

THE LOVE GOD MEANS



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The Love God Means

*What Scripture Means by the Word — and What the Flesh Calls
by Its Name*

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Chapter 1

The Word Everyone Owns

Nobody argues against love. That is exactly the trouble.

Every side of every quarrel claims it. The man who leaves his wife says he is finally being honest about love. The wife who stays says she is being faithful to it. The preacher who warns says love made him speak; the man in the pew says love should have kept him quiet. The same word blesses the vow and the breaking of the vow, the mother's sacrifice and the affair, the rescue and the ruin.

A word that can bless everything has stopped meaning anything. It has become a coin worn so smooth that no image is left on it, and every side spends it freely because it costs nothing to spend.

God is not vague about this. Scripture has a great deal to say about love, and very little of it is what the word means on the street. The Bible does not treat love as a mood that happens to you. It treats it as a direction you are pointed, a loyalty you keep, a price you pay — and, hardest of all, a thing that can be commanded, corrected, misdirected, and lost.

1.1 One question

This book asks one question, and it is not *is love good*. Everyone answers yes to that and means nothing by it. The question is narrower and far more uncomfortable: **what does God mean by the word?**

Because there is a love that God calls love, and there is a love that man calls love, and Scripture does not always give them different names. That last point is where most word studies go wrong, and we will face it early rather than hide it. The Bible will sometimes take the highest word for love and put it in the mouth of a rapist, a deserter, and a harlot. If we are going to be honest about God's love we have to be honest about that too.

1.2 Where the line actually falls

The dividing line in Scripture is not between a warm love and a cold one, nor between a spiritual love and a physical one. God made the body, and He is not embarrassed by it. The line falls somewhere else entirely, and Paul draws it in a single sentence:

First Corinthians 13:6 · Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

There it is. Love has a relationship to truth, and it is not a neutral one. Love is *glad* about one thing and refuses to be glad about another. A love that can rejoice over anything at all, so long as somebody wanted it, is not the love of *First Corinthians 13*. It is something else wearing the name.

1.3 How we will work

We will not settle this from a dictionary of English. We will go to the words God actually used — ahav אָהַב^{H157} and chesed חֶסֶד^{H2617} and racham רָחַם^{H7355} in Hebrew, agapē ἀγάπη^{G26} and phileō φιλέω^{G5368} and epithymia ἐπιθυμία^{G1939} in Greek — and we will let the verses that use them say what they say, including the verses nobody quotes.

And we will keep one rule. Where Scripture presses hard, we press hard. Where Scripture is quiet, we stay quiet and say so. There is enough in the text itself to rearrange a man's life. We do not need to add to it.

A warning before we start. Some of what follows will not feel like love to the flesh. It is not meant to. The flesh has an opinion about love, and the whole burden of this book is that its opinion is wrong. But nothing here is written to wound anyone who is already bleeding. If you find your own life in these pages on the wrong side of a verse, so did the man writing them. The love we are about to describe is precisely the love that goes and finds such people.

Chapter 2

The First Love in the Bible

The word *love* does not appear on the first page of the Bible. It is not in the garden. It is not in the making of the woman, though that is a love story. It is not in the flood, nor in the covenant with Noah, nor in the call of Abram. God waits.

The first time Scripture says *love*, it says it like this:

Genesis 22:2 · And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

That is the first *ahav* אָהַב^{H157} in the Bible. Not a wedding. Not an embrace. A father, an only son, a three-day walk, and a knife.

2.1 God chose the moment

Consider how strange this is. Every human instinct would have introduced the word somewhere gentler. Scripture introduces it at the hardest possible place, and it introduces it in the mouth of God, describing a father's love for a son, in the same breath as the command to give that son up.

Read the sentence again and notice that God does not soften it. He does not say *your son*. He piles it on: thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest. Four times He names the tie before He asks for it. God does not pretend the cost is small. He says the cost out loud, and then He asks.

So the very first definition of love that Scripture offers is not a feeling at all. It is a father with a son he cannot spare, walking toward a mountain anyway.

2.2 The mountain answers itself

Abraham does not lose Isaac. A ram is caught in a thicket, and the son comes down the mountain alive. But Scripture never forgets the shape of that day, and centuries later the same words come back — only now nobody is spared:

John 3:16 · For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Only begotten son. Loved. Gave. It is Moriah again, with the roles changed and no ram.

The two verses share no Hebrew and Greek vocabulary directly, so let us not over-claim: John is not quoting Genesis word for word. But Scripture itself makes the link, and it does so with the decisive word. Writing of Moriah, the author of Hebrews calls Isaac Abraham's *only begotten son* (*Hebrews 11:17*) — and the Greek he uses, *monogenēs* μονογενής^{G3439}, is the very word John uses of Christ in *John 3:16*. The New Testament, not the preacher, put those two sons under one term.

2.3 What this rules out at the start

If the Bible had wanted us to think of love as a feeling, it had every chance to say so and did not. The first love in Scripture is a love that *costs a son*. The clearest love in Scripture is a love that *costs a son*. Between those two mountains lies everything else this book has to say.

Which means the test of love, in the two places Scripture shows it most clearly, is never *how strongly did you feel it*. The test is: **what did it cost you, and did you pay?**

One caution about method, since we will lean on it often. A word's first appearance in Scripture is not automatically its definition; the Bible nowhere teaches that. What follows in Genesis is proof enough — the next occurrences of the word are Isaac's affection for Rebekah, and a father's fondness for game he liked to eat. Moriah is not offered here as a dictionary. It is offered as the frame the Bible itself returns to when it wants to show us what God's love did.

Hold that in your hand. We are going to need it when we meet men in this book who felt love very strongly indeed, and were told by God that what they had was not love at all.

Chapter 3

The Words God Chose

English has one word where Scripture has several, and the loss is real. When a man says *I love my wife, I love my country and I love bread* in the same afternoon, he is not lying, but he is also not saying anything precise. Hebrew and Greek force a precision on the writer that English lets him dodge.

3.1 The Hebrew field

The Old Testament works mainly with four words, and they do different jobs.

ahav אָהַב^{H157} is the broad verb, with its noun ahavah אֲהָבָה^{H160}. It is the workhorse. It covers a husband for a wife, a father for a son, a man for his food, Israel for her God, and God for Israel. It is warm, it is wide, and — this matters enormously later — it is morally neutral all by itself. It describes the direction of a heart without yet telling you whether the heart is right.

chesed חֶסֶד^{H2617} is the covenant word, and it has no clean English equivalent. Mercy, kindness, steadfast love, lovingkindness — translators reach for all of them because none of them is enough. Chesed is loyalty that has given its word and will not go back on it. It is love with a spine.

racham רָחַם^{H7355} is love from the inside of the body. It is built on racham רָחַם^{H7356}, the womb. When God is said to have racham for His people, the picture is a mother's insides turning over for a child she carried. It is the least abstract word for love in the Bible.

dod דּוֹד^{H1730} is the lover's word — *beloved*, and in the plural the tokens and acts of love. It carries a second, quite separate sense as well: in something under a third of its occurrences it simply means an *uncle*, a kinsman on the father's side. Its love-sense is heavily concentrated in the Song of Solomon, where it runs throughout — and, as we will see, in the mouth of the adulteress in *Proverbs 7*. Keep that one in view.

3.2 The Greek field

The New Testament narrows and sharpens.

agapē ἀγάπη^{G26} with its verb agapaō ἀγαπάω^{G25} is the word the apostles reach for when they speak of God's love and of the love He commands. It is love that chooses. Because it chooses, it can be commanded, which is the single most important fact about it and the subject of the next chapter.

phileō φιλέω^{G5368} is the love of affection and friendship, with philos φίλος^{G5384}, a friend, and philia φιλία^{G5373}, fondness. It is the warmth between people who like each other. Scripture never sneers at it. Jesus is said to have wept over Lazarus and the crowd said *behold how he loved him*, and that word is phileō.

Then Greek had a common word for family affection, *storgē*, which the New Testament never uses as a bare noun. It survives only in compounds, and in both directions: negated as astorgos ἄστοργος^{G794}, *without natural affection*, in *Second Timothy 3:3* and *Romans 1:31* — and commanded, as philostorgos φιλόστοργος^{G5387}, *be kindly affectioned one to another*, in *Romans 12:10*. Natural affection is not beneath the New Testament. It is ordered.

And Greek had a word for sexual love, *erōs*, which the New Testament writers do not use even once.

3.3 The word that took the place of erōs

That absence is not squeamishness. God is not embarrassed by desire; He invented it, He blessed it, and He gave a whole book of the Bible to it. Scripture never tells us why the apostles left *erōs* alone, and we will not invent a reason for them. What can be observed is what they wrote instead:

First Thessalonians 4:5 · Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

Lust of concupiscence is epithymia ἐπιθυμία^{G1939} — a longing, and in the New Testament almost always a longing for what is forbidden. Where the Greek world said *erōs*, the apostles said epithymia and called it by its nature. The same root appears when the Lord reaches past the act to the eye that started it, in *Matthew 5:28*, where *to lust* is epithymeō ἐπιθυμέω^{G1937}.

3.4 Do not build a doctrine on a word list

Now the honest part, and it will cost some sermons.

It is very common to hear that agapē is divine love, phileō is human love, and that the difference is fixed. It sounds good, yet allures us in its simplicity. The New Testament

uses *agapaō* for God's love toward the world — and it also uses it for men who love darkness, for a deserter who loved this present world, and for the praise of men preferred to the praise of God. We will look at every one of those verses in the next chapter, because they demolish the idea that the word itself does the work.

The words are real and the distinctions are real. But a word is a container. What determines whether a love is God's love or the flesh's is not which container it comes in. It is **what is in it, and who it is aimed at.**

Chapter 4

The Word Is Not a Charm

If agapē were a holy word by nature, the following verses could not exist. They do exist, and they are worth more than any amount of theory.

John 3:19 · And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

Loved there is agapaō ἀγαπάω^{G25} — the same verb as *God so loved the world* three verses earlier. In the space of three verses John uses one word for the love of God and the love of darkness. He is not being careless. He is telling you that the verb describes a direction, and the direction can be hell.

4.1 Three more

Second Timothy 4:10 · For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

Demas had stood next to Paul. He is named in the greetings of two other letters. Whatever went wrong did not go wrong because he stopped being capable of love. He loved. The verb is agapaō. He simply loved the wrong world, and the loving of it emptied a chair beside an old man in a cell.

John 12:43 · For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

Again agapaō, and here the ruin is not that they loved men's praise instead of God's, but that they loved it *more*. Loves are not only right or wrong in their object. They are right or wrong in their **order**.

Luke 6:32 · For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

Four times *agapaō* in one verse, and the Lord's verdict on it is *what thank have ye*. Sinners can perform the highest Greek word for love perfectly well — as long as it is aimed back at people who aim it at them. Reciprocal love is not the mark of a Christian. It is the mark of being alive.

4.2 The Hebrew does the same thing

This is not a Greek quirk. Turn back to the Old Testament and *ahav* אָהַב^{H157} behaves exactly the same way.

Genesis 25:28 · And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Read the reason. Isaac loved Esau *because he did eat of his venison*. There is a whole doctrine of the flesh in that little clause: a love with a *because* attached to the appetite of the one doing the loving. That family paid for it for two generations.

And in *Second Samuel 13* the same verb opens the account of a man's obsession with his half-sister — twice, in verse 1 and again from his own mouth in verse 4 — before the chapter arrives at the rape in verse 14. We will give that its own chapter, because it deserves one.

4.3 So what actually makes love God's love

If the word does not decide it, what does? Scripture answers in three ways, and every one of them is a test you can apply tonight.

- **Its object.** What is being loved? Light or darkness, God or the world, the neighbour or the neighbour's wife. *1 John 2:15* does not say love less; it says *love not the world*.
- **Its order.** Where does it rank? *Matthew 10:37* does not forbid a man to love his father and mother. It forbids him to love them *more than me*. Idolatry is rarely loving a bad thing. It is usually loving a good thing too much.
- **Its cost.** What has it paid, and for whom? *Luke 6:32* rules out love that is only ever repaid, and *Genesis 22:2* set the price at the start.

Notice what is not on that list. Not intensity. Not sincerity. Not how sure you are that it is love. Amnon was sure. Demas was sure. The men who loved darkness in *John 3:19* were not pretending.

This is not to say God is indifferent to what a man feels — He is not, and the next chapter will show Him judging a nation for an affection that was missing. It is to say that feeling is never the instrument Scripture hands you for telling *whose* love you are holding. That is the one test the flesh trusts, and it is the one test that cannot do the work.

That is the whole quarrel of this book in a sentence, so read it slowly: **the flesh measures love by how strongly it is felt, and God measures it by what it is aimed at and what it will pay.**

Chapter 5

Love That Can Be Commanded

Here is a fact so ordinary that it slips past everyone, and so heavy that it settles the argument by itself.

God commands love.

Deuteronomy 6:5 · And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

Matthew 22:37-40 · 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. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Now stop and think about what a commandment is, and let us be more careful here than this argument usually is.

It is often said that love must not be a feeling, because a feeling cannot be commanded. That is too quick, and Scripture will not support it. God commands affections all through the Bible. He commands rejoicing — *Rejoice in the Lord alway* — and He once named the missing affection as the ground of a national judgment:

Deuteronomy 28:47 · Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things;

So God does command the heart, and He holds men answerable for what is not in it. The commandment in *Deuteronomy 6:5* says so itself: love the LORD with all thine **heart**, and with all thy **might**. The heart is named first.

What follows, then, is not that love excludes feeling. It is something better, and God supplies it in the same book:

Deuteronomy 30:6 · And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.

The love God commands is a heart-work God Himself undertakes to create. He does not stand outside the man shouting for an emotion the man cannot produce; He promises to open the heart that will produce it. That is why the same love appears later as *fruit* rather than as achievement, and we will come to that.

So hold two things together, and they are the hinge of this book. **The commandment can be obeyed before the feeling arrives** — nothing in Scripture tells a man to wait until he is moved. And **the feeling is never the instrument Scripture hands you for telling whose love you are holding**. God may well judge an affection that is missing, as He did at *Deuteronomy 28:47*. What He never does is let a man point at the warmth in his own chest and call the matter settled. What settles it is what the love is aimed at and what it will pay.

5.1 What obedience looks like

Scripture is not shy about spelling out the content.

John 14:15 · If ye love me, keep my commandments.

First John 5:3 · For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

Read that second one carefully. John does not say obedience *proves* love, though it does. He says obedience **is** it: *this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments*. The definition is given flat out, and it contains no reference whatever to how the obedient man feels while obeying.

This is why the New Testament can order love into being over and over — love your enemies, love one another, husbands love your wives — without ever once telling anybody to work up an emotion first.

And the commands are not confined to one Greek word. The warm, affectionate family of *phileō* φιλέω^{G5368} is commanded too: *be kindly affectioned one to another* (*Romans 12:10*), *let brotherly love continue* (*Hebrews 13:1*), and the older women are to teach the young to love husband and children (*Titus 2:4*). God orders the affections as well as the will. He simply never lets a man point to his feelings as proof.

5.2 The flesh's reply

The flesh has an answer ready, and it sounds humble: *but then it isn't real love, it's just going through the motions*.

That objection has the whole thing backwards. It assumes the feeling is the real article and the deed is the shell. Scripture assumes the reverse.

First John 3:18 · My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

Not in word — including, we may say, the word spoken warmly. In deed.

Paul knows the opposite danger too, and names it as sharply as anyone ever has: *though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing (First Corinthians 13:3)*. A man can perform the deeds and be empty. So the worry here is not chiefly that Christians will act lovingly without feeling it. The worry John presses is the commoner one — that they will feel it warmly and never act at all.

5.3 Then is feeling nothing

No, and this is where we must not overcorrect. God is not asking for a cold machine. Look at how He speaks of His own love:

Zephaniah 3:17 · The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.

God sings over His people. There is nothing bloodless in that. The Bible is full of affection, delight, yearning, tears. Feeling is not the enemy of biblical love; feeling is one of its fruits and often one of its joys.

But it is not the root, and it is not the test. A man who waits to feel love before he acts in love will spend his life waiting, and will call the waiting sincerity. A man who acts in love because God commanded it will frequently find, some years in, that the feeling has quietly come and sat down beside the obedience.

That is the order Scripture gives, and the flesh has it exactly reversed.

Chapter 6

Chesed: Love That Keeps Its Word

Of all the words in this book, chesed ^{H2617} is the one English cannot carry. Open three translations and you will find mercy, kindness, steadfast love, lovingkindness, goodness, favour — six English words circling one Hebrew word and none of them landing on it.

Chesed is what love does when it has given its word.

6.1 The self-description of God

When God passes before Moses and says His own name, chesed is in it:

Exodus 34:6-7 · And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

Abundant in goodness and *keeping mercy* both render chesed. And notice what God puts in the same breath: abundant in chesed **and truth**, forgiving iniquity **and** by no means clearing the guilty. This is the first place a modern reader flinches, and we should not skip past the flinch. God does not describe His love as a thing that suspends His justice. He names them together, in one sentence, as one character.

Any account of God's love that has to quietly delete the second half of *Exodus 34:7* is not describing the God of *Exodus 34:6*.

6.2 Love that outlasts the loved

Chesed is why God's love is not a mood. A mood tracks its object: it rises when the beloved is lovely and falls when she is not. Chesed tracks the promise.

Jeremiah 31:3 · The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

Everlasting love is ahavah אָהָבָה^{H160}; *lovingkindness* is chesed. The everlasting quality is not a compliment paid to the intensity of God's feeling. It is a statement about duration under conditions — and the conditions in Jeremiah's day were treachery, idolatry and exile.

6.3 Hosea, and the command nobody wants

Then God does something to prove it. He tells a prophet to live the doctrine.

Hosea 3:1 · Then said the LORD unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine.

Read the comparison God draws. He tells the prophet to love an adulteress *according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel*. God is not merely asking Hosea to do a hard thing. He is saying: this is what My love is like. This is what it has been doing all along.

That verse ought to end a certain kind of talk forever. God's love is not the warm approval of a satisfied party. It is a husband walking back into a marketplace to buy back a wife who left, and it is called love precisely because she left.

6.4 What chesed does to us

Two things follow, and they cut in opposite directions.

The first is comfort, and it is enormous. If God's love toward you is chesed, then it is not being recalculated every morning against your performance. It was given as a word, and God does not go back on His word. The believer's security does not rest on the steadiness of his own affection, which is a reed, but on the steadiness of God's covenant, which is not.

The second is a demand. If chesed is what God's love is, then chesed is what He means when He tells us to love — and chesed is expensive. It means the promise you made when you felt it still binds you on the morning you do not. It means a marriage is not over when the feeling is. It means friendship survives the season in which your friend is not delightful.

The flesh has a word for that kind of persistence. It calls it settling, or being trapped, or living a lie. Scripture calls it the character of God.

Chapter 7

Racham: The Love of the Womb

There is a word for God's love that is not abstract at all. It is anatomical.

racham רַחַם^{H7355} means to have compassion, to be moved with pity, to love tenderly. It is built on the noun racham רַחֵם^{H7356}, which means the womb. When Scripture says God has racham for His people, it is not reaching for a lofty idea. It is reaching for the deepest physical love a human being has ever known and saying: like that, only more.

7.1 The verse that dares God to fail

Isaiah 49:15 · Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.

Look at what God does here. He picks the one human love the whole world agrees is unbreakable — a nursing mother and her infant — and He offers it as a comparison. Then, astonishingly, He admits it can break. *Yea, they may forget.* God does not sentimentalise motherhood. He knows what happens in a fallen world.

And then He plants Himself on the other side of that failure: *yet will I not forget thee.* The strongest natural love in existence is used as a floor, not a ceiling. God's love begins where the best human love runs out.

7.2 The Father's insides

Psalms 103:13 · Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

Pitieth is racham again. The Hebrew is not a distant pity offered downward from a height; it is the turning over of the insides that a parent feels when a child is hurt.

The New Testament keeps this body-language. Where the Gospels say Jesus was *moved with compassion*, the Greek is a verb built on the word for the inward parts — the guts. When the father in the parable sees the prodigal on the road while he is yet a great

way off, he is not described as approving. He is described as struck in the bowels, and then he runs.

7.3 Why this matters against a caricature

Two errors stand at opposite walls, and racham knocks down both.

The first error says God's love is pure will, cold as law — a sovereign decision with no warmth in it. Racham says no. The God of the Bible has insides. He is moved. He sings over His people in *Zephaniah 3:17* and He weeps at a tomb in *John 11:35*.

The second error is the one running loose in our own day: that because God feels for us, He must therefore agree with us. That does not follow, and Scripture never lets it follow. The same God who says *can a woman forget her sucking child* says, in the same book and the same voice, hard things about sin that no amount of tenderness softens.

Feeling with someone and agreeing with them are two different acts. God does the first perfectly and refuses the second wherever we are wrong. That combination is almost extinct among men, which is exactly why we keep mistaking one for the other.

7.4 The thing to take away

When you are tempted to think God's love toward you is grudging — that He receives you the way a magistrate receives a repeat offender, correct and unwilling — put *Isaiah 49:15* in front of your eyes and read it until it lands.

He is not enduring you. His insides turn over for you. And He is still not going to call your sin good, because that would not be racham. That would be a mother watching her child eat poison and calling it dinner.

Chapter 8

Love Without a Mask

Paul writes a sentence about love with a knife in it, and most readers put it down before the second half.

Romans 12:9 · Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

Without dissimulation is one Greek word, *anypokritos* ἀνυπόκριτος^{G505} — literally un-hypocritical, unmasked. It is built from the word for a stage actor. Paul is saying: take the mask off your love.

And then, without a pause, without a new sentence in the sense that we would start one, he tells you what unmasked love does: **abhor that which is evil**.

That is not a change of subject. It is the definition continuing. Hating evil is not an unfortunate duty that sits *beside* love, keeping it honest. In Paul's grammar it is the first thing love does once the mask is off.

8.1 The Psalm says it in one line

Psalms 97:10 · Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.

The logic is a straight line and there is no way around it. If you love the LORD, hate what destroys. The two are not in tension; the second is the proof of the first. A man who claims to love a person and is indifferent to the thing eating that person alive is telling you something about his love, and it is not flattering.

Amos 5:15 · Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: it may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.

Hate, love, and *establish judgment in the gate* — the courtroom of the city. In Amos the three go together as one act of covenant loyalty.

8.2 Where the flesh gets confused

The flesh hears *hate* and reaches immediately for people. That is precisely the error, and Scripture blocks it early. What is to be hated is **evil**, not the man. The same Bible that says hate evil says:

Matthew 5:44 · But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

Hold both. Christian love hates the sin with real hatred and loves the sinner with real love, and it will be accused of hypocrisy for doing so by people who have never managed either. But this is exactly what God does. He hated the sin enough to kill His Son over it and loved the sinner enough to make that the means.

8.3 The counterfeit hatred

There is a false version of this and it must be named, because it does more harm to the truth than the world does.

It is possible to enjoy hating evil. It is possible to use *Psalms 97:10* as a licence to be cruel, to relish the failure of people we disapprove of, to make our indignation a hobby. That is not what Paul commanded. He commanded love without a mask, which means that if the hatred of evil is not visibly attached to a love that will cross the street and pay for someone, it is not the thing Paul described. It is temper with a proof text.

The test is simple and it is unforgiving. Whom have you gone to? What has your abhorrence of evil cost **you**, as opposed to costing the people you abhor it in? Love that only ever spends other people's blood is not love, however orthodox its opinions.

8.4 And the counterfeit love

The opposite counterfeit is the one our age prefers, and Paul rules it out just as flatly. It is a love that will not hate anything at all — that treats every abhorrence as a defect of character and calls its own silence kindness.

Set it against *First Corinthians 13:6* and watch it fail: *rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth*. Paul's love is not neutral about what happens to people. It has something it will not celebrate. Take that away and what remains is not a purer love; it is a love that has stopped caring how the story ends.

Chapter 9

The Rebuke Inside the Commandment

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Everybody knows it. Jesus called it the second commandment, and the whole law hangs on it with the first.

Almost nobody reads the verse before it.

Leviticus 19:17 · Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.

Leviticus 19:18 · Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.

Read them in order, because they are one paragraph and God wrote them that way.

Do not hate your brother in your heart. **Therefore** rebuke him. Do not let sin sit on him. Do not take revenge, do not nurse a grudge — love him as yourself.

The rebuke is not an exception to the love commandment. It is *inside* it. It stands between two prohibitions of hatred, as the alternative to both.

9.1 The logic Israel was given

Follow what God is actually saying, because it is not what we assume.

A man sins. You see it. Now there are three things you can do.

- You can hate him in your heart — say nothing, feel it, let it sour. Forbidden in the first clause.
- You can avenge yourself and hold the grudge. Forbidden in the last clause.
- You can go and tell him. Commanded in the middle.

Silence is not the loving option in this text. Silence is grouped with hatred. God treats the man who watches his brother destroy himself and says nothing as a man with something wrong in his heart, and the phrase He uses is chilling: *not suffer sin upon him* — do not let it stay on him, as a weight he is carrying that you could have helped lift.

9.2 Proverbs says it with a scalpel

Proverbs 27:5-6 · Open rebuke is better than secret love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

Secret love — love that is felt and never risked. Proverbs prefers open rebuke to it, and the reason is in the next line: the wound can be faithful, and the kiss can be a lie. The flesh judges by which one hurts. Scripture judges by which one tells the truth.

Galatians 4:16 · Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

Paul asks it because they had decided he was. They are not the last.

9.3 The guardrails, which are not optional

Now the safeguards, and they are as binding as the command.

It is a rebuke to your brother, not a broadcast about him. *Leviticus 19:17* sends you to the man. It does not send you to everyone else about the man. Most of what passes for faithful rebuke today never reaches the person it is aimed at, which tells you it was never a rebuke; it was an audience.

Its aim is to lift the weight, not to win. *Not suffer sin upon him* names the goal: his freedom, not your vindication. If you would be disappointed to hear he had repented before you got there, you are not on this errand.

It goes with covering, not against it. The same Bible says:

Proverbs 10:12 · Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.

First Peter 4:8 · And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

There is no contradiction here, though the two commands are often set against each other. Love covers — it does not publish, does not collect, does not keep the account open. And love rebukes — it does not leave a man in a fire and call the silence tact. What love never does is the reverse of both: publish the sin to everyone except the sinner. That is the exact combination the flesh finds easiest and Scripture forbids twice.

9.4 The hard sentence

So here is the sentence, and it is not mine:

If you can watch a man you call your brother walk into ruin, and say nothing because you cannot be bothered, or because you are afraid of what it would cost you, or because some part of you is content to watch — and then call your silence love, Scripture has already told you what it is calling that. It is calling it hatred in the heart.

That is deliberately narrower than it first sounds, and the narrowing is Scripture's own. Not all silence is hatred. The same book of Proverbs says *reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee*; Amos says the prudent keep silence in an evil time; and Paul restricts the errand to *ye which are spiritual*. There is a silence that is cowardice and there is a silence that is wisdom, and a man usually knows which one he is holding.

Chapter 10

The Love That Wounds

There is a kind of love the flesh cannot recognise at all, because everything about it looks like the opposite. It arrives as pain.

Hebrews 12:5-8 · And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

The writer is quoting Solomon:

Proverbs 3:11-12 · My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

And the risen Christ says it to a church in His own voice:

Revelation 3:19 · As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Three witnesses, one claim: **the chastening is the evidence of the love, not a suspension of it.**

10.1 Read the argument, not just the sentiment

Hebrews is making a real argument and it is worth following, because it runs against everything we assume.

We assume that if God loved us more, there would be less trouble. The writer argues the reverse. He does not say the discipline is compatible with sonship. He says the *absence* of it would prove you were not a son at all — *then are ye bastards, and not sons*. Discipline is what a father spends on a child who is actually his.

Which means the pain in a believer's life is not evidence against God's love, and should never be read that way. Some of it is evidence for it.

10.2 What this does not say

Two things must be said carefully here, because this doctrine is easily made cruel.

It does not say every suffering is a punishment for a particular sin. Job's friends built a whole theology on that and God rebuked them for it. Some chastening trains rather than corrects; the same Greek family covers the whole upbringing of a son, not merely the rod.

And it does not license anyone to interpret another man's suffering for him. Hebrews addresses the sufferer, in the second person, to keep him from fainting. It hands nobody a diagnosis to deliver about someone else's grief.

10.3 The mirror it holds up

Now turn it toward ourselves, because this is where it bites.

If God's love corrects, then a love which never corrects is not modelled on God's. That applies to a father with his children, to a friend with his friend, to a church with its members. The parent who cannot bear to be disliked for an hour is not being gentler than God; he is being absent from a job God does.

And it applies to how we receive it. *Despise not*, says Solomon — do not shrug it off. *Nor faint*, says the same verse — do not collapse under it. There are two ways to waste a chastening and most of us have a favourite.

The love that leaves you exactly as it found you is not the love of the New Testament. God loves us as we are and He refuses to leave us there, and the second half of that sentence is as much love as the first.

Chapter 11

Kind Unto the Unthankful

A book that gives whole chapters to hating evil, to rebuke and to chastening owes the reader this one, or it has drawn a portrait of God with half the face missing.

Because the same God who chastens sons pays out, daily, on people who give Him nothing back.

Matthew 5:45 · That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

Consider what that verse concedes. The wicked man's field gets rain. His crops come up. He eats, and he thanks nobody, and next spring it rains on him again. God is not running a system in which kindness is metered out to the deserving. He is spending on His enemies every single day, and most of them have never once noticed.

11.1 Kind unto the unthankful

The Lord makes this the pattern His disciples are to copy, and He is explicit about the arithmetic:

Luke 6:35-36 · But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

Hoping for nothing again. That is the phrase to sit with. Earlier we saw the Lord dismiss love that is repaid — sinners manage that much. Here is the alternative stated positively: lend where there is no prospect of return, and do it because that is what your Father is like.

And note the word He lands on. Not *be ye therefore correct*, nor *be ye therefore discerning*. **Be ye therefore merciful.**

11.2 The question the lawyer did not want answered

A man once tried to get the boundary of *love thy neighbour* defined for him, which is always the move of someone hoping the boundary is close. The Lord answered with a story, and the story is a rebuke to everyone who has ever used orthodoxy as a reason to walk past.

A priest saw the wounded man and passed by. A Levite saw him and passed by. Both were, we may assume, entirely sound on the law they served — and note that Luke has the priest *coming down* the same road, in the same direction as the victim, away from Jerusalem. He was not hurrying to the temple. Whatever excuse we might have invented for him, the text does not supply it.

Luke 10:33-34 · But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

Then the Lord turns the lawyer's question inside out. The man had asked *who is my neighbour* — that is, whom am I obliged to. The Lord asks instead which of the three **was** a neighbour, and the answer given is not a category but an act:

Luke 10:37 · And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

He that shewed mercy. Not he that held the right position about the man in the ditch. The Samaritan spent oil, wine, a beast, a night, two pence and an open-ended promise to cover the rest, on a stranger of a people who despised him, who could not repay him and whom he would probably never see again.

Put that beside the three tests. **Object:** a man with nothing to offer. **Order:** a stranger of a hated people ranked above his own schedule, his errand and his safety on a robbers' road. **Cost:** everything in his bag, a night, and an open promise to pay the rest. It is the same shape as the cross, told small.

11.3 Where this bites

It bites on the readers most likely to enjoy the earlier chapters — and the writer of this one is among them.

It is possible to be entirely right about love that hates evil, love that rebukes, love that chastens, and to walk past a man in a ditch on the way to say so. The priest and the Levite are not in that parable as unbelievers. They are in it as the religious.

So take the severity of the last three chapters and hold it with this: whatever else God's love is, it is *kind unto the unthankful and to the evil*, and it will not let a man treat his correct opinions as though they were mercy.

Chapter 12

The Love That Forgives

There is one more thing love does that we have not yet named, and it is the thing most of us will need before the week is out.

Love absorbs.

First Corinthians 13:4-7 · Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

We took one clause of this passage earlier — *rejoiceth not in iniquity* — and used it as a knife. It is a knife. But it sits in the middle of a list, and a long run of that list is about what love **puts up with**.

Suffers long. Is not easily provoked. Thinks no evil — that is, keeps no ledger. Bears, believes, hopes, endures, all things. That is seven clauses of the fifteen, and the last four of them come in a row at the end, describing a love that is being ill-used and does not stop. The other eight are about how love conducts itself; these seven are about what it will take.

12.1 The ground of forgiving

Scripture never asks a Christian to forgive because the offence was small, or because time heals, or because bitterness is bad for the health. It gives one reason, and it is always the same reason:

Ephesians 4:32 · And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. The measure of what you owe your brother is what has already been cancelled on your account. That is the whole argument, and the Lord told it as a story with a servant who had been let off ten thousand talents and then took a colleague by the throat over a hundred pence.

Matthew 18:32-33 · Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?

And then the sentence that ought to make every reader of this book put it down for a minute:

Matthew 18:35 · So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

From your hearts. The Lord will not accept a forgiveness that is only a form of words, and He attaches a consequence to withholding it that no one who takes Scripture seriously can wave away.

12.2 Covering is not the same as pretending

Now hold this against the chapter on rebuke, because the two are constantly played off against each other and they were never opposed.

First Peter 4:8 · And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

To cover is not to deny. It is to decline to publish, to decline to collect, to decline to bring it up again in three years when it would be useful. Rebuke goes **to the man**; covering keeps it **from everyone else**. The two commands work together and together they forbid the thing the flesh finds easiest — telling everyone except the person concerned.

And forgiving does not mean pretending nothing happened, nor does it always mean the relationship resumes unchanged the same afternoon. The debt is released at once; trust is rebuilt at whatever speed wisdom allows. Scripture itself keeps those two apart. It warns *when he speaketh fair, believe him not* (Proverbs 26:25) — forgiveness does not oblige credulity. It records Paul refusing to take Mark, and the contention so sharp that he and Barnabas parted (Acts 15:38-39), and then, years later, *Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry* (Second Timothy 4:11).

And lest anyone use that as a licence for permanent distance, Paul's other instinct is restoration, and it is urgent: *ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him* (Second Corinthians 2:7-8). The debt goes immediately. The rebuilding is real work. Neither one is optional.

12.3 The last word from the cross

There is one place where all of this is done at once, under maximum provocation, by a man who had the power to do otherwise.

Luke 23:34 · Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

He is being killed as He says it. The soldiers are dividing His clothes in the same sentence. Nothing has been apologised for, nothing repaired, nothing even understood — *they know not what they do* — and He is interceding for them already. The asking goes out before anyone has thought to want it.

That is the love this book has been describing from the first page. It moves before it is asked. It pays what it does not owe. And it is aimed, at that particular moment, at the people driving the nails.

Chapter 13

Amnon: When Lust Is Called Love

If a single chapter of the Bible could cure a generation of its confusion about love, it would be this one. It is not a chapter anyone preaches.

Second Samuel 13:1 · And it came to pass after this, that Absalom the son of David had a fair sister, whose name was Tamar; and Amnon the son of David loved her.

Loved her. The word is ahav אָהַב^{H157} — the same verb God used of Abraham and Isaac in *Genesis 22:2*, the same verb Israel is commanded with in *Deuteronomy 6:5*. The Holy Spirit chose it here, of this man, about this woman.

And then the chapter shows you what it was.

Second Samuel 13:2 · And Amnon was so vexed, that he fell sick for his sister Tamar; for she was a virgin; and Amnon thought it hard for him to do any thing to her.

He is sick with it. He cannot eat. Every mark the world uses to certify a great love is present: the intensity, the obsession, the physical toll, the sense of being unable to live without her. If Amnon had written a song about it we would still be singing it.

13.1 The verse that tears the mask off

He tricks her into his room. He rapes her. And then Scripture writes a sentence that ought to be carved over every discussion of this subject:

Second Samuel 13:15 · Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone.

Look at the Hebrew of that verse. *Hated* is sane אָוֵד^{H8130} and *hatred* is its noun; *love* is ahavah אָהָבָה^{H160} and *loved* is ahav. The writer sets the two words side by side deliberately and measures one against the other: the hatred was **greater** than the love.

And then three words that finish the argument: *Arise, be gone*.

13.2 What actually happened

The flesh reads this as love that turned to hate — a passion that soured. The verse does record a real sequence: there was something before, and something worse after, and the writer measures the second against the first. But look at what the sequence exposes.

What Amnon had was never aimed at Tamar's good for one moment; it was aimed at his own relief. While she was unobtained, that appetite wore the face of desperate devotion. The instant it was fed, it had no further use for her, and the true shape of it showed — a shape that had always been there, which is why the disgust could arrive so fast and so total. You do not get from adoration to *arise, be gone* in an afternoon unless it was never adoration.

That is the anatomy of lust, written by the Spirit of God as a case study. Lust is not love that went too far. **Lust and love run in opposite directions from the beginning:** one moves toward what it can get, the other toward what it can give. They can be indistinguishable from the outside for years, because taking and giving look identical while the thing is still being pursued. The difference shows at the moment of possession.

13.3 Why Scripture used the word love here at all

Now the question that makes this chapter so valuable. If Amnon's was not love, why does verse 1 call it love?

Because Scripture is describing the world as it actually is, and in the world as it actually is, this is what men call love. The Bible is not being loose with its vocabulary. It is quoting ours. It puts the word in the sentence exactly as we would put it there, lets us nod along for fourteen verses, and then detonates verse 15 underneath our nodding.

There is a mercy in this. God did not leave us to work out the difference from theory. He gave us a story where the two are laid side by side under one name, and He labelled the ending Himself.

13.4 The test Amnon fails

Take the three tests from earlier and put them to him.

Object. He loved her — but what he wanted was not Tamar's good, it was her body. The object of his love was his own appetite; she was only where it was kept.

Order. Nothing in him ranked God, or his father's house, or her life, above the want.

Cost. He paid nothing and she paid everything. That is the exact inversion of *Genesis* 22:2, where love was a father paying for a son, and of the cross, where love was a Father paying for the world.

Whatever that was, it was not what God means by the word. And the reason this chapter matters is that Amnon was **sincere**. He was not lying when he said he loved her. He was wrong. And sincerity, which is the flesh's whole authority on this subject, did not save him from being wrong by a single inch.

Chapter 14

The Harlot Also Says Love

There is a passage in Proverbs where a woman speaks about love. She uses the vocabulary well. She sounds, on the page, like the Song of Solomon.

Proverbs 7:18 · Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves.

Both words there are love-words. The first is *dod* דוד^{H1730}, the lover's word, and the second is from the *ahav* אהב^{H157} family. This is not a coarse invitation. It is a beautiful one. That is the point of the trap.

14.1 The same word, the opposite verdict

Now hear the identical Hebrew word on the lips of the bride in the Song:

Song of Solomon 1:2 · Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine.

Thy love — *dod*. The very word the adulteress used in *Proverbs 7:18*. Scripture gives one word to the bride and to the harlot, and pronounces one of them blessed and the other a road to death:

Proverbs 7:21-23 · With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.

So the difference between the love God blesses and the love God calls slaughter is **not the desire, not the word, and not the intensity**. All three are the same in both passages. Something else is doing the work.

14.2 God is not against the desire

This must be said plainly, because the church has often said the opposite and done great damage by it.

Proverbs 5:18-19 · Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.

That is Scripture. *Be thou ravished always with her love* — the word is *ahavah*, and the verse is a command to intoxication. Two verses later the same father asks his son why on earth he would go looking for that elsewhere. The argument of *Proverbs 5* is not that desire is dangerous and should be dampened. It is that desire is glorious and the son is about to spend it somewhere it will kill him.

Hebrews 13:4 · Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

One sentence, both halves. Honourable. Undefiled. **And** God will judge. The people who can only hear the first half and the people who can only hear the second are making the same mistake from opposite ends.

