



Psalms 78:2-4

I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old... We will not conceal them.

## Parables Bookshelf - Series 1.7.7

This issue of PARABLES BOOKSHELF contains chapters 28-31 of the book *Evidence of Things Unseen*.

As we continue to consider the symbolism of numbers in creation and in Scriptures, I would tell you about a book that has been very helpful to me. E.W. Bullinger was a minister who died in 1913. Before he died he published a book titled *Number in Scripture*. In the book he has done a wonderful job of revealing the significance and occurrence of many numbers in the Bible.

Following is a quote taken from the book that deals with the number seven that we have been looking at. Remember that the number seven is

symbolic of God, who is described as having seven spirits.

### SEVEN

We come now to the great number of *spiritual perfection*. A number which, therefore, occupies so large a place in the works, and especially in the Word of God as being inspired by the Holy Spirit...

As a number the actual word and number "SEVEN" is used as *no other number* is. *Seven* and its compounds occur in multiples of seven in the Old Testament. *Seven* occurs 287 times, or 7 x 41.

"*Seventh*," the fractional part, occurs 98 times, or 7 x 14.

"*Seven-fold*," occurs 7 times...

Then again *seven*, in combination with other numbers, is remarkable, such as fifty *and seven*, a hundred *and seven*, etc. There are 112 of these combinations, or 7 x 16.

"*Seventy*" occurs 56 times, or 7 x 8.

"*Seventy*," in combination with other numbers, occurs 35 times, or 7 x 5.

[End Quote]

The Bible is a book of mathematical precision inspired by the greatest mathematician of all, God.

It is not by chance that God established the creation in seven days. Seven is a number revealing His holy character.

Mysteries are contained beneath the surface of the words of Scripture.

## Food for Thought

*"It's not what you look at that matters, it's what you see."*

Henry David Thoreau

*"Wherever you are, be all there."*

Jim Elliot

## Scripture Memory

Matthew 22:37-38

And He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the great and foremost commandment."

### Parables Newsletter

- Series 1.7.7
- *Evidence of Things Unseen*
- Chapters 28-31

# Evidence of Things Unseen

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## The Storm Comes

Just before moving to our home in Montezuma a thought came to me one day, that I rejected as being from the Father. The thought was that God would not release His provision for us in our new

I had never spoken to Him about the Lord, or about his soul.

home until I had shared the gospel of Christ with my neighbor who lived across the street. My neighbor was a divorced man, close to my own age, who lived alone,

though from time to time his two children would come and spend time with him. I had spoken to this man on a number of occasions when we would meet outside, but I had never spoken to Him about the Lord, or about his soul.

Not all saints are given the ministry of an evangelist, but all are called to evangelize. A parallel truth is that not all saints are called to the ministry of a prophet, but Paul says “All can prophesy.” I had never considered evangelism to be my ministry gift, and whereas I speak to people about the Lord nearly every day, most of them are professing believers. I knew in my heart that part of my lack of evangelistic effort was a result of a deep, ingrained fear in my life. It was a fear of man that was unhealthy, and which had been keeping me in bonds in certain areas of my life. Yahshua came to set the captives free, and He desires that we be free in every area of our life.

I convinced myself that the thought which had come to mind regarding speaking to my neighbor was not from God, but that if I saw a golden opportunity before I moved I would speak to him. My neighbor was a very congenial person, and not one that people would consider gruff or intimidating. I never found a time to speak to my neighbor before we moved, though this was largely due to the fact that I was not looking very hard.

I had received a financial gift from a brother in

New Zealand on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, and this was the last support I would receive for an entire two months and two days. (Again we see 22 in this, and the Father was using this lack of provision in a profound way to remove some flesh from my life.) I had paid a month’s rent when we moved to Montezuma, this being for the month of May, and as June approached I began to get nervous for no support had come in.

I had received a refund from the state of Georgia soon after moving, but the money went quickly with the cost of moving, paying utility bills up to date, purchasing clothes and other essentials for our family which had been pending for some time, and also giving some of the money away as the Spirit directed. When June arrived I had no money for rent and the anxiety this produced in my soul was greater than any other time I could remember. In a parallel to the spiritual buffeting I was experiencing inside, the weather continued to be stormy, and, in particular, very windy on a nearly continual basis. My anxiety had begun to build during the last week of May, and when June came with no provision in hand the storms were at gale force in my soul.

I continued to struggle to stand in faith and to look to the Father for His provision for us, and some days the battle would rage the entire day. Fears of angry landlords, and anxiety over being reproached for not paying my bills in a timely manner weighed upon me. The thought of being evicted terrorized me beyond all sound reason. I did not know why these fears were so strong in my life at this time, for they had never been before.

On June 2<sup>nd</sup> I had been experiencing a demonic buffeting all day long as fears and anxieties were coming against me. In a direct correlation the wind blew hard all the day and I could see out in the yard the trees bent over against the assault. The wind outside was so ferocious and unrelenting that the trees rarely straightened up the entire day. This was a perfect mirror of the buffeting I was receiving. By the evening I was so exhausted from

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the fight that when I prayed to God for relief the tears began to flow and I begged for His mercy and deliverance. I knew that He had me in a place of tremendous sifting, and I felt I could not bear anymore.

I sent out an e-mail in the evening to the Heart4God list, and I asked for the saints to pray for me. The response was immediate as within fifteen minutes I felt the storm in my soul abating, and I received an inpouring of e-mails from saints who said they were praying for me. I believe the number of people who responded with an e-mail to this one mailing was greater than anything I had previously written and sent forth. What a tremendous mercy this was.

When I had prayed that evening, the thought came to me once more that I had not spoken to my former neighbor about his relationship to God, but I once more put the thought away, not wanting to believe that it had anything to do with my trials. Yet the next day as I was listening to the Lord He spoke it to me again. He said that He wanted me to speak to my neighbor about his soul and that He would not release our provision until this had been done. I wanted to convince myself that this was the voice of Satan seeking to torment and confuse me, but I really could not imagine Satan telling me that I was to witness to my neighbor.

