born into this era will have to make his or her own choice to believe in Jesus as his or her personal saviour. The surroundings will be very different. Satan is bound and cast into the bottomless pit at the beginning of the period so he cannot affect anyone.

\*\* Not the church. For details of the rapture of the church see  
Will the church be caught away.

In perfect and bountiful surroundings people will have to choose for or against Jesus as Saviour. Whilst we may think, 'surely everyone will believe at this time, with Jesus present and virtual perfection,' nevertheless many will still make the wrong choice. We see that, at the end of the period, when Satan is released for a short time, mankind, as numerous as the sand of the sea, rebel and are devoured by fire. (Revelation 20)

In this period of time, with Jesus ruling in person with His bride - the believing church, God's promises to Israel are fulfilled as Israel becomes the chief nation on earth.

### **Israel and the church.**

The future for Israel and the future for the born again believing church are radically different.

The promise to Israel is that it will become the chief nation on earth – this is fulfilled in the 1,000 year reign of Christ.

The promise to the church is that we become the bride of Christ. Revelation 19 tells us that we return from heaven with Jesus at the very start of this period in our new glorified bodies.

Ephesians 2 has a passage which requires clarity. Gentiles and Jews (citizens of Israel) are separated by the law of commandments. Jesus abolishes this wall of separation, by fulfilling the commandments. The result is that for those who believe and trust in Jesus Christ there is now one new man (creation – see Galatians 6:15) There is neither Jew nor gentile in Christ – only new creations.

Only born again believers, whether Jew or Gentile, are new creations, one in Christ.

It is an error to interpret this to say that the church and Israel become one – that is not born out by this or any other scripture.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Fulfilment - complete**

Revelation 21 records the culmination of God's eternal purpose. God's multi-faceted wisdom has been demonstrated to satan and the principalities and powers by the born again believers who make up the church, and are now the bride of Christ.

Now, in proper righteous judgement the Lord can cast satan, antichrist, the false prophet, the fallen angels (demons), all principalities and powers and all unbelieving mankind into the lake of everlasting fire.

God's eternal purpose fulfilled, His manifold wisdom has indeed be demonstrated to the principalities and powers and by grace the church has played its part.

Now the Lord God Almighty can and does dwell with mankind - God makes all things new for eternity in the holy city, New Jerusalem.

### **New Jerusalem**

When we turn to Revelation 21 to read about New Jerusalem it seems that there are two manifestations of the city.

The first 8 verses talk about New Jerusalem after the existing heaven and earth have passed away (verse 1). That is in eternity.

Verses 9 to chapter 22 verse 5 describe New Jerusalem during the millennium period whilst there are still 'kings of the earth' and 'nations' to come into the city. (Verse 24 and 26)

In both cases the city, New Jerusalem, is totally associated with the bride of Christ - the believing church.

## **Understanding the favour of God**

The passage in Romans 11:11-36 tells of the favour of God using the picture of an Olive Tree. The passage describes the nation of Israel as 'natural' branches and describes believing gentiles as having been cut out of an olive 'wild by nature,' and grafted in to the cultivated olive alongside remaining 'natural' branches. Unbelieving Jews having been cut off for their unbelief.

The context of Paul's writing is the position of Israel, which has mostly been cut off from the root through unbelief. Can they be restored? Yes, of course, they can be grafted in again to the tree.

In our understanding it is very important to recognise that Israel is described as branches and not the root . In writing to the Colossians Paul says that believers are, 'rooted and built up in Him.' (Him being Jesus, of course.) So when a gentile becomes a believer he is cut out of the wild olive and grafted into the cultivated olive whose root is Jesus.

The cultivated Olive is made up of all those who believe in Jesus as their Saviour. These have become 'one in Christ.'

Jesus is the mediator of the better covenant - that is the New Covenant in His blood which supercedes the previous or old covenant, now annulled. (Hebrews 8:6, 7:18 and 1 Corinthians 11:25)

The New Covenant is fuelled by grace and mercy in which the Lord promises to bring good out of every situation (Romans 8:28) and which, by nature, is made up of, *'every good and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.'* James 1:17

So we can rightly see the root of the Olive Tree as being the source of all blessing and 'fatness.' (That which makes one replete.) This is Jesus. This is favour. This is the New Covenant.

Gentile believers are not grafted into Israel – rather they are grafted alongside the believing remnant of Israel into Jesus, the root, the Messiah.

## **Our part to play.**

When we go back to our first text in Ephesians 3, we see that the church is expected to demonstrate the manifold wisdom of God to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.

How is that accomplished?

There are two primary aspects:

- 1) Obedience to the truth. Satan went wrong by leaving the truth and setting himself up in what is known as the 'five I wills of Satan.' This is described for us in Isaiah 14:13-15. Satan was going to be like God. As we have seen in previous chapters mankind has also been very disobedient and it is only now, with the indwelling Spirit, that we have power over sin and power over ourselves. So to demonstrate God's manifold wisdom we need to live holy and blameless lives - obedient to the Lord in every way. God's grace has provided restoration for every time we miss the mark - see 1 John 1:9.
- 2) The second aspect is resisting and taking authority over all the works of the enemy. With the Holy Spirit dwelling within us John is able to say, *'He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.'* 1 John 4:4.

The authority that dwells within us is greater than anything the devil has. James, writing says, *'Resist the devil and he will flee from you.'* 4:7 Our adversary has to give way but when we read the parable of the persistent widow we see that he does not give way easily. (Luke 18: 1-8.) Our confidence must be in Him who has saved and empowered us and we will need to stand firm and be persistent.

We are not emphasising 'works.' Rather we are seeing consequences. The consequences of our being born again -we will be changed from one degree of glory to another by the Spirit - we are indwelt by the greater power. Its all by grace - and grace that should be our normal way of life.

For further study:

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So that's what it's all about (overview of the bible account)

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\*Revelation (introductory level)

Ostrich Christianity

Israel and the church not in competition

Favour - enjoying the children's bread.

What should we do with money?

Going for Gold - the testing and stretching of our faith

After Brexit - the nature of the battle ahead

Last Orders

Wisdom

The King is coming

Health and Healing

The sign of Jonah - solved

Understanding the parable of the 10 virgins

The Kingdom Way

The Persistent Widow

Can I lose my salvation?  
Meet the Teacher  
Love, 153 fish and seven signs  
Paul's thorn in the flesh - its message for today  
Deception and how to avoid it  
Chosen and Choice  
The end is not quite yet  
Amazing numbers  
Blood - the blood of the New Covenant  
Building spiritual strength  
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