14.3 So what is the difference

It is covenant — and covenant is the first thing, though not the only thing.

Ezekiel 16:8 · Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine.

Now a word about how we are reading that verse. Ezekiel 16 is a prophetic allegory of Jerusalem's history, not a manual on marriage, and we should not pretend otherwise. But God chose the figure, and the order He chose is worth watching. *The time of love* — dod again. Then: I covered thy nakedness. Then: **I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant**. Then: thou becamest mine.

The oath comes before the belonging. The covering comes before the union. God did not take what was there to be taken and swear afterwards; He bound Himself first, and the binding is what made the nakedness safe rather than shameful.

That is the heart of it. The bride in the Song has been sworn to. The woman in *Proverbs 7* has been sworn to by someone else, and is offering what is not hers to a man who has promised nothing. Identical words, identical desire, opposite verdicts — because one desire is inside a promise and the other is outside it.

But a vow is not a licence, and it is worth saying so plainly before anyone misuses this chapter — in two directions.

First, a wedding does not by itself put a union inside God's covenant. Herod had married Herodias, and John lost his head for telling him that the union itself was unlawful: *it is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife (Mark 6:18)*. A ceremony is not a blank cheque; God, not the ceremony, decides what He has joined.

Second, where the covenant *is* real, it still does not sanctify whatever happens inside it. Paul tells believers to possess their vessel *in sanctification and honour, not in the lust of concupiscence (First Thessalonians 4:4-5)* — a standard aimed squarely at the married. And the Lord locates adultery in the heart of a man who has never touched anyone (*Matthew 5:28*). Covenant is where love is safe to be spent. It is not a wall behind which the flesh may do as it likes.

14.4 Why the flesh cannot see this

The flesh reads a covenant as a fence around a pleasure and resents it. It assumes that the rule is God restricting the joy — that if you removed the vow you would get the same thing with less trouble.

Proverbs 7 says the opposite, and says it in a slaughterhouse image. Take the vow away and you do not get the same thing freely; you get the ox and the dart and the bird. Not because God is punishing the pleasure, but because a body was joined and nothing was promised, and a person cannot be half-given without being torn.

First Corinthians 6:16 · What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.

Paul quotes *Genesis 2:24* — *two shall be one flesh*, the marriage verse — and applies it to a transaction that both parties regarded as meaning nothing. That is his argument. It **did** mean something. The one-flesh union is not a reward the ceremony confers; it is a fact the act performs, and it will happen whether or not anyone consented to be that bound.

Which is why God's law here is not prudery. It is God refusing to let a thing that joins people be treated as a thing that does not.

And because that is heavy, hear what Paul had already said a few verses earlier in the same chapter. Having listed what would shut men out of the kingdom — fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, and worse — he turned and wrote this:

First Corinthians 6:11 · And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Such were some of you. Past tense, and three verbs of rescue. Whatever a reader is carrying into this chapter — what was done to him, or what he did, or what he cannot undo — Paul's own conclusion is not a life sentence. It is a washing. The one-flesh bond is real and that is why God guards it; it is not a chain the blood of Christ cannot break.

Chapter 15

The Covenant Where They Meet

So far this book has mostly separated the two loves. Now we have to say where they meet, because Scripture insists that they do, and in one place above all.

God did not answer the flesh's love by abolishing it. He answered it by binding it into a covenant and then telling us that the covenant is a picture of Himself.

15.1 The command that raises the price

Ephesians 5:25 · Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Read what Paul has just done to marriage. He has taken the most ordinary human relationship there is — a man and his wife, with all the appetite and affection and irritation in it — and set the standard at Calvary.

Even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. Not as much as you can manage. Not as much as she deserves. As Christ, who gave Himself.

And the verb is agapaō ἀγαπάω^{G25}, the commandable love, which means Paul is not asking husbands to feel something. He is asking them to spend something, and he has named the currency: himself.

15.2 Where the two loves meet

Here is the meeting place, and it is worth stating exactly.

A husband's love for his wife is not a purely spiritual thing with a physical accident attached. It is ahav אהב^{H157} and it is dod דוד^{H1730} and it is friendship and it is agapē, all in one man, aimed at one woman, for life. The desire is not tolerated by the covenant; it is *given a home* by it. Paul is explicit that a married couple owes it to one another:

First Corinthians 7:3-5 · Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it

be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

There is no hint here that the body is the lower part of the deal. Paul commands it, calls its withholding a defrauding, and treats a couple's coming together as a defence against the devil.

This is where the flesh's love is not destroyed but converted. The same desire that in *Proverbs 7* is a dart through the liver is, inside the covenant, a duty of kindness and a fence against the enemy.

15.3 The mystery

Then Paul goes further than anyone would dare:

Ephesians 5:31-32 · For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

He quotes the one-flesh verse from Eden and says: *I speak concerning Christ and the church.*

Which means marriage is not merely blessed by God. It is a **likeness** of the gospel. The leaving, the cleaving, the one flesh, the giving of a life for a bride — the whole shape of a marriage is telling the story of what Christ did, whether or not the couple in it know they are telling it.

That is why God guards it as He does. Not because He is anxious about bodies, but because He will not have His own portrait defaced.

15.4 The word God uses about treachery

Malachi 2:14 · Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.

The LORD hath been witness. The vow was not made merely to her; it was made in front of Him, and He was listening. *The wife of thy covenant* — not the wife of thy feelings.

And Malachi's diagnosis of the man who leaves is not that he fell out of love. It is that he *dealt treacherously*. God moves the whole question out of the language of emotion and into the language of faithfulness, which is where He keeps every question about love.

15.5 What this asks of a man

It asks the thing the flesh will not give: that the love be *decided*, and then kept when the deciding is costly.

The wife of your youth grows old. So do you. The season comes in every marriage when the feeling is thin and someone else looks like water in a desert. Everything in the culture will tell you that following the feeling is the honest thing, and staying is the lie.

Malachi calls that leaving treachery and the staying covenant, and God is the witness in the room either way. That is not a harder standard than the gospel. It **is** the gospel, acted out by two people who agreed to show the world what Christ did.

15.6 Whom Malachi is talking to

And now a limit that must be set, because this chapter could otherwise be picked up and used as a weapon by exactly the wrong person.

Malachi is addressing men who were putting away the wives of their youth in order to take others. He aims at the one who *dealt treacherously*, not at the one dealt treacherously with. Read as though it forbade every departure, it would become a text an abuser could hold over a wife's head — and Scripture does not permit that, because Scripture itself names grounds, and its own instinct points further still.

Matthew 19:9 · And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

First Corinthians 7:15 · But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.

Exodus 21:10-11 · If he take him another wife; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish. And if he do not these three unto her, then shall she go out free without money.

The Lord names unfaithfulness. Paul names desertion by an unbeliever, and says plainly that the deserted believer is *not under bondage*. And the law itself, in the case of a bondwoman whose food, clothing and marital due were withheld, let her **go out free**.

That last is a case law about a maidservant, and we should say so rather than stretch it into something it does not claim. But its force runs upward, not downward: if a bondwoman could walk out of a house that starved her of food, clothing and conjugal duty,

no one may argue that a free wife is bound tighter than she was. The law's own instinct is that a covenant is not a cage for the one being starved inside it.

So the thing this chapter condemns is precise: leaving because the feeling thinned and something else looked better. It is not addressed to the betrayed, the deserted or the battered, and anyone who turns it on them has inverted it. God is a witness in that room too, and He is not standing where the treacherous man assumes.

Chapter 16

Love and Jealousy, One Fire

At the end of the Song of Solomon, after eight chapters of the most unembarrassed love poetry in Scripture, the bride says a strange thing.

Song of Solomon 8:6 · Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.

Love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave. The words are ahavah אהבה^{H160} and qinah קינא^{H7068}, set in the same breath, in the same poetic line, as one fire.

Modern ears hear those two as opposites. We are taught that jealousy is what love goes bad into — a possessiveness, a failure of trust, the thing a healthy love has grown out of. The Song puts them in parallel and gives them one flame.

16.1 Because God is jealous

This is not the Song being odd. It is the Song agreeing with the rest of the Bible about God.

Exodus 34:14 · For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:

Read it again. Not *God is sometimes jealous*. **Whose name is Jealous.** It is given as a name, in the same passage where He gave chesed as a name.

Deuteronomy 4:24 · For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.

If jealousy were merely a fault of insecure love, this would be blasphemy. So the definition we inherited must be wrong somewhere.

16.2 What jealousy actually is

First, an honest note about the words. It is tempting to say Hebrew distinguishes envy from jealousy and English has lost it. The reverse is true: **English has two words where Hebrew has one.** qinah קִנְיָה^{H7068} covers both, and the King James translators render it *envy* in a number of places — *who is able to stand before envy?* in *Proverbs 27:4*, and again in *Job*, *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes* and *Isaiah*. The Hebrew names a heat; the context tells you whether the heat is righteous.

So the distinction that follows is one we are drawing to think clearly, not one the vocabulary makes for us — but it is a distinction Scripture's *usage* plainly requires, since it condemns the one and names God by the other.

Call the wrong heat **envy**: it reaches for what belongs to someone else. Call the right heat **jealousy**: it guards what is genuinely one's own and has been sworn to. The first is sin because it has no claim. The second is the necessary reflex of a love that has actually given itself and actually received a promise.

Think about what the absence of it would mean. A husband who feels nothing whatever when his wife is taken from him has not achieved a higher love; he has revealed that there was no covenant in him to violate. Indifference is not the mature form of love. It is the absence of it.

That is why God calls Himself jealous. He is not insecure — He is *bound*. He kept His word to Israel *because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers* (*Deuteronomy 7:8*), and a God who could then watch His bride go to other gods with equanimity would be a God who never meant it.

16.3 Which makes idolatry adultery

And now the language of the prophets stops being strange. God does not describe idolatry as an intellectual mistake about metaphysics. He describes it as a wife with other men, because on His own account of the relationship, that is what it is.

James says the same thing to Christians, and the address he uses is deliberate:

James 4:4 · Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

Friendship of the world is philia φιλία^{G5373}, and *friend* is philos φίλος^{G5384}. James is not accusing them of a doctrinal slip. He calls them adulterers, because he has understood that a covenant God is jealous and that being cosy with what He is at war with is not neutrality — it is infidelity.

16.4 The comfort in it

This is the chapter most likely to feel cold, so end it where the Song ends it.

Song of Solomon 8:7 · Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.

Love strong as death, that many waters cannot quench, that cannot be bought at any price — that is the same fire as the jealousy. They are not two things.

So when Scripture says God is jealous over you, it is not a threat about His temper. It is a promise about His grip. The flesh wants to be loved by someone who would not mind losing it. Scripture offers something better and more frightening: a love that will not let go, that has a name for a rival, and that burns.

Chapter 17

Friendship and Natural Affection

Not every love in the Bible is a marriage or a martyrdom. There is a whole register of ordinary human warmth in Scripture, and God is entirely at home in it.

phileō φιλέω^{G5368} is the verb of affection — the love of people who like each other. Scripture uses it of the Lord Himself:

John 11:35-36 · Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

That is phileō. The crowd read the tears correctly. God in the flesh had a friend, and when the friend died He cried, and bystanders who knew nothing else about Him could tell what it meant.

There is philadelphia φιλαδελφία^{G5360}, brotherly love, which Hebrews commands to continue. There is philandros φίλανδρος^{G5362} and philoteknos φιλότεκνος^{G5388} in *Titus 2:4*, where the older women are to teach the young ones to be husband-loving and children-loving. God gives commandments about ordinary domestic fondness.

17.1 The absence that indicts an age

The Greeks had a word for family affection — *storgē*, the natural love of parent and child, kin and kin. The New Testament never uses the bare noun, but it uses the root, and in both directions. Paul **commands** it: *be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love* (*Romans 12:10*), where *kindly affectioned* is philostorgos φιλόστοργος^{G5387}. And twice he names its failure — once in his portrait of a mind God has given over (*Romans 1:31*), and once in a list of the last days:

Second Timothy 3:1-3 · This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

Without natural affection is astorgos ἄστοργος^{G794} — *storgē* with the alpha of negation in front of it. The mark of the last days is not merely wickedness. It is people in whom the ordinary, natural, unspiritual bonds have failed: parents and children, kin and kin.

Put the two together and the New Testament's verdict on natural affection is clear. It is not beneath the Christian and it is not left to instinct. It is commanded where it should be present, and its collapse is a symptom of a world coming apart.

And notice what heads the same list. *Lovers of their own selves* is *philautos* φίλαυτος^{G5367}. Paul begins with self-love and arrives at the death of natural affection, and he plainly regards the second as the fruit of the first. A civilisation that teaches every man to love himself first should not be surprised when it can no longer hold a family together.

17.2 Friendship that swore

The deepest human friendship in Scripture is worth looking at closely, because our age has trouble reading it.

First Samuel 18:1-3 · And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

Second Samuel 1:26 · I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.

Two things in the text settle what this was, and both are usually skipped.

First, the relationship is a **covenant** — *First Samuel 18:3* says so directly, and Jonathan seals it by handing over his robe, his sword, his bow and his belt, which is a prince handing a shepherd the succession. This is a sworn brotherhood, the sort of bond the ancient world understood and ours has almost entirely lost.

Second, David's lament does not liken this love to the love of women. It **distinguishes** it: *passing the love of women*. A comparison that sets two things side by side and ranks them is a comparison between two different things. You do not say your brother's loyalty surpassed the love of women if what you had was the love of women.

The narrative is not squeamish about affection between them — at their parting *they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded* (*First Samuel 20:41*), which in that world is the parting of kinsmen and covenant brothers. Our age can imagine only two categories, sexual partners or acquaintances, and so it reaches for the first whenever it meets a warmth the second cannot explain. Scripture has a third: a sworn

covenant of souls between men who would die for each other. The narrative never suggests anything sexual between them, and it plainly does not present the bond as that — it presents it as a covenant, sealed with a robe and a sword. The poverty of categories is ours, not the text's.

17.3 Why this belongs in a book about God's love

Because the flesh corrupts the ordinary loves too, and it does it by the same move every time: **it turns a love that gives into a love that takes.**

Storgē becomes the parent who needs the child to justify him. Philia becomes the friendship that lasts as long as it is useful — the friendship of the world in *James 4:4*. Self-love, which Scripture assumes as a measuring rod in *love thy neighbour as thyself*, becomes the thing measured, and every other love is graded by what it does for me.

The cure is not less affection. It is the same cure as everywhere else in this book: the natural loves put under covenant and pointed outward, so that they are safe to have.

Chapter 18

Flesh and Spirit

Paul draws the line of this whole book in one place, and he does not call it a line between love and hate. He calls it the line between flesh and Spirit.

Galatians 5:16-17 · This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 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.

Lust there is *epithymia ἐπιθυμία*^{G1939}, the longing that reaches for what it is not given. And the two are not merely different; they are *contrary the one to the other*. There is no arrangement to be reached, no percentage split. Paul then lists what each produces, and the lists are worth reading side by side.

Galatians 5:19-21 · Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:22-23 · But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

18.1 Read the first word of the fruit

The fruit of the Spirit **is love** — *agapē ἀγάπη*^{G26} stands first, and the eight that follow read like an unpacking of it. That single word placement tells you where God's love comes from. It is not summoned by effort and it is not a temperament some people are born with. It is *fruit*. It grows on a tree the Spirit planted.

Which explains a great deal of failure. A man who tries to produce New Testament love out of his own resources is trying to hang apples on a dead branch. He can manage

the appearance for a while, in front of people, on a good week. Under pressure it comes off, because there was no root.

18.2 Read the works of the flesh honestly

Now the other list, and notice what is in it.

It opens with the sexual sins — adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness. But it does not stop there, and this is where the list stops being comfortable for anybody. *Hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings*. Half the works of the flesh are things that happen in churches, in arguments, on the internet, among people who would never touch another man's wife.

Paul puts the adulterer and the man consumed with strife in one paragraph and gives them one verdict. A reader who uses the first half of the list against other people and skips the second half against himself has understood nothing and is on the list twice.

18.3 What the flesh actually is

It is worth saying plainly, because *flesh* is often heard as *body*, and that is not what Paul means.

Romans 8:5-8 · For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

The flesh is not the skin. It is the whole self organised around itself — the mind that is *enmity against God*, that is *not subject to the law of God*, *neither indeed can be*. That is why the flesh's love always ends where Amnon's ended. It is not that the flesh loves badly. It is that the flesh cannot aim anything outside itself, and love, by definition, is aimed outward.

18.4 The one instruction

So what do you do with a love you cannot manufacture?

Galatians 5:24 · And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

Not managed. Not moderated. Crucified — and note *with the affections and lusts*, the very passions the flesh calls its love. That is the price, and it is the same price as the first page of this book: a death, before the life.

And then, on the far side, the fruit — which is to say: God grows in a crucified man the very thing the uncrucified man was straining after and calling love all along.

Chapter 19

The Loves That Damn

The New Testament forbids some loves outright. Not *moderate them* — forbids them, in the imperative, with consequences attached.

First John 2:15-17 · Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

The verb in both clauses is *agapaō ἀγαπάω*^{G25}. John does not say the world may be loved a little. He says: if a man loves it, **the love of the Father is not in him**. Two loves, one heart, and no room.

And then he anatomises the world for us — *the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*. Appetite, acquisition, and status. That is the world, and it is not a place. It is a set of loves.

19.1 A gallery of forbidden loves

Scripture is remarkably specific, and Greek lets it compound the words.

philautos φίλαυτος^{G5367} — lovers of self, heading the list of the last days in *Second Timothy* 3:2.

philargyria φιλαργυρία^{G5365} — love of money:

First Timothy 6:10 · For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

philēdonos φιλήδονος^{G5369} set against *philotheos φιλόθεος*^{G5377} in the same clause:

Second Timothy 3:4 · Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

That is one of the most exact sentences in the New Testament about our own moment. Not *pleasure-lovers instead of God-lovers*. **More than**. The competition is not between loving and not loving. Everyone loves. The competition is over rank.

19.2 The love of men's approval

John 12:42-43 · Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

These men **believed**. John says so. And their belief died in their throats because of a love — again *agapaō*, again *more than*.

This is perhaps the quietest of the forbidden loves and the one that kills the most preaching. A man does not usually stop telling the truth because he has decided the truth is false. He stops because he has weighed two approvals and found one heavier.

19.3 Demas

Second Timothy 4:10 · For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

We met him earlier and he deserves a second look, because he is the warning this chapter exists for.

Demas is not a villain in the story. He is a co-worker, greeted by name in *Colossians 4:14* and *Philemon 1:24*. He stood where Luke stood. There is no scandal recorded, no doctrine denied, no immorality named. One sentence, one verb, and he is gone: *having loved this present world*.

You can lose everything without ever deciding to. You need only love something a little more, for long enough.

19.4 The test to run tonight

John gives it as a straight either/or, and the way to use it is not to ask *do I love God?* Everyone answers yes.

Ask instead the question Scripture actually asks — the question of **rank**. When the two have collided, which one moved? When following Christ has cost money, or reputation, or an appetite, what happened? Not once in a moment of crisis. Over the last five years, in the ordinary decisions nobody watched.

That answer is your real theology of love, and it is written already whether or not you have read it.

19.5 And the mercy in it

This is a severe chapter, so do not leave it without the door.

The remedy John gives for loving the world is never *try to love it less*. Nobody has ever succeeded at that. The remedy is a rival love — and the next chapter is about how God supplies one, by doing something at a hill outside Jerusalem that no rival can match.

You do not defeat a love by starving it. You defeat it by meeting a better one.

Chapter 20

The Measure Is a Grave

We have spent a whole book saying what love is not. Now the definition, and Scripture gives it in one sentence.

First John 4:10 · Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Herein is love. John is not describing love; he is pointing at it. And the thing he points at is not an attitude in God's heart. It is an event with a date, a place, and a body.

20.1 The word under it

Propitiation is hilasmos ἱλασμός^{G2434} — the means by which wrath is turned away, atonement made, guilt covered.

Stop on that, because it is the exact place modern talk about God's love gets quietly edited. We are fond of the sentence *God is love*, which is two verses earlier and entirely true. We are less fond of what John does with it two verses later. He does not define God's love by how God feels about us. He defines it by what God **did about our sin**, and the word he chooses assumes there was wrath to be dealt with.

A love that had nothing to deal with would not have needed a propitiation. If the cross is the definition of God's love, then whatever else is true, our situation was serious.

20.2 The measure God uses

Romans 5:8 · But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Commendeth — He proves it, exhibits it, puts it on the table. Where? At a death. And the timing is the whole argument: *while we were yet sinners*. Not once we had come round. Not on the strength of what we would become.

This is the final demolition of reciprocal love. In *Luke 6:32* the Lord dismissed love that merely answers love, since sinners manage that much. Here Paul shows the alternative: love that moves first, toward people who are not moving, at the cost of a life.

John 15:13 · Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

First John 3:16 · Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Notice that John will not let the definition stay theoretical for even one sentence. *Hereby perceive we the love of God* — and immediately, *and we ought*. The cross is not only the standard by which love is measured. It is the pattern love is to be copied from.

20.3 Back to Moriah

And now the first page of this book meets the last.

The first *love* in Scripture was a father, an only son, and a mountain in *Genesis 22:2*. God stopped that knife. A ram was caught by the horns in a thicket and a boy walked back down alive.

There was no ram on the second mountain.

Romans 8:32 · He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Spared not. The word Abraham heard — *thine only son, whom thou lovest* — comes back with the sparing removed. What God would not finally require of Abraham, He required of Himself.

That is the definition. Not a feeling, not an approval, not a permission. **Love is what God did on a hill when there was nothing in us to earn it and everything in it for us, and it cost Him a Son.**

Not *nothing in it for Him* — Scripture will not let us say that. He endured the cross *for the joy that was set before him* (*Hebrews 12:2*), and He shall *see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied* (*Isaiah 53:11*). There was a joy ahead and a people bought. What there was not, on our side, was a single reason why He should.

20.4 So the test, finally

Every test in this book comes from this one, and they can now be said in a line each.

- Not *how strongly do I feel it* — Amnon felt it strongly, and it ended in *arise, be gone*.

- Not *is it sincere* — Demas was sincere, and the chair beside Paul was empty.
- Not *is it returned* — sinners manage that much.
- But: **what is it aimed at, where does it rank, and what has it paid?**

Those three questions have one answer at Calvary, and every love that God calls love is a small copy of it.

Chapter 21

Do You Love Him?

Paul ends a long letter to a difficult church by taking the pen from his secretary and writing the last lines himself. This is what he chose to write:

First Corinthians 16:22 · If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.

It is the hardest sentence in the New Testament about love, and it is almost never read aloud.

And there is something in the Greek that deserves saying, because it cuts against a tidy version of this book's own argument. The verb Paul uses here is not *agapaō* ἀγαπάω^{G25}, the word of chosen, commandable love that we have leaned on throughout. It is *phileō* φιλέω^{G5368} — the warm word, the word of affection and friendship.

That should stop anyone who has read this far and concluded that God will settle for dutiful machinery. He will not. At the very end, when Paul names the one thing he will not have absent, he reaches for the word that means *fondness*. God commands the will because the will can be commanded — and He is after the affection too, and says so in the last line of the letter.

Not *if any man teaches error*. Not *if any man sins grievously* — and he had spent this very letter dealing with a church full of both. At the end, the thing Paul will not have in the room is a man who does not love the Lord.

Which tells you where this whole subject has been heading. Love is not a department of the Christian life, one virtue among several. It is the thing itself. A man may be right about everything and be anathema.

21.1 The church that lost it

The risen Christ says the same to a church He otherwise commends:

Revelation 2:2-4 · I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And

hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

Read the résumé first. Works. Labour. Patience. Intolerance of evil. Doctrinal discernment sharp enough to expose false apostles. Burden borne for His name's sake without fainting.

By every measure this book has defended — hating evil, testing teachers, refusing to be sentimental — Ephesus is exemplary. And Christ says: *nevertheless*.

That word should stop us. It is possible to hold every position in this book correctly and be told by Christ that something essential has gone. The doctrine of love is not the same thing as loving, and a man can become an expert on the first while quietly losing the second. If this book has done nothing but sharpen your opinions, it has failed and you should burn it.

21.2 The first love

Revelation 2:5 · Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

The remedy is three imperatives, and notice that not one of them is *feel more*.

Remember — go back and look at what it was like. **Repent** — call the loss what it is, a sin, not a season. **Do the first works** — the deeds you did when the love was fresh, done again now, before the feeling has returned.

That is the same order this book found in *Deuteronomy 6:5* and *John 14:15*. Christ prescribes the deeds first and lets the affection follow. He does not tell Ephesus to work up a mood. He tells them to go and do what love did, and He has never once been mistaken about how a heart is repaired.

And weigh what hangs on it. If they will not, He says, He will *remove thy candlestick out of his place* — the lampstand is the church itself. A congregation orthodox enough to expose false apostles can have its light taken away over this. Not over heresy. Over a lost first love.

21.3 Where the two loves finally part

So we come to the end, and the difference can be put in a sentence.

The flesh's love asks: *what does this do for me, and how strongly do I feel it?* God's love asks: *what does this cost me, and is it aimed at the good God defines?*

They can look identical for years. They part company at the moment of cost. Amnon parted from it at the moment he got what he wanted. Demas parted from it when the world got heavier than the chain on Paul's wrist. The rulers in *John 12:42-43* parted from it at the synagogue door.

And Christ did not part from it at all, at the one place where every reason to was present.

21.4 The invitation

This book has said a great many severe things, so let the last word be the one Scripture ends on.

First John 4:19 · We love him, because he first loved us.

That is the order of the entire Bible in six words. Not: love God and He will love you back. He moved first, at Moriah's answer, while we were yet sinners, and every love a Christian ever manages is a reply.

Which means the question this book leaves you with is not *do you love well enough*. Nobody does. It is the question Paul put at the very end of his letter, and it only ever needed one honest answer:

Do you love Him?

If yes — then go and do the first works, and the rest of it will be built on you over a lifetime.

If you are not sure — then you are exactly the sort of person the cross was aimed at, and the love described in this book went to a great deal of trouble to reach you before you had any interest in it whatsoever.

Appendix A

Glossary

Abana H71 **Abana** — Hebrew ’abānāh אֲבָנָה^{H71}, probably *stony*, from ’eben אֶבֶן^{H68}, a stone; the marginal reading *Amana* means *constant, perennial*. A river of Damascus, named once in Scripture and only in an objection.

Naaman, told to wash in Jordan, answers: *Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage* 2 Kings 5:12.

He was not wrong about the water. The Abana — the modern Barada — rises in the Anti-Lebanon and runs cold and clear through Damascus, and it is the reason a city exists in that desert at all; it makes the oasis of the Ghouta green for miles before losing itself in a marsh. Beside it the Jordan is a muddy, sunken, unimpressive stream. On every measure a man could name, Naaman was right.

Its companion in the complaint, parpar פָּרְפָּר^{H6554} — *swift*, probably from a root meaning to rush — is named in the same breath and nowhere else in the Bible. Both rivers exist in Scripture for one purpose only: to be the better water that a man preferred to the water he was sent to.

And that is exactly the point. The question was never which river was cleaner. It was which river God had spoken about. Abana stands in Scripture as the better alternative — the reasonable substitute, nearer home, more dignified, genuinely superior on its own terms — offered in place of the thing commanded. His servants had to talk him back: *if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it?* 2 Kings 5:13

He was healed in the worse river. See **Naaman** and **Jordan**.

Abel H1893 **Abel** — Hebrew hebel הֶבֶל^{H1893}, *breath, vapour, a puff of air*. It is the very word Ecclesiastes repeats thirty-eight times and the King James renders *vanity*: **vanity of vanities** is *hebel hebelim*, breath of breaths. Greek Abel Ἀβελ^{G6}. Second son of Adam and Eve, a keeper of sheep.

A name that means *a breath* given to the man whose life was the shortest in Scripture’s telling — the first human being to die, and he died before his parents.

His offering is accepted and his brother’s is not. *Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering* Genesis 4:4. Hebrews gives the reason the text itself withholds: *By faith Abel offered*

unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous Hebrews 11:4. Not a better commodity — a better faith. John adds the plain reading of Cain: *because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous* 1 John 3:12.

Then the ground speaks. *The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground* Genesis 4:10 — and the Hebrew is *bloods*, plural, which the rabbis read as the blood of him and of all his unborn descendants. Blood that cries is the first thing in Scripture said to have a voice from the earth.

And Hebrews sets him against Christ on exactly that point: we are come to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel Hebrews 12:24. Abel's blood cried for justice. Christ's cries for mercy. Both are heard; they ask for opposite things.

Christ calls him *righteous Abel* and dates the world's guilt from him: *from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias* Matthew 23:35. He is the first name in the roll of faith, the first martyr, and — as Hebrews puts it — *he being dead yet speaketh*.

A man named Breath, who has not stopped talking in six thousand years.

Ablution **Ablution** — ritual washing with water as a religious act. Hebrew uses *rāḥaṣ* רָחַץ^{H7364} for bathing the whole body and *kābas* כָּבַס^{H3526} for washing garments; Greek *baptismos* βαπτισμός^{G991} for the ceremonial washings generally, and *loutron* λουτρόν^{G3067} for the bath itself.

The Law is full of it, and the rules are precise. The priest washes his flesh in water before putting on the holy garments *Leviticus* 16:4 and again when he puts them off. The laver stands between the tent and the altar, and Aaron and his sons wash hands and feet at it *that they die not* Exodus 30:20. A cleansed leper washes his clothes, shaves off all his hair, and bathes — and is still shut out seven days, and does it all again *Leviticus* 14:8-9. Anyone touching a corpse, a carcass, an issue, or a bed slept in by the unclean, washes and is unclean until evening.

Whole-body immersion is assumed, not argued. *He shall wash all his flesh in water.* The Mishnah later spells out what the Law took for granted: the water must be gathered, not drawn, and must cover the whole body at once, with nothing intervening — see *miqweh* מִקְוֶה^{H4723}. This is the practice John the Baptist steps into, which is why no one in the Gospels asks him what immersion is. They ask by what authority he does it *John* 1:25.

Three consecrations of the priesthood run together, and Moses performs all three at the door of the tabernacle: he **washed** them with water, **anointed** with oil, and **sprinkled** blood *Leviticus* 8:6, *Leviticus* 8:23-24, *Leviticus* 8:30. Water, oil, blood — the same three John names as witnesses: *the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one* 1 John 5:8.

By the first century it had multiplied. The Pharisees *except they wash, eat not, holding the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables* Mark 7:3-4 — where the Greek is βαπτισμός. Christ's quarrel is never with washing; it is with washing that has replaced the commandment: *ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition* Mark 7:9.

And Hebrews puts the whole system in its place. The old ordinances stood in *meats and drinks, and divers washings* (βαπτισμοῖς), *imposed on them until the time of reformation* Hebrews 9:10. They cleansed the flesh. What they could not do was purge the conscience — which is precisely the distinction Peter draws for baptism: *not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God* 1 Peter 3:21.

Every ablution in the Law says the same thing twice: you cannot come as you are, and water alone will not finish it.

Abraham H85 **Abraham** — Hebrew ʾabrāhām אַבְרָהָם^{H85}, *father of a multitude*; called ʾabrām אַבְרָם^{H87}, *exalted father*, until Genesis 17:5, where God lengthens the name by a single letter and makes it a promise: *a father of many nations have I made thee*. Greek Abraam Ἀβραάμ^{G11}. Son of Terah, from Ur of the Chaldees; husband of Sarah; father of Ishmael and Isaac.

He is called out with no map. *Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee* Genesis 12:1. Hebrews notes the point: *he went out, not knowing whither he went* Hebrews 11:8.

The verse the whole New Testament turns on. *And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness* Genesis 15:6. Paul quotes it in Romans 4:3 and Galatians 3:6; James quotes it too James 2:23. It is the seed of the doctrine of justification by faith.

And the order matters enormously. Paul builds an argument on the *sequence* of Abraham's life: he was reckoned righteous in Genesis 15:6, and circumcised in Genesis 17 — years later. *How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision* Romans 4:10. Then comes Paul's definition of the sign itself: *he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised* Romans 4:11.

A seal of a righteousness already held by faith. The sign did not create the standing; it attested it. Faith first, sign after — and Paul says this is precisely why Abraham can be *the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised*.

And Paul names what answers to that sign now. Writing to the Colossians he sets circumcision and baptism side by side: *In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him*

through the faith of the operation of God Colossians 2:11-12. The order Abraham's life established is kept: faith, then the sign that seals it. See **Baptism**.

He is tested at the mountain. *Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest Genesis 22:2* — and he rises early. Hebrews says he reckoned that God was able to raise Isaac from the dead, *from whence also he received him in a figure Hebrews 11:19*. He names the place *Jehovah-jireh*, the LORD will provide, and a ram is caught in a thicket by its horns.

He is called the friend of God *James 2:23, Isaiah 41:8* — a title given to no one else. He argues with God over Sodom and is not rebuked for it *Genesis 18:23-32*. He pays tithes to Melchizedek. He dies *in a good old age, an old man, and full of years Genesis 25:8*.

And Christ places him beyond his own century: *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad* — and then, *Before Abraham was, I am John 8:56-58*.

Paul's conclusion is why the New Testament keeps returning to him: *they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham Galatians 3:7*. Descent is not the qualification. Believing is — which is how a nation came from his grandson **Israel** and a family came from every nation.

Abram H87 **Abram** — Hebrew 'abrām אַבְרָם^{H87}, *exalted father*, or *father of height*. The patriarch's name for the first ninety-nine years of his life, from *Genesis 11:26 to Genesis 17:5*.

The renaming is one of the smallest and largest events in Scripture. *Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee Genesis 17:5*. A single Hebrew letter — the א, *he* — is inserted into the name. It is the letter of the divine name itself, twice over in יהוה, and Jewish comment has long noted that God gives away a letter of His own name to a man and to his wife in the same chapter: Sarai becomes Sarah by the same *he Genesis 17:15*.

And the tense changes with the letter. Abram was *exalted father* — a description, and at ninety-nine a slightly bitter one for a man with one son by a servant. Abraham is *father of a multitude* — and God says *have I made thee*, past tense, over a childless man. He is renamed for what he does not yet have.

The change comes with circumcision, the covenant in the flesh; and Paul's whole argument in *Romans 4* turns on the fact that Abram was already justified by faith *Genesis 15:6* years before Abraham was circumcised. The faith belonged to Abram. The sign was given to Abraham. See **Abraham** for what Paul makes of that order.

The New Testament never calls him Abram. Once God has renamed a man, Scripture does not go back.

Adam H120 **Adam** — Hebrew 'ādām אָדָם^{H120}, *man, mankind*; bound by sound and root to 'adāmāh אֲדָמָה^{H127}, *the ground*, and to 'ādam אָדָם^{H119}, *to be red*. The pun is the point: the earthling from the earth, *dust of the ground* Genesis 2:7. Greek Adam Ἀδάμ^{G76}.

The word is both a proper name and the ordinary Hebrew for *humanity* — over 500 occurrences — so Scripture cannot say *man* without saying *Adam*. He is not merely the first man; he is Man.

God breathes into him nešāmāh נִשְׁאָמָה^{H5397}, *the breath of lives, and man became a living soul*. He is placed in a garden *to dress it and to keep it*, given every tree but one, and given work and a warning before he is given a wife.

He names the animals and finds no help meet for him among them — then God builds a woman from his side and he breaks into the first recorded human speech, which is poetry: *This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh*. He calls her **Eve**, the mother of all living; the garden is **Eden**.

Then the command is broken. The serpent questions God's word, the woman is deceived, and Adam — Paul is careful here — *was not deceived* 1 Timothy 2:14. He ate knowing. They hide; God asks *Where art thou?*, the first question in the Bible; the man blames the woman and, in the same breath, God. Sentence falls on the serpent, the woman, the ground — and in the middle of it the first promise of a deliverer, the seed of the woman who shall bruise the serpent's head Genesis 3:15.

And God clothes them. They had sewn fig leaves; He makes *coats of skins* Genesis 3:21 — the first death in Scripture, and the first covering God provides in place of the covering man made for himself. Compare endyō ἐνδύω^{G1746} and the wedding garment of Matthew 22:11.

He outlives his own son. The first human being to die is not Adam but **Abel**, killed by his brother, and Adam lives on 930 years afterward before the sentence reaches him too.

Paul makes him one of the two men history hangs on. *As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive* 1 Corinthians 15:22. *The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit... the first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven* 1 Corinthians 15:45-47. And Romans 5:14 calls him *the figure of him that was to come* — a type of Christ precisely in this, that what one man did counts for everyone joined to him.

Two federal heads, two humanities. Everything after Genesis 3 is the question of which one you are in.

Agag H90 **Agag** — Hebrew 'āgag אָגָג^{H90}, glossed *I will overtop*. Less a personal name than a title, like Pharaoh: the standing style of the kings of **Amalek**.

Balaam uses it that way in his oracle — Israel's king *shall be higher than Agag* Numbers 24:7 — pitting one throne against the other.

The Agag who matters is Saul's. Told to destroy Amalek utterly, Saul spares the king and the best of the livestock, and explains the sheep as sacrifice. Samuel's answer is the sentence the chapter exists for: *Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams* 1 Samuel 15:22. Agag comes *delicately*, saying *Surely the bitterness of death is past* — and Samuel hews him in pieces before the LORD 1 Samuel 15:32-33. Saul keeps the kingdom's forms and loses the kingdom.

The account has a long tail. **Haman**, who tried to exterminate the Jews under Ahasuerus, is called *the Agagite* Esther 3:1. What Saul left alive in one generation came back for the whole nation in another.

Alexandria **Alexandria** — the Egyptian city founded by Alexander the Great in 331 BC, and after Rome the second city of the empire. Never the scene of a biblical narrative, and yet standing behind a great deal of the New Testament.

Three reasons it matters here. It was the home of the **Septuagint** — the Old Testament in Greek, made there from the third century BC onward, and the version most New Testament writers quote. It held the largest Jewish community outside Judea, with its own quarter and its own synagogues. And it was a university town: Philo, the Jewish philosopher who read Moses through Greek categories, wrote there in the apostles' own century.

Scripture mentions it in passing, and the passes are telling. Men of *Alexandria* dispute with Stephen in the synagogue of the Libertines Acts 6:9. **Apollo** is born at *Alexandria*, and the training shows — *an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures* Acts 18:24. And Paul sails to Rome twice in Alexandrian grain ships Acts 27:6, Acts 28:11, one of which is wrecked.

The name Alexandros Ἀλέξανδρος^{G223}, *defender of man*, is borne by four different men in the New Testament — none of them from the city.

Amalek H6002 **Amalek** — Hebrew 'āmālēq אֲמָלֵק^{H6002}, glossed *dweller in a valley*. Grandson of Esau by Eliphaz Genesis 36:12, and the desert nation descended from him — so Israel's first enemy is also Israel's cousin.

They attack at Rephidim, days out of Egypt, and Moses holds up his hands while Joshua fights; when the hands drop, Amalek prevails, so Aaron and Hur hold them up until sundown Exodus 17:11-12. Deuteronomy adds the detail that makes it a moral case rather than a border war: *he... smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God* Deuteronomy 25:18. They took the stragglers.

So the sentence is permanent. *The LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation* Exodus 17:16. Saul is sent to execute it and spares **Agag**, and loses the kingdom for it 1 Samuel 15. Centuries later **Haman** the Agagite is still trying to finish what his people started.

A nation defined by one act, against the weakest people in the column.

Amen H543 **Amen** — Hebrew ^{ʾāmēn} אָמֵן^{H543}, *surely, truly, so be it*, from ^{ʾāman} אָמַן^{H539}, **to be firm, to support, to be reliable** — the root that also gives ^{ʾēmûnāh} אֱמוּנָה^{H530}, *faithfulness*, and ^{ʾemet} אֱמֶת^{H571}, *truth*. Greek ^{āmēn} ἀμήν^{G281}, taken over untranslated.