What finally persuaded me was the realization that it was a fear of man that had kept me from speaking to my neighbor, and I knew that Yahweh did not want His children to be enslaved to any fears. I considered that, whether God was telling me to speak to this man, or not, I could not do wrong by facing this fear and refusing to be cowed by it. I could only err by continuing to be ruled by fear.

I gathered my family together and I shared with them what I was now convinced the Father had been speaking to me. I shared how I had allowed a fear of man to go uncontested in my life, and that I had failed to speak to our neighbor when the Spirit

had prompted me to do so. I asked them to pray for me as I was going out right at that moment to drive the 30 miles to where our neighbor lived, and I was going to fulfill that which God required of me. My wife and children prayed for me, and I then got in the car and drove in complete peace over to this man's house. I knew he would be home, and he was, and he invited me in and we spent about an hour and a half speaking about his relationship to the Lord.

I felt something significant had occurred in this, and that I had broken free from some chains that had long been binding me. The torment from this particular stronghold had been shattered. However, there was another fear that the Father also desired to loose me from before His sifting would be complete.

The Father showed me that I had also been fearful of bearing reproach in the name of Christ. Fears of my landlords thinking that I was an infidel, or reprobate, or a sorry fellow for not holding a wage earning job were buffeting me. Then there was the church and our extended family. They had heard me profess that the Father had called me to trust Him for our finances, and how could I defend myself if the Father chose to delay in manifesting His provision? Who would believe that I was truly walking in the will of God? Would not all men number me among the transgressors?

*I had also been fearful of bearing reproach in the name of Christ.*

It wasn't that such reproaches were new to me, for I had experienced a great number of them before. Yet I had never come to a place of being content with the reproaches I received. They had always galled me, and left me with gaping wounds that were slow to heal. As the Spirit spoke to me He began to bring me understanding that it was His will that we willingly bear reproaches in our obedience before God, and that the Father would intentionally bring us to situations in which we had no pos-

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sibility of defending ourselves. He intentionally orchestrated events, and our particular reproaches, where no one would believe us if we attempted to persuade them. He opened my eyes to see that He had brought one after another of His chosen vessels to this same place.

Joseph, the son of Jacob, was accused of being an attempted rapist, and, as a slave and a foreigner, no person would believe his word over the word of one of Pharaoh's officials and his wife. What a re-

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proach this young man bore, and it was God's will that he bear it. Mary, the mother of Yahshua, was thought to be an adulteress, and people thought her Son was the

product of adultery. How could Yahshua defend Himself? Who would believe that His Father was God and not a man. No man had ever been born previously aside from the intimate relations of a man and a woman, so who would believe that Yahshua was the first and only exception to this pattern? He had to bear this reproach, as well as the reproach of being a Sabbath breaker, a blasphemer, a Samaritan (illegitimate half-breed), and many other things.

The apostle Paul testified regarding reproaches:

II Corinthians 12:10

Therefore ***I am well content*** with weaknesses, with insults, ***with reproaches***, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

God challenged me at this time with the questions, "Will you be content to obey Me even if it leads to reproaches that you are unable to justify in the eyes of man? Will you be content with the knowledge that I know you are being obedient, though all men consider you a transgressor? Will you receive the reproach of your landlord, if it be My will, and bear it with contentment?" It took me some

hours to be able to tell the Lord I was willing, but in the end I did. As I made the confession that I would be content to bear more reproach, the storm in my soul broke, for it was the fear and dread of reproach that was bringing torment, and when I chose to no longer avoid reproach the torment was broken. I confessed that I was willing to bear the reproach of my landlord, or any other, and I even began to seek an opportunity to meet my landlord so that I might see whether God had chosen further reproach for me, or not.

A few days later, now the middle of June, our landlord's wife came over to do some work in her garden and I went out to speak to her. I told her that I did not have the money yet to pay her for the month's rent, but that I was committed to doing so as soon as I was able. Her response was very gracious and without a hint of reproach. She said that she understood that there were times when things did not work out according to our expectation and that these were times when we had to have faith in God. What a marvelous attitude and expression of grace this was. When I went back in the house I thanked God for His mercy, and I told Him that though I was willing to bear reproach, it was a blessing that He had chosen to remove the reproach in this instance.

June 25<sup>th</sup> was a landmark day in many ways for us. It had now been two months and two days since we had received any financial support from any of the saints, and this was quite unusual for us. Though I do not solicit funds, nor do I normally make my personal needs known to the saints, the Spirit regularly leads various ones from all over the world to send us financial gifts at very appropriate times. To go for two months and two days without any such gifts being received represented a very real drought for us. Our rent was now seriously in arrears. Our telephone bill was a few days past due, and our electric bill would be due before another week had passed.

When we come to extremities in our circumstance we can either begin to murmur and complain, or

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we can choose to worship God. I felt the Spirit leading me to worship the Father that morning, so I put on a very worshipful CD, and I quickly entered into a deep and profound worship. For about thirty minutes I worshiped the Father, and my whole being was moved. I felt a trembling inside and tears streamed down my face as I worshiped the Father for His awesome holiness, His faithfulness, His love and mercy. It was a very moving time and I knew I had been in the presence of the Father and that He had received my worship which had been offered in the midst of a great trial.

As the CD ended there was a knock at the door and I found that it was my landlord. I went outside to speak to him, and I could tell that he was a bit nervous about what he had to say. He began with, “I really hate to tell you what I have to tell you”, and then he proceeded to tell me that one of his sons who had moved out of state with his wife and child had found that things were not working out for them as he had anticipated, and they were going to move back home and would need to live in the home we were now occupying. This man told me that he had not anticipated having to ask us to move until his next son got married, but this had come up unexpectedly. He hated to ask me to move out so soon after we had moved in, and as some compensation they wanted to offer us our last month’s rent free, if we could be out in two weeks time.