The root picture is a hand holding something up, a nurse carrying a child, a nail driven into a sure place. Amen does not mean *I hope so*. It means **that will hold**.

In the Old Testament it is the people's word. Israel answers the curses from Ebal with *And all the people shall say, Amen* — twelve times in *Deuteronomy* 27. It seals an oath *Numbers* 5:22, a coronation *1 Kings* 1:36, and the doxology that closes each of the five books of Psalms: *Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting. Amen, and Amen Psalms* 41:13. The congregation does not compose; it agrees, and the agreement is binding.

Christ does something with it nobody had done. Every other speaker in Scripture says Amen *after* — at the end of a prayer or a promise, to ratify what was said. Jesus puts it **first**: *Verily, verily, I say unto you* — ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, twenty-five times in John alone. He is not ratifying someone else's word. He is guaranteeing His own before He speaks it, which is the speech of a man with nothing above him to appeal to.

Paul makes it the shape of the promises. *For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us* *2 Corinthians* 1:20. God says yes; the church says amen; the amen is spoken *through Christ*. And Paul assumes it is said aloud and understood, arguing that a stranger cannot *say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest* *1 Corinthians* 14:16.

What answers, and what answers with the whole man. The faith that says amen to God is *pistis* πίστις^{G4102}; and Peter names the moment a man says it with his body. Baptism, he writes, is *the answer of a good conscience toward God* *1 Peter* 3:21 — *eperōtēma ēπερώτημα*^{G1906}, a word Liddell-Scott-Jones traces to the Latin *stipulatio* and glosses, in this very verse, as **pledge**. The congregation's amen is spoken; this one is enacted. See **Baptism**.

Then it becomes a name. *These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God* *Revelation* 3:14. The word for *that will hold* is a title of Christ — and Isaiah had already called God *the God of truth*, literally **the God of Amen** *Isaiah* 65:16.

Scripture's last word, in nearly every manuscript tradition, is this one: *Amen*.

Ananias G367 **Ananias** — Greek Hananias Ἀνανίας^{G367}, from Hebrew *hānanyāh* חַנַּנְיָהּ^{H2608}, **Yah has been gracious**. It was one of the commonest names in Israel — Strong's

lists thirteen Old Testament bearers of it, including the friend of Daniel whom Babylon renamed Shadrach. Three men in Acts bear it, and the New Testament's use of them is almost cruelly symmetrical.

1. The liar of Jerusalem Acts 5:1-11. With **Sapphira** his wife he sells a possession, keeps back part of the price, and lays the rest at the apostles' feet as though it were the whole. Peter's rebuke turns on the fact that no one had asked him for anything: *Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?* The sin was not withholding. It was the performance — *thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God*. He falls down and dies; his wife, three hours later, not knowing. *And great fear came upon all the church*. The first recorded judgement inside the church is against pretended generosity.

2. The disciple at Damascus Acts 9:10-19, Acts 22:12-16, and by far the most important. God tells him to go to Straight Street and lay hands on Saul of Tarsus, and he answers back: *Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem*. He is afraid, and says so, and goes anyway.

Then he does something no apostle authorises and no council convenes for. He enters the house, and his first word to the man who came to arrest him is **Brother Saul**. He lays hands on him; the scales fall; and he says: *And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord* Acts 22:16.

The verb is baptizō βαπτίζω^{G907}, and it stands there in the middle voice — *get thyself baptized* — while the question that opens the sentence is a rebuke of delay. Paul, who will spend his life writing about grace, is told at the beginning of it not to stand about. Ananias is called *a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there*; he baptizes the greatest missionary in history and then vanishes from Scripture entirely. He has no other recorded act. See **Paulus** and **Baptism**.

3. The high priest Acts 23:2-5, Acts 24:1. He commands Paul to be struck on the mouth, and Paul answers, *God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?* — then apologises on being told who it was, quoting *Exodus 22:28*. Josephus records that this Ananias, son of Nedebaeus, was violent and rapacious, and was murdered by assassins at the start of the revolt.

Three men named *God has been gracious*: one who lied to the Spirit, one who obeyed while afraid, and one who struck the mouth of a prisoner. The name is a gift, not a verdict.

Anna G451 **Anna** — Greek Anna Ἄννα^{G451}, from Hebrew ḥannāh חַנָּה^{H2584}, **grace, favour** — the same name as Hannah, who prayed for Samuel. A prophetess of the tribe of Asher, and one of only a handful of women Scripture gives that title.

She appears once, in eight verses, and **Luke** alone records her *Luke 2:36-38*. Married seven years, then a widow — the text says *of about fourscore and four years* — and she *departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day*.

She arrives at the exact moment. Simeon has just taken the infant Christ in his arms and said *now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, and she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem*.

What her entry preserves is a small, unhurried point. She had waited decades in a building where nothing happened, and she was in the right room on the one morning it did. The last prophet before her had been Malachi, four centuries earlier; the next voice would be John's. She is the seam between the Testaments, and she is an old woman nobody was watching.

Apollo G625 **Apollo** — Greek Apollōs Ἀπολλῶς^{G625}, a shortened form of *Apollonios*; the name honours the god Apollo, and the New Testament keeps it without comment. A Jew of Alexandria, and one of the most attractive minor figures in Acts.

Luke's description is unusually warm. *An eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures... fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord Acts 18:24-25*. Alexandria was the intellectual capital of the Jewish diaspora and the home of the Septuagint; a man trained there and *mighty in the scriptures* was formidable.

And then the qualification — *knowing only the baptism of John*. He had the Scriptures, the eloquence, the fervour and the diligence, and he was preaching accurately as far as he went. What he lacked was the part that came after John. He was not alone in it: Paul reaches Ephesus soon after and finds twelve men in exactly the same position, who had been baptized *unto John's baptism* and had not so much as heard of the Holy Ghost — and *when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Acts 19:1-5*. See **Baptism**.

How he is corrected is the whole point of the passage. Aquila and Priscilla — tentmakers, a married couple, no office named — hear him in the synagogue, *took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly*. Not publicly. Not by rebuke. They take him aside. And a man described as eloquent and mighty in the Scriptures lets two artisans teach him.

Note also that Priscilla is named first, here and in most references to the pair, which is unusual enough in a first-century text to be deliberate.

He then goes to Achaia and becomes formidable for the gospel, *mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ Acts 18:28.*

Paul's use of him afterwards is worth noticing. When the Corinthians split into parties — *I am of Paul; and I of Apollos* — Paul does not disown him or compete. He writes: *I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase 1 Corinthians 3:6-7.* And later he says he *greatly desired* Apollos to visit them, though Apollos declined for the time *1 Corinthians 16:12* — a free man, not a subordinate.

Luther guessed him the author of Hebrews. It remains a guess.

The pattern this entry preserves: learning is not the same as completeness, correction can come from below, and a genuinely able man is known by whether he takes it.

Arabia **Arabia** — Hebrew עֲרָב^{H6152}, the desert country east and south of Palestine; Greek Arabia Ἀραβία^{G688}. The root idea is *steppe*, dry open land, and the same consonants give the word for evening and for what is dusky.

In the Old Testament it is a place trade comes from — the kings of Arabia bring Solomon gold and spices *1 Kings 10:15*, and Isaiah and Jeremiah both have oracles against its tribes and their caravans.

Paul puts it somewhere unexpected. Recounting his conversion, he insists he consulted nobody: *neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus Galatians 1:17.* Three years pass before he meets Peter. Whatever he did there, the point he is making is that his gospel did not come to him through a committee.

And he uses it once as an argument. *For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is Galatians 4:25* — placing **Sinai** outside the promised land and making the law-covenant, in his allegory, the covenant of a bondwoman. See **Sinai** and **Horeb**.

Aram ^{H758} **Aram** — Hebrew אֲרָם^{H758}, glossed *exalted*, from a root meaning high land. Both a man and a country: the fifth son of Shem *Genesis 10:22*, and the highlands of Mesopotamia and northern Syria that his descendants held. English Bibles usually translate it **Syria**, which hides the name — see that entry.

Israel's oldest family ties run here. Abraham's kin stay at Haran in *Aram-naharaim*, Aram of the two rivers; Isaac and Jacob both take wives from it, and Laban is called *the Syrian*. Deuteronomy makes the confession every Israelite recited at harvest begin *A Syrian ready to perish was my father Deuteronomy 26:5* — the nation's own origin story names it as Aramean.

Later the relatives become the enemy. Damascus rules Aram through the Ben-hadads, and the wars with Israel fill Kings — with **Naaman** as its most famous soldier, and Elisha weeping over what its next king would do.

And the language outlived the kingdom. Aramaic became the common tongue of the Near East, the language of parts of Daniel and Ezra, and the language Christ spoke — *Talitha cumi, Abba, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani*.

Ark Ark. English uses one word for two entirely different Hebrew things, and the distinction is worth keeping — until Greek collapses it again, which is where this entry ends.

1. The ark of Noah, and the ark of Moses — *tēbāh* תֵּבָה^{H8392}, a chest or box. The word occurs 25 times in the Hebrew Bible and describes **only these two objects**: the vessel that carried Noah's household through the flood *Genesis 6:14*, and the basket of bulrushes that carried the infant Moses on the Nile *Exodus 2:3*. Nothing else in Scripture is ever a *tēbāh*.

Consider what that means. Hebrew had ordinary words for boat and for basket and did not use them. Two vessels, separated by centuries and by a factor of thousands in size, are given one name — because they are one idea. A remnant is shut inside a box, sealed against water, and floated through a judgement that kills everyone outside. Noah's ark saves a family from a drowning world; Moses' ark saves a child from a river ordered to drown him. Both are sealed with tar, though by different words: Noah daubs his *within and without with pitch*, *kōper* כֹּפֶר^{H3724}, while Moses' mother uses bitumen and asphalt, *hēmār* חֵמָר^{H2564} and *zepet* זֶפֶת^{H2203} *Exodus 2:3*. Both vessels have no rudder, no sail, no oar: nothing to steer with, because the passenger is not navigating. God shuts the door of one *Genesis 7:16*; a sister watches over the other.

The verb behind Noah's pitch is worth a moment. *Thou shalt pitch it* is *kāpar* כָּפַר^{H3722} — the verb that everywhere else in the Old Testament means **to make atonement**: *on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you Leviticus 16:30*. Strong's and Brown-Driver-Briggs carry both under one root: the Qal is to coat with pitch, the Piel is to cover sin. (Modern morphological tagging separates them as homonyms — the ark is Qal, the Day of Atonement is Piel — so this is a resonance the lexicons preserve, not an etymology to lean a doctrine on.) What kept the water out is spelled the way what keeps wrath out is spelled.

Peter draws the line himself: *eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us 1 Peter 3:20-21*. The ark is not a boat story. It is the shape of salvation: judgement passes over and around those who are inside the thing God told them to get into.

2. The ark of the covenant — ^{H727}אֲרוֹן ^{ʾārôn}, a different word entirely, meaning a chest or coffer. Acacia wood overlaid with gold, holding the tables of the Law, Aaron's rod that budded, and the golden pot of manna *Hebrews* 9:4, with the mercy seat above it and the cherubim over that. It goes before Israel into Jordan and the river is cut off *Joshua* 3:15-17; it circles Jericho; it strikes Uzzah dead for a steadying hand *2 Samuel* 6:6-7; it terrifies the Philistines and topples Dagon. It is the place where God says *there I will meet with thee Exodus* 25:22.

3. One word in Greek. The distinction Hebrew is careful to keep, Greek does not keep at all. The Septuagint renders *tēbāh* in Genesis 6–9 and ^{ʾārôn} in *Exodus* 25 with the same noun, *kibōtos* ^{G2787}κιβωτός, a wooden chest; and the New Testament follows it, using that one word of Noah's ark *Matthew* 24:38, *Luke* 17:27, *Hebrews* 11:7, *1 Peter* 3:20 and of the ark of the covenant *Hebrews* 9:4, *Revelation* 11:19. So the apostles inherited a Bible in which the box that carried a household through the flood and the box that carried the covenant through the wilderness are named alike. Both are gold-worthy containers of what God has sworn to preserve; both are the one place the judgement does not reach.

Asia ^{G773}Asia — Greek Asia Ἀσία ^{G773}. Not the continent and not Asia Minor, but the **Roman province of Asia**: the western third of what is now Turkey, with **Ephesus** as its capital. Every New Testament use means that province.

Paul is forbidden to preach there — *forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia Acts* 16:6 — and the closed door is what turns him west to Troas, the vision of the man of Macedonia, and **Lydia** at the riverside in Philippi. Europe hears the gospel because Asia was shut.

Later it is opened, and comprehensively. Based at Ephesus for two years, Paul reaches the whole province: *all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks Acts* 19:10. Then the silversmiths riot.

And it ends in disappointment. From prison Paul writes *this thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me 2 Timothy* 1:15.

The seven churches of Revelation are all in it — Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea *Revelation* 1:11 — a circuit a courier could walk. The province Paul was once barred from is the province the risen Christ dictates letters to.

auxei (auxei) ^{G837}auxei — Greek auxanō ^{G837}αὐξάνω, **to grow, to increase** — the ordinary word for what a plant does. Abbott-Smith notes the shorter form *auxō* is the one Paul uses at *Ephesians* 2:21 and *Colossians* 2:19. The Septuagint uses it chiefly for *pārāh* ^{H6509}פָּרַח, to be fruitful.

Its normal habitat is agriculture and childhood. The mustard seed *is grown* Matthew 13:32; the seed on good ground *increased*; the child *grew, and waxed strong in spirit* Luke 2:40. Nothing technical about it.

Which is why its use in Ephesians is startling. *In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord* Ephesians 2:21. Buildings do not grow. Paul puts a live verb on a masonry noun and leaves the collision standing — see **synarmologoumenē**.

And he draws the conclusion elsewhere. *I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase* — the same root, three times in two verses, ending *neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase* 1 Corinthians 3:6-7. The men are given the verbs anyone can do. The growing is not one of them.

Growth in this word is never something the thing does to itself. A wall is built; a plant is grown; and Paul says the church is both, and neither by its own doing.

Azariah H5838 **Azariah** — Hebrew ‘āzaryāh אֶזְרִיָּא^{H5838}, **Jehovah has helped**, from ‘āzar אָזַר^{H5826}, to help, with the divine name. One of the commonest names in the Old Testament — Strong’s counts nineteen bearers.

Two of them carry the weight.

The king. Azariah son of Amaziah reigned fifty-two years over Judah and is better known as **Uzziah** 2 Kings 15:1-7. He did right, and *when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction*: he went into the temple to burn incense, was withstood by eighty priests, and the leprosy rose in his forehead while he stood there with the censer 2 Chronicles 26:16-21. He lived out his reign in a separate house, a leper. It is the year of his death that Isaiah sees the Lord high and lifted up *Isaiah* 6:1.

The captive. Azariah is the Hebrew name of the friend of **Daniel** whom Babylon renamed **Abednego** — *servant of Nebo*, the god swapped into his name. With Hananiah and Mishael he refuses the image on the plain of Dura and answers the furnace: *our God whom we serve is able to deliver us... but if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods* Daniel 3:17-18. The three walk in the fire with a fourth.

One man named *God has helped* was ruined by needing no help; three others kept the name in a furnace.

Baptism **Baptism** — Greek baptism βαπτισμα^{G908}, the act and its result; baptismos βαπτισμός^{G909}, a washing or ablution; from baptizō βαπτίζω^{G907}, to immerse. See that entry for the word’s full range, which is where most of the argument actually lives.

The Bible knows several baptisms and distinguishes them.

- **John's baptism** — *unto repentance*, in Jordan, with confession of sins *Matthew 3:5-6*. Paul finds twelve men at Ephesus who had only this, and they are baptized again in the name of the Lord Jesus *Acts 19:3-5*. John himself says his is the lesser: *I indeed baptize you with water... he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire Matthew 3:11*.
- **The baptism of Christ Himself**, who had no sins to confess, and answers John's protest with *thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness Matthew 3:15*. Heaven opens over it.
- **Christian baptism**, commanded in *Matthew 28:19* and practised from Pentecost onward, *in the name of Jesus Christ Acts 2:38*.
- **Baptism with the Holy Spirit** — promised by Christ *Acts 1:5*, poured out at Pentecost and at Cornelius' house, where it falls *before* the water and Peter concludes that water can therefore not be withheld *Acts 10:47*.
- **Baptism of suffering** — Christ's own word for His death: *I have a baptism to be baptized with Luke 12:50, Mark 10:38*.
- **Israel's baptism unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea 1 Corinthians 10:2** — and Paul immediately warns that it saved nobody who then fell in the wilderness.

And it insists there is one. *One Lord, one faith, one baptism Ephesians 4:5*.

What the New Testament says it does. It is a burial and a resurrection with Christ — *synthaptō συνθάπτω*^{G4916} in *Romans 6:4* and *Colossians 2:12*, where the power is expressly *the faith of the operation of God*. It clothes: *as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ Galatians 3:27* — see *endyō ἐνδύω*^{G1746}. It washes: *the washing of regeneration Titus 3:5* — see *loutron λουτρόν*^{G3067} and *palingenesia παλιγγενεσία*^{G3824}. It is a pledge: *the answer of a good conscience toward God 1 Peter 3:21* — see *eperōtēma ἐπερώτημα*^{G1906}. And Ananias tells Saul, *arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord Acts 22:16*.

What it does not do. It does not work mechanically. Israel was baptized unto Moses and fell in the desert. Simon the sorcerer *believed also, and was baptized*, and Peter tells him within the hour that his heart is not right with God *Acts 8:13, Acts 8:21*. And Peter is careful to say baptism saves *not* as a removal of bodily dirt, but as a pledge.

The order in Acts never varies: preaching, hearing, believing, baptism. The Ethiopian *Acts 8:35-38*; Lydia *Acts 16:14-15*; the jailer, to whom they *spoke the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house*, before any were baptized *Acts 16:32-33*; and Corinth, where *many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized Acts 18:8*. Nine narrated baptisms, one sequence.

The mode is not left to guesswork. Greek possessed a word for sprinkling, *rhantizō* ῥαντίζω^{G4472}, used seven times and always of blood; and a word for pouring, *ekcheō* ἐκχέω^{G1632}, used of the Spirit. For baptism the Spirit uses neither. Add the narratives — *much water, went down into the water, came up out of the water* — and the picture is consistent throughout.

Where it comes from, and what it was already saying. The Hebrew noun *miqweh* מִקְוֶה^{H4723} means a *gathering* of water, from *qāwāh* קָוָה^{H6960}, to wait or to hope. It is the word for the gathered seas at *Genesis 1:10*, and it appears in the purity laws at *Leviticus 11:36*, where a spring or a pit — *a gathering of water* — is the one thing that stays clean when everything it touches has been defiled. The immersion pool that Second Temple and rabbinic Judaism built on that word, and named from it, is a later development and is not legislated in the Old Testament; but the idea it was built on is there from the first chapter of *Genesis*. And the figures were there too, long before the practice was: **Noah** in the **Ark**, **Israel** through the sea, **Naaman** in the **Jordan** — three men and a nation brought through water into a life on the other side of it.

Bible Bible — from Greek τὰ βιβλία, *the books* — a **plural**, which is the first thing worth knowing about it. Through Latin the plural was mistaken for a feminine singular, *biblia*, and so the library became a book. The word itself never appears in Scripture; the Bible does not call itself the Bible. It calls itself *graphē* γραφή^{G1124}, **the writing** — see **Scripture**.

It is a library, not a volume. 66 books in the Protestant canon, written across roughly 1,500 years, in three languages — Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek — on three continents, by some forty authors: a shepherd, a king, a physician, two fishermen, a tax collector, a tentmaker, a cupbearer, a herdsman of sycamore fruit.

Its own internal claim is specific. *All scripture is given by inspiration of God* — *theopneustos* θεόπνευστος^{G2315}, *God-breathed*, a word Paul appears to have coined *2 Timothy 3:16*. And Peter on how it came: *holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost* *2 Peter 1:21*. Not dictated, and not merely collected.

The divisions. The Hebrew Bible is the **Tanakh** — **Torah**, **Nevi'im**, **Ketuvim**: Law, Prophets, Writings — which is precisely the threefold division Christ names on the Emmaus road, *in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms* *Luke 24:44*. Same books as the Protestant Old Testament, differently ordered: the Hebrew ends in *Chronicles*, the Christian in *Malachi*, so the Old Testament closes on a curse and a promised *Elijah* rather than on a decree to go up to Jerusalem. Around that core Judaism built its own commentary, first the **Mishna** and then the **Talmud** — which are about the Bible and are not in it, a distinction those entries keep.

Chapters and verses are late and are not inspired. The chapter divisions are attributed to Stephen Langton, c. 1227; verses to Robert Estienne, 1551. They are a citation system, and occasionally an unhelpful one — the chapter break at Isaiah 53 severs it from its opening in 52:13, and a good many arguments have been made from an accident of numbering.

Two moments worth keeping. The Septuagint — the Old Testament in Greek, made from the third century BC onward — is what most New Testament writers quote, which is why some quotations do not match the Hebrew word for word. And the Bible was the first substantial book off Gutenberg's press, c. 1455, which is the beginning of the assumption that ordinary people would own one.

And these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name John 20:31.

Daniel ^{H1840} **Daniel** — Hebrew dāniyyē ^{דָּנִיֵּיִל} ^{H1840}, **God is my judge.** Carried off to Babylon as a youth in the first deportation, c. 605 BC, and renamed **Belteshazzar** by his captors — a name honouring Bel, which the book pointedly keeps using alongside his own.

The book turns on a refusal in the first chapter, and it is a small one. Offered the king's meat and wine, *Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself Daniel 1:8* — and asks, rather than rebels, proposing a ten-day trial of pulse and water. Everything that follows rests on a young man who decided what he would not do before anyone asked him to do it.

He serves four kings across some seventy years — Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, Cyrus — and outlasts the empire that took him. He interprets the dream Nebuchadnezzar refuses to disclose, and prefaces it by denying he has any special faculty: *there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets Daniel 2:28*. He reads the writing on the wall the night Babylon falls — see **Mene**. And under Darius he keeps praying at his open window three times a day *as he did aforetime Daniel 6:10*, knowing the decree, and goes to the lions.

Three men do the same thing without him. Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah — renamed Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego — refuse the image on the plain of Dura, and their answer to the furnace is the high point of the book's nerve: *our God whom we serve is able to deliver us... but if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods Daniel 3:17-18*. Daniel is not in that chapter. See **Azariah**.

The visions are the strangest material in the Old Testament: four beasts from the sea, the little horn, the ram and the goat, the seventy weeks, and the figure who is the heart of it — *one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven... and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him Daniel 7:13-14*. That is the title Christ uses of Himself

more than any other, and He quotes this verse to the high priest at His trial *Matthew* 26:64, which is the moment the robes are torn.

He is told he will not understand his own book. *Shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end Daniel* 12:4, and again: *Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end Daniel* 12:9. A prophet given more detail than almost any other and denied the meaning of it.

Ezekiel names him while he is still alive — with Noah and Job, as one of three men whose righteousness could deliver only themselves *Ezekiel* 14:14, and again as a byword for wisdom *Ezekiel* 28:3. And an angel twice calls him *greatly beloved Daniel* 9:23, *Daniel* 10:11.

Almost uniquely among major figures, **Scripture records no sin of his.** That is not a claim about the man; it is an observation about the book, and it is worth noticing that the same Bible which refuses to hide David's adultery simply has nothing to report here.

David ^{H1732} **David** — Hebrew dāwīd דָּוִד^{H1732}, **beloved.** Greek Δαυίδ. Youngest of eight sons of Jesse of Bethlehem; shepherd, harpist, giant-killer, outlaw, king; author of much of the Psalter. The most-named human being in Scripture — roughly 1,000 occurrences.

He is chosen against every visible criterion. Samuel comes to anoint a king and starts down the line of brothers; God stops him at the first: *Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature... for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart* 1 Samuel 16:7. David is not even called in from the sheep until the others are exhausted.

He kills Goliath with a stone, having refused Saul's armour because he had not proved it, and the sentence that carries the scene is not about courage but about arithmetic: *the battle is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hands* 1 Samuel 17:47.

Then a decade of being hunted, in which the best of him shows. Twice he has Saul at his mercy — in the cave, and asleep inside his own camp — and twice refuses, because *the LORD forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the LORD's anointed* 1 Samuel 26:11. He cuts a corner from Saul's robe and his heart smites him even for that. When Saul dies he composes a lament for the man who spent years trying to kill him: *How are the mighty fallen!*

And then the worst of him. *At the time when kings go forth to battle,* David stayed at Jerusalem 2 Samuel 11:1 — one clause of scene-setting that carries the whole disaster. Adultery with Bathsheba, then the attempt to disguise it, then Uriah the Hittite murdered by letter carried in the victim's own hand. Nathan tells him a story about a poor man's lamb, waits for him to pronounce sentence, and says: *Thou art the man* 2 Samuel 12:7. Psalm 51 is what came out of that.

What Scripture does with him afterwards is the remarkable part. It never sanitises the record — Absalom’s rebellion, the census, the sons who tore each other apart, all of it stands. And yet God’s verdict, given long after, is *a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will Acts 13:22*. Not a man who did not sin. A man who, when confronted, did not argue.

He is denied the temple because he had shed much blood *1 Chronicles 22:8*, and spends his last years assembling materials for a house he will never see. And he is given something larger instead: *thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever 2 Samuel 7:16* — the covenant the New Testament traces to Christ, *the son of David Matthew 1:1*, and which Christ Himself uses to corner the Pharisees: if David calls him Lord, how is he then his son? *Matthew 22:45*.

The last book of the Bible closes the circle: *I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star Revelation 22:16*. Both root and offspring — before him and from him.

Demas ^{G1214} **Demas** — Greek Dēmas Δημᾱς^{G1214}, probably a contraction of *Demetrios*. A companion of Paul, named three times, and the three form a straight line down.

First he is one of the team. Writing from prison to Colossae, Paul closes: *Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you Colossians 4:14* — standing beside **Luke**, no qualifier needed.

Then, in Philemon, a colleague. *Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers Philemon 1:24*.

Then the last letter Paul wrote, awaiting execution: *Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica 2 Timothy 4:10*. The next sentence is *only Luke is with me*.

Two things the entry keeps. Paul does not accuse him of heresy, immorality or apostasy from Christ — the charge is *agapaō ἀγαπάω*^{G25} pointed at *this present world*, *aiōn αἰών*^{G165}, the present age. He loved the wrong age. And the departure is to a real city with a real church in it; he did not vanish into the dark, he went somewhere comfortable.

Named in the same breath as Luke twice, and remembered for the third time. Both men had the same journey and the same prison; the difference was what they wanted at the end of it.

Eden ^{H5731} **Eden** — Hebrew ‘ēden עֵדֶן^{H5731}, *delight, pleasure, luxury*; the related ‘ēdnāh עֵדְנָה^{H5730} is the word Sarah uses when she laughs at the thought of pleasure in old age *Genesis 18:12*. The Septuagint renders the garden *παράδεισος* — a Persian loanword for a walled royal park — which is how English gets **paradise**.

And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden Genesis 2:8. Note the phrasing: the garden is *in* Eden, not identical with it. A river goes out of Eden to water it and then parts into four heads — Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel and Euphrates. Two of those names are still on the map, which is why the text reads as geography rather than allegory, and why no one has ever found it.

What is in the garden. Every tree *pleasant to the sight, and good for food*; the tree of life in the midst; and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Gold, bdellium and onyx in the land around. A man put there *to dress it and to keep it* — work exists before the fall, and so does a prohibition. The man is **Adam**, and he is given the work and the warning before he is given the woman.

What is lost. Not the fruit but the walking: *they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day Genesis 3:8*, and hid. The sentence falls on the ground itself — *cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life* — and the man is driven out, with cherubim and a flaming sword turning every way to keep the way of the tree of life *Genesis 3:24*. The gate is not merely shut. It is guarded.

The prophets keep it as the standard of ruin and of restoration. Ezekiel taunts the king of Tyre with *thou hast been in Eden the garden of God Ezekiel 28:13*. Joel says the land ahead of the locusts is *as the garden of Eden* and behind them *a desolate wilderness Joel 2:3*. And Isaiah promises the reverse: *he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein Isaiah 51:3*.

Scripture ends where it began, and does not. The last chapters of Revelation give back the tree of life and the river — *a pure river of water of life... and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life Revelation 22:1-2* — but the setting is now a city, not a garden, and *there shall be no more curse*. The flaming sword is gone. Nobody is standing guard, because the reason for guarding is finished.

Egypt H4714 **Egypt** — Hebrew miṣrayim מִצְרַיִם^{H4714}, a dual form, probably *the two straits* or *the double narrows* — Upper and Lower Egypt — and popularly connected with mēṣar מֶצָר^{H4712}, **a narrow place, distress, straitness**. Greek Aigýptos Αἴγυπτος^{G125}. Scripture also calls it *the land of Ham Psalms 105:23* and, contemptuously, **Rahab** — the boaster, the sea-monster sitting still *Isaiah 30:7*.

The name is the story: a narrow place, a house of constriction, from which a people has to be brought *out*.

It is a refuge before it is a prison. Abraham goes down there in famine and lies about his wife. Joseph is sold there and rises to the right hand of Pharaoh. Jacob's household — seventy souls — comes for bread and stays. *Now there arose up a new*

king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph Exodus 1:8, and the shelter becomes the iron furnace Deuteronomy 4:20 and the house of bondage.

The exodus is the defining act of God in the Old Testament. Ten plagues, each striking a god of Egypt; the Passover lamb and the blood on the door; the firstborn; and then the sea. Israel walks through on dry ground; the water that opened for them closes over the army behind them *Exodus 14:21-29*. Paul calls that passage a baptism: *baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea 1 Corinthians 10:2* — see **Israel and Baptism**.

And its river gives up the man who leads them out. Pharaoh's daughter draws an infant from the Nile in a papyrus box and names him for it — see **Moses** and **Ark**. Egypt's own river, ordered to drown the Hebrew boys, carries the one who will empty the land.

Afterwards Egypt becomes shorthand for two temptations. The first is going back: within days of the sea the people are saying *it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians Exodus 14:12*, and they remember the fish, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, onions and garlick *Numbers 11:5* — the menu of slavery, recalled fondly. The second is leaning on it: the prophets hammer at alliances with Egypt, *a bruised reed, whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand Isaiah 36:6*.

And God keeps the memory as a moral argument. *Thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt Exodus 23:9*. The rescue is not merely a favour; it is the reason Israel must treat foreigners well.

Yet the last word over Egypt is mercy. Christ Himself is carried there as an infant, so that Hosea's line about the nation is fulfilled in a person: *Out of Egypt have I called my son Matthew 2:15, Hosea 11:1*. And Isaiah sees an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land, with the astonishing benediction: *Blessed be Egypt my people Isaiah 19:25*.

Revelation makes it a name for the world that kills prophets — the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified *Revelation 11:8*.

Elias G2243 **Elias** — Greek Hēlias Ἡλίας^{G2243}, the Septuagint and New Testament form of Hebrew 'ēliyyāhû אֱלִיָּהוּ^{H452}, **Elijah** — *my God is YHWH*, which is the argument of his entire life compressed into a name. English keeps both spellings, the Greek in the New Testament and the Hebrew in the Old; they are one man.

He arrives without introduction. No genealogy, no call narrative, no father named beyond "the Tishbite": he simply stands in front of Ahab and announces a drought *1 Kings 17:1*. He leaves the same way — not dying, but taken up in a whirlwind, with a chariot of fire between him and Elisha *2 Kings 2:11*. Only Enoch shares that exit.

Carmel is the scene everyone remembers. Four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, two bulls, and one question: *How long halt ye between two opinions?* 1 Kings 18:21 — and the people *answered him not a word*. He mocks their god for sleeping or being on a journey, soaks his own altar with twelve barrels of water, and prays a prayer of some thirty words. The fire falls.

And the next chapter is why he is worth an entry. After the greatest public vindication in the Old Testament, one threat from Jezebel sends him a day's journey into the wilderness asking to die: *It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers* 1 Kings 19:4. God's response is not rebuke. An angel feeds him twice and lets him sleep. Then, at Horeb, wind and earthquake and fire pass by, and *the LORD was not in any of them* — He is in *a still small voice* 1 Kings 19:12. And the correction to Elijah's *I, even I only, am left* is arithmetic: seven thousand who have not bowed. See **Horeb**.

James makes exactly this the point: *Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly* James 5:17.

Malachi closes the Old Testament by promising him back — *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD* Malachi 4:5 — which is why the priests ask John the Baptist *Art thou Elias?* and he says *I am not John* 1:21, while Christ says of John, *if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come* Matthew 11:14. Both are true: John came *in the spirit and power of Elias* Luke 1:17, and was not the man himself.

And he appears in person, alive, on the mount of transfiguration, with Moses, speaking with Christ of the exodus He was about to accomplish Luke 9:30-31. The Law and the Prophets, standing beside the One they were about.

Emmaus G1695 **Emmaus** — Greek Emmaous Ἐμμαοῦς^{G1695}, probably from a Semitic root meaning *warm springs*. A village *threescore furlongs from Jerusalem* — about seven miles — named once in Scripture, in Luke 24:13-35, and preserved by Luke alone. Several sites are proposed and none is certain.

Two disciples are walking away from Jerusalem on the Sunday, and the detail Luke gives first is that *they talked together of all these things which had happened*. One is named Cleopas; the other never is, which has made the story unusually easy to walk into.

Christ joins them and asks what they are discussing, and they stop, *sad*. Their summary of the weekend is one of the most quietly devastating lines in the Gospels: *we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel* — past tense, three days after. They even report the empty tomb and the angels, and it has not moved them.

His answer is not to identify Himself. It is to teach: *beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself* Luke 24:27. The risen Christ's first recorded act of instruction is a Bible study, and Luke gives us the syllabus but not the content — arguably the most tantalising omission in Scripture. See **Scripture**.

Then the recognition, and it turns on a gesture. They constrain Him to stay — *Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent* — and at table *he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.* They knew Him in the breaking of bread, and knowing Him was the end of seeing Him.

And the line that explains everything preceding it: *Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?* The burning came first and was only understood afterwards. They had been in the presence of the risen Christ for seven miles and diagnosed it as indigestion of the heart.

They go back that same hour — seven miles, at night, having just said the day was far spent. Whatever had made them slow going out did not apply coming back. The road to Emmaus is only ever half a journey; the entry belongs as much to **Jerusalem**, which they had left and to which they returned before the night was out.

Evangelist ^{G2099} **Evangelist** — Greek euangelistēs εὐαγγελιστής^{G2099}, *a bringer of good news*, from euangelion εὐαγγέλιον^{G2098}, **gospel** — itself *eu*, good, plus *angelia*, message. The same root gives euangelizō εὐαγγελίζω^{G2097}, to announce good news, which the New Testament uses more than fifty times.

The noun occurs only three times in the whole New Testament, which is worth noticing given how much weight the word carries in later church usage.

- *Acts 21:8* — *Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven.* The only man Scripture actually calls one.
- *Ephesians 4:11* — in the list of gifts: *some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.*
- *2 Timothy 4:5* — Paul's charge to Timothy, who is not called an evangelist but told to *do the work of an evangelist*, as part of making full proof of his ministry.

Philip is the pattern, and it is instructive. He is chosen in *Acts 6* as one of the seven appointed to serve tables so the apostles could attend to prayer and the word — an administrator, on paper. Then persecution scatters the church, and he goes down to Samaria and preaches Christ with such effect that Peter and John have to come from Jerusalem. Then an angel sends him to a desert road, where he runs

alongside a chariot, asks the Ethiopian *Understandest thou what thou readest?*, begins *at the same scripture* in Isaiah 53, and preaches Jesus. The man asks *what doth hinder me to be baptized?*, they both go down into the water, and Philip baptizes him — baptizō βαπτίζω^{G907} — Acts 8:36-38.

Then Philip is caught away and found at Azotus, and preaches through every city till he comes to Caesarea — where, twenty years later, he is still living, with four daughters who prophesy Acts 21:9.

So the New Testament's one named evangelist is a layman by appointment, sent to a Samaritan city and then to a single foreigner on an empty road, who preaches from the Scriptures and ends in a baptism. Not attached to one congregation, not ordained to it, and going where he is sent. See **Scripture** and **Baptism**.

The word became a title for the four Gospel writers only later. Scripture uses it for a function, not an office of rank.

Gilgal H1537 **Gilgal** — Hebrew gilgāl גִּלְגָּל^{H1537}, *a circle or a rolling*, from gālal גָּלַל^{H1556}, to roll. Israel's first camp west of Jordan, between the river and Jericho.

The name is given by a pun, and the pun is the whole point. *This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day Joshua 5:9.*

Four things happen there in quick succession, and they are a sequence.

- **The twelve stones are set up.** Taken out of the middle of Jordan where the priests' feet stood, carried over, and pitched in Gilgal as a memorial — *that all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty Joshua 4:20-24*. A stone circle at the water's edge, so that children would ask *What mean ye by these stones?*
- **The nation is circumcised.** Everyone born in the wilderness had gone uncircumcised for forty years; the whole generation that came out of Egypt had died. So at Gilgal Joshua circumcises them with knives of flint, and they stay in the camp till they are whole *Joshua 5:2-8*. The covenant sign is restored on the far side of the water, not before it.
- **The Passover is kept** on the fourteenth day, in the plains of Jericho *Joshua 5:10*.
- **And the manna stops.** *They did eat of the old corn of the land... and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn; neither had the children of Israel manna any more Joshua 5:11-12*. Forty years of bread from heaven end the day they taste the harvest of the promise.

The order is worth sitting with. They cross the water first — see **Jordan**, whose bed those stones came out of, and **Israel**, which entered the land as a nation that

day. Then the sign in the flesh, then the feast, then the wilderness diet ends. Nothing is restored until they are through Jordan.

Afterwards it becomes a place of beginnings and then of rot. Samuel judges there on his circuit *1 Samuel 7:16*; Saul is confirmed king there *1 Samuel 11:15* — and there too Saul loses the kingdom, offering the sacrifice himself rather than waiting for Samuel *1 Samuel 13:8-14*. David is met there on his return from exile.

Then the prophets turn on it. Hosea: *all their wickedness is in Gilgal Hosea 9:15*. Amos, with brutal wordplay on the name: *come to Bethel, and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression... for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity Amos 4:4, Amos 5:5*. The place where the reproach was rolled away became a shrine, and then a byword.

God God — the Bible never argues for His existence; it opens by assuming it. *In the beginning God created Genesis 1:1*. What Scripture does argue about, relentlessly, is *which* God, and what He is like.

The names are a theology in themselves.

- ʾēlōhîm אֱלֹהִים^{H430} — the ordinary word for God, and grammatically **plural** while taking singular verbs. Used of pagan gods too, and of judges. Over 2,600 occurrences.
- ʾēl אֵל^{H410} — the older, shorter form: *the Mighty One*. It builds the compounds: El Shaddai, El Elyon, El Roi — *thou God seest me*, said by Hagar, a runaway slave girl, who becomes the first person in Scripture to give God a name *Genesis 16:13*.
- YHWH יהוה^{H3068} — the covenant name, spoken from the burning bush: *I AM THAT I AM Exodus 3:14*. Roughly 6,800 occurrences, and rendered LORD in small capitals because Jewish reverence substituted *Adonai* aloud. It is a name built out of the verb *to be*.
- ʾădōnāy אֲדֹנָי^{H136} — Lord, Master. And Greek theos θεός^{G2316}, kyrios κύριος^{G2962}.