I saw in this that God had ordered our steps to manifest a provision for us in receiving a free month’s rent, and also giving our landlord’s a way to save face and act graciously in this unexpected turn of events. Our landlord was being very humble and gracious, and I did my best to reassure him that I was in no way upset with his request, and we would begin praying immediately for the Lord to show us where we were to move.

While he was speaking he also mentioned that they did not know that we had dogs when we moved in, and they had not asked, and we had not told them.

He said they would never have said anything about the dogs once we moved in, but it was really their desire to not have dogs in the house. These words brought back to remembrance my own omission of revealing this information, and it brought me understanding of what the Father was doing.

Over the next days the Father spoke to me through the history of Abram and Sarai, when on two occasions Abram went into a foreign country (Egypt and Gerar) and he asked Sarai to say that she was his sister. This was actually a true statement, for they had the same father, but different mothers. Technically, Abram and Sarai were not lying, but neither were they disclosing the entire truth. They were withholding the fact that they were married due to Abram’s fear that the men of the land would kill him in order to have Sarai for themselves, for she was very beautiful.

Abram, who was later to be called Abraham, is called the father of faith, yet his faith was something that he had to grow in. He had faith when he was younger, for he followed God to a land that he knew nothing about simply on a promise from God. Yet his faith needed perfecting. He stumbled in faith on several occasions, and these were two of them. Abram should have been able to trust God, and not be concerned about being killed. Yahweh had promised Abram that he would be a father of many nations, and Abram had not yet had born to him the child that was promised. He should have been able to trust God to take care of him in these foreign lands, yet fear was present in his life and he willingly omitted a key item of truth in order to “help” God preserve his life.

*He stumbled in faith on several occasions...*

What a parallel these occasions in Abram’s life were to my own situation, for I had also omitted some information to help God out (not telling our landlord we had dogs), and in doing so I had revealed that my faith was not yet perfected. God, in

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His mercy, would now allow me to walk through the same situation again in order that I might walk perfectly this next time. In a great parallel to our previous move, we once more had two weeks to move, no money on hand, and no idea where we would move to.

When Yahweh revealed the purpose for having us go through this again, I felt no reproof from Him, but only His desire to see me perfected in faith. As I read the story of Abram's two similar events, I

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also could find no hint of God reproving him in the matter. God simply continued to patiently mold Abram into Abraham the father of faith. When I understood the will and purpose of God in this matter, I gathered my family together and I confessed to them these things. I told them that the reason we were having to move again so soon was that I had not acted perfectly in the previous move, and God wanted to see all of His children perfected before Him. I confessed my error and we all committed to doing it right this next time.

I took comfort in the fact that Yahweh did not punish Abram materially when he stumbled in these matters, but that he actually was increased in goods in both instances. Though he did suffer embarrassment in being forcibly escorted out of Egypt, he went away with more than he arrived with. Knowing this, I had hope that God would not make us suffer some deprivation due to my error, such as sending us to live in some dilapidated hovel that was undesirably situated, trusting instead that He was merely looking to produce a correct attitude in me that He might bless us.

June 25<sup>th</sup> was a landmark day due to the fact that we learned that the Lord was going to move us again in two weeks, but it also stood out because we received a financial gift in the mail that day from a Christian sister in California. It had been two months and two days exactly since the last gift,

and this was the capstone to God's testimony that He was removing much flesh from my life. The amount we received was fifty dollars, and five is the number of grace, and fifty is the number of Jubilee where all the captives were set free, so this number was also very significant to us. An added testimony was that the sister had written the check out and dated it for the 23<sup>rd</sup>, and once more Yahweh was testifying to us that He was our shepherd and we would not want. We actually received more than fifty dollars on this day, for our landlord had told us our rent would be free for the month, and this was a financial provision as well.

As I spoke to my family of what the Father was doing, I shared with them how gracious and merciful the Father was being to us. Our landlord could have come over with great indignation because I had not told them about the dogs, and he could have been angry that I was behind on the rent. He could have rightfully demanded that we be out in two weeks and still pay the last month's rent, yet none of these things occurred. We received great grace as the landlord was very humble and even apologetic, and he demonstrated much grace to us in giving us a free month's rent. We serve a loving and merciful God.

### **Disappointment, and an Illinois Miracle**

The next day, June 26<sup>th</sup>, was similarly eventful. My wife had planned to get together with our friend Barbara Barnes. Barbara called in the morning to say that she was at a gas station and her car would not crank. She asked if we could meet her there and see if we could help her. Tony and I hurriedly got in our car to go help her, and, to our amazement, our car would not crank either. I did not think that this was merely coincidence for the Spirit had spoken to me that Barbara's husband Randy and I would one day be working together in ministry. A few years back we were both picking muscadines and scuppernongs (a type of large grape) in a local vineyard. The name of the vineyard just happened to be JC's Vineyard, JC being the preferred name of the owner. The Spirit spoke

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to me at the time and told me that Randy and I would indeed be working together in JC's (Jesus Christ's) vineyard in the future. Again, first the natural, then the spiritual.

As I was standing outside looking at my car that would not crank, and contemplating this strange parallel between our two cars, the phone rang and it was one of the ministers from the church we were fellowshiping with. He said he had heard we were having to move, and he expressed his sympathy over this, and then he asked if I would be able to meet with him and the other minister from the body that night. I told him I would be delighted to do so. We arranged to meet at 7:30 P.M..

I was able to get my car fixed before the meeting as God sent a Christian brother over to our house who paid for the part and installed it for me. It turned out that both our car and the Barnes' car had the starter go out on them at the same time. We later found out that both cars were repaired and driven back home at nearly the same moment, around 5:30 P.M..

I went to the meeting that night, not having a clue as to what the ministers wanted to speak to me about, though many guesses flew around my mind, all of which were wrong. These men had been considering whether God had sent me to be a minister with them to the body of Christ, and one of them had asked me a few weeks previously if I considered myself Calvinistic in my beliefs. One of the five main points of Calvinism is 'limited atonement', and it asserts that Christ died only for a remnant of the creation, and that the majority of the creation will suffer unending torment in the lake of fire never to be reconciled to God. It turned out that the ministers wanted to speak to me about my belief that when God's plan of the ages is complete all things whether in heaven or in earth would be reconciled to God through the cross of Christ (Colossians 1:20).

This minister had been surprised to hear me state

that I found fault with this point of Calvinism, and I gave him a copy of the book I had written on the topic called "God's Plan of the Ages" (). Both ministers had looked over the book, one very briefly, and they had both concluded that the teaching of universal reconciliation was heresy. The meeting both began and ended with them affirming their belief that it was heresy. We spent over three hours discussing the matter, but were unable to come to agreement. I asked them what effect this would have on my fellowship with them and I was told that I would not be allowed to hold any teaching position in the church, nor would I be allowed to partake of the sacrament of communion with them. I reaffirmed my love for both men before leaving, and I hugged both of their necks.

In the span of two days, I found that I would have to move suddenly, and I would have no opportunity to minister among this body of believers. A decision was set before me, and I knew it was a test. I could shake the dust off of my feet and move out of the community the Father had led us to, or I could forgive my brothers and choose to remain, as I looked to God to fulfill the things He had spoken to me about raising up a people for His praise and glory. I searched the mind of the Spirit and I could not find any witness that He desired me to leave. He had already spoken to me about being willing to bear reproach, and here I was being reproached as a heretic and I was being given the opportunity to bear it with contentment.

*I would be viewed as a heretic and numbered among the transgressors.*

Our family prayed about the matter, and we were all inclined to stay and to continue to fellowship with this people, even though I would be viewed as a heretic and numbered among the transgressors. As saints we are being conformed to the image of Christ, and the pattern of Yahshua's life was to go to a people whom the Father had sent Him to, to be rejected and reproached by these people, and yet He did not shake the dust off His sandals and call down fire on them. Rather, He laid down His

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life for them that they might be reconciled to the Father. Yahshua is our pattern Man, and how blessed we are when the Father gives us an opportunity to share in the work and the suffering of His firstborn Son! The Spirit bore witness that He was offering such an opportunity to me, yet how easy it would be to simply walk away from this people since I was having to move at this time anyway.

As I considered it I realized that if I walked away pride would be the primary motivator in a decision

*On the first of July I received a surprising phone call.*

to do so. Yet if I stayed and bore the reproach with contentment, God would work in me the humility that He desires in His sons and daughters. The decision was

not a difficult one, and as a family we confessed to the Father that we were desirous of staying among these people that we loved, and which we knew He loved, and we asked that He would provide us a new place to live.

It was only a day or two after we had committed to stay, and had asked for God's provision, that a check arrived in the mail. I was the only one home, and normally we did not see the mail arrive for the mailbox was quite a distance from the house. I "just happened" to look out the front window when I saw the mail being delivered. I felt the Spirit urging me to go and check the mail, and I had an expectancy that had been lacking during our long drought. There was a letter in the mail from a brother in Canada. I opened the letter and I found that it contained a postal money order, and what looked like a carbon copy.

The amount on the money order was \$729.20. I had to look at the amount several times to believe I was seeing it correctly, for this was a significant amount, yet the note attached to it described it as being a small amount which the brother hoped would be helpful to allow me to continue in the ministry that the Father had called me to. Sure enough, it was over seven hundred dollars. As I

walked back to the house I felt the Spirit urging me to look closer at the carbon copy. It looked identical, and had the very same amount inscribed on it. The thought occurred that I should check the serial number. The serial number on the copy was different than the original. In awe, I then understood that this Christian brother had sent me \$1,458.40. He had actually sent \$2,000 dollars Canadian, and this was the amount it translated to when converted to U.S. currency. What a blessing this was, and with this money the Father had provided the necessary money to pay our bills and rent our next home.

I took this gift to be a confirmation from the Father that He was pleased to allow us to remain in the area, and I had a growing anticipation that He would soon reveal His perfect provision for a home for us. I shared with my family that I believed the Father would do similarly as He had done the last time we had moved and we would not have to seek a place, but He would bring it to us. We did go out and check out a few possibilities one day, asking the Father to close all doors that were not of Him, and all the doors were closed, so I determined not to look further.

On the first of July I received a surprising phone call. A man from Illinois whom I had only received a couple of short e-mail correspondences from, was on the phone and he told me that he was in Montezuma, Georgia. This was unanticipated, and I invited he and his wife to come on over to our house. Our family had chosen this day to pack up all that could be boxed, so that we would be ready when the Father opened a door for us. This couple arrived to find our house filled with boxes.

Gary and Karri Sargeant were the names of our unexpected visitors. They shared with me that the Spirit had spoken to Gary and told him to go to Georgia to see me, and he really did not know all that the Father intended, but that he knew he was to be there. He wasn't sure if the Father wanted him to move to Georgia, or just come for a visit, though Karri said that the Spirit had told her they

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would only be in Georgia seven days. Not certain of the Father's will in this, Gary still heard the Spirit speak to him when he arrived in Montezuma, and direct him to rent a house. The Spirit said, "I will make it real simple. There will be only one house for rent in the local newspaper, and that is the one I want you to rent." Sure enough, there was only one house for rent in the paper, and Gary put down a deposit on it, with a commitment to pay the rent by July 8<sup>th</sup>.

As Gary and Karri looked at the house they had placed a deposit on, they questioned whether the Lord really intended it for them. The house was too big for the two of them, being a three bedroom triple-wide manufactured home. When Gary entered our home with boxes everywhere, and heard that we were preparing to move, but had no idea where we were to move to, he said, "I think I may have just rented your house for you."