What He declares about Himself, when Moses asks to see His glory, is not a definition but a character reference: *The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty Exodus 34:6-7*. Both halves. It is the most quoted self-description in the Old Testament.

He is one — *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD Deuteronomy 6:4*, the Shema, which a devout Jew says twice daily. And Christ calls it *the first of all the commandments Mark 12:29*.

He is spirit *John 4:24*, invisible *1 Timothy 1:17*, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto *1 Timothy 6:16*. No man hath seen Him at any time. He cannot lie *Titus 1:2* and does not change *Malachi 3:6*.

And He is love — but John says it twice, and the sentence has a hinge: *God is love* 1 John 4:8, and *God is light, and in him is no darkness at all* 1 John 1:5. Also *our God is a consuming fire* Hebrews 12:29. Scripture will not let one attribute swallow the others.

The New Testament fills the name out. The Father sends; the Son is *the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person* Hebrews 1:3; the Spirit is called God to Ananias' face Acts 5:3-4. Baptism is commanded *into the name* — singular — *of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost* Matthew 28:19. One name, three named.

And the most startling claim in the book is that this God can be known, and that knowing Him is the point: *this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent* John 17:3.

Hades G86 **Hades** — Greek *hadēs* ᾍδης^{G86}, the unseen; the realm of the dead. It answers to Hebrew *še ʾôl* שְׁאוֹל^{H7585}, **Sheol**, which the Septuagint renders with this word some sixty times. Ten occurrences in the New Testament.

The King James renders it "hell", and that is the source of a great deal of confusion, because it uses the same English word for three different Greek ones:

- *hadēs* ᾍδης^{G86} — the state of the dead between death and resurrection. Not a synonym for final punishment.
- *Geenna* γέεννα^{G1067} — **Gehenna**, the Valley of Hinnom outside Jerusalem, where children had been burned to Molech and which became the city's refuse fire. This is Christ's word for final judgement, and it is the one He uses in the warnings: *where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched* Mark 9:44.
- *tartaroō* ταρταρώ^{G5020} — used once, of angels cast down 2 Peter 2:4.

Modern versions transliterate rather than translate for exactly this reason.

In the Old Testament, Sheol is where everyone goes, and its tone is grey rather than fiery: Jacob expects to *go down into the grave unto my son mourning* Genesis 37:35. *The dead praise not the LORD* Psalms 115:17. Job wants to be hidden there till wrath is past. It is not annihilation, and it is not yet reward.

Christ tells one story with the place in it, and it has two compartments: the rich man *in hell lift up his eyes, being in torments*, and sees Lazarus far off in Abraham's bosom, with *a great gulf fixed* between Luke 16:23-26. Whatever weight the parable is meant to carry, the state is conscious and the division is settled.

And then the New Testament empties it of terror in three strokes.

- Peter at Pentecost quotes David: *thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption* — and applies it to the resurrection Acts 2:27, Acts 2:31.

- Christ says *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it* Matthew 16:18 — gates are defensive works; it is the church that is advancing.
- And the risen Christ says: *I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death* Revelation 1:18. See **Jesus**.

Its end is stated plainly. *And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death* Revelation 20:14. Hades is not the final destination; it is emptied and then abolished, along with death itself.

Ham H2526 **Ham** — Hebrew ḥām חָם^{H2526}, connected by sound with *hot* and by tradition with *swarthy* or *burnt*, though the etymology is genuinely uncertain and may be Egyptian rather than Hebrew. The second or youngest son of **Noah**, and one of the eight carried through the flood in the **Ark**.

He is named for one incident. After the flood Noah plants a vineyard, drinks of the wine, and lies uncovered in his tent. *And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without* Genesis 9:22. Shem and Japheth take a garment, walk backward, and cover him without looking. Noah wakes and speaks the oracle.

And the oracle is the thing readers most often get wrong. The curse does not fall on Ham. It falls on **Canaan**: *Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren* Genesis 9:25. Ham himself is not cursed, and neither are his other three sons — Cush, Mizraim and Phut. The text is precise and has been misread catastrophically: the notion that this passage marks out African peoples for servitude is an invention laid on top of it, and it collapses the moment the actual name in the verse is read. Canaan's descendants are the peoples of the land Israel later dispossesses, which is the point Genesis is preparing.

His line is the great-power line of the early world. Mizraim is Egypt — see **Egypt**, which the Psalms simply call *the land of Ham* Psalms 105:23, Psalms 106:22. Cush is Nubia. Out of Cush comes Nimrod, *a mighty hunter before the LORD*, who founds Babel, Erech and Nineveh Genesis 10:8-11. Phut is Libya. Canaan fathers Sidon and the Hittite, Jebusite, Amorite and the rest Genesis 10:15-18.

So the table of nations gives Ham's descendants Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Nineveh and Canaan — very nearly every power that will later stand against **Israel**, and the land Israel is given is his son's.

A note for translators, because this entry caused real damage. In Norwegian editions this headword must be **Kam**, never "Ham": Norwegian *ham* is the object pronoun *him*, which in a Christian text almost always means Christ. Glossing it with this article told readers that "Ham" means *burnt, swarthy*. The general rule it

produced: never let a Latin-script headword stand where it collides with ordinary vocabulary in the target language — including inflected and definite forms.

Haman H2001 **Haman** — Hebrew hāmān חַמָּן^{H2001}, a Persian name glossed *magnificent*. Chief minister of Ahasuerus, and the villain of Esther.

His descent is the first thing the book tells you. He is *the Agagite Esther 3:1* — of the line of **Agag**, king of **Amalek**, the nation Saul was ordered to destroy and did not. Mordecai is *a Benjamite*, of the house of Kish, Saul’s family. The quarrel in the palace is the same quarrel, five centuries on, between the same two houses.

It begins over a bow that is not made. Mordecai will not bow, and Haman, *full of wrath*, decides that killing one man is too small: he buys from the king the right to destroy *all the Jews, even young and old, little children and women, in one day Esther 3:13*, and casts *Pur*, the lot, to choose the date.

The reversal is total and the book enjoys it. He builds a gallows fifty cubits high for Mordecai; he is made to lead Mordecai through the city crying *Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour; and they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai Esther 7:10*. The feast of **Purim** is named for the lot he cast.

God is never named in Esther — the only book of which that is true. Haman is the reason the point still lands: the man who cast lots for a nation’s extermination was undone by a sleepless night and a queen’s dinner invitation.

Hermon H2768 **Hermon** — Hebrew ḥermôn הֶרְמוֹן^{H2768}, a **sanctuary**, from ḥāram חָרַם^{H2763}, to devote, to set apart irrevocably — the root behind *herem*, the ban. A mountain set apart.

Geographically it is the northern limit of the land, 9,200 feet, snow-capped most of the year, marking the boundary of Joshua’s conquest *Joshua 11:17*. The Sidonians called it Sirion and the Amorites Shenir *Deuteronomy 3:9*.

Its snows make the Jordan. Meltwater from Hermon feeds the springs at Dan and Banias and becomes the river; so the water in which Israel was cut off, Naaman was cleansed and Christ was baptized starts on this mountain. See **Jordan**.

The Psalms use it for what runs downhill. *As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing Psalms 133:3* — the psalm about brethren dwelling together in unity, and the picture is of moisture off the high north reaching the dry south.

And it is very probably the mount of the transfiguration. Scripture says only *an high mountain apart Matthew 17:1*, but the preceding scene is at Caesarea Philippi, at Hermon’s foot. If so, the confession of **Peter** and the voice from the cloud both happen on the mountain whose name means *set apart*.

Hor H2023 **Hor** — Hebrew hōr הֹר^{H2023}, simply **mountain**: an archaic form of har הָר^{H2022}, so the name is *Mount Mountain*. Two peaks carry it, one on the northern boundary of the land *Numbers 34:7-8*, and one that matters.

Hor is where Aaron dies. On the edge of Edom, in the fortieth year, God tells Moses that Aaron *shall not enter into the land which I have given unto the children of Israel, because ye rebelled against my word at the water of Meribah Numbers 20:24*. The three of them go up in sight of the whole congregation — Moses, Aaron, and Eleazar the son. Moses strips his brother of the priestly garments and puts them on the son, *and Aaron died there in the top of the mount Numbers 20:28*. They come down two.

The detail worth keeping is the vestments. Aaron does not take the priesthood with him. It is transferred, on the mountain, in front of everyone, before he dies — the office outliving the man who held it, which is the exact point Hebrews later presses: *they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: but this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood Hebrews 7:23-24*.

Israel mourns him thirty days. See **Nebo**, where Moses would die the same way, alone.

Horeb H2722 **Horeb** — Hebrew hōrēb הֹרֵב^{H2722}, **desert, waste**, from hārab הָרַב^{H2717}, to be dry, to lie in ruins. The other name of **Sinai** — the lexicons treat them as one place, Horeb the more general term for the range and Sinai the peak.

Everything decisive happens there twice, to two men.

Moses. The burning bush is at Horeb, *the backside of the desert Exodus 3:1* — a man who had been forty years a shepherd looking at a thorn bush that would not burn up. Later he strikes the rock in Horeb and water comes out for the whole nation *Exodus 17:6*. And Deuteronomy names Horeb, not Sinai, as the place of the covenant: *The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb Deuteronomy 5:2*.

Elijah. Forty days' journey to the same mountain, wanting to die, and the question *What doest thou here, Elijah?* Wind, earthquake and fire pass and *the LORD was not in them*; then *a still small voice 1 Kings 19:8-12*. The mountain that had shaken with thunder and trumpet under Moses is silent under Elijah.

The name is the point. Horeb means *dry waste*. God speaks from a bush there, gives water from rock there, cuts the covenant there, and whispers there. Nothing about the place recommends it; that is why it is chosen. See **Sinai** and **Elías**.

Hosea H1954 **Hosea** — Hebrew hōšēa הוֹשִׁיעַ^{H1954}, **salvation**; the same name borne by Joshua before Moses lengthened it, and by the last king of the northern kingdom. Greek Hōsēe Ὡσηε^{G5617}. First of the twelve minor prophets, and the only writing prophet from the north, prophesying to **Israel** in its last decades before Assyria.

God's opening command to him is the hardest given to any prophet. *Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the LORD Hosea 1:2.* He marries Gomer. The marriage is not an illustration he chose; it is a message he was made to live.

The children are named as sentences. Jezreel — *God scatters*, and the name of a massacre to be avenged. Then **Lo-ruhamah**, *not pitied: for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel.* Then **Lo-ammi**, *not my people: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God Hosea 1:9.* A man calling his own children by those names across a courtyard, for years.

And then the reversal, in the very next breath — *yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea* — with the names undone: *I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people Hosea 2:23.* Paul quotes exactly this to explain the calling of the Gentiles *Romans 9:25*, and Peter echoes it: *which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God 1 Peter 2:10.*

Chapter 3 is the part that costs him something. Gomer is gone, and God says *Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress.* He buys her back — fifteen pieces of silver and a homer and a half of barley, roughly the price of a slave. The prophet purchases his own wife out of the position she sold herself into.

The book alternates between fury and tenderness in a way no other prophet quite manages. *Ephraim is a cake not turned. They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind.* And then: *When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt Hosea 11:1* — which Matthew applies to Christ *Matthew 2:15*; see **Egypt**. And: *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?... mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together Hosea 11:8.*

Two lines the New Testament takes up directly. *I will have mercy, and not sacrifice Hosea 6:6* — quoted twice by Christ, both times against the Pharisees *Matthew 9:13*, *Matthew 12:7.* And *O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction Hosea 13:14*, which Paul turns into the taunt at the end of the resurrection chapter *1 Corinthians 15:55.*

The whole book is one argument: that God's covenant love is a marriage, that Israel treated it as a transaction, and that He bought her back anyway.

Israel ^{H3478} **Israel** — Hebrew ^{יִשְׂרָאֵל} ^{ʾēl} ^{יְשׁוּעָה} ^{H3478}. The name God gives **Jacob** at Peniel after a night of wrestling: *thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed Genesis 32:28.* From ^{סָרָה} ^{שָׂרָה} ^{H8280}, to strive or persist, with ^{ʾēl} ^{יְהוָה} ^{H410}, God — *he strives with God*, or *God strives*. Greek ^{Ἰσραήλ} ^{Ἰσραήλ} ^{G2474}.

The renaming costs him his walk. The wrestler touches the hollow of his thigh, and Jacob leaves limping — *and the sun rose upon him*. He gets the blessing and the injury in the same night, and never walks the same again.

Then the name becomes a people: twelve tribes from his twelve sons; a nation in Egypt; after Solomon, the ten northern tribes as against Judah; and after the exile, the covenant people as a whole.

Their founding act is a passage through water. Pursued to the shore, they go through the divided sea on dry ground while the sea closes over Egypt behind them *Exodus 14:21-29*. Paul reads it as a baptism: *all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea 1 Corinthians 10:1-2*. Water on either hand, cloud overhead — a nation buried out of slavery and raised on the far bank singing. The man who led them out had himself been drawn out of water as an infant; see **Moses**.

And Paul immediately turns it into a warning. *But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples 1 Corinthians 10:5-6*. Every one of them passed through the water. Most of them died in the desert. The passage begins a life; it does not finish it. Entering the land required a second water, at **Jordan**, and a second generation.

God's own words for them are extravagant: *a peculiar treasure unto me above all people... a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation Exodus 19:5-6; the apple of his eye Deuteronomy 32:10; a wife, in Hosea and Ezekiel, and an unfaithful one. When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt Hosea 11:1*.

The New Testament reopens the definition. *For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel Romans 9:6. He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly... but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit Romans 2:28-29*. Gentiles are grafted into the olive tree, and Paul warns them against arrogance toward the natural branches: *boast not against the branches Romans 11:18*. And he insists God has not cast away His people *Romans 11:1*.

The name still means what it meant at Peniel: a people who contend with God and are not destroyed for it — and who walk away marked.

James ^{G2385} **James** — Greek *Iakōbos* Ἰάκωβος^{G2385}, which is simply **Jacob**: the Hebrew *yā'āqōb* יַעֲקֹב^{H3290}, *supplanter*, carried through Latin *Iacomus* into English as *James*. The New Testament has one name where English has two, and the disguise is complete — the patriarch and the apostle are called the same thing in Greek.

Three men carry it. James the son of Zebedee, brother of John, one of the three taken into the inner scenes, and the first apostle martyred — *Herod the king... killed James the brother of John with the sword Acts 12:2*. **James the son of Alphaeus**, called *the less*, of whom nothing else is recorded. And **James the Lord's brother**.

The third is the one who matters most. He did not believe during the ministry — *neither did his brethren believe in him John 7:5* — and then the risen Christ appeared to him personally *1 Corinthians 15:7*. By Acts 15 he presides at the Jerusalem council and gives the verdict; Paul lists him among *pillars Galatians 2:9*.

And he never trades on the relation. The letter opens *James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ James 1:1* — not *his brother*. A man who grew up in the same house and introduces himself as a slave.

Jerusalem H3389 **Jerusalem** — Hebrew *yerûšāla'im* יְרוּשָׁלַיִם^{H3389}, commonly read as *foundation of peace* or *city of peace*, from a root of founding with *shalem/shalom*; the form is a dual, which the rabbis liked to hear as two Jerusalems, one below and one above. Greek Hierousalēm Ἱεροσολήμ^{G2419}. Called also **Salem** *Genesis 14:18*, **Zion**, *the city of David*, and *the city of the great King Matthew 5:35*.

It begins as a Jebusite stronghold that Israel could not take for four hundred years, until David captured it and made it his capital — a shrewd choice, on the seam between Judah and the northern tribes and belonging fully to neither. He brings the ark up with dancing; Solomon builds the temple on Moriah, the mountain where Abraham had bound Isaac *2 Chronicles 3:1*.

Its history is a long argument with God. Sennacherib besieges it and an angel empties his camp. Nebuchadnezzar burns it, and Lamentations sits in the ashes: *How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people!* Ezra and Nehemiah rebuild; the old men who remembered the first house weep at the foundation of the second *Ezra 3:12*. Rome levels it again in AD 70, as Christ said it would — *there shall not be left here one stone upon another Matthew 24:2*.

The prophets speak of it as a wife, and are not gentle. Isaiah opens with *How is the faithful city become an harlot! Isaiah 1:21*. Ezekiel gives it a whole chapter as a foundling raised, adorned and unfaithful *Ezekiel 16*. And yet: *Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken... but thou shalt be called Hephzibah* — my delight is in her *Isaiah 62:4*.

Christ weeps over it twice. *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! Luke 13:34*. Those *children* are τέκνα — grown citizens who refused; see teknon τέκνον^{G5043}, where that verse does a great deal of work. And again, coming down Olivet in sight of the walls: *If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! Luke 19:42* — the city of peace, not knowing the things of peace.

It is where everything happens. He is crucified outside its gate, raised outside it, and ascends from beside it; the Spirit falls there at Pentecost; the church is born

there and told to begin there — *ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth Acts 1:8*. Its council settles the Gentile question *Acts 15*.

And then the name lifts off the map. Paul: *Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all Galatians 4:26*. Hebrews: *ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem Hebrews 12:22*. And John sees *the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband Revelation 21:2* — a city with no temple in it, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

The Bible opens in a garden and closes in a city, and the city has a bride's name.

Jesus ^{G2424} **Jesus** — Greek Iēsous Ἰησοῦς ^{G2424}, the Septuagint's form of Hebrew yehôšûa 'יהושוע' ^{H3091}, Joshua, and of its shortened post-exilic form Yeshua: **YHWH is salvation**. It was a common name. Joshua son of Nun bears it; so does Joshua the high priest in Zechariah; so does an ancestor in Luke's genealogy and a companion called Justus *Colossians 4:11*. Josephus knows a dozen men called it.

The name is given, not chosen. *Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins Matthew 1:21*. The angel supplies the etymology in the same breath as the command — the only name in Scripture explained by its own job description.

Its Old Testament bearer is the man who brought Israel into the land, after Moses could not. The Law leads to the border; Joshua takes them through Jordan into the inheritance. Hebrews plays on it: *if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day Hebrews 4:8* — where the Greek says Iēsous and means Joshua, and the argument only works because they are one word.

Scripture piles other names on Him and each says something different. *Christ*, Christos Χριστός ^{G5547}, the Anointed, Hebrew Messiah — an office, not a surname. *Immanuel*, God with us *Matthew 1:23*. *The Word John 1:1*. *The Lamb of God John 1:29*. *The Amen, the faithful and true witness Revelation 3:14* — see **Amen**. *The last Adam 1 Corinthians 15:45* — see **Adam**. And the seven great sayings in John, each opening ἐγώ εἰμι, *I am*: the bread, the light, the door, the good shepherd, the resurrection, the way, the vine.

The name carries authority in Acts. Baptism is *in the name of Jesus Christ Acts 2:38*; healing is *in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk Acts 3:6*; and the Sanhedrin's whole strategy is to forbid speaking *in this name Acts 4:17-18*. Peter's answer is total: *neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved Acts 4:12*.

And Paul takes it to the end of the world. *God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should*

bow Philippians 2:9-10 — a passage which openly applies to Him what *Isaiah 45:23* says of YHWH alone.

He is baptized in Jordan though He has nothing to confess, and answers John's protest with *thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness Matthew 3:15*. He calls His death a baptism *Luke 12:50* — see baptizō βαπτίζω^{G907}. And His last command before ascending is to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them *Matthew 28:19* — see mathēteuō μαθητεύω^{G3100}.

A common name, borne by a carpenter's son, that ends every argument in the New Testament.

Jona ^{G2495} **Jona** — Greek Iōnas Ἰωνᾶς^{G2495}, from Hebrew yōnāh יוֹנָה^{H3124}, **a dove**. Two men: the prophet, and the father of **Peter** — *Simon Barjona*, son of Jonas *Matthew 16:17*.

The prophet is sent east and sails west. Told to go to Nineveh, he pays his fare to Tarshish, and the book is careful to say he went *down* to Joppa, *down* into the ship, and later *down* to the bottoms of the mountains. He is the one man in Scripture who runs from a commission and says plainly why: not fear, but that he knew God was *gracious... and repentest thee of the evil Jonah 4:2*. He did not want them forgiven.

Nineveh repents on a five-word sermon, king and cattle in sackcloth, and Jonah sits outside the city under a gourd, angry enough to die. The book ends not with the revival but with a question God asks him about a plant and a hundred and twenty thousand people *that cannot discern between their right hand and their left* — and no answer is recorded.

Christ makes him the only sign He will give. *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*, adding that the men of Nineveh will rise in judgment against that generation, *for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here*.

A prophet named Dove who would not carry the message of peace.

Jordan ^{H3383} **Jordan** — Hebrew yardēn יַרְדֵּן^{H3383}, from yarad יָרַד^{H3381}, *to go down*. The name is simply **the Descender**, and it is well earned: no river on earth falls so far below the sea it never reaches. It runs from the snows of Hermon through the waters of Merom and the Sea of Galilee down to the Dead Sea, some 1,300 feet below the Mediterranean, and ends in a basin with no outlet. A river whose whole vocation is descent, running down into death.

Greek Iordanēs Ἰορδάνης^{G2446}. It is the eastern boundary of the promised land: Israel does not receive the inheritance until this water is crossed.

Scripture puts an extraordinary number of decisive moments in it.

- **Israel enters the land through it.** The priests bearing the ark step in — *the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped* (ṭābal טָבַל^{H2881}) *in the brim of the water* — and Jordan, then overflowing all its banks at harvest, is cut off, and a nation walks over on dry ground *Joshua 3:15-17*. Twelve stones are taken up out of the riverbed and set as a memorial, and twelve set in the midst of it. A generation that had died in the wilderness is finished; a new one goes in. See **Gilgal**, where those stones were pitched.
- **Naaman is cleansed in it**, dipping seven times — the same verb, ṭābal טָבַל^{H2881} — and rises with the flesh of a little child *2 Kings 5:14*. He wanted **Abana** and **Pharpar**, the clear rivers of Damascus, and had to have this muddy one.
- **Elijah divides it and goes up from beyond it** in a chariot of fire; Elisha, returning, strikes it with the mantle and it parts again — a double portion asked and given at the same water *2 Kings 2:8-14*.
- **The axe head swims** there, iron rising against its nature at a word *2 Kings 6:6*.
- **John baptizes in it**, and all Judea and Jerusalem go out to him and are baptized, *confessing their sins Matthew 3:5-6*. He does not go to the cities; the cities come down to the river. Nobody asks him to justify the practice, because immersion in a *gathering of water* — miqweh מִקְוֵה^{H4723} — was already intelligible to them; see **Baptism**.
- **And Christ is baptized in it.** He comes from Galilee to Jordan to be baptized of John, who forbids Him — *I have need to be baptized of thee* — and He answers, *Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness*. Then, going up straightway out of the water, the heavens open, the Spirit descends as a dove, and the Father speaks *Matthew 3:13-17*.

The pattern is hard to miss. Every meeting at this river turns on going *down* — into a river that is itself always going down — and coming up changed, or coming up on the other side. **Israel** goes down and comes up in the land. **Naaman** goes down a leper and comes up a child. Christ goes down and comes up with heaven torn open over Him.

A Jew hearing "Jordan" did not hear a place name. He heard the border of the inheritance, the end of the wilderness, the water where lepers are made clean and prophets are taken up.

The name has sometimes been glossed "the river of judgment"; that reading is homiletical rather than lexical — the Hebrew is from yarad, to descend.

Juda H3063 **Juda** — Hebrew *yěhûdāh* יהודה^{H3063}, **praised**, from *yādāh* ידע^{H3034}, to give thanks, to praise. Leah names her fourth son *Now will I praise the LORD* Genesis 29:35. Greek Ioudas Ἰούδας^{G2455}. The man, the tribe, the territory, and the southern kingdom all carry it — and so, eventually, does the word **Jew**.

He is not the eldest and not the best. Judah proposes selling Joseph rather than killing him, and the chapter that follows is the Tamar affair, in which he is caught by his own pledge and says *She hath been more righteous than I* Genesis 38:26. That is the first honest word out of him.

And it changes him. Years later, with Benjamin's freedom at stake, he offers himself: *let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord* Genesis 44:33. The brother who sold one brother offers to be sold for another.

So the blessing goes to him. *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come* Genesis 49:10. David comes of this tribe, and so does Christ — *our Lord sprang out of Juda* Hebrews 7:14, *the Lion of the tribe of Juda* Revelation 5:5.

See **Judas** for the Greek form as a personal name, and **Judea** for the land.

Judas G2455 **Judas** — Greek Ioudas Ἰούδας^{G2455}, the New Testament form of **Juda**, *praised*. One of the commonest Jewish names of the period, and the New Testament uses it of at least six men — which is worth stating first, because one of them has swallowed the name whole.

Judas Iscariot, of the twelve, treasurer of the company and *a thief* who *had the bag* John 12:6. He sells for thirty pieces of silver, the price of a gored slave Exodus 21:32, and betrays with a kiss. Matthew records the return of the money, *I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood*, the answer *what is that to us? see thou to that*, and the rope Matthew 27:4-5.

But the others matter for the same reason. Judas the brother of James, also called Thaddaeus, one of the twelve, who asks the only question recorded of him John 14:22. **Jude**, the Lord's brother, who wrote the epistle and, like **James**, calls himself only *the servant of Jesus Christ*. **Judas Barsabas**, sent from Jerusalem with the council's letter Acts 15:22. **Judas of Galilee**, who raised a revolt Acts 5:37. And **Judas of Damascus**, in whose house on Straight Street Saul was lodged and found Acts 9:11.

A name meaning *praise*, borne by a traitor, a martyr's brother, and the man who housed the conversion of Paul.

Judea G2449 **Judea** — Greek Ioudaia Ἰουδαία^{G2449}, the Judaeian land: the southern province of Palestine around Jerusalem, named from the tribe of **Juda**. Used narrowly of the south as against Galilee and Samaria, and sometimes broadly of the whole country.

It is the province the gospel starts in and does not stay in. John baptizes there and *all the land of Judaea* goes out to him *Mark 1:5*. Christ is born at Bethlehem of *Judaea*, and the wise men are sent there by a text *Matthew 2:5-6*.

And it is the first ring of the commission. *Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth Acts 1:8* — the shape of the whole book of Acts stated in one verse. Persecution then does the work: *they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles Acts 8:1*, and the scattering is what spreads it.

Its churches are the reference point everyone else is measured against. Paul tells the Thessalonians they *became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus 1 Thessalonians 2:14*, and years later he is still carrying a collection *for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem Romans 15:26*.

Judea gave the faith its first congregations and, within a generation, needed feeding by the Gentile ones.

Luke G3065 **Luke** — Greek Loukas Λουκᾶς^{G3065}, probably a shortened form of the Latin *Lucanus*; the traditional gloss *luminous* is folk etymology rather than lexicon. A physician, **Paulus**' companion, and author of the Gospel that bears his name and of the Acts of the Apostles — together about a quarter of the New Testament, more than any other writer contributes.

He is named only three times, and each mention is a whole biography in miniature.

- *Luke, the beloved physician Colossians 4:14* — and the surrounding list separates him from those of *the circumcision*, which makes him almost certainly the only Gentile author in the Bible.
- *Lucas my fellowlabourer Philemon 1:24*.
- And, from the last letter Paul wrote, awaiting execution: *Only Luke is with me 2 Timothy 4:11*. **Demas** had loved this present world and departed; the others were scattered on business. One man stayed.

The "we" passages give him away. In *Acts 16:10* the narrative shifts without explanation from *they* to *we*, and shifts back later, and forward again — at Troas, on the voyage to Jerusalem, and through the shipwreck and the journey to Rome. He does not name himself anywhere; he simply starts being present. It is the most self-effacing authorial signature in Scripture.

He tells you his method, which no other evangelist does. *Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us... it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou*

mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed Luke 1:1-4. He interviewed, he traced, he ordered, and he wrote for a named reader who wanted to know whether it was true.

And what he chose to keep is the measure of the man. The material found only in Luke is the material about people nobody else was writing down: the Samaritan, the prodigal, the lost coin, the rich man and Lazarus, the Pharisee and the publican, Zacchaeus, the thief on the cross. Mary's Magnificat, Elisabeth, **Anna** the prophetess. The seventy sent out. Women named as supporting the work from their own means *Luke 8:3*. And the detail a doctor would notice — that in Gethsemane the sweat was *as it were great drops of blood Luke 22:44*.

He also gives the one story of Christ as a child, and twice records that Mary *kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart* — which reads very much like a note on where he got it.

He is also the New Testament's principal witness on baptism, simply because he wrote the book in which it happens: every one of the narrated cases — Pentecost, the Samaritans, the Ethiopian, Saul, Cornelius, **Lydia**, the jailer, Corinth, the twelve at Ephesus — is his, and the sequence never varies. See **Baptism**, and **Emmaus**, which only he preserved.

Lydia G3070 **Lydia** — Greek Lydia Λυδία^{G3070}. The name is that of her home region in Asia Minor, so it may be a trade-name — *the Lydian woman* — rather than a given one. A seller of purple from Thyatira, resident at Philippi. Her account is *Acts 16:13-15* and *Acts 16:40*.

She is the first recorded convert in Europe, and Luke's telling is deliberate. Paul, forbidden to go into Asia and called west by a vision, arrives at Philippi — a Roman colony with too few Jews for a synagogue — and on the sabbath goes outside the gate to a riverside *where prayer was wont to be made*. He finds a group of women, sits down, and speaks to them.

The decisive clause is not about Paul. *A certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.* The preaching is Paul's; the opening is the Lord's. Luke gives the sequence exactly: she **heard**, her heart was **opened**, she **attended**, and then — *and when she was baptized, and her household*. It is the order Acts never varies from; see **Baptism**.

Purple was money. Thyatira was famous for its dyers; the murex trade supplied senatorial stripes and royal garments, and a woman running it independently in a colonial city was a person of means. She has a house large enough to lodge four missionaries and later to hold the church.

And she argues Paul into staying: *If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.* Luke's verb is forceful — she prevailed on them. After the earthquake, the beating and the jail, Paul and Silas come out of prison and go straight to her house before leaving the city *Acts 16:40*. The European church begins in a businesswoman's living room.

On the household. Her οἶκος is baptized with her, and the phrase is often pressed into service for infant baptism. The text says nothing of children, and Lydia is never said to have a husband — her household would be servants and dependents of a trader. Luke, who is precise about such things, uses βρέφος^{G1025} for infants four times in his Gospel and never here. Compare the jailer a few verses later, where Luke closes the door explicitly: *they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house* — and the man *rejoiced, believing in God with all his house Acts 16:32, Acts 16:34*. The word was preached to all of them; all of them believed; all of them were baptized.

Manna H4478 **Manna** — Hebrew mān מַן^{H4478}, Greek manna μάννα^{G3131}. The bread God gave Israel in the wilderness, and the name is a question. When it first fell *they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was* — Hebrew מַן הוּא, *what is it? Exodus 16:15*. Some lexicographers prefer a root meaning to apportion, or the Egyptian *mennu*, food; the text itself offers the question.

What it looked like. *A small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground Exodus 16:14; like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey Exodus 16:31; the colour of bdellium, the taste as the taste of fresh oil Numbers 11:7*. They ground it in mills or beat it in a mortar and baked it in pans.

The rules attached to it were a test — *that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no Exodus 16:4*. An omer a man, gathered every morning before the sun melted it. Kept overnight it bred worms and stank. On the sixth day a double portion fell and that portion alone stayed sweet, and on the sabbath none fell at all: the sabbath was taught by bread before it was cut in stone. And the arithmetic never came out — *he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack Exodus 16:18* — which Paul makes the rule for Christian giving *2 Corinthians 8:14*.

Travellers in Sinai still find something called manna: a sweet exudation from the tamarisk, gathered by the Arabs for a few weeks in early summer, a few hundred pounds in a good year. It is not this. This fell on the open face of the wilderness wherever Israel went, in quantity enough for a nation, for forty years — and then stopped dead. *And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land Joshua 5:12*. The wilderness food ended the day the land began to feed them.

Israel grew tired of it. *Our soul loatheth this light bread Numbers 21:5.* They remembered the fish and the cucumbers of Egypt and wept in the doors of their tents. It was the one food that cost them nothing, and it was despised for exactly that.

An omer was laid up before the LORD in a golden pot beside the ark *Exodus 16:33, Hebrews 9:4* — the single portion that did not corrupt.

And Christ claims it. *Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.* He does not deny the miracle; He dates it. *I am that bread of life John 6:48.* The Psalms had already called it *angels' food* and *corn of heaven Psalm 78:24*, Paul calls it *spiritual meat 1 Corinthians 10:3*, and to him that overcometh is promised *the hidden manna Revelation 2:17* — the portion in the golden pot, still kept.

Mara H4755 **Mara** — Hebrew mārā מָרָא^{H4755}, *bitter*, the feminine of mar מַר^{H4751}. The name Naomi asked to be called. The wilderness spring **Marah** mārâ מֶרָא^{H4785} is the same word.

Call me not Naomi, call me Mara. Coming back to Bethlehem widowed and childless, Naomi meets the women of the town and refuses her own name: *call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty Ruth 1:20.* Naomi means *pleasant*. She is asking to be renamed after what has happened to her, and the book neither rebukes her nor argues. It simply keeps going — until the same women say over a baby in her lap, *there is a son born to Naomi Ruth 4:17*, using the name she had thrown away.

Marah, the water. Three days out from the Red Sea, in the wilderness of Shur, Israel found water and could not drink it: *for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah Exodus 15:23.* It is the first murmuring after the song at the sea. Three days between the singing and the complaint.

And the LORD shewed him a tree. Moses cried, and was shown something to cast into the water, *and the waters were made sweet Exodus 15:25.* The healing came with a statute attached and a name attached: *I am the LORD that healeth thee Exodus 15:26* — the first time God gives Himself that title, and He gives it at a bitter spring.

Then the next verse. *And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees.* Elim was one stage further on. The bitter water stood between the sea and the palm trees, and they had to drink there first.

Travellers have long identified Marah with Ain Hawarah, some forty-seven miles from the traditional crossing, whose water the Arabs will not drink though their camels will. The identification is old and reasonable, not certain.

Mark G3138 **Mark** — Greek Markos Μάρκος^{G3138}, the Latin name *Marcus*; his Jewish name was John. Luke introduces him as *John, whose surname was Mark Acts 12:12*, then calls him John alone *Acts 13:5*, and after the parting at Antioch simply Mark

Acts 15:39. Paul and Peter only ever call him Mark. The Roman name displaced the Jewish one, as it did with **Paulus**.

The house in Jerusalem. His mother Mary kept a house in the city large enough to hold a prayer meeting and staffed with a servant girl named Rhoda. It is where Peter went when the angel let him out of Herod's prison, and Rhoda was so glad she left him standing at the gate *Acts 12:12*. Peter calls Mark *my son* *1 Peter 5:13*, which most read as meaning he converted him. He was cousin to Barnabas *Colossians 4:10*.

He quit. He went out with Barnabas and Saul on the first journey as their *minister* — *hypēretēs ὑπηρέτης*^{G5257}, an under-rower, the assistant *Acts 13:5*. He got as far as Cyprus, Barnabas's own island, and then at Perga in Pamphylia, on the edge of the hard inland country, he *departed from them and returned to Jerusalem Acts 13:13*. No reason is given.

The church's first recorded quarrel was about him. When Barnabas wanted to take him again, Paul *thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work*. The word for what followed is *paroxysmos παροξυσμός*^{G3948}, a sharp exasperation: *and the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other Acts 15:39*. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus; Paul took **Silas**. Two missions went out where one had been.

Paul changed his mind. From prison in Rome he sends the Colossians a greeting from Mark with the instruction *if he come unto you, receive him Colossians 4:10*, and names him among the few *fellowlabourers* who had been *a comfort unto me Philemon 24*. Years later, in the last letter he wrote: *Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry 2 Timothy 4:11*. The man who was not worth taking is asked for by name.

The Gospel. Papias, quoted by Eusebius, reports that Mark was Peter's interpreter and wrote down accurately what Peter preached, though *not in order*. The book reads like it — hurried, *straightway* over and over, thick with eyewitness detail no summary would keep: the green grass, the cushion in the stern, the colt tied where two ways met. Latin loanwords for Roman readers, Aramaic sayings translated for them, **Peter's** failures kept in and Peter's honours left out.

The young man who ran away. Mark alone records that at the arrest in Gethsemane a certain young man followed, with a linen cloth about his naked body, and when they laid hold of him *he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked Mark 14:51*. It connects to nothing around it and no name is given. Many readers since have taken it for the author signing his book with the one thing he could not forget: that he ran. If so, his whole life is in the two verses — he ran once, and was afterwards profitable for the ministry.

Martyr G3144 **Martyr** — Greek *martys* *μάρτυς*^{G3144}, and it means, plainly and only, a *witness*. The English word is a loan, not a translation.

In the New Testament it is mostly a courtroom word. *In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established Matthew 18:16. What need we any further witnesses?* asks the high priest *Mark 14:63*. Paul calls God for a record — a witness — against his soul *2 Corinthians 1:23*, and warns Timothy to receive no accusation against an elder but before two or three *1 Timothy 5:19*. Classical Greek used it the same way, of the man produced in court.

The apostolic office is stated in that word. *Ye shall be witnesses unto me Acts 1:8.* The one qualification for replacing Judas was that the man must *be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection Acts 1:22*. A witness testifies to what he saw; that is the whole of the job. Nothing about dying is in the term.

The dying got attached to it by events. Three times the New Testament uses the word of someone killed for testifying. Of Stephen: *when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by Acts 22:20* — Paul's own memory, and Stephen was the first. Of Antipas at Pergamos: *my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth Revelation 2:13*. And of the woman on the beast, *drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus Revelation 17:6*. In each the Greek is still simply *witness*. It is the sentence around it that supplies the death.

Christ holds the title first. *Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness Revelation 1:5; the faithful and true witness Revelation 3:14*. Standing before Pilate He states His own case in exactly these terms: *To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth John 18:37*. Then He is killed for it, and the pattern is set before the word has shifted.

Why the meaning moved. Under Rome the two acts collapsed into one: to testify was, often enough, to be executed for testifying, so the word for the testimony came to name its price. By the second century the technical Christian sense was fixed, and it is the sense English still carries. The shift is an honest one, but it hides the root. A martyr is not first of all someone who dies. He is someone who will not stop saying what he saw.

Related: *μαρτυρία*, the testimony itself; *μαρτυρέω*, to bear witness.

Mene H4484 **Mene** — Aramaic *mēnē* ܡܢܐ^{H4484}, *numbered*, a passive participle of the verb to count. It is also the name of a weight, the *mina*. The first word of the writing on the wall.

The night it was written. Belshazzar made a feast to a thousand of his lords, and while he tasted the wine commanded that the vessels of gold taken out of the temple at Jerusalem be brought in, so that he and his princes and his wives and his

concubines might drink from them. They drank, *and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone Daniel 5:4. In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote Daniel 5:5.* His countenance changed, his thoughts troubled him, and *his knees smote one against another.*

Nobody could read it. The astrologers, the Chaldeans and the soothsayers were offered scarlet, a chain of gold, and the third place in the kingdom, and *they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation Daniel 5:8.* The queen remembered an old man out of Nebuchadnezzar's reign.

MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN *Daniel 5:25.* Every one of the four is a weight — a mina, a mina, a shekel, and half-minas. Read as they stand, the writing is a column of currency. Daniel reads them as verbs.

- **MENE**; *God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.* mēnē ' מְנֵה ^{H4484}, counted — and the counting is done.
- **TEKEL**; *Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.* tēqal תְּקַל ^{H8625}, a shekel, and to weigh.
- **PERES**; *Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.* pēras פָּרַס ^{H6537}, to break in two — and the word for divided is very nearly the word for Persia. The sentence names its own executioner.