Over the next few days, Gary prayed and asked the Lord that if the house were intended for he and his wife that the Father would provide the money for them to rent it by the end of the week, for they had rented a hotel room in town for one week and they had told the owners that they would pay them the rent in one week. He said that if the Lord did not provide them the money then he would know that the house was intended for us, and not them. Before the week was over, however, both Gary and Karri had heard from the Lord that they were to return to Illinois.

The Father sent this couple to Georgia for much more than simply to secure a house for us. The Father had many things which he wanted me to minister to this couple, and we spent much time together. The Spirit did some profound things during this week, and He manifested many prophetic signs that confirmed the things He was speaking. Before the week was over both Gary and Karri knew that they were to return to Illinois, and many spiritual things had been imparted between us all. My daughter formed a special bond with Karri, and it was a very precious time.

At the end of their week in Georgia, we went with the couple to meet the landlords of what was to be our new home, and to see the house. The house was everything we had desired. My daughter had especially wanted to remain in the country (as opposed to living in the city), and the home was on a farm with a pecan orchard behind it with cows pastured under the trees. There were horses in a nearby field, and my wife had been saying for months how she had wanted some chickens so she could have fresh eggs, though I did not want the responsibility of having to care for them. There were chickens that ranged freely throughout the yards, and the owners' son said that we were welcome to have all the eggs we wanted for he did not like eggs. In this way, both my wife's desire and my own were satisfied.

One thing I knew would be an important point to deal with up front was to disclose that we had inside dogs, and to ascertain that this was not a problem for the owners. Before we even arrived at the house the couple from Illinois told us that the landlords allowed indoor dogs, but not outside dogs, for they said the outside dogs always ended up becoming theirs. What a perfect provision this was, and I had never heard of any landlord who allowed only indoor dogs, which was exactly what we needed. They confirmed this when we spoke to them.

*A waiting list of eight families who wanted to rent the home had been compiled.*

The landlords told us that the house had been advertised in the paper for about a week before this couple from Illinois came to rent it, and they had absolutely no response on the ad, which was amazing since decent rental property is very scarce in this rural area. Yet in the next days after this couple put down a deposit a waiting list of eight families who wanted to rent the home had been compiled. Since this couple had already put down the deposit, the owners were willing to transfer the deposit to us and allow us to rent it, which we did.

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What a miraculous thing this was, for the Father sent a couple all the way from Illinois to secure a house for us, not even knowing we were having to move, and it was equally incredible that the home would be a perfect match for us in every way! Once

*I was much encouraged by the truly marvelous ways in which God continued to provide for us.*

more we had the house brought to us, and we did not need to search for it. In this little community, such things were truly amazing. My wife had recently spoken to

another lady from this same community who was once in a similar situation of having to move in two weeks. She testified that she and her husband had to move out of the community for there were no suitable properties for rent.

After my great disappointment with the ministers of the local fellowship we were attending, I was much encouraged by the truly marvelous ways in which God continued to provide for us.

### **Eights and Sevens**

God delights to speak to me through numbers, and He gave us some significant ones at this time. After receiving the money from the brother in Canada, I paid our telephone bill, electric bill and all other bills up to date, as well as buying some groceries. When I balanced our checkbook to see how much money we had left to use for moving, the balance came to the unusual number of \$888.77. It struck me immediately that the Father had chosen to speak to me through this number, so I went to an online site where E.W. Bullinger's book on the Biblical significance of numbers is located, and I was surprised to find an entry called "Eight and Seven Together." Of these two numbers together he writes:

*Seven means, as we have seen, according to its etymology, that which is spiritually complete or satisfying; while eight denotes that which is superabundant or satiating. Hence we often find*

*these two numbers associated with these distinctions.*

I did not understand why these two numbers should be important to us at the time, but the Lord continued to set these two numbers before us, linked together with one another in ways that we could not ignore. On the first day that we drove out to this new home that the Sargeants had secured for us, we turned onto the road that borders one side of the property, which must be traversed to get to the house. When I passed the street sign, I had to stop and ask my family, "Did you see that?" I drove back to the sign and on it was written CR 87 for County Road 87. A further confirmation of God speaking to us through these numbers at this time was that we officially moved into our new home, and spent our first night there on July 8<sup>th</sup>, which is the seventh month and eighth day. Only in hindsight have I been able to understand what these numbers signified.

My rejection by the ministers of this body, who declared my teaching to be heresy and who told me that I would not even be allowed to partake of communion with them, occurred the very day after I had heard from my landlord that his son was moving back and they needed us to move out in two weeks. The temptation was present to shake the dust off of my feet and move away from this area and never fellowship with this people again. It was not in my heart to do these things, however, so I quickly rejected these thoughts that the enemy brought to my mind. I truly loved this group of people, and I was not willing to give up my hope that God would yet lead them forward into their inheritance in Christ. I hoped that they might yet not shrink back from a walk of faith and life in the Spirit.

The morning after my meeting with the ministers, I told my family about all that had transpired. I told them, despite the fact that I would be considered a heretic, and regardless of my being limited from any teaching role among them, I still desired to stay and intercede for this people. I asked my

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family if they were willing and desirous of staying under these circumstances and they all said they were. As a family, we committed to continue to attend services and to love the people and pray for them, though I knew the news would quickly get around that I had met with the elders, and the outcome of the meeting would be noised about.

My family and I bowed before the Father and told Him that we were willing to remain and intercede for this body of believers, and we asked Him, that if this were agreeable to Him, that He would let us know by opening up a suitable place for us to move into that was in this same area. It was a remarkable thing that the first house had been available to us and had been so suitable. It was an even more remarkable thing when we found a second house in this same rural community, and once more we did not have to look for it, but God brought it to us at the hands of a couple who had driven all the way from Illinois. God revealed in a profound way that He was very pleased with our request to remain and intercede.