Before the reading, the charge. Daniel refuses the gifts, recites Nebuchadnezzar's madness and restoration, and then turns on the grandson: *And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this Daniel 5:22.* The sin is not ignorance. It is knowing.

Sentence was carried out that night. They clothed Daniel in scarlet and put the chain about his neck, and then: *In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom Daniel 5:30.* He wore the third place in Babylon for a few hours, and Babylon was gone by morning.

Messias ^{G3323} **Messias** — Greek Messias Μεσσίας ^{G3323}, a transliteration of the Aramaic מְשִׁיחָא, which is the Hebrew māšîaḥ מָשִׁיחַ ^{H4899}, *anointed*. The form occurs twice in the New Testament, both times in John, and both times John stops to translate it for readers who do not know it: *which is, being interpreted, the Christ.*

Anointed for what. Oil poured on the head was the act that put a man into an office he could not take for himself — king, priest, occasionally prophet. So the Hebrew word is used of Saul and David, of the high priest, of the patriarchs, and once, startlingly, of a foreign emperor: *Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus Isaiah 45:1.* By itself the word does not mean the deliverer. It means the one God

has commissioned. What loaded it was prophecy — an anointed prince to come, a throne of David without end — until by the first century *the* Anointed had become a title with a nation's whole hope in it.

Andrew says it first. He and another had spent one afternoon with Jesus. *He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ John 1:41.* The first thing done with the discovery was to go and fetch somebody.

A Samaritan woman says it second. At the well she says *I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things John 4:25.* And Jesus answers her flatly — in the middle of a conversation about her marriages, to a woman of the wrong nation, in a country the Jews would not walk through: *I that speak unto thee am he.* It is as plain a claim as He makes anywhere in the Gospels, and He makes it there.

Everywhere else the New Testament uses Christos Χριστός^{G5547}, which translates the word instead of transliterating it. It is the same title in another language, and not a surname. *Messias* keeps the sound the disciples actually made.

Mishna Mishna — Hebrew מִשְׁנָה, from a root meaning *to repeat*: instruction learned by saying it over. The written collection of the Jewish oral law, and the older stratum of the **Talmud**.

Oral law. Rabbinic Judaism held that alongside the written **Torah** a body of oral instruction was handed down — the rulings, definitions and case law by which the written commands were to be applied in practice. For a long time it was deliberately not committed to writing; it was repeated. The New Testament meets it as *the tradition of the elders Mark 7:3*, the standard by which the Pharisees judge disciples who eat with unwashed hands, and against which Jesus sets *Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition Mark 7:9.*

Then it was written down. The redaction is traditionally ascribed to Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi, toward the end of the second century, once the destruction of the temple and the failed revolts had made oral transmission alone too fragile to trust. The result is terse to the point of obscurity: rulings stated without their reasoning, dissenting rabbis named side by side, disputes often recorded and left standing.

Its shape. Six orders — seeds, appointed times, women, damages, holy things, purities: agriculture, festival, marriage and divorce, civil and criminal law, sacrifice, ritual cleanness. Each order divides into tractates. A great deal of it legislates in detail for a temple that no longer existed when it was compiled.

Mishna and Gemara. Later generations in Palestine and in Babylonia argued the Mishna through line by line, and that commentary is the גמרא. Mishna plus

Gemara is the **Talmud**. The Mishna is the text; the Talmud is the text with its argument wrapped around it.

Why it matters to a reader of the Gospels. It was compiled well after the apostles and cannot be quoted as evidence of what anyone believed in their lifetime. But it preserves the categories, the vocabulary and the running disputes of the world the Gospels are set in — sabbath limits, ritual washing, corban, grounds for divorce, the tithing of mint and anise and cummin. It does not tell you what Jesus's opponents thought. It does tell you what they were arguing about.

Moses ^{H4872} **Moses** — Hebrew mōšeh מֹשֶׁה^{H4872}. Pharaoh's daughter names him *because I drew him out of the water*, from māšāh מָשָׁה^{H4871}, to draw out. The form is active — *the one who draws out* — so the name he carried all his life was a prophecy of his office: a man drawn out of water who would draw a nation out of water. Greek Mōusēs Μωϋσῆς^{G3475}. Levite, son of Amram and Jochebed, brother of Aaron and Miriam.

His life falls in three forties. Forty years a prince in Egypt; forty a shepherd in Midian after killing an Egyptian and fleeing; forty leading Israel in the wilderness. He dies at 120 on **Nebo**, in sight of the land, *his eye not dim, nor his natural force abated Deuteronomy 34:7*, and God buries him, *and no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day*.

Water is the thread of his whole life, and Scripture will not let it go.

- He is hidden in an **ark** — tēbāh תֵּבָה^{H8392}, the same rare word used for Noah's vessel and for nothing else in Hebrew. Two arks in all of Scripture, and both carry a saved remnant through water that kills everyone else. Noah's is pitched with kōper כֹּפֶר^{H3724}; the baby's is daubed with bitumen and asphalt *Exodus 2:3*. See **Ark**.
- He draws water for Reuel's daughters at a well and gains a wife *Exodus 2:17*.
- He turns the Nile to blood, and the water that swallowed Hebrew infants becomes the first plague *Exodus 7:20*.
- He stretches out his hand and **the sea divides**; Israel walks through on dry ground and Egypt drowns in the same corridor *Exodus 14:21-28*.
- He heals the bitter water of **Mara** with a tree cast into it *Exodus 15:25*.
- He strikes the rock and water comes out *Exodus 17:6* — and it is because he strikes the second rock instead of speaking to it that he is barred from the land *Numbers 20:11-12*.
- He washes Aaron and his sons with water at the door of the tabernacle to consecrate them as priests — rāḥaṣ רָחַץ^{H7364} — *Exodus 29:4* and *Leviticus*

8:6: anointing oil, blood, and water, the three witnesses laid down in the Law.

Paul reads the crossing as a baptism. *All our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea 1 Corinthians 10:1-2.* Water on both sides, cloud overhead, a people buried out of Egypt and raised in the wilderness — and Paul adds the sober half of it: *but with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.* The passage through water begins a life; it does not guarantee the finish. See **Israel** and **Baptism**.

He is the prophet all others are measured against. *There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face Deuteronomy 34:10.* He is called *very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth Numbers 12:3* — written of him, tradition holds, by his own hand. He intercedes for a people who have just made a calf and asks to be blotted out of God's book rather than see them destroyed *Exodus 32:32*.

And he foretold his own successor: *The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken Deuteronomy 18:15* — a text Peter and Stephen both apply to Christ.

The New Testament sets the two side by side without embarrassment and without equality: *the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ John 1:17; Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant... but Christ as a son over his own house Hebrews 3:5-6.* He appears once more, alive, on the mount of transfiguration, speaking with Christ of the exodus He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem *Luke 9:30-31* — the man who was denied the land standing in it at last, beside the One who brought him.

Naaman H5283 **Naaman** — Hebrew na' aman נָאֵמָן^{H5283}, *pleasantness*, from a root meaning to be delightful, agreeable. Greek Neeman Νεεμών^{G3497}. Commander-in-chief of the armies of Syria under Ben-hadad II, in the days of Jehoram king of Israel, c. 885 BC. His whole story is *2 Kings 5:1-27*.

"A great man with his master, and honourable" — and the reason given is startling: *because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria.* Yahweh had won victories for a pagan army through a pagan general who did not know Him. Jewish tradition as old as Josephus (*Antiquities* 8.15.5) identifies Naaman with the archer who "drew a bow at a venture" and struck Ahab between the joints of his harness *1 Kings 22:34*. If so, the man God used to end an apostate king of Israel is the man God then cleansed.

Then the sentence turns on one word: *but he was a leper.*

The gospel arrives by way of a kidnapped child. A little Israelite maid, carried off in a Syrian raid, waiting on the wife of the man whose army took her, says: *Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria!* She had every reason for silence and spoke anyway. The whole account hangs on her.

Naaman goes to the wrong address first — to the king, with silver and gold and a letter, as a great man does. The king of Israel rends his clothes and cries, *Am I God, to kill and to make alive?* Power could not help him; only a prophet could. Elisha does not even come to the door. He sends a servant with a sentence: *Go and wash in Jordan seven times.*

And Naaman is furious — and his anger is worth reading closely, because it is every objection ever raised against a plain command. *Behold, I thought.* He had a picture in his mind of how God ought to work: the prophet coming out, calling on the name of the LORD, striking his hand over the place. And he had better water at home — *Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean?* Cleaner rivers, nearer home, less humiliating. *So he turned and went away in a rage.* See **Abana**.

His servants save him. *My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?* The offence was never the difficulty of the command. It was the smallness of it.

Then the verse that carries everything. *Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean* 2 Kings 5:14.

- *Went down* — yarad יָרַד^{H3381}, the same descent every baptism narrative keeps; and the river's own name, **Jordan**, yārdēn יַרְדֵּן^{H3383}, is built on that verb.
- *Dipped himself* — ṭābal טָבַל^{H2881}. The verb occurs sixteen times in the Hebrew Bible, and everywhere else something is dipped *into* something — a coat in blood, hyssop in blood, a priest's finger in blood. Here alone it is a person dipping **himself**; Brown-Driver-Briggs gives that reflexive sense its own line, and this is the verse it rests on. It is also the one place the Septuagint renders the word baptizō βαπτίζω^{G907}.
- *Like unto the flesh of a little child* — he came up not merely healed but **new-born**. The Hebrew is a small child, a boy. A grown soldier goes down; a child's flesh comes up.
- *And he was clean* — tāhēr טָהַר^{H2891}, the priestly word for ritual purity, the verdict pronounced over a cleansed leper. The law of that cleansing, with its blood and its running water, is *Leviticus 14:1-9*.

Afterward he confesses — *Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel* — refuses to let Elisha be paid, and asks instead for two mules' burden of earth, meaning to build an altar on Israelite ground and sacrifice to no other god again. His conversion is complete and it costs him nothing but his pride.

And Christ takes him up. In the synagogue at Nazareth, in His first recorded sermon, Jesus says: *many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian Luke 4:27*. He is arguing that grace goes where God pleases, over the heads of the covenant people, to an enemy general. For that sentence His own town tried to throw Him off a cliff.

Why the story keeps being told. It is the whole pattern in one man: a proud man cannot buy it, a king cannot grant it, a rich man's silver is refused, a slave girl carries the news, the remedy is a word he thinks beneath him, and obedience — not sincerity, not preference, not a better river — is what touches the water. He was not cleansed while he stood on the bank agreeing that Jordan was a fine idea. See **Baptism**.

Nebo **Nebo** — four things in Scripture carry the name: a mountain, two towns, and a god of Babylon.

The mountain. *Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan Deuteronomy 32:49*. It is the head of the ridge called **Pisgah**, in the Abarim range east of the Dead Sea, generally identified with Jebel Neba a few miles south-west of Heshbon — under 2,700 feet, but placed so that it commands the whole west.

What Moses saw from it. God showed him Gilead unto Dan, Naphtali, Ephraim and Manasseh, all Judah unto the utmost sea, the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar. Then: *I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither Deuteronomy 34:4*. He was a hundred and twenty years old, *his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated Deuteronomy 34:7*. He died there and was buried in a valley in Moab, *but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day*. See **Moses**.

The towns. A Nebo in Reuben, east of Jordan, taken and rebuilt by that tribe *Numbers 32:38*, later back in Moabite hands and named in the oracles against Moab *Isaiah 15:2, Jeremiah 48:1*. A second Nebo in the west supplied fifty-two men to the return from exile *Ezra 2:29*.

The god. Nebo is the Babylonian Nabu, patron of writing, learning and prophecy, son and interpreter of Bel-Merodach, with a great temple at Borsippa. His name is folded into half the royal names in the Bible — Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan, Nebushasban — which is how thoroughly Babylon belonged to him.

And Isaiah puts him on a donkey. *Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth; their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages were heavy loaden; they are a burden to the weary beast* Isaiah 46:1. The gods who were supposed to carry the empire have to be carried out of it, on pack animals, and they are heavy. Two verses later the LORD answers the picture: *even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you.*

Noah H5146 **Noah** — Hebrew nōaḥ נֹחַ^{H5146}, *rest*, from nûaḥ נָחַ^{H5117}, *to rest, to settle down*. Greek Nōe Νῶε^{G3575} — carried into English as **Noe**, which this dictionary keeps as a separate headword. Tenth from Adam, son of Lamech, father of Shem, **Ham** and Japheth.

His father names him prophetically: *This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed* Genesis 5:29. A man named Rest, born into a world God is about to unmake.

What is said of him is very nearly unique. *Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God* Genesis 6:9. Only Enoch is also said to have walked with God. And the first occurrence of the word **grace** in the Bible is his: *But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD* Genesis 6:8 — ḥēn חֵן^{H2580}. Grace enters Scripture in the sentence just before the flood.

He builds for 120 years while preaching: Peter calls him *a preacher of righteousness* 2 Peter 2:5. Hebrews says he was *moved with fear* and *prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith* Hebrews 11:7. He is the first man in Scripture called an heir of righteousness by faith — before Abraham.

Then the water. He enters the ark (tēbāh תֵּבָה^{H8392} — see **Ark**), and the LORD shut him in Genesis 7:16. Eight souls. The fountains of the great deep break up and the windows of heaven open: the world is returned to the state of Genesis 1:2, and creation is begun again out of water. He sends a raven, then a dove three times; the dove returns with an olive leaf, and the third time does not return at all. He comes out to a washed earth, builds an altar, and God sets the bow in the cloud.

Scripture keeps him as a measure. Ezekiel names him with Daniel and Job as the three men whose righteousness could deliver only themselves Ezekiel 14:14. Isaiah calls the covenant of peace *the waters of Noah* Isaiah 54:9. And Christ makes him the sign of His own return: *as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be* — eating, drinking, marrying, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away Matthew 24:37-39. The judgement fell on a world that had been warned for a century and found the warning uninteresting.

And Peter makes him the type of baptism, explicitly: eight souls *saved through water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting*

away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) 1 Peter 3:20-21. See eperōtēma ἐπερώτημα^{G1906} for that last phrase, which is stronger than English suggests, and **Baptism**.

One more witness. Philo of Alexandria, writing in Greek in the same century as the apostles, calls Noah and his sons παλιγγενεσίας ἡγεμόνες — *leaders of the regeneration*. A Jew looking at the ark already reached for the word **palingenesia**. Paul then calls baptism a washing of palingenesia παλιγγενεσία^{G3824}. The vocabulary was waiting. (Note what this does and does not say: Philo applies the word to Noah's household as the start of a renewed world. It was never a name for the flood itself, and Scripture never uses it of the flood at all.)

Noe G3575 **Noe** — Greek Nōe Νῶε^{G3575}, the Septuagint and New Testament spelling of the Hebrew nōaḥ נֹחַ^{H5146}, *rest*. Indclinable: the Hebrew name carried straight across without a Greek ending. The Authorised Version keeps the Greek form wherever the New Testament writes it, which is why the same man is Noah in Genesis and Noe in Matthew. For the life, see **Noah**.

What the New Testament does with him. He is named in eight places, and each one uses him to measure something.

- **The line.** Luke traces Christ's descent back through *Sem, which was the son of Noe*, to Adam, and to God Luke 3:36.
- **Faith.** *By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world Hebrews 11:7.* Faith, here, is acting on a warning about weather that has not started.
- **Preaching.** Peter calls him *a preacher of righteousness*, and counts him *the eighth person saved* 2 Peter 2:5 — eight, out of a world.
- **Water.** *The longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us* 1 Peter 3:20.

And the last days. *But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be* Matthew 24:37. What marks those days, in Christ's telling, is not violence but ordinariness: *they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away.* Not one item on that list is a sin. They were doing what people do, right up to the moment the door shut.

oikodomēsō (oikodomēsō) G3618 **oikodomēsō** — Greek oikodomēsō οἰκοδομήσω^{G3618}, **I will build**: the future active indicative, first person singular, of oikodomeō οἰκοδομέω^{G3618}

— literally *to build a house*, from oikos οἶκος^{G3624}, a house, and a root meaning to construct.

Three things are settled by the parsing alone, and they are the reason this word has its own entry rather than being folded into the verse.

- **Future.** Not *I have built* and not *I am building*. At *Matthew 16:18* the church is still ahead — which is why the word ἐκκλησία appears here for the first time on Christ's lips, and why nothing in the Gospels is yet the thing He is describing.
- **Active.** The subject does the building.
- **First person singular.** *I will build*. And the possessive is His too: *my church*. In one clause Christ names Himself the builder and the owner, and assigns no one else a share in either.

The verb elsewhere is deliberately ordinary. It is what the wise man does to his house on the rock *Matthew 7:24*, what the fool does on sand, what a man does who sits down first and counts the cost of a tower *Luke 14:28*, what the Jews said took forty-six years on the temple *John 2:20*. It is a builder's word, not a religious one — and the New Testament then keeps using it of people. Paul is *a wise masterbuilder* laying a foundation on which another builds, and warns each man to *take heed how he buildeth thereupon* *1 Corinthians 3:10*. Love *edifieth* — the same verb — where knowledge only puffs up *1 Corinthians 8:1*. And the whole of *Ephesians 2:20-22* is one construction metaphor: built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself the chief corner stone, the building fitly framed together and growing — see **synarmologoumenē** and **auxei**.

So the sentence distributes the work exactly. Peter confesses; the Father reveals; Christ builds. The one thing no human being does in *Matthew 16:18* is build. Later writers who assign the construction to a man have to take the verb off Christ's lips to do it, and it is in the first person.

And what He builds it against is worth the last word. *The gates of hell shall not prevail against it* — katischyō κατασχύω^{G2729}, to overpower. Gates are what a city defends itself with. In the picture Christ draws, the church is not the thing under siege. See **petros**, **petra**, and **Hades**.

Oil Hebrew šemen שֶׁם^{H8081}, Greek elaion ἔλαιον^{G1637}, Latin *oleum*.

The root. H8081 is fat, oil, olive oil; figuratively richness. Strong's derives it from šāman שָׁמַן^{H8080}, the primitive root *to grow fat*. Comparative Semitic evidence may run the other way — Akkadian *šamnu*, Ugaritic *šmn*, Arabic *samn* suggest the noun is primary and the verb denominative. Either direction, the root is **š-m-n**.

It is not the root of "name". A popular teaching couples šemen שמן^{H8081} with šēm שֵׁם^{H8034} and concludes that oil *is* character. The two do not share a root: Brown-Driver-Briggs marks šēm's root simply *unknown*, and Strong's calls it a primitive word. They do stand together in *Ecclesiastes 7:1* and *Song of Songs 1:3*, and the play is deliberate — but it is paronomasia, sound-play, needing no shared etymology. Two things settle it. *Ecclesiastes* ranks the name *above* the oil, which requires them to be two things. And the Vulgate loses the play altogether — *melius est nomen bonum quam unguenta pretiosa*, nomen against unguenta, with no echo left. A pun does not survive translation; a shared meaning would.

Latin. The Vulgate has *oleum* wherever the lamps are fed: *non sumpserunt oleum secum Matthew 25:3*, *acceperunt oleum in vasis suis Matthew 25:4*. At *Song of Songs 1:3* it keeps both words — *oleum effusum nomen tuum* — and *Psalms 45:7* gives *oleo exultationis*, the oil of gladness, in a wedding psalm.

Oil and the Spirit. The coupling runs the length of Scripture. Samuel takes the horn of oil, and the Spirit of the LORD comes upon David from that day forward *1 Samuel 16:13*. God anointed Jesus *with the Holy Ghost and with power Acts 10:38*. He *hath anointed us*, and *given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts 2 Corinthians 1:21-22*. Zechariah's lampstand is fed by two olive trees *Zechariah 4:2-3*, the branches emptying golden oil through the pipes *Zechariah 4:12*, and God glosses the supply himself: *Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit Zechariah 4:6*.

Two guards on it. The holy anointing oil may not be poured upon a stranger, and no one may compound a copy of it *Exodus 30:31-33* — untransferable, and never self-manufactured. And the flour sin offering alone was to carry no oil at all *Leviticus 5:11*.

The verb worth keeping. In *Matthew 25:8* the failing torches are sbennymi σβέννυμι^{G4570} — present passive, *being quenched*, not long dead. It is the same verb Paul sets against the Spirit: *Quench not the Spirit 1 Thessalonians 5:19*. And oil comes only by pressing: Gethsemane is *gat šëmanim*, the press of oils, from *gat* גַּת^{H1660}, a wine-press, with šemen שמן^{H8081}.

See **Virgin**.

Omega ^{G5598} **Omega** — Greek ōmega Ω^{G5598}, the twenty-fourth and last letter of the Greek alphabet. The name means *great O*, ὦ μέγα, to distinguish it from *omicron*, the little o. As a numeral it stood for 800. In Scripture it is never a letter inside a word. It appears only as a title.

I am Alpha and Omega. Three times, all in the Revelation:

- *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty Revelation 1:8.*

- *It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end Revelation 21:6.*
- *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last Revelation 22:13.*

It is a quotation, not an ornament. *The first and the last* is God's own self-description in Isaiah, and He uses it precisely where He is denying that anyone else qualifies: *I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God Isaiah 44:6; I the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he Isaiah 41:4.* In the third Revelation passage the speaker who claims the title goes on in the same breath: *I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star Revelation 22:16.* What belongs to the LORD in Isaiah is spoken by Christ in the Revelation, and no seam is left between them.

Why letters. An alphabet is the whole stock out of which anything sayable is made. To hold its first and its last is to hold everything that can be said in between — the same figure an English speaker makes with *from A to Z*. John's readers read Greek; the two letters were their own, off their own schoolroom wall.

And note where the second one stands. *It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.* The title is pronounced at the exact point the story runs out. See also **Alpha**.

Papyrus Papyrus — the reed of the Nile marshes, and the writing material made from it. The English word never occurs in the Authorised Version, but the plant and the paper are both in the book.

The plant. Hebrew *gōme* ' סוף^{H1573}, englished as *bulrush* and *rush*: a tall sedge with a triangular stem, growing only in standing water. *Can the rush grow up without mire?* asks Bildad *Job 8:11*. Isaiah watches ambassadors sent *by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters Isaiah 18:2* — the light Egyptian skiffs made of bound reeds. And when the mother of Moses could hide him no longer, *she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink Exodus 2:3*. The deliverer of Israel was floated on papyrus.

The paper. The pith of the stem was sliced into strips, laid down in two crossed layers, pressed and dried into a sheet; sheets were pasted edge to edge into a roll. It was the ordinary writing material of the ancient Mediterranean, and the letters of the New Testament were almost certainly first written on it. John ends a letter *I would not write with paper and ink* — *chartēs* χάρτης^{G5489}, a sheet of it *2 John 12*. Paul, cold in a Roman prison, asks Timothy to bring *the books, but especially the parchments 2 Timothy 4:13*, and the distinction is between the cheap material and the durable one.

Why the Bible is called the Bible. The Greeks bought their papyrus through the Phoenician port of Byblos, and βίβλος came to mean first the pith, then the roll, then the book. Its diminutive βιβλίον is the New Testament's ordinary word for a scroll: *there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias Luke 4:17*. The neuter plural — τὰ βιβλία, *the books* — passed into Latin, was mistaken there for a feminine singular, and came into English as **Bible**. The name of the Scriptures is the name of a marsh reed.

And it rots. Papyrus will not survive damp ground. The earliest surviving copies of the New Testament are the ones that happened to be buried in the dry sand of Egypt. The most durable book in the world was first written on the least durable stuff there was.

Paulus G3972 **Paulus** — Latin *Paulus*, Greek Paulos Παῦλος^{G3972}, a common Roman cognomen meaning *small, little*. Two men in the New Testament carry it.

Sergius Paulus. The Roman proconsul of Cyprus, sitting at Paphos, *a prudent man, who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God Acts 13:7*. His court sorcerer Elymas withstood them and was struck blind, and the deputy *believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord Acts 13:12*. He is the first Roman official Scripture records as converted.

And the apostle. Luke calls him Saul for twelve chapters and then, in this scene and not before, slips in a clause: *Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him Acts 13:9*. From that verse to the end of Acts he is Paul, and he never signs a letter anything else.

Why the change. Nothing says he took the name from the proconsul, and the natural reading is that he had both names all his life, as a Jew who was also a Roman citizen would — Saulos Σαῦλος^{G4569} for the synagogue and *Paulus* for the empire. What changes at *Acts 13:9* is not his name but which of the two Luke uses, and it changes at precisely the point the mission turns outward from the synagogue toward the Gentile world. He becomes Paul in the record on the day he starts working in Roman company. See also **Saul**.

The meaning is small. Whether or not he ever heard his own name that way, he wrote *For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God 1 Corinthians 15:9*, and later, lower still: *unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given Ephesians 3:8*. English flattens the two into one word; the Greek does not. At *1 Corinthians 15:9* he uses the superlative elachistos ἐλάχιστος^{G1646}, *least*; at *Ephesians 3:8* he uses elachistoteros ἐλαχιστότερος^{G1647}, a comparative built on top of that superlative — *leaster*, less than the least. Abbott-Smith and Liddell-Scott-Jones both flag it as an irregular formation, and Liddell-Scott-Jones can only cite it from a secular writer of the second century, well after

him. It occurs exactly once in the whole New Testament. Whether he coined it or reached for a colloquialism, no other writer in Scripture uses it: nothing in the language was small enough.

Peter ^{G4074} **Peter** — Greek Petros Πέτρος ^{G4074}, *a stone*; the Aramaic original is Kēphas Κηφᾱς ^{G2786}, **Cephas**, rock. Born **Simon** (Hebrew *Shim 'on, he hears*), son of Jonas, a fisherman of Bethsaida and Capernaum, brother of Andrew, married — Christ heals his wife's mother *Mark 1:30*.

He is renamed at first sight. *Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas John 1:42*. Not *thou art*, but *thou shalt be* — the name is a prophecy, and the man spends the Gospels not living up to it.

Because the record is unsparing. He walks on water and sinks *Matthew 14:30*. He confesses *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God* and is called blessed *Matthew 16:16*, then within six verses is told *Get thee behind me, Satan*. He wants three tabernacles on the mount, *not knowing what he said Luke 9:33*. He refuses to have his feet washed, then demands to be washed all over *John 13:9*. He swears he will die first, and denies Christ three times before a servant girl and a fire, and *went out, and wept bitterly Luke 22:62*.

And he is restored by a threefold question at another charcoal fire: *Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?* — and *the third time* he is grieved *John 21:15-17*. Three denials, three askings, three commissions: *feed my sheep*.

Then Pentecost, and the man is unrecognisable. The one who could not face a servant girl stands and preaches to the city that killed his Master, and three thousand are baptized *Acts 2:41*. His sermon ends with the sentence this dictionary keeps returning to: *Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins Acts 2:38* — see eis εἰς ^{G1519} and **Baptism**.

He heals at the Beautiful Gate, confronts **Ananias**, is delivered from prison by an angel while the church prays and then does not believe it is him at the door — and, most costly of all, is given the vision of the sheet and sent to Cornelius, where he says *God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean Acts 10:28* and orders Gentiles baptized while the Spirit is still falling on them *Acts 10:47*. Paul later withstands him *to the face* at Antioch for drawing back from that same table *Galatians 2:11*.

He also draws the line on a false profession. It is Peter who tells **Simon magus**, a man baptized in good standing days earlier, *thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God Acts 8:21*. The apostle who preached the water is the apostle who refused to let it stand in for a heart.

His letters are the writing of a man who has been forgiven a great deal. He calls himself *also an elder* rather than pulling rank *1 Peter 5:1*, tells shepherds not to lord

it over the flock, and gives the New Testament its densest sentence on baptism: *the like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God)* 1 Peter 3:21 — see eperōtēma ἐπερώτημα^{G1906} and **Noah**.

Christ told him how he would die, *signifying by what death he should glorify God* John 21:19. Tradition says a cross, and that he asked to be hung head downward.

petra (petra) G4073 **petra** — Greek petra πέτρα^{G4073}, **bedrock**: living rock in place, a cliff, a ledge, the mass a thing is cut *into* or founded *on*. Feminine. Fourteen occurrences in the New Testament. Abbott-Smith defines it precisely against its neighbour — *a mass of live rock as distinct from petros πέτρος*^{G4074}, *a detached stone or boulder* — and notes that in the Septuagint it renders chiefly sela סֶלַע^{H5553} and tsûr צוּר^{H6697}, the two Hebrew words for the crag and the rock-of-refuge that the Psalms are full of.

Its ordinary uses in the Gospels are all about what will not move. The wise man *built his house upon a rock*, and when the rain and the floods and the winds beat on it *it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock* Matthew 7:24-25 — and the verb there is oikodomeō οἰκοδομέω^{G3618}, the same verb Christ uses of building His church. In Luke's telling of the same parable the man *digged deep*, down past the soil, to reach it. The seed that fell *upon a rock* withered *because it lacked moisture* Luke 8:6 — the same permanence, now a liability. And the tomb was hewn *in the rock* Matthew 27:60, with the earth quaking and *the rocks rent* at the death Matthew 27:51. Christ is buried inside a petra and the petra is what splits.

Then two metaphorical uses, and both are about Christ. Paul, on Israel in the wilderness: *they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ* 1 Corinthians 10:4. And then the verse this entry exists for: *upon this rock I will build my church* Matthew 16:18.

Note also that the distinction is not absolute, and the honest entry says so. Abbott-Smith flags that in *Romans* 9:33 and *1 Peter* 2:8 — both quoting Isaiah on the stone of stumbling — πέτρα is used where πέτρος would do, and Galen in the second century thought the difference had worn thin. The distinction is real, well attested and old; it is not a law of the language. Any argument built on it must be able to survive the exceptions being named out loud.

What the word carries into that verse is the Old Testament behind it. *He is the Rock, his work is perfect* Deuteronomy 32:4. *The LORD is my rock, and my fortress* Psalms 18:2. *Lead me to the rock that is higher than I* Psalms 61:2. Every Jew who heard *upon this petra* had a lifetime of Scripture in which the Rock is God and no one else. That is context an argument can stand on — and the reason Peter, of all men,

later writes that the stone the builders rejected is the head of the corner, and that Christ is that stone.

See **petros**, **oikodomēsō**, and **Peter**.

petros (petros) G4074 **petros** — Greek petros πέτρος^{G4074}, **a stone**: a detached piece of rock, a boulder, something a man could lift, roll or throw. Masculine. In classical Greek it is the ordinary word for a stone used as a missile or a building block, and Liddell-Scott-Jones keeps it distinct from petra πέτρα^{G4073}, which is the living rock itself, the ledge, the cliff, the bedrock a thing is quarried *out of*.

In the New Testament the common noun has vanished and only the name is left. Every one of its occurrences is **Peter** — the man. The lower-case noun survives in the language, and in the Septuagint, but the apostles never once use it of an actual stone. So when Christ says the sentence, the word had a meaning His hearers knew and a man standing in front of Him wearing it.

And that is why the grammar of the verse is worth reading slowly. *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church* Matthew 16:18. Morphological parsing gives:

- πέτρος — Noun, Nominative, Singular, **Masculine**. The man addressed.
- πέτρα — Noun, Dative, Singular, **Feminine**. What the building goes on.

They are two different nouns of two different genders in one sentence, and the sentence pivots from one to the other with *and upon this*. Christ does not say *upon thee*; He had the pronoun and did not use it. He turns from a masculine name to a feminine noun and points at something.

What He points at is the argument, and this dictionary will not pretend it is settled by grammar alone. The gender shift is real and is not a Greek accident — a proper name simply cannot take the feminine article — but Aramaic, in which the exchange most likely happened, has one word, *kepha*, for both, which is why Paul calls him Kēphas Κηφᾶς^{G2786} and not Petros. So the Greek distinction may preserve a distinction Jesus made, or may be Matthew's necessary rendering of a pun that had none. Honest handling says both.

What is not in doubt is the immediate context: the confession *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God* has just been made, and Christ says *flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father*. Something was revealed; then something is built. And elsewhere the New Testament is explicit about the foundation — *other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ* 1 Corinthians 3:11 — while Peter himself, writing later, calls Christ the stone and every believer a stone: *ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house* 1 Peter 2:5, using lithos λίθος^{G3037},

a third word again. The man who was renamed Rock never once claims the foundation for himself.

See **Peter**, **petra**, and **oikodomēsō**.

Rabbi G4461 **Rabbi** — Greek rhabbi ῥαββί^{G4461}, from the Hebrew rab רַב^{H7227}, *great*, with the possessive ending: *my great one, my master*. A term of respectful address to a teacher of the law. John, who expects readers with no Hebrew, translates it the first time it is used: *Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? John 1:38.*

Everybody says it to Him. Nathanael *John 1:49*, Peter on the mount of transfiguration *Mark 9:5*, the crowd across the lake *John 6:25*, and Nicodemus coming by night with the careful sentence *Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him John 3:2*. John's own disciples use it of John *John 3:26*. It is the ordinary courtesy of a student to the man he is learning from.

And Judas uses it. Twice in Matthew, and only twice: at the table — *Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? Matthew 26:25* — and in the garden, *Hail, master; and kissed him Matthew 26:49*. Both are *Rabbi* in the Greek. In the same scene at the same table the other eleven say *Lord*. Matthew lets the difference stand without comment: Judas never once calls Him anything higher than teacher.

The strengthened form is ῥαββουσί, and it occurs twice. Blind Bartimaeus shouts it on the Jericho road *Mark 10:51*. And Mary, at the tomb, mistaking Him for the gardener until He says her name: *She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master John 20:16*. The first word spoken to the risen Christ is a schoolroom word.

He forbids it to His own. *But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren Matthew 23:8*. The setting is the scribes and Pharisees who *love greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi Matthew 23:7* — the repetition is the point. What is forbidden is not merely the vanity but the title, and it stands on a short list with *father* and *master*.

Afterwards. In the academies that survived the destruction of the temple, *rabbi* hardened from a courtesy into an office: the ordained teacher whose rulings fill the **Mishna** and the **Talmud**. In the Gospels it is still only what you call the man you follow around.

Rahab H7343 **Rahab** — two unrelated Hebrew words that fall together in English spelling.

The woman. Hebrew rāḥāb רַחַב^{H7343}, *wide, broad*; Greek Rhaab Ῥαάβ^{G4460}, and in Matthew the variant Rhachab Ῥαχάβ^{G4477}. She kept a house on the wall of

Jericho, and the two men Joshua sent to view the land *came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there* Joshua 2:1. Joshua, Hebrews and James all keep the noun attached to her name. None of them softens it.

What she knew. When the king of Jericho sent for the men she had already hidden them under the stalks of flax on her roof, and she sent the search out the wrong gate. Then she told the spies why: *I know that the LORD hath given you the land... for we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt... and as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt* Joshua 2:9. Forty years after the sea, a Canaanite woman in a condemned city had the report and drew the right conclusion from it, which is more than Israel managed in the wilderness. She finishes: *for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.*

The scarlet line. *Bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by* Joshua 2:18 — and gather your father and your mother and your brethren into the house. The token is the same cord she had used to save them, hung where anyone passing could see it. Everyone inside the marked house lived. *And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had... and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day* Joshua 6:25.

Where she ends up. In the genealogy of Christ: *Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth* Matthew 1:5. She is one of the handful of women Matthew names in that line, and David's great-great-grandmother. Hebrews sets her in the roll of faith: *By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace* Hebrews 11:31. James takes the very same woman as his example of works: *was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?* James 2:25. The two writers supposed to contradict each other chose the same person to prove it on.

The other Rahab. Hebrew rahab רָהַב^{H7294}, a different word altogether — *storm, arrogance, boaster* — used of a sea-monster and as a byname for Egypt. *Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain* Psalm 89:10. *Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried the sea?* Isaiah 51:9 — where the monster and the Red Sea are the same act. *I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me* Psalm 87:4, and in Isaiah 30:7 it is Egypt again, all noise and no help. Nothing connects it to the woman but the sound.

Samarita H8111 **Samarita** — Hebrew šōmērōn שְׁמֵרֹן^{H8111}, *watch-mountain*, built on the root meaning to watch or keep; Greek Samareia Σαμάρεια^{G4540}. A city, then a kingdom, then a people.

The hill was bought. *And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of the*

owner of the hill, Samaria 1 Kings 16:24. Omri moved the capital of the northern kingdom onto an isolated hill standing in a wide basin, some six miles north-west of Shechem and thirty north of Jerusalem — a site picked for precisely what the name says. It watches.

The capital of the ten tribes. Ahab built a house of ivory there *1 Kings 22:39* and a house of Baal for Jezebel *1 Kings 16:32*. It is *the prophet that is in Samaria* whom the little captive maid wishes her master would go to *2 Kings 5:3*. Ben-hadad besieged it until an ass's head sold for fourscore pieces of silver and women were eating their children *2 Kings 6:25* — and it was four lepers shut out of the gate who found the Syrian camp abandoned and said *we do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace 2 Kings 7:9*.

Then it fell. *In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria 2 Kings 17:6.* The chapter that follows is the Bible's own post-mortem on the northern kingdom, and it spares nothing. Assyria then *brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria 2 Kings 17:24*, and the result is summed up in one sentence: *they feared the LORD, and served their own gods 2 Kings 17:33*.

Which is where the Samaritans come from. The mixed population that grew out of that resettlement held to the five books of Moses, worshipped on Gerizim, and were refused any share in the rebuilding of Jerusalem *Ezra 4:3*. By the first century the situation is stated flatly in an aside: *for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans John 4:9*.

And that is exactly where the Gospel puts its hardest examples. The neighbour in the parable is *a certain Samaritan Luke 10:33*. Of ten lepers cleansed, the one who turned back to give thanks *was a Samaritan Luke 17:16*. It is to a Samaritan woman at a well that Christ first says plainly who He is — see **Messias**. Philip afterwards *went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them Acts 8:5*, which is where the church met **Simon magus**. And the commission itself names the province rather than stepping over it: *in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth Acts 1:8*.

Samuel H8050 **Samuel** — Hebrew šēmû 'ēl שְׁמוּאֵל^{H8050}; Greek Samouēl Σαμουήλ^{G4545}. The lexicons divide over it: *heard of God*, from šāma ' שָׁמַע^{H8085} and 'ēl אֵל^{H410}, or else *his name is God*. Hannah's own explanation points somewhere slightly different again — *she called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD 1 Samuel 1:20*. The last of the judges, and the head of the prophetic line: Peter counts *it all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after Acts 3:24*.

Asked for. Hannah, barren and provoked year after year by her rival, prayed at Shiloh so that her lips moved and no voice came, and Eli took her for drunk. Her

vow: *I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head 1 Samuel 1:11*. She got the child, weaned him, and walked him back: *For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him: therefore also I have lent him to the LORD as long as he liveth 1 Samuel 1:27*. Her song at the handing over *1 Samuel 2:1* is the one Mary's follows in Luke, phrase after phrase.

The word was precious in those days. *And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision 1 Samuel 3:1* — precious meaning rare. Then the boy, lying down where the ark was, hears his name, and runs to Eli three times before the old man works out what is happening and tells him what to answer: *Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth 1 Samuel 3:9*. The first word ever given him is the destruction of Eli's house, and he has to say it to Eli's face at breakfast. *And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him*.

Established. *And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD 1 Samuel 3:20*. He judged on a circuit — Bethel, Gilgal, Mizpeh — and came back each year to Ramah, *for there was his house 1 Samuel 7:17*.

Make us a king. His own sons *turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment* — the same failure as Eli's, in the man who had been given Eli's sentence to deliver. The elders came to Ramah and asked for *a king to judge us like all the nations*. Samuel took it as a personal rejection, and was corrected: *they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them 1 Samuel 8:7*. He then told them exactly what a king would cost them — sons, daughters, fields, a tenth of everything *1 Samuel 8:11* — and anointed one anyway.

And he told the king the truth. After Amalek, after the spared cattle and the excuse that they were for sacrifice: *Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams 1 Samuel 15:22*. Then: *And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul 1 Samuel 15:35*. Both halves of that sentence are him. See **Saul**.

The last thing he does is pass over the obvious son. At Bethlehem, working down seven sons of Jesse and finding none of them, he is told the rule he had spent a lifetime learning: *the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart 1 Samuel 16:7*.

Sara ^{G4564} **Sara** — Greek Sarra Σάρρα^{G4564}, the New Testament form of the Hebrew ^{H8283} שָׂרָה, *princess, noblewoman*. Wife of Abraham, mother of Isaac. She carried another name first: see **sarai**.

She laughed. The visitors at the tent door in Mamre said she would have a son, and she was listening behind them, and she was old: *therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?* Genesis 18:12. It was inside herself and nobody heard it. *And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh? — followed by the question the rest of the book exists to answer: Is any thing too hard for the LORD?* She denied it, *for she was afraid*, and was told plainly, *Nay; but thou didst laugh*.

Then she laughed again. *God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me* Genesis 21:6. The child was called Isaac — *he laughs*. She laughed twice, and the second one is fixed in her son's name for good.

What she did in between is not tidy. She gave Hagar to Abraham to obtain a child by proxy, and then could not bear the sight of her: *my wrong be upon thee* Genesis 16:5. She dealt so hardly with the girl that she ran away, and years later had her and Ishmael put out into the wilderness Genesis 21:10. Twice she is passed off by her husband as his sister, in Egypt and at Gerar Genesis 12:13, Genesis 20:2.

She dies first, at a hundred and twenty-seven, and her burial buys the first piece of ground Abraham ever owns in Canaan — the cave of Machpelah, weighed out to the sons of Heth in *current money with the merchant* Genesis 23:16. The land of promise was entered by way of a grave.

The New Testament takes her as a case. Paul uses her body as evidence, that Abraham *considered not... the deadness of Sara's womb* and staggered not at the promise Romans 4:19. Hebrews enters the woman who laughed under faith: *Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed... because she judged him faithful who had promised* Hebrews 11:11. And Peter holds her up to wives: *even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement* 1 Peter 3:6. The sentence he is quoting is the one she said while she was laughing.

sarai H8297 **sarai** — Hebrew śāray שָׂרַי^{H8297}, from śar שָׂר^{H8269}, a prince or chief: *princess*. The name Abram's wife carried for the whole first stretch of the story.

The change. *And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her* Genesis 17:15. It happens in the same breath as Abram's own renaming to Abraham, in the chapter of the covenant and of circumcision, and it arrives with the promise of Isaac attached to it.

What actually changed is almost nothing on the page: a final yod becomes a final he. The traditional reading is that *Sarai* is *my princess*, a title held inside one household, and *Sarah* is *princess* without the possessive — she stops being one man's and

is given to nations, which is exactly what the promise in the same verse says. The lexicons are not unanimous, and both forms carry substantially the same sense.

Sarai, before. Under the old name she is barren *Genesis 11:30*; she leaves Ur; she is called Abram's sister in Egypt; and she hands her handmaid to her husband: *the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her Genesis 16:2*. Every episode in which she tries to arrange the promise herself falls on that side of the name.

And it is never used again. From *Genesis 17:15* the narrative says Sarah and nothing else, and the New Testament knows her by no other name at all. See **Sara**.

Satan ^{H7854} **Satan** — Hebrew śātān שָׂטָן^{H7854}, from a verb meaning to oppose or withstand: *an adversary*, one who stands against. Greek Satan *Σατανᾶς*^{G4567}; the same being is also called diabolos *διάβολος*^{G1228}, *slanderer*, from which English gets *devil*. Before it is a name it is a common noun.

It begins as a job description. The word is used of plain human opponents — the LORD stirs up *an adversary* against Solomon *1 Kings 11:14*; the Philistine lords will not have David in the battle *lest he be an adversary to us 1 Samuel 29:4* — and of the angel who stands in Balaam's road *for an adversary against him Numbers 22:22*. When it hardens into a title it takes the article: *the adversary*, the one whose whole function is opposition.

In the court. In Job he comes in among the sons of God, and is questioned like a subordinate: *Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it Job 1:7*. He advances a thesis about a man — *Doth Job fear God for nought?* — and is given leave to test it, with a limit set, and then a second limit. He is nowhere an equal power. He asks.

The accuser. Zechariah sees Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD *and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him* — the accuser's place at the bar — and the reply is not a counter-argument: *The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan... is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Zechariah 3:2*. Revelation names the office outright: *the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night Revelation 12:10*.

The titles. *The prince of this world John 12:31; the god of this world 2 Corinthians 4:4; the prince of the power of the air Ephesians 2:2; the tempter Matthew 4:3; a roaring lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour 1 Peter 5:8; and gathered into one verse, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world Revelation 12:9*. Christ's own description is the flattest: *He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it John 8:44*.

How he actually works. By quotation and by suggestion, not by force. In the wilderness he opens twice with *If thou be the Son of God*, and the third time quotes the Psalms accurately, and is answered every time with *It is written Matthew 4:4*. And when Peter — minutes after confessing the Christ — takes Him aside to say that He must not suffer, the rebuke is: *Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men Matthew 16:23*. The adversary's most effective sentence is a friend's good advice.

And his end is stated, not debated. *I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven Luke 10:18*. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil 1 John 3:8. And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly Romans 16:20 — under yours, the promise of Genesis 3:15 handed down to ordinary Christians. He is finally cast into the lake of fire Revelation 20:10. From the first page to the last he is a creature on a tether, and he does not hold the other end of it.

Saul H7586 **Saul** — Hebrew שָׂאֻל^{H7586}, *asked for, desired*: the passive participle of שָׂאֻל^{H7592}, to ask — the very verb the elders used when they asked for a king. Greek Saoul Σαούλ^{G4549}, and in its Hellenised form Saulos Σαῦλος^{G4569}.

They asked, and they got him. A Benjamite, son of Kish, from the smallest tribe, head and shoulders taller than any of the people, out looking for his father's lost donkeys when the prophet found him 1 Samuel 9:3. He began well. The Spirit came upon him and he was *turned into another man 1 Samuel 10:6*; when the lot fell on him at Mizpeh he had hidden himself among the baggage 1 Samuel 10:22; his first act as king was to relieve Jabesh-gilead. Remember that town.

Two disobediences finished him. At Gilgal he would not wait out the seven days for **Samuel** and offered the burnt offering himself, with an explanation that condemns him as he gives it: *I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering 1 Samuel 13:12*. Then Amalek, where he spared Agag and the best of the sheep and the oxen and met the prophet with *I have performed the commandment of the LORD* — over the noise of the evidence. *What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? 1 Samuel 15:14*. Even his confession gives him away: *I have sinned... yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people 1 Samuel 15:30*.

After that it is documented decline. *But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him 1 Samuel 16:14*. He loves David and throws a javelin at him. He orders the priests of Nob killed — eighty-five men wearing a linen ephod — and his own footmen refuse, so Doeg does it 1 Samuel 22:18. He hunts David through the wilderness, is twice spared by him at close quarters, and twice lifts up his voice and weeps, and goes on hunting.

The last night. He had put the mediums and the wizards out of the land himself; on the eve of Gilboa he goes to one in disguise, at Endor, and says why: *I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams 1 Samuel 28:15.* The next day he falls on his own sword. And the men of Jabesh-gilead — the town he had saved in his first week — walk all night to take his body down from the wall of Bethshan and bury it under a tree *1 Samuel 31:12.* One kindness done at the beginning came back for him at the end.

And the other Saul. The apostle bore the same name, out of the same tribe — *of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews Philippians 3:5.* Luke calls him Saul until Cyprus. On the Damascus road the voice uses the Hebrew form and doubles it: *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Acts 9:4.* See **Paulus.**

Scripture ^{G1124} **Scripture** — Greek graphē γραφή^{G1124}, simply *a writing*, from graphō γράφω^{G1125}, to write; the English comes through the Latin *scriptura*, which means the same thing. In ordinary Greek the word covers a drawing, a letter, a contract, a price-list, an indictment. In the New Testament it is used almost exclusively of one body of writing.

Singular and plural do different work. *The scriptures*, plural, means the whole collection: *Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God Matthew 22:29; Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me John 5:39.* *The scripture*, singular, usually points at one passage — *This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears Luke 4:21*, said of the sentence He had just read out of Isaiah in the synagogue. It is the difference between citing a library and citing a line.

What is claimed for it. *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness 2 Timothy 3:16.* The phrase *given by inspiration of God* is a single Greek word, θεόπνευστος, *God-breathed*. Peter says how it came: *the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost 2 Peter 1:21.*

It is used as the thing that ends an argument. *It is written* is Christ's entire answer to the tempter *Matthew 4:4*, repeated three times without elaboration. Paul settles a doctrine on a singular noun — *He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one... which is Christ Galatians 3:16.* Christ settles the resurrection on the tense of a verb: *I am the God of Abraham Matthew 22:32.* And once, in a parenthesis, the assumption behind all of it: *the scripture cannot be broken John 10:35.*

Where the boundary was. For the New Testament writers Scripture is the Old — *the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms Luke 24:44* — quoted constantly, usually in Greek. But the line moves inside the New Testament itself. Paul cites a

verse of Deuteronomy and a saying of Christ side by side under the one heading, *the scripture saith 1 Timothy 5:18*. And Peter, writing about Paul's letters, sets them among *the other scriptures 2 Peter 3:16*.

A neighbouring word. γράμμα is the letter as against the spirit — *the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life 2 Corinthians 3:6* — and yet the same word is used plainly of the sacred writings Timothy had known from a child *2 Timothy 3:15*. See **Papyrus** for what it was written on, and **Testament** for the two halves.

And it exists to do something. *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope Romans 15:4*. The stated purpose is not information. It is hope.

Shama H8091 **Shama** — Hebrew šāmā ' שָׁמָע^{H8091}, *obedient*, from šāma ' שָׁמָע^{H8085}, to hear. One of David's mighty men.

Everything recorded of him is one clause in a list: *Shama and Jehiel the sons of Hothan the Aroerite 1 Chronicles 11:44*. He and his brother come in among the warriors from east of Jordan, from Aroer, and nothing further about either of them survives anywhere.

The list is the point. The chapter is the muster of the men who made David king: the three who broke through the Philistine garrison to fetch him a drink from the well of Bethlehem, then the thirty, then a long tail of names carrying nothing but a father and a home town. Shama is in the tail. The Chronicler had no story to attach and wrote him down regardless — which is what a roll of honour is for.

And the name is a verdict. In Hebrew, hearing and obeying are the same verb: to *hear* a command and to *do* it are not separate acts but one word wearing two English coats. So a name built on *heard* comes out as *obedient*. All that is known of this man is that he came out to an outlaw who was not yet king, and that his name means he listened. See **Shema**.

Shema **Shema** — the Hebrew imperative šāma ' שָׁמָע^{H8085}, *hear*. It is the first word of *Deuteronomy 6:4*, and therefore the name of the confession that starts there: *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD*.

Why the one word carries so much. The verb makes no distinction between hearing and heeding. The same word is rendered *hear, hearken, obey, consent, understand, regard*. To *shema* is to listen in the manner of a man who is going to do it. Which is why what follows the summons is not a doctrine to be filed but a command to be kept: *And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might Deuteronomy 6:5*.

And what is to be done with it. *And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt*

talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates Deuteronomy 6:6. Out of those four verses come the phylacteries and the doorpost case. Recited morning and evening, it is the first thing a Jewish child is taught and, by long custom, the last words a dying Jew tries to say.

Christ quotes it as the answer. Asked which is the first commandment of all, He does not summarise or improve. He recites: *The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment Mark 12:29.* Mark alone keeps the opening summons; Matthew and Luke begin at *thou shalt love.*

And the scribe who asked gets an answer he did not expect. He agrees, and adds that to love God and one's neighbour *is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God Mark 12:34.*

Also a name. Shema is borne by several men in the genealogies and by a town in the south of Judah *Joshua 15:26* — in some cases from a different Hebrew word that only falls together in English. See **Shama**.

Silas ^{G4609} **Silas** — Greek Silas Σίλας^{G4609}, a contracted form of Silouanos Σιλουανός^{G4610}, *Silvanus*, which is the name he goes by in the epistles. Luke writes Silas; Paul and Peter write Silvanus. A leading man among the brethren at Jerusalem, a prophet, and — the detail that becomes important — a Roman citizen.

Chosen after the quarrel. The Jerusalem council sent its letter to Antioch by *Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren Acts 15:22*, and being prophets themselves they *exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them Acts 15:32.* When Paul and Barnabas divided over **Mark**, Paul *chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God Acts 15:40.*

Philippi. They cast a spirit of divination out of a slave girl, destroyed her owners' income, and were hauled into the market place on the charge that *these men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city.* Stripped, beaten with many stripes, thrust into the inner prison, feet made fast in the stocks. *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them Acts 16:25.* Then the earthquake; the jailer with his sword already drawn; *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*; and the whole household baptised *the same hour of the night*, and a meal set before two men with open wounds, and a man *rejoicing, believing in God with all his house Acts 16:34.*

And in the morning they refuse to go quietly. The magistrates sent word to release them. Paul's answer: *They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out Acts 16:37.* Romans is plural. Silas held the citizenship too, and had said nothing about it through the beating.

Afterwards. Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth Acts 17:4, Acts 18:5. He is co-sender of both letters to the Thessalonians, and Paul names him as a fellow preacher: *For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay 2 Corinthians 1:19.* And Peter closes his first letter: *By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly 1 Peter 5:12.* The man who carried the council's letter ended up carrying Peter's.

Simeon H8095 **Simeon** — Hebrew שִׁמְעוֹן^{H8095}, *heard*, from שָׁמַע^{H8085}; Greek Symeōn Συμεών^{G4826}. Leah gave the name and gave the reason: *Because the LORD hath heard that I was hated, he hath therefore given me this son also Genesis 29:33.*

The second son of Jacob, and one of the two who sacked Shechem. With Levi he took the city by a trick after their sister Dinah was defiled, killed every male while the men were still sore from circumcision, and met their father's protest with a question of their own: *Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot? Genesis 34:31.* Jacob never let it go. His deathbed word on the pair of them is a curse aimed at a temper: *Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations... Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel Genesis 49:5.*

And the scattering happened. Simeon received no territory of his own, only towns within the inheritance of the children of Judah, because Judah's portion was too large for one tribe Joshua 19:1. Levi got no land at all and was distributed through all the tribes as the priesthood. One sentence, worked out two opposite ways.

He is also the brother Joseph kept back. When the brothers came to Egypt for corn and were charged with spying, Joseph took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes Genesis 42:24, and held him while the others went home for Benjamin. The text does not say why he picked that one.

And then the man in the temple. The other Simeon is *just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel*, and it had been revealed to him *that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ Luke 2:25.* He came in by the Spirit, took a six-week-old child up in his arms, and said the words the church has used at nightfall for centuries: *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation Luke 2:29.* Then he turned to the mother with

the hard half of it: *yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also Luke 2:35*. A man whose name means *heard* got his answer in his arms, and asked to be let go.

Simon G4613 **Simon** — Greek Simōn Σίμων^{G4613}, a Greek name pressed into service as the everyday equivalent of the Hebrew **Simeon**, Symeōn Συμεών^{G4826}, *heard*. It was among the commonest names a Jewish man could have, and the New Testament carries nine of them.

Simon Peter first. *And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone John 1:42*. But the old name never quite goes away, and it is worth watching where it comes back. At the great confession: *Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona Matthew 16:17*. Asleep in Gethsemane: *Simon, sleepest thou? couldst not thou watch one hour? Mark 14:37*. And on the shore after the denial, three times over: *Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? John 21:15*. See **Peter**.

The rest of them.

- Simon the Canaanite, called *Zelotes*, among the twelve *Luke 6:15* — a man out of the party of armed revolt against Rome, seated at the same table as a man who collected Rome's taxes.
- Simon, one of the brethren of the Lord *Mark 6:3*.
- Simon the father of Judas Iscariot *John 6:71*.
- Simon the Pharisee, who invited Christ to dinner and gave Him no water for His feet, no kiss, no oil — and then had opinions about the woman who supplied all three *Luke 7:44*.
- Simon the leper, in whose house at Bethany the alabaster box was broken *Mark 14:3*.
- Simon of Cyrene, *the father of Alexander and Rufus*, coming in out of the country and compelled to carry the cross *Mark 15:21*. Mark names his sons, which means the church knew them.
- Simon a tanner, of Joppa, in whose house by the sea Peter lodged and saw the sheet let down *Acts 10:6*. An observant Jew already staying with a man whose trade kept him permanently unclean is half the lesson of that chapter before the vision starts.
- Simon the sorcerer of Samaria — see **Simon magus**.

And the name means heard. In a country where every third man answered to it, what Christ did with this one is the point: He did not take it away. He left it and added another, and afterwards used whichever one fitted.

Simon magus Simon Magus — Simon the sorcerer of Samaria, Acts 8:9-24. *Magus* is not a surname but the Greek *mageuō* μαγεύω^{G3096}, to practise magic. He is the most uncomfortable man in the book of Acts, and every honest doctrine of baptism has to walk past him.

He had a following before Philip arrived. He used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. He had held them of long time.

Then comes the sentence. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done Acts 8:13.

Luke uses the ordinary word — *pisteuō* πιστεύω^{G4100} — with no qualifier. Simon believed, was baptized, and stayed. By every outward test available to the church, he was in.

And within days he offers money for the Holy Spirit. Seeing that the Spirit was given through the apostles' hands, he says *Give me also this power* — and gets one of the most withering replies in Scripture: *Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God Acts 8:20-21. Peter* tells him to repent *if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee*, and adds: *I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.*

Simon's answer is ambiguous to the last line he speaks: *Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.* He asks for relief from consequences, not for a new heart. Luke never tells us how it ended. His name survives in English as **simony**, the buying and selling of sacred office.

What he settles, and what he does not. He is the standing refutation of any doctrine that makes the water work on its own. A man was baptized by an evangelist in good standing, in the apostolic era, and Peter told him within the hour that he had *neither part nor lot in this matter*. Baptism is the doorway; it is not a machine, and it does not manufacture a right heart. He is not alone in that: **Israel** passed through the sea entire and then fell in the wilderness, and Paul presses exactly that parallel *1 Corinthians 10:1-6*.

But he refutes the opposite error just as hard. Nobody in Acts concludes from Simon that baptism should therefore be delayed, hedged, or withheld until certainty is reached — **Philip** baptized him on his profession, and the narrative never faults Philip for it. The church baptizes on confession because that is what it is given to judge. God judges the heart, which is precisely what Peter says.

And it is worth naming what a man gives at the water and can give falsely: eperōtēma ἐπερώτημα^{G1906} the pledge of a good conscience toward God *1 Peter 3:21*. A pledge can be sincere or it can be perjury; that it can be perjured is not an argument against pledging. See **Baptism**.

Sinai H5514 **Sinai** — Hebrew sînay סִינַי^{H5514}, of uncertain derivation; the old name-lists render it *thorny*. Greek Σινᾱ. The mountain of the law, at the southern end of the peninsula that now carries its name. The exact peak is not known. The same mountain is called **Horeb**.

The appointment was made in advance. At the burning bush God told Moses what the sign would be: *When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain Exodus 3:12*. The proof of the deliverance was to be given after the deliverance, not before it. They came into the wilderness of Sinai in the third month *Exodus 19:1*.

What it was like. Bounds were set round the foot of it so that neither man nor beast might touch it and live. Then *there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire... and the whole mount quaked greatly Exodus 19:16*. The people asked for a middleman before the first commandment was finished: *Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die Exodus 20:19*.

What was given there. The ten words, spoken aloud in the hearing of the entire nation *Exodus 20:1* — the only portion of the law delivered directly and to everybody at once. Then forty days of pattern, statute and ordinance, and two tables of stone *written with the finger of God Exodus 31:18*. And at the foot of the mountain, while that was going on, the golden calf.

Elijah goes back to it. Running from Jezebel he walks forty days to Horeb and lodges in a cave, and God stages the whole thing again for one man — a great strong wind rending the mountains, an earthquake, a fire — and is in none of them. *And after the fire a still small voice 1 Kings 19:12*. Same mountain, same God, volume deliberately down.

What the New Testament does with it. Paul turns it into an allegory: *For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all Galatians 4:25*. And Hebrews stands the two mountains side by side: *For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest... But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God... and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant Hebrews 12:18*. The contrast is not

law against no law. It is a mountain nobody was allowed to touch, set against one the reader is told he has already arrived at.

synarmologoumenē (synarmologoumenē) G4883 **synarmologoumenē** — Greek synarmologeō συναρμολογέω

to fit or frame together, from *syn*, together, and a compound of *harmos* ἄρμος^{G719}, a joint. Abbott-Smith glosses it as the classical *synarmozō*: to join closely, of the parts of a building.

It occurs twice, both in Ephesians, and Paul uses it of two different structures.

Of a building: *in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord Ephesians 2:21*. And of a body: *from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth Ephesians 4:16*.

The form in Ephesians 2:21 is a present passive participle — *being framed together*, continuously, and by someone else. Not a finished structure and not a self-assembling one. Every stone is being fitted by a hand that is not the stone's.

And then Paul does something no builder could. He says the building *auxanō* αὐξάνω^{G837} — **grows**. See **auxei**. Masonry does not grow and bodies are not framed; he has jammed the two metaphors together deliberately, so the church is a temple that is alive and a body that is under construction.

The joints are the point. A stone is fitted *to its neighbours*, not to the plan in the abstract — which is why the paragraph ends *buildd together for an habitation of God through the Spirit*.

Syria G4947 **Syria** — Greek Syria Συρία^{G4947}. The country north and north-east of Israel, called **Aram** in the Old Testament, ʾārām אֲרָם^{H758}, with Damascus for its chief city. *Syriac* in *Daniel 2:4* and *Ezra 4:7* means the Aramaic tongue, and it is in that language that parts of Daniel and Ezra are actually written.

The old enemy — and the old relation. The Syrian wars run through the books of Kings: Ben-hadad besieging **Samaria** until the city was eating anything it could find; the raiding bands who carried off a little Israelite maid and so, without meaning to, delivered their own commander-in-chief to the prophet — see **Naaman**. But the connection is older than the fighting. Jacob's mother and both his wives came out of Padan-aram, and every Israelite bringing his firstfruits had to say over the basket: *A Syrian ready to perish was my father Deuteronomy 26:5*.

Under Rome. Syria was an imperial province governed from Antioch, and the New Testament uses the name in that administrative sense. The census was taken *when Cyrenius was governor of Syria Luke 2:2*. Christ's fame *went throughout all Syria Matthew 4:24*.

And it is where the church stopped being only Jewish. Men of Cyprus and Cyrene came to Antioch and *spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus*, and

a great number believed *Acts 11:20*. Barnabas was sent to look at it, fetched Saul from Tarsus, and the two taught there a year — *and the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch Acts 11:26*. That congregation, not Jerusalem, sent out the first missionary journey *Acts 13:2*; and when the council wrote its letter, it addressed it *unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia Acts 15:23*.

On the road into it. The man riding out of Jerusalem with letters to the synagogues of Damascus was stopped on that road *Acts 9:3*. See **Paulus**.

Talmud Talmud — Hebrew תַּלְמוּד, from a root meaning *to learn: study, instruction, that which is learned*. The great compilation of Jewish law together with its argument. It has two layers: the **Mishna**, which is the code, and the גְּמָרָא, which is the debate that grew up around the code.

There are two of them. The Palestinian, or Jerusalem, Talmud came out of the academies of Galilee and is the earlier and much the shorter. The Babylonian came out of the schools of Mesopotamia, is many times larger, and became the authoritative one. *Talmud* without qualification means the Babylonian.

What it is like to read. Not a code so much as a conversation preserved in transcript. A line of Mishna is quoted, and then generations of rabbis go at it — an objection, a counter-case, a question raised and deliberately left standing, a story told half as illustration and half as digression, then back to the ruling. The legal material is הֲלָכָה, from a root meaning to walk; the narrative, parable, medicine, astronomy and folklore threaded through it is שְׁנַיִם, the telling. It keeps the losing side of an argument as carefully as the winning side.

Its relation to Scripture. It is not Scripture and does not present itself as Scripture: it is commentary on the oral law, which is itself commentary on the written. But in practice the interpretation ends up carrying the working authority, and that is exactly the tendency Christ names to the Pharisees — *making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered Mark 7:13*.

Why a Christian reader might open it. It is the fullest surviving record of the world the Gospels are set in — the categories, the disputes, the assumptions about sabbath and cleanness and oaths and divorce — written down by the heirs of the men Christ argued with. It is late evidence, and has to be handled as late evidence. It is also very nearly the only evidence of its kind there is. See **Torah**.

Testament G1242 **Testament** — Greek diathēkē διαθήκη^{G1242}, from διατίθημι, to set in order, to dispose. In ordinary Greek it means a will: the disposition a man makes of his property. In the Septuagint it is the standard rendering of the Hebrew bērit בְּרִית^{H1285}, *covenant*. Both senses come through into the New Testament, and English has kept the less useful one.

Why a will and not a treaty. The ordinary Greek for an agreement between parties was συνθήκη, and the translators did not use it. The choice looks deliberate: a *syn-* word suggests two sides negotiating on level terms, and what God makes with men is not that. He states the terms; the other party accepts them or does not.

Covenant is the usual sense. *For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins Matthew 26:28* — a covenant, not a legacy. *But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises Hebrews 8:6.* Paul lists among Israel's advantages *the covenants Romans 9:4.*

Except in one passage, where the writer uses both edges of the word at once. *For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth Hebrews 9:16.* The argument only runs because one Greek word covers both a covenant and a will, and he is using the overlap to say that this covenant, like a will, needed a death before anything could be inherited.

And that is where the two halves of the Bible got their names. *Old testament* is Paul's phrase, and he means covenant: *until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament 2 Corinthians 3:14.* Jeremiah had promised the other: *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel Jeremiah 31:31.* Hebrews quotes that promise entire and then draws the conclusion in a single line: *In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old Hebrews 8:13.* The two Testaments are named after two covenants, not after two books. See **Scripture**.

Titus G5103 **Titus** — Greek Titos Τίτος^{G5103}, a Latin name; the old lists render it *pleasing*. A Greek, one of the most trusted men Paul had, and — oddly — never once named in the Acts of the Apostles. Everything known of him comes from the letters.

Uncircumcised on purpose. Paul took him up to Jerusalem as a walking test case, and reports the outcome as a victory: *But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised Galatians 2:3.* The whole Gentile question was standing in the room in the person of one man, and the church did not require the knife. Timothy, half-Jewish and working in Jewish country, Paul did circumcise — which shows the principle was never about the operation.

The man sent when things had gone wrong. He carried the hard letter to Corinth and had to bring the answer back, and Paul is unembarrassed about what the waiting was like: *I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother 2 Corinthians 2:13.* Then the relief: *Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus 2 Corinthians 7:6; and his inward affection is more*

abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all 2 Corinthians 7:15. He was put in charge of the collection for the poor saints as well, and the reason Paul gives for the arrangements around it is worth keeping: *providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men* 2 Corinthians 8:21.

Crete. *For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city* Titus 1:5. The letter is blunt about the material he had to work with — it quotes a Cretan poet against Cretans — and equally blunt about the remedy, which is not enthusiasm but appointed men, sound doctrine, and households in order.

Last seen leaving. *For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia* 2 Timothy 4:10. Three men go in one sentence, and only the first of them is being reproached.

Torah H8451 **Torah** — Hebrew tôrâ תּוֹרָה^{H8451}, *instruction, direction, law*. It comes from yārâ יָרָא^{H3384}, a verb meaning to throw or to shoot — an arrow, a stone, the founding course of a building — and from there to point, to aim, to teach. Torah is not first a list of prohibitions. It is aiming.

How wide the word is. In the singular it can mean one particular ruling — *this is the law of the burnt offering* Leviticus 6:9 — or something with no legal force at all: *forsake not the law of thy mother* Proverbs 1:8. Most often it means the whole body of God's instruction to Israel, and by extension the five books of Moses in which that instruction stands. In Jewish usage *the Torah* is those five books, and a synagogue scroll contains nothing else.

How it is spoken of by the people under it. Not as a weight. *O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day* Psalm 119:97. *The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul... More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb* Psalm 19:7. The longest chapter in the Bible is a hundred and seventy-six verses about it, worked through the Hebrew alphabet eight verses at a time.

And what it cannot do. *Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin* Romans 3:20. Paul is not taking back the psalm; in the same letter he calls the law *holy, and just, and good* Romans 7:12. The instruction shows the target and shows the miss. It does not move the arrow.

Christ on its durability. *Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled* Matthew 5:17. The jot is the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet; the tittle is the little stroke that keeps one letter from being another.

And what all of it hangs on. *On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets* Matthew 22:40 — said immediately after He had recited the **Shema**. See also **Mishna, Talmud, Scripture** and **Testament**.

Virgin Hebrew *bētûlâ* בְּתוּלָה^{H1330} and ‘*almâ* עַלְמָה^{H5959}, Greek *parthenos* παρθένος^{G3933}, Latin *virgo*.

Two Hebrew words, not one. H1330 is parsed as a feminine passive participle of an unused root meaning *to separate* — one set apart. Brown-Driver-Briggs glosses it flatly, *virgin*, across its sixty occurrences. H5959 is a different word: a lass, *as veiled or private*, feminine of ‘*elem* עֶלֶם^{H5958}, *something kept out of sight*. Brown-Driver-Briggs is careful with it — *young woman (ripe sexually; maid or newly married)*. It does not by itself assert virginity, which is the whole crux of *Isaiah* 7:14.

The Greek settles it earlier than the argument. G3933 is a maiden, an unmarried daughter; Strong’s calls its origin unknown. What matters is the coupling: in the Septuagint *parthenos* renders **both** Hebrew words — chiefly *bētûlâ* בְּתוּלָה^{H1330}, but also ‘*almâ* עַלְמָה^{H5959} at *Genesis* 24:43 and *Isaiah* 7:14. Jewish translators were reading *almah* as *parthenos* two centuries before the Gospels, which is why *Matthew* 1:23 can quote *Isaiah* as it stands.

Latin. *virgo*. The Vulgate: *ecce virgo concipiet et pariet filium* *Isaiah* 7:14, and *decem virginibus* *Matthew* 25:1.

In the parable. The ten of *Matthew* 25:1 are *parthenoi* — wedding attendants, not the bride. What they carry is *lampas* λαμπάς^{G2985}, a *torch* fed with *oil*, not the small household lamp *lychnos* λύχνος^{G3088} of *Matthew* 5:15 and *John* 5:35; the Vulgate keeps the distinction, *lampadas suas*. Five took no *oil* with them; five took *oil* in their vessels *Matthew* 25:4.

See **Oil**.

αἰών (**aiōn**) *an age: age* — for ever, an unbroken age, perpetuity of time, eternity; the worlds, universe; period of time, age. KJV: age, course, eternal, (for) ever(-more), (n-)ever, (beginning of the, while the) world (began, without end). From the same as G0104 (G165)

Αἴγυπτος (**aigyptos**) *Egypt* — a country occupying the northeast angle of Africa; metaphorically Jerusalem, for the Jews persecuting the Christ and his followers, and so to be likened to the Egyptians treating the Jews. KJV: Egypt. Of uncertain derivation (G125)

βάπτισμα (**baptisma**) *baptism* — immersion, submersion; of calamities and afflictions with which one is quite overwhelmed; of John’s baptism, that purification rite by which men on confessing their sins were bound to spiritual reformation; of Christian baptism (a rite of immersion in water as commanded by Christ, by which one

after confessing his sins and professing his faith in Christ, having been born again by the Holy Spirit unto a new life, identifies publicly with the fellowship of Christ and the church). KJV: baptism. From G0907 (G908)

Βαλαάμ (**balaam**) *Balaam* — The prophet Balaam. KJV: Balaam. Of Hebrew origin (H1109) (G903)

βαπτίζω (**baptizō**) G907 **To dip, to immerse, to submerge; to overwhelm.** From a derivative of baptō βάπτω^{G911}. 65 occurrences, every one in the New Testament.

It is not religious vocabulary. Greek writers use it for putting a thing under a surface and leaving it there. Josephus drives a sword to the hilt in a man's throat; Galen sinks a trephine into bone. Of ships, Polybius uses it for **sending them to the bottom**; of soldiers, wading breast-deep across a ford. Of a city, Josephus writes that the crowds pouring into Jerusalem before the siege **flooded** it. In the passive, of a man, it simply means *to be drowned*.

The metaphors are where the word opens up, because every one runs the same way — a man is in over his head, and the thing he is under now owns him. Plato has men *soaked in wine*. Plutarch has a man *over head and ears in debt*. Diodorus has a citizen swamped **with taxes**. Achilles Tatius: *he who is baptized in rage goes under*. Libanius: **a soul baptized in grief**. And Plato again, watching a boy lose an argument — seeing the lad *getting out of his depth*. That is the force the word carries into *Romans 6:3*. Not a man touched by water. A man in it, and it has him.

The line against βάπτω is drawn by a pickle recipe. Nicander — Greek poet and physician, around 200 BC, preserved in Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* IV.133c–e — tells the cook to *dip* (βάπτω) turnip slices in boiling water, then *soak* (βαπτίζω) them in strong brine. The dipping is momentary and reversible. The soaking makes a pickle: the nature of the thing is changed, and does not change back. βάπτω in the New Testament only ever moistens a part — a fingertip, a morsel, a dyed garment — and is never once used of baptism. The distinction was settled in a cookbook two centuries before Christ.

In the Septuagint it stands only four times, and one of them is everything: *2 Kings 5:14*, where it renders the Hebrew *ṭābal* טָבַל^{H2881} as Naaman *dips himself* seven times in the Jordan. The single place the Greek Old Testament spends this word on a Hebrew verb is a leper going down into a river and coming up clean. Elsewhere: *Isaiah 21:4*, *lawlessness overwhelms me* — the metaphor, in Scripture's own mouth.

In the New Testament, four constructions matter. Absolutely, of the act itself — *Mark 1:4*, *John 3:22*, *1 Corinthians 1:17* — with the participle ὁ βαπτίζων standing as a title, *the Baptizer*. In the **middle voice** at *Acts 22:16* and *1 Corinthians 10:2*, *get yourself baptized*: Ananias does not tell Saul that something will be done to him,

but that he must submit himself to it. With ἐν, of the element. And with εἰς, of element, purpose or result — *Matthew 28:19, Romans 6:3, Galatians 3:27*; see eis εἰς^{G1519}.

The hammer is Christ's own mouth. Three times He takes the noun and verb together — βάπτισμα βαπτίζομαι, *the baptism I am baptized with* — and He means His death: *Mark 10:38, Mark 10:39, Luke 12:50*. "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" He was not sprinkled by the cross. He went under it, and rose. Whatever the word means, He defined it with His own body.

And the narratives keep the picture without exception. Jesus, baptized, *went up straightway out of the water Matthew 3:16*. John baptized at Aenon *because there was much water there John 3:23*. Philip and the eunuch **both went down into the water Acts 8:38**. Not once in Scripture is water brought to a candidate; every time, the candidate is brought to the water.

- Cognates: baptisma βάπτισμα^{G908} the rite · baptismos βαπτισμός^{G909} a ceremonial washing · baptistēs Βαπτιστής^{G910} the Baptizer · baptō βάπτω^{G911} to dip a part.
- What the act is called elsewhere: mathēteuō μαθητεύω^{G3100} commands it; synthaptō συνθάπτω^{G4916} and endyō ἐνδύω^{G1746} enact it; palingenesia παλιγγενεσία^{G3824} through the loutron λουτρόν^{G3067} is what it works; eperōtēma ἐπερώτημα^{G1906} is what the baptized gives.

βαπτισμός (**baptismos**) *baptism* — a washing, purification effected by means of water; of washing prescribed by the Mosaic law (Hebrews 9:10) which seems to mean an exposition of the difference between the washings prescribed by the Mosaic law and Christian baptism. KJV: baptism, washing. From G0907 (G909)

βρέφος (**brephos**) G1025 **An unborn child; a newborn babe.** Liddell-Scott's first sense is blunt: *babe in the womb, foetus*. Homer uses it of the unborn foal still in the mare (*Iliad* 23.266). **Eight occurrences in the New Testament.**

And they are tender ones. The babe that **leaped** in Elisabeth's womb at Mary's greeting — *Luke 1:41 and Luke 1:44*. The babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger — *Luke 2:12 and Luke 2:16*. The infants brought to Jesus that He might touch them — *Luke 18:15*. The babes cast out to die in Egypt — *Acts 7:19*. *As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word* — *1 Peter 2:2*. And Timothy, who *from a babe* had known the holy Scriptures — *2 Timothy 3:15*.

Luke reaches for this word four times. Luke also wrote the book of Acts, where nine baptisms are narrated in detail.

The hammer. This is not an argument from silence; it is an argument from a word left on the table. The Greek for *infant* existed, was current, was used by the very authors in question, and appears in the very chapters that describe baptisms. It never once occurs in the same sentence as baptizō βαπτίζω^{G907}. Not once in eight. Had the apostles baptized infants, βρέφος was the word waiting to say so — and the Spirit declined it every time.

γράφω (**graphō**) *to write* — to write, with reference to the form of the letters; to delineate (or form) letters on a tablet, parchment, paper, or other material; to write, with reference to the contents of the writing; to express in written characters; to commit to writing (things not to be forgotten), write down, record; used of those things which stand written in the sacred books (of the Old Testament); to write to one, i.e., by writing (in a written epistle) to give information, directions; to fill with writing; to draw up in writing, compose. KJV: describe, write(-ing, -ten). A primary verb (G1125)

γραφή (**graphē**) *a writing* — a writing, thing written; the Scripture, used to denote either the book itself, or its contents; a certain portion or section of the Holy Scripture. KJV: scripture. From G1125 (G1124)

Δημᾶς (**dēmas**) *Demas* — a companion of Paul, who deserted the apostle when he was a prisoner at Rome and returned to Thessalonica. KJV: Demas. Probably for G1216 (G1214)

διάβολος (**diabolos**) *devilish/the Devil* — prone to slander, slanderous, accusing falsely; a calumniator, false accuser, slanderer,; metaphorically applied to a man who, by opposing the cause of God, may be said to act the part of the devil or to side with him Satan the prince of the demons, the author of evil, persecuting good men, estranging mankind from God and enticing them to sin, afflicting them with diseases by means of demons who take possession of their bodies at his bidding. KJV: false accuser, devil, slanderer. From G1225 (G1228)

εἰς (**eis**) G1519 **Into; unto; with a view to.** 1,457 occurrences — one of the commonest words in the New Testament, and it quietly decides two of the most contested sentences about baptism. A preposition of *motion toward and entry into*: not resting beside a thing, but arriving at it and going in.

Abbott-Smith, treating baptizō βαπτίζω^{G907} with this preposition, classes it as marking **the element, the purpose, or the result** (citing Lightfoot, *Notes*, 155). Liddell-Scott quote Acts 2:38 under the same head: βαπτισθήτω ἕκαστος εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν.

First sentence. *Be baptized εἰς the remission of sins.* The preposition points forward. Baptism is aimed at the forgiveness — it is not a receipt issued for a transaction

already closed. Compare *Matthew 3:11*, where John baptizes εἰς μετάνοιαν, *unto repentance*: the same forward motion, the rite pointing at what it is for.