The significance of the numbers eight and seven is that God found our willingness to put aside all offense in order to intercede for these people to be a satisfying thing in His eyes. He found our willingness to despise the shame and endure reproach, while asking the Father to bring these people into their inheritance in Christ, to be a complete and mature response. We were willing to suffer for the sake of others, and this satisfied the heart of Yahweh. The etymology of these numbers testified that our being at this home for this purpose was an acceptable offering in the sight of God. It was “spiritually complete or satisfying” to the Father, and the aroma of this sacrifice was “superabundant and satiating” to Him.

God testified even further concerning this matter of making an intercessory offering for this people. Our amazement grew when we saw what other testimonies God had set to our obedience in remaining here to pray for the people, rather than choosing to leave with an offended heart. The house was

located at 308 Levie Road, and it was impossible to not see the name of the priestly tribe in this name. The owner’s last name was King. So this property bore the remarkable testimony of kings and priests.

Revelation 1:5-6

And from Yahshua Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, **and hath made us kings and priests unto God** and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

It was the duty of the priests to present the sacrifices to God, and as a nation of kings and priests it is the calling of all of God’s elect to offer to God sacrifices that are acceptable and well pleasing unto Him. Christ is the forerunner for all of the elect. He bids His disciples to follow where He walked. As He took up the cross, so are all of His disciples commanded to take up their cross and follow Him. If He willingly bore reproach as an evildoer, so too will His disciples be asked to bear similar reproach. If He laid down His life for those who treated Him with despite and ill will, then so too will the elect of God be called to lay down their lives for those who have rejected them.

*We were willing to  
suffer for the sake of  
others...*

God spoke to me much about this call to intercede for others while we lived at this home on Levie Road. He taught me much concerning the saints’ call to lay down their lives for others. Daily I was brought to pray for the ministers who had rejected me. When I met them at church I continued to hug their necks and speak a blessing to them. I did not turn my love away from them, nor did I call down fire from heaven to consume them. I continued to ask God to bring them into their inheritance in Christ.

## Evidence of Things Unseen

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We were to experience much pain while we lived in this home, and we were to endure some more storms. As a testimony to what was to occur in our lives spiritually, God once more provided natural signs to attest to what was coming. Within the first few weeks there were repeated thunderstorms that passed through the area. The winds were so severe that they blew the underpinning loose from under the house, and I had to put it back in place and re-attach it. This happened two or three times, as thunderstorms would pass through the area quickly.

On the last occasion when this occurred, my son Josiah had gone over to the barn to get some eggs from the chickens before the storm arrived. The wind began blowing, with lightning striking in

*My wife hollered and said that Josiah was crawling through the yard.*

close proximity attended by loud boomings of thunder. Josiah had not yet made it back, and I was thinking about looking for him when my wife hollered and said

that Josiah was crawling through the yard. She thought he had been struck by lightning. I flew out the door and was by his side in a moment. He was a pitiful sight crawling through the yard on all fours.

I asked him what had happened and he said that when he had seen the lightning that he had decided to hurry to the house and he went to change his gait to a run, pushing off suddenly with one leg, when his knee twisted. He fell to the ground and sat the eggs down in the grass and was proceeding to crawl to the house. Tony and I helped him into the house. His knee was tender for some time, and he walked gingerly for a week, or so, but he healed up quickly. This event was a foreshadowing of a tremendous spiritual storm to come where my son would once more play a central part.

My mind was gripped with the image of my son crawling through the yard, and great compassion filled my heart for him. I thought of David crying

out in grief over his son, “O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!” It may seem strange that these words came to mind when I witnessed my son dragging himself through the yard, for my son’s condition was nowhere near the extremities of that young man Absalom. Josiah was my only living son, however, and it was an emotionally moving experience for me to see him in this way.

After the storm I noticed that the air conditioner would no longer come on. It had been damaged by a lightning strike. When I went to check on this problem I noticed that the brand name of the air conditioning unit was Payne. This was the same spelling as the town we lived in where we knew so much pain. What a prophetic sign this would prove to be. Although the landlords replaced the unit within a few days, the old unit sat in the yard next to the house until the day we moved out.

The emotional pain we were to know at this house, and the great wrestling of soul and spirit, were to be the greatest we had ever experienced. Though I had known longer trials, I had never experienced any trial that would be as intense as that which was coming. That which is spiritually complete and satisfying to God often comes attended with great wrestling and acute pain. God pronounced His satisfaction when Abraham was willing to offer up Isaac, and before we left this home on Levie Road I would also be faced with a similar test.

I was to learn more about the Father’s heart through the painful experiences I was about to walk through. Just as Yahweh wanted Abraham to learn more of His character and heart, so too did He want me to discern more of His great and terrible love. Even in Abraham’s day, God had already determined to give up His Son Yahshua as a sacrifice, and He wanted a friend with whom He could share the knowledge of what it had cost Him. In asking Abraham to perform a similar act, Abraham would be able to touch the heart of Yahweh in a way that only those who are willing to make such

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deep sacrifices can. Abraham was called “the friend of God”, and a true friend will willingly share the joys and the sorrows of another.

Yahweh wants others to know His heart, His sacrifices, His pain and sorrow. God is not some automaton that lacks feelings. He did not embark upon the plan that would lead to the death of His beloved Son without emotion and pain. What He experienced is inexpressible, for never has the love of a father for a son been more pure, and never has there been a son who was more pleasing to his father. Even as the Son knew great agonies in the Garden of Gethsemane as He contemplated drinking from the cup of suffering that would lead to His separation from the Father, so too did the Father drink from His own cup and know His own agony.

The Father was about to give me a small taste of the depths of sorrow He was willing to endure to redeem a fallen creation. Even as He stood in intercession on behalf of the world who had rejected Him, so I was being called to stand as an intercessor for this group of believers.

### The Threat of Eviction

After being in this home on Levie Road for a month it came time to pay for another month’s rent. Once more God’s provision did not include money to pay the rent on time. I was really grieved by this, and I argued with God some concerning this matter. I reminded Him that we had asked that if it was His will for us to remain in this area and intercede for this body of believers that He would give us a sign of His pleasure in this matter by opening up another house for us to move to. He had done so by sending a couple all the way from Illinois to secure a house for us on the very day that we began boxing up all of our things to move. This couple had entered our home and said, “I think I may have just rented your house for you.”