Second sentence, and it is the greater one. The same preposition carries the believer somewhere: baptized εἰς Χριστόν, *into Christ* — *Romans 6:3*, *Galatians 3:27*, *1 Corinthians 12:13*. And into His name: *Matthew 28:19*, *Acts 8:16*, *Acts 19:5*. And, once, into Moses: *1 Corinthians 10:2*.

That is not a preposition of association. It is a preposition of *arrival*. The destination of baptism is a Person.

The hammer. Both halves stand or fall together, because it is one word doing both jobs. If εἰς in "baptized into Christ" means real entry into Him — and no one disputes that it does — then εἰς in "baptized unto the remission of sins" means the rite genuinely points at that remission, and cannot be reduced to a badge worn afterwards. And if εἰς is drained to a bare token in *Acts 2:38*, the same draining empties *Romans 6:3*, and nobody is baptized *into* anybody.

You cannot weaken the preposition in one verse and keep it strong in the other. It is the same word, in the same construction, with the same verb.

εὐαγγέλιον (**euangelion**) *gospel* — a reward for good tidings; good tidings; the glad tidings of the kingdom of God soon to be set up, and subsequently also of Jesus the Messiah, the founder of this kingdom; the glad tidings of salvation through Christ; the proclamation of the grace of God manifest and pledged in Christ; the gospel; the narrative of Jesus' life and teachings (i.e., the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). KJV: gospel. From the same as G2097 (G2098)

εὐαγγελίζω (**euangelizō**) *to speak good news* — to bring good news, to announce glad tidings; used in the Old Testament of any kind of good news; in the New Testament used especially of the glad tidings of the coming kingdom of God, and of the salvation to be obtained in it through Christ, and of what relates to this salvation; glad tidings are brought to one, one has glad tidings proclaimed to him; to proclaim glad tidings. KJV: declare, bring (declare, show) glad (good) tidings, preach (the gospel). From G2095 and G0032 (G2097)

εὐαγγελιστής (**euangelistēs**) *evangelist* — a bringer of good tidings, an evangelist; the name given to the New Testament heralds of salvation through Christ who are not apostles. KJV: evangelist. From G2097 (G2099)

θεόπνευστος (**theopneustos**) *God-breathed* — inspired by God; the contents of the scriptures. KJV: given by inspiration of God. From G2316 and a presumed derivative of G4154 (G2315)

θεός (**theos**) *God* — a god or goddess, a general name of deities or divinities; the God-head, trinity; God the Father, the first person in the trinity; Christ, the second per-

son of the trinity; Holy Spirit, the third person in the trinity; spoken of the only and true God; refers to the things of God; his counsels, interests, things due to him; whatever can in any respect be likened unto God, or resemble him in any way; God's representative or viceregent. KJV: God, god(-ly, -ward),. Of uncertain affinity (G2316)

Κηφᾶς (**kēphas**) *Cephas* — another name for the apostle Peter. KJV: Cephas. Of Chaldee origin (compare H3710) (G2786)

κιβωτός (**kibōtos**) *ark: covenant* — a wooden chest or box; in the New Testament the ark of the covenant, in the temple at Jerusalem; of Noah's vessel built in the form of an ark. KJV: ark. Of uncertain derivation (G2787)

κύριος (**kyrios**) *lord: God* — he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has power of deciding; master, lord; the possessor and disposer of a thing; is a title of honor expressive of respect and reverence, with which servants salute their master; this title is given to: God, the Messiah. KJV: God, Lord, master, Sir. From κῦρος (supremacy) (G2962)

Λουκᾶς (**loukas**) *Luke* — a Gentile Christian, the companion of Paul in preaching the gospel and on his many journeys; he was a physician and author of the book of Luke and Acts in the New Testament. KJV: Lucas, Luke. Contracted from Latin <latin>Lucanus</latin> (G3065)

λουτρόν (**loutron**) G3067 **The bath.** From λούω, to bathe the whole body — as against νίπτω, which washes a part, a hand or a face. Homer's word for the warm bath drawn for a returning traveller, θερμὰ λοετρά.

Liddell-Scott give it two settings, and a Greek ear heard both.

The first is a wedding. νυμφικὰ λουτρά — *the bridal waters*: the ceremonial bath a Greek bride took before her marriage. It had its own vessel, the λουτροφόρος, a tall two-handled jar carried in procession to fetch the water. The jar was so bound to the rite that when a girl died unmarried, her family set a λουτροφόρος on her grave — the bath she never had, standing as her monument.

The second is a grave. In the poets λουτρά also means σπονδαί, the libations poured out for the dead — Sophocles, *Electra* 84 and 434; Euripides, *Phoenissae* 1667.

One noun. The water that makes a bride, and the water poured over the dead.

Now look where the New Testament spends it — twice, and only twice. *Ephesians* 5:26: Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it, *that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word* — and four verses later Paul says plainly, "I speak concerning Christ and the church." That is the bridal bath, named as such. And *Titus* 3:5: *the washing of regeneration* — see palingenesia παλιγγενεσία^{G3824}.

In the Septuagint it appears in the Song, of the bride coming up from the washing (*Song of Solomon* 4:2, *Song of Solomon* 6:6).

The hammer, and it is a comfort more than a club. The two pictures the New Testament sets on baptism — buried with Him in *Romans* 6:4, and washed as a bride in *Ephesians* 5:26 — are not two competing metaphors that a preacher has to reconcile. They were already one word before Paul picked it up. The Greeks poured λουτρόα over the dead and over the bride, and Paul took the word whole.

You go down as the dead are washed. You come up as the bride is washed. Same water.

Λυδία (**lydia**) *Lydia* — a woman of Thyatira, a seller of purple, the first European convert of Paul, and afterward his hostess during his first stay at Philippi. KJV: Lydia. Properly, feminine of Ludios (of foreign origin) (a Lydian, in Asia Minor) (G3070)

μάννα (**manna**) *manna* — the food that nourished the Israelites for forty years in the wilderness; of the manna was kept in the ark of the covenant; symbolically, that which is kept in the heavenly temple for the food of angels and the blessed. KJV: manna. Of Hebrew origin (H4478) (G3131)

Μάρκος (**markos**) *Mark* — an evangelist, the author of the Gospel of Mark. KJV: Marcus, Mark. Of Latin origin (G3138)

μάρτυς (**martyrs**) *witness* — a witness; in a legal sense; an historical sense; in an ethical sense. KJV: martyr, record, witness. Of uncertain affinity (G3144)

μαθητεύω (**mathēteuō**) G3100 **To make a disciple of.** Four occurrences: *Matthew* 13:52, *Matthew* 27:57, *Matthew* 28:19, *Acts* 14:21. Intransitively, in Plutarch, it means simply *to be someone's pupil*. Matthew uses it transitively — you do it **to** people.

The hammer is the grammar, and it is decisive. In *Matthew* 28:19 there is exactly **one imperative** in the Great Commission: μαθητεύσατε, *make disciples*. Everything around it is a participle — πορευθέντες (going), βαπτίζοντες (baptizing), διδάσκοντες (teaching).

Greek participles of this kind answer the question *how*? They are not a list of separate errands appended to the command; they are the manner in which the single command is carried out. Christ did not say "make disciples, and also, when convenient, baptize them." He said: make disciples — **and this is how you do it** — by going, by baptizing, by teaching them to observe all things.

Pull baptism out of that sentence and you have not removed an optional extra. You have removed one of the three ways the only imperative in the commission is obeyed.

And the object is πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, *all the nations* — not all the households, not all the infants: the nations, disciplined one believing soul at a time, exactly as Acts 14:21 shows it done: “they preached the gospel to that city, and *had taught many*” — μαθητεύσαντες ἰκανούς, having disciplined a good number.

The passive is beautiful in its own right. *Matthew 13:52*: “every scribe **which is instructed** unto the kingdom of heaven” — μαθητευθεὶς τῇ βασιλείᾳ — a man disciplined *to a kingdom*. And *Matthew 27:57*, of Joseph of Arimathaea, the rich man who had been disciplined to Jesus and who then asked for the body: the word’s last appearance in Matthew before the commission is a man burying Christ. Its next is a command to bury men with Him.

- What that burial is called: synthaptō συνθάπτω^{G4916}.

Μεσσίας (**messias**) *Messiah* — the Greek form of Messiah; a name of Christ. KJV: Messias. Of Hebrew origin (H4899) (G3323)

Νεεμάν (**neeman**) *Naaman* — commander-in-chief of the army of Syria. KJV: Naaman. Of Hebrew origin (H5283) (G3497)

Νῶε (**nōe**) *Noah* — the tenth in descent from Adam, second father of the human race. KJV: Noe. Of Hebrew origin (H5146) (G3575)

Πέτρος (**petros**) *Peter* — one of the twelve disciples of Jesus. KJV: Peter, rock. Apparently a primary word (G4074)

πίστις (**pistis**) *faith* — conviction of the truth of anything, belief; in the New Testament of a conviction or belief respecting man’s relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervour born of faith and joined with it; relating to God; relating to Christ; the religious beliefs of Christians; belief with the predominate idea of trust (or confidence) whether in God or in Christ, springing from faith in the same; fidelity, faithfulness; the character of one who can be relied on. KJV: assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity. From G3982 (G4102)

παλιγγενεσία (**palingenesia**) G3824 **Regeneration; a second becoming.** πάλιν, *again*, + γένεσις, *origin*. **Two occurrences in the whole New Testament** — *Matthew 19:28* and *Titus 3:5* — and that scarcity is the point. The word Scripture uses for the renewal of the entire created order is spent exactly once more: on what happens to a man in water.

This is not a word for a change of feeling. In every ancient usage it names *a new world on the far side of a catastrophe* — something has ended, and what follows is not a repair but a fresh origin.

Philo, and the flood. Philo of Alexandria calls Noah and his sons παλιγγενεσίας ἡγεμόνες — **leaders of the regeneration**. Writing in Greek, in the century of the

apostles, a Jew looking at the ark called the flood a *palingenesia*. Then Peter looks at that same flood and calls it the figure of baptism: eight souls saved through water, "the like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us" 1 Peter 3:20-21. And Paul calls the washing a washing of *regeneration*. Three witnesses, one picture: water that ends a world and carries a household out the far side.

Josephus uses it of the **restoration of the homeland** after the exile — a people who had lost everything, given their country back.

And Roman law used it, Liddell-Scott note, for *restitutio natalium*: the legal act by which a freedman's birth was re-recorded, so that he stood before the law as one **born free**. Manumission only ended the slavery. This went behind the slavery and rewrote the origin.

The hammer. Consider then what *Titus* 3:5 actually claims. Not that God improved us. Not that He freed a slave and left him a freedman with a past. He performed a *restitutio natalium*: the record now reads that you were born free — born of God, from the beginning. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration."

And the other occurrence sets the horizon. *Matthew* 19:28: "in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory." One word for what is done to a man at the water and what will be done to heaven and earth. Your baptism and the renewal of all things are the same act of God, begun early, in you.

- The bath it comes through: loutron λουτρόν^{G3067}.
- The burial it follows: synthaptō συνθάπτω^{G4916}.
- The pouring it is distinguished from, in the very next verse: ekcheō ἐκχέω^{G1632}.

παροξυσμός (**paroxysmos**) *stirring up* — an inciting, incitement; irritation. KJV: contention, provoke unto. From G3947 ("paroxysm") (G3948)

Παῦλος (**paulos**) *Paul* — Paul was the most famous of the apostles and wrote a good part of the New Testament, the 14 Pauline epistles; Paulus was a deputy or pro-consul of Cyprus and is said to be a prudent man, in the management of affairs, as a governor. KJV: Paul, Paulus. Of Latin origin (G3972)

Σάρρα (**sarrha**) *Sarah* — the wife of Abraham. KJV: Sara, Sarah. Of Hebrew origin (H8283) (G4564)

Σαμάρεια (**samareia**) *Samaria* — a territory in Palestine, which had Samaria as its capital. KJV: Samaria. Of Hebrew origin (H8111) (G4540)

Σαμουήλ (**samouēl**) *Samuel* — the son of Elkanah and Hannah, the last of the judges, a distinguished prophet, and a founder of the prophetic order, he gave the Jews there first kings, Saul, David. KJV: Samuel. Of Hebrew origin (H8050) (G4545)

Σαούλ (**saoul**) *Saul* — the Jewish name of the apostle Paul; the son of Kish and the first king of Israel. KJV: Saul. Of Hebrew origin (H7586) (G4549)

Σατανᾶς (**satanas**) *Satan* — adversary (one who opposes another in purpose or act), the name given to; the prince of evil spirits, the inveterate adversary of God and Christ; a Satan-like man. KJV: Satan. Of Chaldee origin corresponding to H4566 (with the definite affix) (G4567)

Σαῦλος (**saulos**) *Saul* — the Jewish name of the apostle Paul. KJV: Saul. Of Hebrew origin, the same as G4549 (G4569)

συνθάπτω (**synthaptō**) G4916 **To bury together with.** συν + θάπτω. Twice in the New Testament — *Romans 6:4* and *Colossians 2:12* — and **both times it is baptism.** The word exists in Scripture for no other purpose.

You bury only the dead. That is the whole logic of *Romans 6:4*, and it is why the form of the act cannot be detached from its meaning: a man is put *under*, out of sight, as a corpse is put under; and then he is raised. Strong's own note puts it plainly — Paul likens baptism to a burial by which the former sinfulness is *utterly taken away*, a thing the immersion of a believer pictures exactly.

And Paul will not let the power sit in the water. "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him **through the faith of the operation of God**" *Colossians 2:12*. The grave does not raise anybody. Faith in the God who raised Christ does. The water is where it is confessed.

The juice. Liddell-Scott's citation for the passive — *to be buried with* — is Herodotus 5.5, on the Thracians: of a man's several wives, the one judged best-loved was slain at his tomb and laid in the earth **with her husband**, τῷ ἀνδρί, and it was counted the highest honour among them. The one classical instance the lexicon reaches for is a wife going into the ground with the man she loved.

That is the verb Paul chose. Not a funeral only — a wedding at a graveside. She is not buried *near* him; she is buried *with* him, and the burial is how the union is declared before everyone watching.

The hammer. So the question is never "is this ritual necessary?" Paul does not offer baptism as a ceremony added to a union already complete. He offers it as the burial in which the union is enacted: buried with, raised with, joined to. If the old man was never put in the ground, what exactly came up?

- What comes up wears something new: endyō ἐνδύω^{G1746}.
- What it works: palingenesia παλιγγενεσία^{G3824}, through the loutron λουτρόν^{G3067} — the same word Greeks used for the washing of a bride *and* the libation over a grave.

τέκνον (teknon) G5043 **Offspring, descendant.** From τίκτω, to bear — *that which is born*. 91 occurrences. The word answers "whose?", never "how old?"

Watch it work anywhere else and the point makes itself. Children of the promise *Romans 9:8*. Children of light *Ephesians 5:8*. Children of obedience *1 Peter 1:14*. Children of wrath *Ephesians 2:3*. Children of the devil *1 John 3:10*. Nobody reads a single one of those as a statement about age. τέκνον names a line you belong to.

Abbott-Smith lists a use all its own: **of the inhabitants of a city** — *Matthew 23:37, Luke 13:34, Luke 19:44, Galatians 4:25*.

The hammer, and it is Luke's own. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem... how often would I have gathered thy *children* (τὰ τέκνα σου) together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, **and ye would not**" — *Luke 13:34*. Those τέκνα are grown men and women, and they are called τέκνα in the very clause that says they *refused*. Same word, same author, two books away from *Acts 2:39*.

So the reading that makes "the promise is unto you, and to your children" mean *infants receive the sign apart from faith* must also make Christ weep over Jerusalem's babies for a refusal they were too young to make. The verse will not carry it.

And Peter shuts the door himself, in the same breath. The promise runs to the children **and** "to all that are afar off" (εἰς μακράν) — the distant nations. If the word *children* secures baptism without faith, then *afar off* secures it too, and the whole world was baptized in a single sentence. Peter's own key is the clause he ends with: *even as many as the Lord our God shall call*. Wide as the world in its reach; personal as a call in its receiving.

Compare brephos βρέφος^{G1025} — the word that really does mean an infant, and never once stands beside βαπτίζω.

φιλέω (phileō) To love with the love of affection and friendship — Latin *amare* against the *diligere* of αγαπᾶω ἀγαπάω^{G25}. G5368 is warmth, fondness, personal attachment; it also means, quite concretely, to kiss, which is how Judas' signal is described.

It is not a lesser word in the sense of a suspect one. Scripture uses it of the Father's love for the Son (*John 5:20*) and of Christ's own affection: at the tomb of Lazarus the bystanders say *Behold how he loved him* (*John 11:36*), and they are reading real tears correctly. Its cognates fill out the ordinary human loves the Bible commends — philos φίλος^{G5384}, a friend; philadelphia φιλαδελφία^{G5360}, brotherly love; philandros φίλανδρος^{G5362} and philoteknos φιλότεκνος^{G5388} in *Titus 2:4*, the wife who loves husband and children.

But because φιλέω names attachment rather than commitment, it is also the word for attachments that ruin. The φιλ- compounds in *2 Timothy 3:2-4* are a catalogue of the last days: philautos φίλαυτος^{G5367}, lovers of self; philēdonos φιλήδονος^{G5369},

lovers of pleasure *more than* lovers of God, philotheos φιλόθεος^{G5377}. James warns that the philia φίλια^{G5373} of the world is enmity with God (*James 4:4*), and Paul names philargyria φιλαργυρία^{G5365}, love of money, as a root of all evil (*1 Timothy 6:10*).

Trench's classic distinction — agapan of judgment and deliberate choice, philein of personal attachment and feeling — is worth knowing and worth holding loosely. The two verbs overlap substantially in John, and the distinction, where it holds, is one of emphasis rather than of rank.

χάρτης (**chartēs**) *paper* — paper. KJV: paper. From the same as G5482 (G5489)

Χριστός (**christos**) *Christ* — Christ was the Messiah, the Son of God; anointed. KJV: Christ. From G5548 (G5547)

Ω (**ōmega**) *Omega* — the last letter in the Greek alphabet; the last. KJV: Omega (G5598)

אֱלֹהִים ('ēlōhîm) *God* — (plural); rulers, judges; divine ones; angels; gods; (plural intensive—singular meaning); god, goddess; godlike one; works or special possessions of God; the (true) God; God. KJV: angels, × exceeding, God, god(-s, -dess, -ly), × (very) great, judges, × mighty. Plural of H0433 (H430)

אֱמוּנָה ('ēṁûnâ) *faithfulness* — firmness, fidelity, steadfastness, steadiness. KJV: faith(-ful (man), -ly, -ness), set office, stability, steady, truly, truth, verily. Or (shortened) אֱמֻנָה; feminine of H0529 (H530)

אֲבָנָה ('ābānâ) *Abana* — river Abana, Syrian river flowing through Damascus. KJV: Abana. Perhaps feminine of H0068; compare H0549 (H71)

אָגָג ('āgag) *Agag* — king of Amalek, spared by Saul but slain by Samuel. KJV: Agag. Or אָגָג; of uncertain derivation (compare H0089); flame (H90)

אֲדָמָה ('ādāmâ) *land: soil* — ground, land; ground (as general, tilled, yielding sustenance); piece of ground, a specific plot of land; earth substance (for building or constructing); ground as earth's visible surface; land, territory, country; whole inhabited earth; city in Naphtali. KJV: country, earth, ground, husband(-man, -ry), land. From H0119 (H127)

אֲדֹנָי ('ādōnāy) *Lord* — my lord, lord; of men; of God; Lord—title, spoken in place of Jehovah in Jewish display of reverence. KJV: (my) Lord. An emphatic form of H0113 (H136)

אַרָם ('ārām) *Aram* — (n pr m) Aram or Syria the nation; the Syrian or Aramean people; (n m) fifth son of Shem; a grandson of Nahor; a descendant of Asher. KJV: Aram, Mesopotamia, Syria, Syrians. From the same as H0759; the highland (H758)

ֵל ('ēl) *God* — god, god-like one, mighty one; mighty men, men of rank, mighty heroes; angels; god, false god, (demons, imaginations); God, the one true God, Jehovah; mighty things in nature; strength, power. KJV: God (god), × goodly, × great, idol, might(-y one), power, strong. Shortened from H0352 (H410)

ֵיִיָּהּ ('ēliyyā) *Elijah* — the great prophet of the reign of Ahab; Benjamite son of Jeroham; a son of Elam with foreign wife during exile; a son of Harim, and priest, with foreign wife during exile. KJV: Elijah, Eliah. Or prolonged יֵיִיָּהּ; from H0410 and H3050; God of Jehovah (H452)

אֶבֶן ('eben) *stone* — stone (large or small); common stone (in natural state); stone, as material; precious stones, stones of fire; stones containing metal (ore), tool for work or weapon; weight; plummet (stones of destruction) also made of metal; stonelike objects, eg hailstones, stony heart, ice; sacred object, as memorial Samuel set up to mark where God helped Israel to defeat the Philistines; (simile); (metaphorically). KJV: + carbuncle, + mason, + plummet, (chalk-, hail-, head-, sling-)stone(-ny), (divers) weight(-s). From the root of H1129 through the meaning to build (H68)

אֱמֶת ('emet) *truth: faithful* — (n f) firmness, faithfulness, truth; sureness, reliability; stability, continuance; faithfulness, reliableness; truth; (adv) in truth, truly. KJV: assured(-ly), establishment, faithful, right, sure, true(-ly, -th), verity. Contracted from H0539 (H571)

אַבְרָהָם ('abrāhām) *Abraham* — friend of God and founder of Hebrew nation via God's elective covenant. KJV: Abraham. Contracted from H0001 and an unused root (probably meaning to be populous); father of a multitude (H85)

אַבְרָם ('abrām) *Abram* — original name of Abraham. KJV: Abram. Contracted from H0048; high father (H87)

אָב ('āb) *father* — father of an individual; of God as father of his people; head or founder of a household, group, family, or clan; ancestor; grandfather, forefathers (of a person); of people; originator or patron of a class, profession, or art; of producer, generator (figuratively); of benevolence and protection (figuratively); term of respect and honor; ruler or chief (specifically). KJV: chief, (fore-)father(-less), × patrimony, principal. A primitive word (H1)

אָדָם ('ādām) *to redden* — to be red, red; (Qal) ruddy (of Nazarites); (Pual); (Hiphil); (Hithpael). KJV: be (dyed, made) red (ruddy). אָדָם (H119)

אָדָם ('ādām) *man* — man, mankind; man, human being; man, mankind (much more frequently intended sense in Old Testament); Adam, first man; city in Jordan valley.

KJV: × another, + hypocrite, + common sort, × low, man (mean, of low degree), person. From H0119 (H120)

אהב (ahav) The ordinary, wide verb for love in the Hebrew Bible, and the workhorse of the whole subject. Brown-Driver-Briggs spreads it across the full range of human attachment: a man for a woman, a father for a son, friend for friend, and the appetite of a man for food, drink or sleep — and then across the same range Godward and manward, God’s love for individuals, for Israel, and for righteousness.

Its breadth is the point. H157 describes the *direction* of a heart without, by itself, pronouncing on whether the heart is right. Scripture uses it of Abraham’s love for Isaac in *Genesis 22:2* — its first occurrence anywhere in the Bible, and a love commanded to give up what it loves — and of Amnon’s obsession with Tamar in *2 Samuel 13:1*, four verses before the rape and fourteen before the hatred that outweighed it.

That is a deliberate feature of the Hebrew, not a defect. The word names the fact of love; the context, the object and the cost pronounce the verdict. A reader who expects the vocabulary to do his moral work for him will misread the Old Testament repeatedly.

In the intensive stems the participle carries the sense of *lover*, used figuratively of adulterers; the noun is *ahavah* אהבה^{H160}. The Septuagint most often renders it with *agapaō ἀγαπάω*^{G25}, which is how the Greek word came to carry the covenant weight it has in the New Testament.

אמן (’āmēn) *amen* — verily, truly, amen, so be it. KJV: Amen, so be it, truth. From H0539 (H543)

אמן (’āman) *be faithful* — to support, confirm, be faithful; (Qal); (Niphal); (Hiphil). KJV: hence, assurance, believe, bring up, establish, + fail, be faithful (of long continuance, steadfast, sure, surely, trusty, verified), nurse(-d, -ing father), (put), trust, turn to the right. A primitive root; (Isaiah 30:21; interchangeable with H0541, to go to the right hand) (H539)

ארון (’ārôn) *ark* — chest, ark; money chest; Ark of the Covenant; coffin. KJV: ark, chest, coffin. Or אָרָן; from H0717 (in the sense of gathering) (H727)

גלגל (gilgāl) *Gilgal* — the first site of an Israelite camp west of the Jordan, east of Jericho, here Samuel was judge, and Saul was made king; later used for illicit worship; dwelling place of prophets in northern Israel about four miles (7 km) from Shiloh and Bethel; a region conquered by Joshua, site unsure. KJV: Gilgal. The same as H1536 (with the article as a properly, noun) (H1537)

גלל (gālāl) *to roll* — to roll, roll away, roll down, roll together; (Qal) to roll; (Niphal); (Pilpel) to roll; (Poal) to be rolled; (Hithpoel) to roll oneself; (Hithpalpel) to roll

oneself; (Hiphil) to roll away. KJV: commit, remove, roll (away, down, together), run down, seek occasion, trust, wallow. A primitive root (H1556)

גֹּמֶה (gōme ') *reed* — rush, reed, papyrus. KJV: (bul-)rush. From H1572 (H1573)

דָּנִיֵּיֶל (dāniyyēl) *Daniel* — the 2nd son of David, by Abigail the Carmelitess; the 4th of the greater prophets, taken as hostage in the first deportation to Babylon, because of the gift of God of the interpretation of dreams, he became the 2nd in command of the Babylon empire and lasted through the end of the Babylonian empire and into the Persian empire. His prophecies are the key to the understanding of end time events. Noted for his purity and holiness by contemporary prophet, Ezekiel; also, 'Belteshazzar' (H1095 or H1096); a priest of the line of Ithamar who sealed the covenant with Nehemiah. KJV: Daniel. In Ezekiel it is; **דָּנְיָאֵל**; from H1835 and H0410; judge of God (H1840)

דָּוִד (dāwid) *David* — youngest son of Jesse and second king of Israel. KJV: David. Rarely (fully); **דָּוִיד**; from the same as H1730; loving (H1732)

דֹּד (dod) The lover's word. H1730 means a beloved one, and in the plural the acts and tokens of love; it also carries the quite separate sense of *uncle*, a kinsman on the father's side.

It is the pulse of the Song of Solomon, where the bride says *thy love is better than wine* (Song of Solomon 1:2). But Scripture places the identical word in a second mouth. In *Proverbs 7:18* the adulteress calls to the young man: *Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning* — dod again, spoken beautifully, and the chapter ends with an ox led to slaughter and a dart through the liver.

One word, two verdicts. The difference is not in the vocabulary, nor in the desire, nor in its intensity, all of which are the same in both passages. God Himself supplies the difference in *Ezekiel 16:8*, where He describes His own courtship of Israel: *thy time was the time of love* — dod — and then, in order, *I covered thy nakedness, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant, thou becamest mine*.

The oath precedes the belonging. That sequence is the biblical doctrine of desire in miniature: the same longing is blessed inside a covenant and lethal outside one, because what it does to a person is permanent either way.

הֶבֶל (hebel) *Abel* — second son of Adam and Eve, killed by his brother Cain. KJV: Abel. The same as H1892 (H1893)

הָר (har) *mountain: mount* — hill, mountain, hill country, mount. KJV: hill (country), mount(-ain), × promotion. A shortened form of H2042 (H2022)

הָמָן (hāmān) *Haman* — chief minister of Ahasuerus, enemy of Mordecai and the Jews, who plotted to kill the Jews but, being foiled by Esther, was hanged, with his fam-

ily, on the gallows he had made for Mordecai. KJV: Haman. Of foreign derivation (H2001)

הָרַ (hōr) (*Mount*) *Hor* — the mountain on which Aaron died; situated on the eastern side of the valley of Arabah, the highest of the whole range of sandstone mountains in Edom; on the eastern side is the ancient city of Petra; the mountain named as one of the marks of the northern boundary of the land which the children of Israel were about to conquer; located in Lebanon. KJV: Hor. Another form of H2022; mountain (H2023)

הוֹשֵׁעַ (hōšēa ') *Hoshea* — family name of Joshua, the son of Nun; the 19th and last king of the northern kingdom of Israel; son of Beerī, and the first of the minor prophets; prophet to the northern kingdom of Israel in the reign of Jeroboam II; a son of Azaziah, a chief of Ephraim in the time of David; an Israelite chief who sealed the covenant with Nehemiah. KJV: Hosea, Hoshea, Oshea. From H3467; deliverer (H1954)

זֶפֶת (zepet) *pitch* — pitch, tar, asphalt. KJV: pitch. From an unused root (meaning to liquify) (H2203)

חַנַּנְיָהּ (hānanyâ) *Hananiah* — the godly friend of Daniel whom Nebuchadnezzar renamed Shadrach; one of the three friends who with Daniel refused to make themselves unclean by eating food from the king's table which went against the dietary laws which God had given the Jews; also one of the three who were thrown into the fiery furnace for refusing to bow down to a graven image of Nebuchadnezzar and who were saved by the angel of the Lord. See also, 'Shadrach' (H7714 or H7715); one of the 14 sons of Heman and chief of the 16th course; a general in the army of King Uzziah; father of Zedekiah in the time of Jehoiakim; son of Azur, a Benjamite of Gibeon and a false prophet in the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah; grandfather of Irijah, the captain of the ward at the gate of Benjamin who arrested Jeremiah on the charge of deserting to the Chaldeans; a head of a Benjamite house; son of Zerubbabel from whom Christ derived His descent also called 'Joanna' by Luke; one of the sons of Bebai who returned with Ezra from Babylon; a priest, one of the makers of the sacred ointments and incense, who built a portion of the wall of Jerusalem in the days of Nehemiah; head of the priestly course of Jeremiah in the days of Joiakim; ruler of the palace at Jerusalem under Nehemiah and also, along with Hanani, the Tirshatha's brother, entrusted with the arrangements of guarding the gates of Jerusalem; Two post exilic Israelites. KJV: Hananiah. Or **יְחֲנַנְיָהּ**; from H2603 and H3050; Jah has favored (H2608)

חֵמָר (hēmār) *bitumen* — slime, pitch, asphalt, bitumen. KJV: slime(-pit). From H2560 (H2564)

חֵן (**hēn**) *favor* — favor, grace, charm; favor, grace, elegance; favor, acceptance. KJV: favour, grace(-ious), pleasant, precious, (well-)favoured. From H2603 (H2580)

חֶסֶד (**chesed**) The great covenant word of the Old Testament, and the one English cannot carry in a single term. The King James Version renders it *lovingkindness* thirty times, and elsewhere *mercy*, *kindness*, *goodness*, *favour*; the American Standard reserves *lovingkindness* for God's H2617 and *kindness* for man's. The root is thought to mean to bow or incline oneself, hence to be gracious.

What all the renderings circle is this: chesed is **loyalty that has given its word**. It is not benevolence in general but faithfulness inside a relationship — the steady, obligated, freely-promised kindness of one party to another who has a claim on him. Love with a spine.

It stands at the centre of God's self-description in *Exodus 34:6-7*, where He proclaims His own name — and where He sets *abundant in goodness and truth* beside *will by no means clear the guilty*, refusing to let His love be read as the suspension of His justice.

Its most important property is duration under bad conditions. Because chesed is anchored in a promise rather than in the loveliness of its object, it survives what affection cannot: *Jeremiah 31:3* speaks of an everlasting love drawing a treacherous people, and in *Hosea 3:1* God commands a prophet to love an adulteress *according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel* — offering His own covenant loyalty as the pattern.

Note that Brown-Driver-Briggs also lists a homonym חָסַד meaning *shame* or *reproach* (as in *Leviticus 20:17*). It is a separate word, and no argument should be built on the overlap.

הַרְמוֹן (**hermôn**) (*Mount*) *Hermon* — a mountain on the northeastern border of Palestine and Lebanon and overlooking the border city of Dan. KJV: Hermon. From H2763; abrupt (H2768)

חַנָּה (**hannâ**) *Hannah* — the mother of Samuel, one of the wives of Elkanah. KJV: Hannah. From H2603; favored (H2584)

חָם (**hām**) *Ham* — (n pr m) 2nd son of Noah, father of Canaan and of various peoples which were inhabitants of southern lands; in late usage, a collective name for Egyptians; (n pr loc) the place where Chedorlaomer smote the Zuzim, probably in the territory of Ammonites (Gilead) east of the Jordan. KJV: Ham. The same as H2525; hot (from the tropical habitat) (H2526)

חָרַב (**hārab**) *to dry* — to be waste, lay waste, make desolate, be desolate, be in ruins; (Qal) to be waste, be desolate; (Niphal); (Hiphil) to lay waste, make desolate; (Hophal) to be laid waste; to be dry, be dried up; (Qal) to be dried, be dried up; (Pual) to be

dried; (Hiphil) to dry up; (Hophal) to be dried up; to attack, smite down, slay, fight. KJV: decay, (be) desolate, destroy(-er), (be) dry (up), slay, × surely, (lay, lie, make) waste. Or **חָרַב**; a primitive root (H2717)

חָרַם (**hāram**) *to devote/destroy* — to ban, devote, destroy utterly, completely destroy, dedicate for destruction, exterminate; (Hiphil); (Hophal); to split, slit, mutilate (a part of the body); (Qal) to mutilate; (Hiphil) to divide. KJV: make accursed, consecrate, (utterly) destroy, devote, forfeit, have a flat nose, utterly (slay, make away). A primitive root (H2763)

חֹרֵב (**hōrēb**) *Horeb* — another name for Mount Sinai from which God gave the law to Moses and the Israelites. KJV: Horeb. From H2717; desolate (H2722)

טָבַל (**tābal**) *to dip* — to dip, dip into, plunge; (Qal); (Niphal) to be dipped. KJV: dip, plunge. A primitive root (H2881)

טָהַר (**tāhēr**) *be pure* — to be clean, be pure; (Qal); (Piel); (Pual) to be cleansed, be pronounced clean; (Hithpael). KJV: be (make, make self, pronounce) clean, cleanse (self), purge, purify(-ier) (self). A primitive root; properly, to be bright; i.e., (by implication) (H2891)

יְהוָה (**yěhōwâ**) *LORD* — the proper name of the one true God; unpronounced except with the vowel pointings of H0136. KJV: Jehovah, the Lord. From H1961 (H3068)

יְהוֹשֻׁעַ (**yěhōšûa**) *Joshua* — (n pr m) son of Nun of the tribe of Ephraim and successor to Moses as the leader of the children of Israel; led the conquest of Canaan; a resident of Beth-shemesh on whose land the Ark of the Covenant came to a stop after the Philistines returned it; son of Jehozadak and high priest after the restoration; governor of Jerusalem under king Josiah who gave his name to a gate of the city of Jerusalem. KJV: Jehoshua, Jehoshuah, Joshua. Or **יְהוֹשָׁע**; from H3068 and H3467; Jehovah-saved (H3091)

יְהוּדָה (**yěhûdâ**) *Judah* — the son of Jacob by Leah; the tribe descended from Judah the son of Jacob; the territory occupied by the tribe of Judah; the kingdom comprised of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin which occupied the southern part of Canaan after the nation split upon the death of Solomon; a Levite in Ezra's time; an overseer of Jerusalem in the time of Nehemiah; a Levite musician in the time of Nehemiah; a priest in the time of Nehemiah. KJV: Judah. From H3034; celebrated (H3063)

יְרוּשָׁלַיִם (**yěrûšālaïm**) *Jerusalem* — the chief city of Palestine and capital of the united kingdom and the nation of Judah after the split. KJV: Jerusalem. Rarely **יְרוּשָׁלַיִם**; a dual (in allusion to its two main hills (the true pointing, at least of the former reading, seems to be that of H3390)); probably from (the passive participle of) H3384 and H7999; founded peaceful (H3389)

יִשְׂרָאֵל (yisrā'ēl) *Israel* — the second name for Jacob given to him by God after his wrestling with the angel at Peniel; the name of the descendants and the nation of the descendants of Jacob; the name of the nation until the death of Solomon and the split; the name used and given to the northern kingdom consisting of the 10 tribes under Jeroboam; the southern kingdom was known as Judah; the name of the nation after the return from exile. KJV: Israel. From H8280 and H0410 (H3478)

יַעֲקֹב (ya'ăqōb) *Jacob* — son of Isaac, grandson of Abraham, and father of the 12 patriarchs of the tribes of Israel. KJV: Jacob. From H6117; heel-catcher (i.e., supplanter) (H3290)

יַרְדֵּן (yardēn) *Jordan* — the river of Palestine running from the roots of Anti-Lebanon to the Dead Sea a distance of approximately 200 miles (320 km). KJV: Jordan. From H3381; a descender (H3383)

יָדָה (yādâ) *to give thanks* — to throw, shoot, cast; (Qal) to shoot (arrows); (Piel) to cast, cast down, throw down; (Hiphil); (Hithpael). KJV: cast (out), (make) confess(-ion), praise, shoot, (give) thank(-ful, -s, -sgiving). A primitive root; used only as denominative from H3027; literally, to use (i.e., hold out) the hand (H3034)

יָרַד (yārad) *to go down* — to go down, descend, decline, march down, sink down; (Qal); (Hiphil); (Hophal). KJV: × abundantly, bring down, carry down, cast down, (cause to) come(-ing) down, fall (down), get down, go(-ing) down(-ward), hang down, × indeed, let down, light (down), put down (off), (cause to, let) run down, sink, subdue, take down. A primitive root (H3381)

יֹנָה (yônâ) *Jonah* — son of Amittai and a native of Gath-hepher; 5th of the minor prophets who prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II and whom God sent also to prophecy to Nineveh. KJV: Jonah. The same as H3123 (H3124)

כָּבַס (kābas) *Washer's* — to wash (by treading), be washed, perform the work of a fuller; (Qal) washer, fuller, treader (participle); (Piel) to wash (garments, person); (Pual) to be washed; (Hothpael) to be washed out. KJV: fuller, wash(-ing). A primitive root (H3526)

כָּפַר (kāpar) *to atone* — to cover, purge, make an atonement, make reconciliation, cover over with pitch; (Qal) to coat or cover with pitch; (Piel); (Pual); (Hithpael) to be covered. KJV: appease, make (an atonement, cleanse, disannul, forgive, be merciful, pacify, pardon, purge (away), put off, (make) reconcile(-liation). A primitive root (H3722)

כֹּפֶר (kōper) *ransom* — price of a life, ransom, bribe; asphalt, pitch (as a covering); the henna plant, name of a plant (henna?); village. KJV: bribe, camphire, pitch, ransom, satisfaction, sum of money, village. From H3722 (H3724)

מִנָּה (mēnē ') *mina* — (P'al) mina, maneh; a weight or measurement; usually 50 shekels but maybe 60 shekels. KJV: Mene. Passive participle of H4483 (H4484)

מִצְרַיִם (miṣrayim) *Egypt* — (n pr loc) a country at the northeastern section of Africa, adjacent to Palestine, and through which the Nile flows; (adj) the inhabitants or natives of Egypt. KJV: Egypt, Egyptians, Mizraim. Dual of H4693 (H4714)

מִקְוֵה (miqweh) H4723 **A gathering of waters — and a hope.** One word, both meanings, ten occurrences. The root is qāwāh קָוָה^{H6960}, *to wait, to hope*: what is **collected** and what is **waited for** are the same act in Hebrew.

The water. The first time the word appears, God is speaking creation into order: "the *gathering together* of the waters called he Seas" *Genesis 1:10*. It is used of the pools of Egypt turned to blood *Exodus 7:19*. And then, quietly, in the middle of the purity laws: "a fountain or pit, wherein there is a **miqveh** of waters, shall be clean" *Leviticus 11:36*.

That verse is the whole foundation of the mikveh. The water must be *gathered* — rain, spring, river — never drawn and carried in a vessel. Hence *living water*: it has to come to the pool by itself. This is why John baptized at Aenon "because there was much water there," and why a Jew reading the Gospels needed no explanation of what John was doing.

The hope. "Yet now there is **hope** in Israel concerning this thing" *Ezra 10:2*. "O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble" *Jeremiah 14:8*. "The LORD, the hope of their fathers" *Jeremiah 50:7*.

The hammer — and Jeremiah swings it. "O LORD, the **miqveh** of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed... because they have forsaken the LORD, **the fountain of living waters**" *Jeremiah 17:13*.

Read it again with the double meaning restored. *O LORD, the gathered pool of Israel... they have forsaken the fountain of living water*. In one verse Jeremiah names God as the cleansing bath and as the Hope, and charges Israel with walking away from the only water that was ever alive. Every mikveh in the land was a hole in the ground with His name on it.

They went down into *hope* to be made clean, generation after generation, and did not yet see that the Hope was a Him. Then He came, and stood in the Jordan, and went under it Himself.

- Letter pictures: מ water, chaos → פ the hindmost, the circle, time → י the tent peg that fastens → א the man with arms raised, *behold*. Numeric value 151.
- The Greek the Septuagint reaches for when a man goes down into such water: baptizō βαπτίζω^{G907}.

- מֶצָר (mēṣar)** *terror* — straits, distress. KJV: distress, pain, strait. From H6869 (H4712)
- מָר (mar)** *bitter* — (adj) bitter, bitterness; of water or food; of harlot's end, end of wickedness, cry (figuratively); of pain (subst); (adv) bitterly. KJV: + angry, bitter(-ly, -ness), chafed, discontented, × great, heavy. Or (feminine) מָרָה; from H4843 (H4751)
- מָן (mān)** *manna* — manna; the bread from Heaven that fed the Israelites for 40 years of wilderness wanderings; means 'What is it?'. KJV: manna. From H4100 (H4478)
- מָרָא (mārā ')** *Mara* — a name that Naomi called herself due to her calamities. KJV: Mara. For H4751 feminine; bitter (H4755)
- מָרָה (mārâ)** *Marah* — the spring with bitter water which was 3 days travel from the crossing place of the Red Sea in the peninsula of Sinai. KJV: Marah. The same as H4751 feminine; bitter (H4785)
- מָשִׁיחַ (māšîaḥ)** *anointed* — anointed, anointed one; of the Messiah, Messianic prince; of the king of Israel; of the high priest of Israel; of Cyrus; of the patriarchs as anointed kings. KJV: anointed, Messiah. From H4886 (H4899)
- מָשָׂה (māšâ)** *to draw* — to draw; (Qal) to draw; (Hiphil) to draw. KJV: draw(out). A primitive root (H4871)
- מֹשֶׁה (mōše)** *Moses* — the prophet and lawgiver, leader of the exodus. KJV: Moses. From H4871; drawing out (of the water), i.e., rescued (H4872)
- נְשָׁמָה (něšāmâ)** *breath* — breath, spirit; breath (of God); breath (of man); every breathing thing; spirit (of man). KJV: blast, (that) breath(-eth), inspiration, soul, spirit. From H5395 (H5397)
- נַעֲמָן (na ' āmān)** *Naaman* — son of Bela of the family of Benjamin; he was among the family of Jacob that went down to Egypt; commander-in-chief of the army of Syria; stricken with leprosy he went to Elisha, eventually followed his instructions, and was cured. KJV: Naaman. The same as H5282 (H5283)
- נֹחַ (nōaḥ)** *Noah* — son of Lamech, father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth; builder of the ark which saved his family from the destruction of the world which God sent on the world by the flood; became the new seminal head of the human race because his family were the only survivors of the flood. KJV: Noah. The same as H5118; rest (H5146)
- נָחַ (nūaḥ)** *to rest* — to rest; (Qal); (Hiph); (Hoph). KJV: cease, be confederate, lay, let down, (be) quiet, remain, (cause to, be at, give, have, make to) rest, set down. A primitive root (H5117)

עֲזַרְיָה (‘*ăzaryâ*) *Azariah* — son of king Amaziah of Judah and king of Judah himself for 52 years; also ‘Uzziah’; the godly friend of Daniel who Nebuchadnezzar renamed Abednego; one of the three friends who with Daniel refused to make themselves unclean by eating food from the king’s table which went against the dietary laws which God had given the Jews; also one of the three who were thrown into the fiery furnace for refusing to bow down to a graven image of Nebuchadnezzar and who were saved by the angel of the Lord; also, ‘Abednego’ (H5664 or H5665); son of Nathan and an officer of Solomon; perhaps David’s grandson and Solomon’s nephew; a prophet in the days of king Asa of Judah; son of king Jehoshaphat of Judah and brother to 5; another son of king Jehoshaphat of Judah and brother to 4; a priest, son of Ahimaaz, grandson of Zadok and high priest in the reign of king Solomon; the high priest in the reign of king Uzziah of Judah; a priest who sealed the covenant with Nehemiah; probably same as 18; a Kohathite Levite, father of Joel in the reign of king Hezekiah of Judah; a Merarite Levite, son of Jehalelel in the reign of king Hezekiah of Judah; a Kohathite Levite, son of Zephaniah and ancestor of Samuel the prophet; a Levite who helped Ezra in instructing the people in the law; son of Jeroham and one of the temple captains of Judah in the time of queen Athaliah; probably the same as 21; son of Maaseiah who repaired part of the wall of Jerusalem in the time of Nehemiah; one of the leaders who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel; a man who assisted in the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem in the time of Nehemiah; probably the same as 10; son of Johanan, one of the captains of Ephraim in the reign of king Ahaz of Judah; a Judaite, son of Ethan of the sons of Zerah; a Judaite, son of Jehu of the family of the Jerahmeelites and descended from Jarha the Egyptian slave of Sheshan; probably one of the captains of the time of queen Athaliah and the same as 15; a priest, son of Hilkiah; a priest, son of Johanan; son of king Jehoram of Judah; probably clerical error for ‘Ahaziah’; son of Meraioth; son of Hoshai and one of the proud men who confronted Jeremiah. KJV: Azariah. Or **עֲזַרְיָהוּ**; from H5826 and H3050; Jah has helped (H5838)

עַמְלֵק (‘*ămālēq*) *Amalek* — son of Eliphaz by his concubine Timnah, grandson of Esau, and progenitor of a race of people in southern Canaan; descendants of Amalek. KJV: Amalek. Probably of foreign origin (H6002)

עֲרָב (‘*ārāb*) *Arabia* — steppe-dwellers; the people inhabiting the country east and south of Canaan, the nomadic desert Bedouins; Arabians, Arabs. KJV: Arabia. Or **עֲרָב**; from H6150 in the figurative sense of sterility (H6152)

עֵדֶן (‘*ēden*) *Eden* — (n pr m loc) the first habitat of man after the creation; site unknown; (n pr m) a Gershonite Levite, son of Joah in the days of king Hezekiah of Judah. KJV: Eden. The same as H5730 (masculine) (H5731)

עָזַר (‘āzar) *to help* — to help, succour, support; (Qal) to help; (Niphal) to be helped; (Hiphil) to help. KJV: help, succour. A primitive root (H5826)

פָּרַס (pēras) *to divide* — (v) (P’al) to break in two, divide; (n m) half-mina, half-shekel; a unit of measure and weight. KJV: divide, (U-)pharsin. Corresponding to H6536 (H6537)

פָּרְפַר (parpar) *Pharpar* — a stream in the district of Damascus identified with the modern ‘Awaj’; rises on the southeast slopes of Mount Hermon and flows into the southernmost lake of Damascus. KJV: Pharpar. Probably from H6565 in the sense of rushing; rapid (H6554)

קִנְיָה (qinah) Jealousy, zeal, ardour — and, in the wrong direction, envy. ISBE observes that the root idea behind both the Hebrew H7068 and the Greek ζῆλος is *warmth* or *heat*, and that both are used in a good and a bad sense, for right passion and wrong.

A caution against a common claim: it is often said that Hebrew distinguishes envy from jealousy where English has blurred them. The reverse is true. **English has two words; Hebrew has one.** Qinah covers the whole range, and the King James translators render it *envy* in a number of places — *who is able to stand before envy?* (*Proverbs 27:4*), and again at *Job 5:2*, *Proverbs 14:30*, *Ecclesiastes 4:4* and *Isaiah 11:13*. The word names a heat; the context decides whether the heat is righteous.

What Scripture’s usage does require is the underlying distinction, since it condemns the one and takes the other as a divine name. The wrong heat reaches for what belongs to another; the right heat guards what is genuinely one’s own and has been sworn to. The first has no claim; the second is the necessary reflex of a covenant actually meant.

Scripture sets qinah in direct parallel with love, not in opposition to it:

Love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame (Song of Solomon 8:6).

There ahavah אָהָבָה^{H160} and qinah are one fire. This is why God takes it as a name — *the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God (Exodus 34:14)*, and *the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God (Deuteronomy 4:24)*. The claim is not that God is insecure but that He is bound: He swore an oath (*Ezekiel 16:8*) and will not watch it broken with indifference.

It also explains why the prophets describe idolatry as adultery rather than as an error of reasoning, and why James can call worldly Christians *adulterers and adulteresses (James 4:4)*. Where there is a covenant, betrayal is the category.

קָוָה (qāwâ) *to await* — to wait, look for, hope, expect; (Qal) waiting (participle); (Piel); to collect, bind together; (Niphal) to be collected. KJV: gather (together), look, patiently, tarry, wait (for, on, upon). A primitive root (H6960)

רַב (rab) *many* — (adj) much, many, great; much; many; abounding in; more numerous than; abundant, enough; great; strong; greater than; (adv) much, exceedingly; (n m) captain, chief. KJV: (in) abound(-undance, -ant, -antly), captain, elder, enough, exceedingly, full, great(-ly) (man, one), increase, long (enough, (time)), (do, have) many(-ifold) (things, a time), (ship-)master, mighty, more, (too, very) much, multiply(-tude), officer, often(-times), plenteous, populous, prince, process (of time), suffice(-lent). By contracted from H7231 (H7227)

רָהַב (rahab) *Rahab monster* — storm, arrogance (but only as names); mythical sea monster; emblematic name of Egypt. KJV: Rahab. The same as H7293 (H7294)

רַחַם (racham) To have compassion, to love deeply, to be moved with tender pity. What makes H7355 distinctive is that it is not an abstraction: the verb is built on the noun racham **רַחֵם**^{H7356}, the **womb**. To have racham for someone is to feel toward them what a mother feels for the child she carried — an inward turning that happens in the body before it is reasoned.

Scripture uses it unembarrassedly of God. In *Psalms 103:13* the LORD *pitieth them that fear him* as a father pities his children. In *Isaiah 49:15* God takes the strongest natural love the world knows — a nursing mother and her infant — concedes that even it can fail, and plants His own love on the far side of that failure.

Two errors die here. Racham refutes the notion that God's love is bare sovereign will with no warmth in it; the God of the Bible has insides, and they move. And it equally refutes the assumption that because God feels with us He must therefore agree with us — the same prophets who record His racham record His judgments, and a mother's love for a child is precisely not indifference to what the child swallows.

The Septuagint and the New Testament carry the body-language over into Greek in the verb built on *σπλάγχνα*, the inward parts, used when Christ is *moved with compassion*.

רָחַץ (rāḥaṣ) *to wash: wash* — to wash, wash off, wash away, bathe; (Qal); (Pual) to be washed; (Hithpael) to wash oneself. KJV: bathe (self), wash (self). A primitive root (H7364)

רָהַב (rāḥāb) *Rahab* — a harlot of Jericho who aided the spies to escape; saved from the destruction of Jericho; married Salmon, an ancestor of David and of Christ; commended for her faith in the book of James. KJV: Rahab. The same as H7342; proud (H7343)

שְׁאוֹל (šē 'ôl) *hell: Sheol* — sheol, underworld, grave, hell, pit; the underworld; Sheol—the Old Testament designation for the abode of the dead. KJV: grave, hell, pit. Or שְׁאָל; from H7592 (H7585)

שְׁמוּעַל (šēmû 'ēl) *Samuel* — son of Elkanah by his wife Hannah and judge or prophet of Israel during the days of Saul and David; son Ammihud and the prince of the tribe of Simeon who was chosen to divide the land of Canaan between the tribes. Spelled 'Shemuel'; son of Tola and grandson of Issachar. Spelled 'Shemuel'. KJV: Samuel, Shemuel. From the passive participle of H8085 and H0410; heard of God (H8050)

שָׁאַל (šā 'al) *to ask* — to ask, enquire, borrow, beg; (Qal); (Niphal) to ask for oneself, ask leave of absence; (Piel); (Hiphil). KJV: ask (counsel, on), beg, borrow, lay to charge, consult, demand, desire, × earnestly, enquire, + greet, obtain leave, lend, pray, request, require, + salute, × straitly, × surely, wish. Or שְׁאָל; a primitive root (H7592)

שָׁאֻל (šā 'ûl) *Saul* — a Benjamite, son of Kish, and the 1st king of Israel; an early king of Edom and a successor of Samlah; a son of Simeon; a Levite, son of Uziah. KJV: Saul, Shaul. Passive participle of H7592; asked (H7586)

שָׁמַע (šāma ') *to hear: hear* — (v) to hear, listen to, obey; (Qal); (Niphal); (Piel) to cause to hear, call to hear, summon; (Hiphil); (n m) sound. KJV: × attentively, call (gather) together, × carefully, × certainly, consent, consider, be content, declare, × diligently, discern, give ear, (cause to, let, make to) hear(-ken) (tell), × indeed, listen, make (a) noise, (be) obedient, obey, perceive, (make a) proclaim(-ation), publish, regard, report, shew (forth), (make a) sound, × surely, tell, understand, whosoever (heareth), witness. A primitive root (H8085)

שֹׁמְרוֹן (šōmērôn) *Samaria* — the region of northern Palestine associated with the northern kingdom of the 10 tribes of Israel which split from the kingdom after the death of Solomon during the reign of his son Rehoboam and were ruled by Jeroboam; the capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel located 30 miles (50 km) north of Jerusalem and 6 miles (10 km) northwest of Shechem. KJV: Samaria. From the active participle of H8104; watch-station (H8111)

שָׂר (sar) *ruler* — prince, ruler, leader, chief, chieftain, official, captain; chieftain, leader; vassal, noble, official (under king); captain, general, commander (military); chief, head, overseer (of other official classes); heads, princes (of religious office); elders (of representative leaders of people); merchant-princes (of rank and dignity); patron-angel; Ruler of rulers (of God); warden. KJV: captain (that had rule), chief (captain), general, governor, keeper, lord, (task-)master, prince(-ipal), ruler, steward. From H8323 (H8269)

שָׂטָן (**sātān**) *Satan* — adversary, one who withstands; adversary (in general—personal or national); superhuman adversary; Satan (as noun pr). KJV: adversary, Satan, withstand. From H7853 (H7854)

שָׂרַי (**sāray**) *Sarai* — original name of Sarah the wife of Abram or Abraham. KJV: Sarai. From H8269; dominative (H8297)

שָׂרָה (**sārâ**) *to strive* — contend, have power, contend with, persist, exert oneself, persevere; (Qal) to persevere, contend with. KJV: have power (as a prince). A primitive root (H8280)

תֵּקֵל (**tēqal**) *to weigh* — (v) to weigh; (P'il) to be weighed; (n m) tekell, shekel; (P'al) tekell (a unit of weight), shekel. KJV: Tekell, be weighed. Corresponding to H8254 (H8625)

תֵּבָה (**tēbâ**) *ark* — ark; vessel which Noah built; basket vessel in which Moses was placed. KJV: ark. Perhaps of foreign derivation (H8392)

Ἀβραάμ (**abraam**) *Abraham* — the son of Terah and the founder of the Jewish nation. KJV: Abraham. Of Hebrew origin (H0085) (G11)

ἀγάπη (**agapē**) The New Testament's principal word for love, and very nearly a Christian coinage. Deissmann observed that outside biblical and ecclesiastical writing there is no clear instance of G26; the noun is essentially unattested in classical Greek, though the verb *agapaō* ἀγαπᾶω^{G25} is ordinary enough. The Septuagint had already pressed it into service for *ahavah* אָהַבָה^{H160}, and the apostles took it over to name the bond between God and man, and between man and man in Christ.

Abbott-Smith distinguishes it from its neighbours: from *φιλία*, friendship; from *στοργή*, natural family affection; and from *ἔρως*, sexual love, which the New Testament never uses at all, its place being taken by *epithymia* ἐπιθυμία^{G1939}. Where *φιλέω* is spontaneous, emotional attachment, *agapē* is *love which chooses its object* — and therefore, as Abbott-Smith notes, love that **can be commanded as a duty**, which no mere feeling can be.

That last point is the practical hinge of the whole New Testament ethic. Love God, love your neighbour, love your enemies, husbands love your wives: every one of these is an imperative, and none of them asks a man to manufacture an emotion first.

Two cautions. First, *agapē* is not a magic word. The same verb describes men who *loved darkness rather than light* (John 3:19), Demas who *loved this present world* (2 Timothy 4:10), and rulers who *loved the praise of men more than the praise of God* (John 12:43). The container does not sanctify what is put in it; the object and the cost

do. Second, the popular sharp split between *agapē* and φιλέω in *John 21:15-17* is a traditional reading, not a settled one — John uses the two verbs interchangeably elsewhere, and no doctrine should rest on the exchange.

Its content is given not by definition but by demonstration: *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins* (1 *John 4:10*).

ἀγαπάω (**agapaō**) 1. *to love* — of persons; to welcome, to entertain, to be fond of, to love dearly; of things; to be well pleased, to be contented at or with a thing. KJV: (be-)love(-ed). Perhaps from ἄγαν (much) (or compare H5689) (G25)

2. To love — the verb behind *agapē* ἀγάπη^{G26}, and the New Testament's chief word for the love God shows and the love He commands. In the Septuagint it is the standard rendering of *ahav* אָהַב^{H157}, which is how it acquired the covenant weight it carries in the apostles.

Abbott-Smith, following the traditional derivation, defines it as love based on esteem and deliberate choice — *love which chooses its object* — as against *phileō* φιλέω^{G5368}, spontaneous natural affection. The consequence he draws is the important one: because G25 follows the direction of the will rather than arriving unbidden, it **can be commanded as a duty**. Every New Testament imperative to love depends on this.

Its range is wide and deliberately unsentimental. It describes the Father's love for the Son (*John 3:35*), Christ's love for the church (*Ephesians 5:25*), and God's love for sinners while they were still sinners (*Romans 5:8*).

But it is not a word that sanctifies whatever it touches, and this must be said plainly against a common pulpit claim. The same verb describes men who *loved darkness rather than light* (*John 3:19*), rulers who *loved the praise of men more than the praise of God* (*John 12:43*), Demas who *loved this present world* (2 *Timothy 4:10*), and the wholly unremarkable love sinners have for those who love them back (*Luke 6:32*). The verb names a direction of the will; what makes that direction holy is its object, its rank among a man's other loves, and what it is willing to pay.

Ἀδάμ (**adam**) *Adam* — Adam, the first man, the parent of the whole human race. KJV: Adam. Of Hebrew origin (H0121) (G76)

ἀθετέω (**atheteō**) G114 **To set aside; to annul; to break faith with.** Literally to make a thing ἄθετον — to *un-place* what has been laid down (τίθημι, to set in position). 12 occurrences. Not carelessness. Cancellation.

Liddell-Scott's first sense is to set at naught **a treaty or a promise**, and the New Testament objects fall exactly there: a covenant *Galatians 3:15*, a commandment

Mark 7:9, the law *Hebrews 10:28*, a pledge already given *1 Timothy 5:12*, and God Himself *1 Thessalonians 4:8*.

But the third sense is the one that stings: **to deal treacherously with, to break faith with** a person. Polybius uses it of betrayed allies. Isaiah opens with it — "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have *rebelled* against me" *Isaiah 1:2*. Herod is bound by it: having sworn before his guests, he *would not reject her* *Mark 6:26*. This is the vocabulary of a broken word, a torn contract, an engagement called off.

In the papyri, passive, it is a name **struck off a register**; of a petition, *dismissed*. In the grammarians, a text **marked spurious** — rejected as not genuine.

The hammer. There is exactly one place in Scripture that describes people declining baptism, and Luke chose this verb for it: "But the Pharisees and lawyers ἡθέτησαν the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him" *Luke 7:30*.

Read the senses back into it. They did not overlook a ritual. They struck their own names off the register. They marked God's own plan *spurious*. They broke faith with the One who had proposed. And Luke adds the two most terrible words in the sentence — *against themselves*: the treachery lands on the traitor.

Compare eperōtēma ἐπερώτημα^{G1906}, the pledge baptism gives. ἀθετέω is what it looks like to refuse to give it.

Ἀλέξανδρος (**alexandros**) *Alexander* — son of Simon of Cyrene who carried Jesus's cross, *Mark 15:21*; a certain man of the kindred of the high priest, *Acts 4:6*; a certain Jew, *Acts 19:33*; a certain coppersmith who opposed the Apostle Paul, *1 Timothy 1:20*; man-defender, the protector of men. KJV: Alexander. From the same as (the first part of) G0220 and G0435 (G223)

ἀμήν (**amēn**) *amen* — firm; metaphorically faithful; verily, amen; at the beginning of a discourse: surely, truly, of a truth; at the end: so it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled. KJV: amen, verily. Of Hebrew origin (H0543) (G281)

Ἀνανίας (**anania**) *Ananias* — a certain Christian at Jerusalem, the husband of Sapphira (*Acts 5:1–6*); a Christian at Damascus (*Acts 9:10–18*); a son of Nedebaeus, and high priest of the Jews about AD 47–59 (*Acts 23:2*) (in the year AD 66, he was slain by the Sacarii). KJV: Ananias. Of Hebrew origin (H2608) (G367)

ἀνυπόκριτος (**anypokritos**) Unfeigned, sincere, without pretence — literally *un-hypocritical*, formed from the alpha of negation and the word for a stage actor playing a part behind a mask. G505 occurs of faith, of wisdom, of brotherly love, and most pointedly of love itself:

Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good (Romans 12:9).

The force of the word is best seen in what Paul puts immediately after it. Having demanded love with the mask off, he does not proceed to a separate topic; he tells you what unmasked love does first — it *abhors what is evil*. In Paul's construction the hatred of evil is not a duty standing beside love, keeping it respectable. It is the opening act of love once the performance stops.

This is the same logic as *Psalms 97:10, ye that love the LORD, hate evil*, and of *1 Corinthians 13:6, where love rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth*. What is to be hated is the evil, never the person — the identical New Testament commands love of enemies (*Matthew 5:44*). A love that will not hate anything at all has not become purer; by Paul's definition it has merely kept the mask on.

Ἀπολλῶς (apollōs) *Apollo* — a learned Jew from Alexandria and mighty in the scriptures who became a Christian and a teacher of Christianity. KJV: Apollos. Probably from the same as G0624 (G625)

Ἀραβία (arabia) *Arabia* — a well known peninsula of Asia lying towards Africa, and bounded by Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia, Babylonia, the Gulf of Arabia, the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. KJV: Arabia. Of Hebrew origin (H6152) (G688)

Ἀσία (asia) *Asia* — Asia proper or proconsular Asia embracing Mysia, Lydia, Phrygia, and Caria, corresponding closely to Turkey today. KJV: Asia. Of uncertain derivation (G773)

Ἀβελ (abel) *Abel* — the second son of Adam, murdered by his brother Cain. KJV: Abel. Of Hebrew origin (H1893) (G6)

Ἄννα (anna) *Anna* — A Jewish prophetess in Jerusalem at the time of the Lord's presentation in the Temple. KJV: Anna. Of Hebrew origin (H2584) (G451)

ἄστοργος (astorgos) Without natural affection; hard-hearted toward one's own kin. G794 is *στοργή* — the Greek word for the instinctive love of parent and child, kinsman and kinsman — with the alpha of negation in front of it.

The New Testament never uses the bare noun *στοργή*, but it does use the root, and in both directions. That double usage is the point, and it is often misreported.

Commanded, positively: *philostorgos φιλόστοργος*^{G5387} in *Romans 12:10* — *be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love*. Natural affection is not treated as something beneath the Christian, left to instinct; Paul orders it.

Named in its failure, twice: in *Romans 1:31*, among the marks of a mind God has given over, and in *2 Timothy 3:3*, in the portrait of the last days — *lovers of their*

own selves... disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers.

Read the company it keeps in that second list, and especially what heads it: philautos φίλαυτος^{G5367}, lovers of self. Paul's sequence runs from self-love to the collapse of the natural bonds, and plainly regards the second as the fruit of the first. The mark of the perilous times is not merely that men will be wicked; it is that the ordinary ties which even pagans honoured — parent and child, kin and kin — will stop holding.

Both times the word appears, the failure of natural love is named as a symptom of a deeper refusal, not as its own root.

ἐκχέω (ekcheō) G1632 **To pour out.** 28 occurrences. Properly of liquid leaving a vessel — and the vessel is always emptied. Homer pours wine; Aeschylus, blood upon the ground. John pours out the changers' coins across the temple floor *John 2:15*. Judas bursts and his bowels **gush out** *Acts 1:18*.

The figurative range is generous and reckless. To *squander* — ὄλβον ἐκχέειν, to pour away a fortune; Plato of a man who pours out both his substance and himself. To pour forth arrows from a quiver (Homer). Of a friendship *cast away and forgotten* — ἐκκέχυται φιλότης (Theognis). And, in Aristophanes, of a man so glad he simply **spills over**.

That is the word Scripture chooses for the Spirit. Not measured out. Emptied over.

- *I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh* — *Acts 2:17*, and again at *Acts 2:18*.
- Christ, exalted, *hath shed forth this* — *Acts 2:33*.
- On the Gentiles, to Peter's astonishment — *Acts 10:45*.
- And the love of God, ἐκκέχυται in our hearts — *Romans 5:5*.

The hammer, and Paul sets it up himself. *Titus 3:5* and *Titus 3:6* are one sentence, and they contain both verbs. Verse 5: God saved us *by the washing* — λουτρον λουτρόν^{G3067}, a bath. Verse 6: the Spirit *which he shed on us abundantly* — ἐξέχεεν, poured out.

Two motions, and Paul distinguishes them in a single breath. The Spirit descends and is poured over a man. The man descends and is buried in water. Water is never said to be poured on a candidate anywhere in the New Testament; the Spirit is never said to be a bath the believer climbs into. Each has its own verb, and Scripture does not confuse them.

So when a rite pours water over a head, it has not performed a smaller baptism. It has borrowed the verb that belongs to Pentecost and spent it on the wrong element.

- The word for sprinkling, also never used of baptism: rhantizō ραντίζω^{G4472}.

- What the washing works: palingenesia παλιγγενεσία^{G3824}.

ἐλάχιστος (**elachistos**) *least* — smallest least; in size; in amount: of management of affairs; in importance: what is the least moment; in authority: of commandments; in the estimation of men: of persons; in rank and excellence: of persons. KJV: least, very little (small), smallest. Superlative of ἔλαχυσ (short) (G1646)

ἐλαχιστότερος (**elachistoteros**) *least* — less than the least, lower the lowest. KJV: less than the least. Comparative of G1646 (G1647)

Ἑμμαοὺς (**emmaous**) *Emmaus* — the village to which the two disciples were going when our Lord appeared to them on the way, on the day of resurrection. KJV: Emmaus. Probably of Hebrew origin (compare H3222) (G1695)

ἐνδύω (**endyō**) G1746 **To clothe; to put on.** 26 occurrences. And the derivation is already the sermon: ἐν + δύω, which Strong's glosses "in the sense of **sinking into** a garment." It is the same δύω that means to dive, to plunge, to go under. In Greek you do not *wear* a robe so much as you *sink into* it.

Which means Galatians and Romans are not two pictures at all. Going down into the water and putting on Christ are the same motion, and the Greek says so in the shape of the verb.

The actor's word. Dionysius of Halicarnassus writes of a man τὸν Ταρκύνιον ἐνδύεσθαι — to *put on Tarquin*, to assume the person, to step into another man's character and walk out as him. Paul uses it exactly so: "put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ" *Romans 13:14*. Not to imitate Him from outside. To be found in Him.

The hammer, and it is one verb doing two jobs. *Galatians 3:27*: "as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have **put on** Christ" — ἐνεδύσασθε. *Matthew 22:11*: the king comes in to see the guests and finds a man "which had **not on** a wedding garment" — μὴ ἐνδεδυμένον ἔνδυμα γάμου. And the man was *speechless*.

Same verb, same wedding, opposite ends. One has been clothed in the robe the King Himself provides. The other came to the feast in what he already owned, and had no answer when asked how he got in.

Note what the parable does *not* say: he was not thrown out for being poor, or late, or unworthy of an invitation — the servants had gathered "both bad and good." He was thrown out for declining the garment. The gift was at the door and he walked past it.

The rest of the New Testament keeps handing out clothes: power from on high *Luke 24:49*, incorruption and immortality *1 Corinthians 15:53*, the new man *Ephesians 4:24* and *Colossians 3:10*, bowels of mercies *Colossians 3:12*, the whole armour of God *Ephesians 6:11*. Every one is something you did not weave.

- The other half of the same act: synthaptō συνθάπτω^{G4916}. Down as the dead go down; up wearing what the King gives.

ἐπερώτημα (eperōtēma) G1906 **A pledge; a formal undertaking.** A hapax — it occurs once in the whole New Testament, at *1 Peter* 3:21, and the translators have wrestled with it ever since: *the answer of a good conscience toward God*.

The bare sense is a **question** (Herodotus 6.67; Thucydides 3.53). But Liddell-Scott track it forward into the language of law. Second sense: an answer to an inquiry put to a higher authority — hence a **sanction**, an official yes, found in civic inscriptions. Third sense, and here it lands: **equivalent to the Latin stipulatio**.

The stipulatio was the backbone of Roman contract. It was not signed; it was *spoken*, and it was transacted as a question and an answer, face to face, in the present tense. One party asked; the other answered in the same verb. No question, no contract. No answer, no contract. The words themselves were the binding thing.

For this sense Liddell-Scott give one citation — *1 Peter* 3:21. Peter's phrase is the lexicon's own worked example of a pledge.

The hammer. Peter is not describing a feeling that accompanies baptism. He is naming baptism as the moment the vow is spoken. "A good conscience's ἐπερώτημα toward God" is the exchange itself — the asking and the answering that make a covenant hold. It is, in the plainest terms Greek had, *I do*.

Which is why the objection collapses under its own weight. An infant cannot enter a stipulatio; Roman law would not have recognised one, and neither does Peter. Nor can an infant afterwards claim to have entered it — a contract nobody remembers making is not a contract that was made. That is not harshness toward the child. It is the dignity of the vow: God will not put words in a mouth that cannot yet speak them, and He will not hold a man to a promise he never gave.

He asks. You answer. That is the day.

- The conscience it comes out of: syneidēsis συνείδησις^{G4893}.
- The refusal to give it: atheteō ἀθετέω^{G114}, to break faith with the One who proposed.

ἐπιθυμία (epithymia) A longing, a strong desire, a setting of the heart upon something — and in New Testament usage, overwhelmingly, a longing for what is forbidden. The verb is epithymeō ἐπιθυμέω^{G1937}, which the Tenth Commandment uses in the Greek for *thou shalt not covet*, and which the Lord uses of the look that has already committed adultery in the heart (*Matthew* 5:28).

G1939 is not evil by definition — it can be used of right longing, as when Christ says He has *desired* to eat the passover with His disciples. But its habitual New

Testament sense is appetite off its leash, and it occupies a significant vacancy: classical Greek had ἔρωσ for sexual love, and the New Testament writers refuse the word entirely, naming instead *the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God* (1 Thessalonians 4:5).

That substitution is theological, not prudish. Scripture blesses desire lavishly inside covenant — *Proverbs 5:19* commands a husband to be ravished always with his wife's love. What epithymia names is the same faculty aimed at what has not been given: *the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life* (1 John 2:16), which John says is the whole content of the world a Christian must not love.

Hence its place in Paul's great antithesis. The flesh's epithymia and the Spirit are *contrary the one to the other* (Galatians 5:17); and those who are Christ's *have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts* (Galatians 5:24) — the very passions the flesh had been calling its love.

Ἠλίας (**hēlias**) *Elijah* — The Old Testament prophet Elijah. KJV: Elias. Of Hebrew origin (H0452) (G2243)

Ἰάκωβος (**iakōbos**) *James* — son of Zebedee, an apostle and brother of the apostle John, commonly called James the greater or elder, slain by Herod, Acts 12; an apostle, son of Alphaeus, called the less; James the half-brother of Christ; an unknown James, father of the apostle Judas(?). KJV: James. The same as G2384 Graecized (G2385)

Ἰησοῦς (**iēsous**) *Jesus* — Joshua was the famous captain of the Israelites, Moses' successor; Jesus, son of Eliezer, one of the ancestors of Christ; Jesus, the Son of God, the Saviour of mankind, God incarnate; Jesus Barabbas was the captive robber whom the Jews begged Pilate to release instead of Christ; Jesus, surnamed Justus, a Jewish Christian, an associate with Paul in the preaching of the gospel. KJV: Jesus. Of Hebrew origin (H3091) (G2424)

Ἰορδάνης (**iordanēs**) *Jordan* — the one river of Palestine, has its course of little more than 200 miles (300 km), from the roots of Anti-Lebanon to the head of the Dead Sea. KJV: Jordan. Of Hebrew origin (H3383) (G2446)

Ἰουδαία (**ioudaia**) *Judea* — in a narrower sense, to the southern portion of Palestine lying on this side of the Jordan and the Dead Sea, to distinguish it from Samaria, Galilee, Peraea, and Idumaea; in a broader sense, referring to all Palestine. KJV: Judaea. Feminine of G2453 (with G1093 implied) (G2449)

Ἰούδας (**ioudas**) *Judas* — the fourth son of Jacob; an unknown ancestor of Christ; a man surnamed the Galilean, who at the time of the census of Quirinus, excited the revolt in Galilee (see Acts 5:37); a certain Jew of Damascus (see Acts 9:11); a prophet surnamed Barsabas, of the church at Jerusalem (see Acts 15:22, 27, 32); the apostle who was surnamed Lebbaeus or Thaddaeus (see John 14:22), and believed to have

written the Epistle of Jude; the half-brother of Jesus (see Matthew 13:55); Judas Iscariot, the apostle who betrayed Jesus. KJV: *Juda*(-h, -s); *Jude*. Of Hebrew origin (H3063) (G2455)

Ἰσραήλ (israēl) *Israel* — the name given to the patriarch Jacob (and borne by him in addition to his former name); the family or descendants of Israel, the race of Israel; Christians, the Israel of God (Galatians 6:16), for not all those who draw their bodily descent from Israel are true Israelites, i.e., are those whom God pronounces to be Israelites and has chosen to salvation. KJV: *Israel*. Of Hebrew origin (H3478) (G2474)

Ἰωνᾶς (iōnas) *John* — the fifth minor prophet, the son of Amittai, and a native of Gath-hepher and lived during the reign of Jeroboam II, king of Israel; Jonas, the father of Peter. KJV: *Jonas*. Of Hebrew origin (H3124) (G2495)

Ἱερουσαλήμ (hierousalēm) *Jerusalem* — denotes either the city itself or the inhabitants; "the Jerusalem that now is", with its present religious institutions, i.e., the Mosaic system, so designated from its primary external location; "Jerusalem that is above", that is existing in heaven, according to the pattern of which the earthly Jerusalem was supposed to be built; metaphorically "the City of God founded by Christ", now wearing the form of the church, but after Christ's return to put on the form of the perfected Messianic kingdom; "the heavenly Jerusalem", that is the heavenly abode of God, Christ, the angels, saints of the Old and New Testament periods and those Christians that are alive at Christ's return; "the New Jerusalem", a splendid visible city to be let down from heaven after the renovation of the world, the future abode of the blessed. KJV: *Jerusalem*. Of Hebrew origin (H3389) (G2419)

ἱλασμός (hilasmos) Propitiation; the means by which wrath is turned away and sin covered. G2434 belongs to the family of ἱλάσκομαι, and to the ἱλαστήριον of *Hebrews* 9:5 and *Romans* 3:25 — the mercy seat, the golden lid of the ark, on which the blood of atonement was sprinkled so that the tables of the law beneath it no longer testified against the people.

The word carries the entire Levitical logic into one term: there is real guilt, there is real wrath, and there is a divinely provided covering that meets both. The Hebrew behind the mercy seat, kapporeth, is from the root to cover, to atone, to make reconciliation.

Its importance for the doctrine of love is that John chooses it as his definition:

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins (1 John 4:10).

John does not define God's love by God's disposition. He defines it by an act, and the act he names presupposes wrath to be dealt with. A love requiring a propitia-

tion is a love addressing a situation that was genuinely serious — which is why the sentence *God is love*, two verses earlier, must be read forward into this one rather than in place of it.

ὕπηρέτης (**hypēretēs**) *servant* — servant; an underrower, subordinate rower; any one who serves with hands: a servant; in the New Testament of the officers and attendants of magistrates; any one who aids another in any work. KJV: minister, officer, servant. From G5259 and a derivative of ἐρέσσω (to row) (G5257)

ᾠσηέ (**hōsēe**) *Hosea* — the well known Hebrew prophet, son of Beerī and contemporary with Isaiah. KJV: Osee. Of Hebrew origin (H1954) (G5617)

Ῥαάβ (**rhaab**) *Rahab* — a harlot of Jericho. KJV: Rahab. Of Hebrew origin (H7343) (G4460)

ῥαββί (**rhabbi**) *Rabbi* — my great one, my honorable sir; Rabbi, a title used by the Jews to address their teachers (and also honor them when not addressing them). KJV: Master, Rabbi. Of Hebrew origin (H7227 with pronominal suffix) (G4461)

ῥαντίζω (**rhantizō**) G4472 **To sprinkle.** From ῥαίνω, to scatter in drops. **Four occurrences in the entire New Testament.** Count them, because the whole case rests on the count.

Hebrews 9:13 — the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean. *Hebrews 9:19* — Moses sprinkling the book and the people with blood. *Hebrews 9:21* — the tabernacle and the vessels. *Hebrews 10:22* — hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience. Add the noun rhantismos ῥαντισμός^{G4473} and you get *Hebrews 12:24* and *1 Peter 1:2*, both *the blood of sprinkling*.

Every last one is blood. Not one is water, and not one is baptism.

In the Septuagint it renders the sprinkling of the sin offering at *Leviticus 6:27*, and — most famously — David's cry at *Psalms 51:7*, *purge me with hyssop*. Hyssop is a brush dipped in blood. Even Israel's great sprinkling verse is a blood verse.

The hammer. The objection assumes the New Testament had no precise word for sprinkling and so used a general word for washing. The reverse is true. Greek had ῥαντίζω, and the Holy Spirit used it seven times — every time for the blood that cleanses, never once for the water that buries. Liddell-Scott even record a second sense, *to purify*, so the word was fully capable of carrying a cleansing rite. It was capable, available, and passed over.

A man who says he was sprinkled has not had a small baptism. He has had a different word.

Ῥαχάβ (**rhachab**) *Rahab* — a harlot of Jericho. KJV: Rachab. From the same as G4460 (G4477)

How this was made

This is the author's own work. It was composed with [junifye](#) and an AI assistant, drawing its Scripture and original-language work (Greek, Hebrew, cross-references) from [Darash](#) (Hebrew *darash*, “to seek, inquire, study”), a tool and reference work for the Bible in its original languages.

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