There was no doubt in our minds that God had gone before us in this matter, for we did not even have to look for this home. God brought it to us. I was extremely perplexed then, when God would not manifest His provision for us to continue to pay rent. I had to contact our landlords and tell them I did not have the money to pay them, but I was committed to do so as soon as the funds came in. The landlords were not willing to be patient with us at all in this matter, and when the rent was only a few days late they informed us that they were going to file at the local courthouse to have us evicted.

This news was very unsettling for my wife, and it was disturbing to me as well. We had never faced eviction before. Immediately, images began swirling around in our minds of the Sheriff coming to put all of our furniture out by the road. We had fears of being put out with no idea of where we would go. These, and similar anxieties, were to fuel the storms that would rage in our souls for the next few weeks. If I were perfected in my faith I would not have worried, instead I would have been able to sleep as soundly as Christ did on the cushion in the boat while the storm raged around Him. God had given me plenty of assurances that things would be all right. He had spoken through my daughter during an earlier test and said, “You need not fear any trouble. Instead trust Me.”

*“Put away all foolish thoughts of doubt and unbelief, for great is my reward to those who trust in Me.”*

I considered these words often in these days, as I re-read God’s words of prophecy to me. They did give me a measure of calm in the midst of the storm, but it was not a perfect calm. In this same prophetic word God had said, “Those who place their trust in Me need never fear, for I am a just God,” and again He said, “Put away all foolish thoughts of doubt and unbelief, for great is my reward to those who trust in Me.” These words became my defense against the storms that we were encountering, and I would daily do battle by medi-

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tating upon what God had spoken to me. I had to choose whether I would walk by sight, or walk by faith, trusting in the words of God as more real than the events that were conspiring against us.

I mentioned before how God had prepared us for the test of faith when we first moved to Montezuma by having a Christian brother send me a book on the life of Rees Howells. When I first opened this book and looked in the index I saw a chapter titled “Called Out From Wage Earning,” and this was the very first chapter I read, for God was calling me to leave my job at the college, and I wanted the encouragement of another man who had walked in a similar place. Rees Howells also experienced tests, but God was faithful to see him through all of them. I had not even known this book was coming, but God knew I needed to be encouraged by the witness of it at this time. He spoke to me further through the chapter “Standing in the Queue,” which gave us the boost we needed to stand during our own time of testing.

This was not to be the last time God would prepare me for a test by placing it upon some saint’s heart to send me a book. Just before we moved to the home on Levie Road, another brother in Christ sent me a copy of Bill Britton’s biography called “Prophet on Wheels.” In this book Bill Britton described a time when God called him to also trust God for his provision as he committed himself to ministry. Bill gave up a lucrative insurance sales job to follow God in obedience, and then God did not provide according to his expectation. Bill ended up having his nice car repossessed, and they too faced being cast out of their home for not being able to make their payments. Bill began to complain to God about the poor provision they were seeing. The following is taken from his writing titled “Hebrews - A Book of Better Things.”

*One time, years ago, we were living in a little*

*house at the edge of a village in Carney, Oklahoma. Our only bathroom was an outdoor privy, or an outhouse, as some call them. We had no hot water in the house. In fact, until we were able to have a well dug, we had no water at all and had to carry water from a neighbor’s house. It was during this time that our youngest girl, Rachel, was born and seeing my wife have to take care of herself and her newborn baby under these conditions, began to do something to me.*

*I had been successful in the insurance business and was zone manager for a very fine company, but the Lord had pressed on my spirit to quit my job and give full-time to the ministry of writing and radio preaching. Our expenses were heavy and had been sufficiently met by my earnings at my job. But when I was without a job, the expenses went on while the money coming in was cut off. Things got in very bad shape. Financially, it seemed that the door to heaven was closed. Night after night I would stand in the field behind our house and look up at the stars and say, “Father, I know you own every one of those stars. I know you own the cattle on a thousand hills. You have in your hands the hearts of millionaires who would not even miss the amount that it would take to bring us through this financial crisis. Father, I do not doubt your ability to meet our needs. The question in my heart is, why are you not meeting those needs? Why are you letting us go like this?”*

*Night after night I cried to God. Our bills were getting behind. We hardly had money to feed our children. We lost our car and it looked as though we would lose our little home. Unknown to me, a bitterness against God was beginning to creep into my heart. I did not recognize this until one night I went to a service in Oklahoma City.*

*The preacher was preaching on the first part of Hebrews 3. I had with me an Amplified New Testament, and began to read this chapter in the Amplified, reading ahead of where he was preaching. I came to verse 8, and in the Amplified it says:*

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*"Do not harden your hearts, as happened in the rebellion of Israel and in their provocation and embitterment of Me in the day of testing in the wilderness." I stopped and read that phrase again, "embitterment of Me". Then I realized that the children of Israel in the wilderness were bitter at God.*

*I said, "God, why were they bitter at you?" And the Lord spoke to me as I sat there in the service that night and said: "They became embittered at Me because they knew I could do better than give them bread and water. I gave them manna from heaven and water from the rock, but they lusted after flesh. They knew that if I desired, I could give them quail, and they were bitter at Me because I was not doing as much for them as they knew I was capable of doing." I thought to myself, "what a wicked and rebellious people. They did not deserve to go into the promised land, becoming embittered like that at God." Then the voice of the Lord spoke to me and said: "Son, that's the condition you are in. You are becoming bitter at Me." I cried out in horror, "Oh no, Lord, not me, I'm your son. I wouldn't be bitter at you no matter what". He said: "You are becoming bitter because you know in your heart and have faith to believe that I am able to meet all your financial needs; and yet, you are wondering why I am not doing it, and bitterness is coming into your heart."*

*As the light of His Word shined upon my heart, I recognized that it was true, and right there in my seat, while the preacher in the pulpit was continuing his message, I had an altar call and cried out to God for repentance and for forgiveness. I said: "God if you will cleanse me from this awful thing, I will never complain or become bitter at any circumstance you bring me into, regardless of what it is"*

In his biography Bill shares of this same time, and goes on to comment that he told the Lord that even if they should lose their house that he would not complain a word to God. He said that if he and his wife and children were put out of the house

that they would just join hands and sing praises to God as they walked down the country road leading away from their house. This experience came back to me as I found myself in similar straits. I did not want to murmur against God, yet I was very perplexed about the situation, and experiencing some anxiety.

It was not possible for us to go anywhere, for we did not have the money to rent another house. We had to simply wait for things to play themselves out and see what God would do for us. I gathered my family together and told them that we would continue to pray for God's provision in our lives, and look to Him to deliver us. I read them the chapter from Bill Britton's book where he faced his own crisis, and I told my family that we had to count the cost of our obedience.

The Spirit had shown me that the enemy is able to heap added torment upon us when we have not counted the cost of obedience and accepted it. I thought of what the worst thing was that could happen. We could be evicted by the Sheriff and have all of our possessions put out by the road. We could possibly lose all we owned of material goods. I considered whether I was willing to pay that price as an intercession for the people we were praying for, and as an act of obedience to God's will. I determined that I was, and I shared this with my family. I asked them to also count the cost, for by doing so they would take away the enemy's ability to torment them. When Satan came with his fear tactics saying that we could lose everything, we could simply respond, "I have already counted the cost and I am willing." The threat would then lose its potency, and we could know peace.

*I thought of what the worst thing was that could happen.*

Our landlords filed the eviction papers, and the Sheriff came out to have us sign the document. The papers then went back to the court and we had

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a couple weeks to come up with the rent or be put out. The weeks went by and no money came in to pay the rent. We began looking for the Sheriff to show up any day and place all of our belongings out by the road and to put us out as well. I continued to pray for grace, particularly that God would spare my wife from having to go through this experience. She had struggled mightily for weeks, but had at last come to a place where she said she was willing to trust God in this situation, and she would accept His will in the matter. This was a great victory and I made mention of it to God and asked for Him to spare Tony from this ignominy.

The day came when the Sheriff drove down the driveway, and I knew we were to receive the final news of our eviction. The Sheriff was a kindly gentleman. He told me the landlords wanted him to throw us out that day and put our belongings by the road, but he told

*The day came when the Sheriff drove down the driveway...*

them he didn't do things that way. He said that he preferred to give people a period of grace to move out in an orderly fashion, and he would give us three more days to allow us to move our belongings. He was almost apologetic about his duty, and his gracious demeanor did wonders for my tense nerves.

God was to open up a place for us to move to the very next day, and we would end up getting all of our things moved in good fashion during the next three days. It happened to be Labor Day weekend, so some of our friends had time off from work and they helped us move. A couple we had known for a number of years, Randy and Georgina Mills, had heard of our predicament and they prayed and felt like the Lord would have them to offer for our family to come and live with them for a time. We could place our belongings in their garage, and we could also help them out by completing some remodeling projects on their home. I prayed about this offer and felt the Lord would have us to accept it. We would end up staying with this couple for five months.

God gave us some confirmations of His tremendous grace being loosed to us at this time. I had prayed for grace in this situation, and it had impressed me that the Sheriff had used the word grace when he said that he preferred to give people a grace period to move their things in an orderly fashion. When I remembered these words it seemed to me that God had deliberately led this man to use this term to show me that He had heard my prayer. Another testimony of God's grace being extended to us was to occur on the day we moved out. I did not set my alarm on the Sunday we were to move, but I woke up and looked at the clock and it was exactly 5:00 AM. Five is the Scriptural number for grace, and it was very unusual that I would wake up at this time, for I had been in the habit of waking between six and seven.

When I checked the news on the computer that morning I was faced with an even more remarkable confirmation. The headlines read:

### ***Texas braces for wind, rain as Grace nears***

*(CNN) --As Tropical Storm Grace moved steadily closer to the Texas Gulf Coast, Hurricane Fabian churned far east of the Caribbean, the National Hurricane Center in Miami, Florida, said Sunday.*

*At 5 a.m. EDT, Grace was about 115 miles southeast of Corpus Christi, Texas, and moving to the northwest near 14 mph, forecasters said. That motion would bring the storm's center across the Texas coast sometime Sunday.*

*Strong winds and rain from the storm have fallen over East Texas and southern Louisiana, forecasters said. They predicted rainfall accumulations of 6-8 inches in those areas, with higher amounts in some places.*

*A tropical storm warning remained in effect for the Texas coast from High Island to Corpus Christi.*

The statements in this article were too incredible to be mere coincidence. The time given for this

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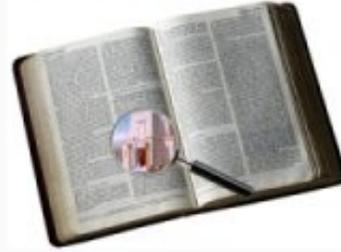
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tropical storm update was 5 AM, five being the number of grace. Grace was 115 miles from Corpus Christi, 115 being 23 times 5, 23 signifying God's provision as in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want," and five once more being the number of grace. God was stating through this that His grace was being loosed in the area of provision. But the clincher is that it said Grace was heading toward Corpus Christi, which is Latin for "the Body of Christ." I was in awe of what I read, and I knew Yahweh had set this sign before me for my encouragement.

We would be moved by the deadline given us by the Sheriff, and we would know five months with our friends, which was a period signifying grace. A week after we moved I received some money and I paid our landlords the balance of the rent I had owed them. I was not required to do so by law, but I sensed in the Spirit that it was the right thing to do, and I did not desire to defraud anyone. We experienced one more excruciating trial before all this was accomplished. I have skipped over it to tell the end of this matter first, but I will speak of this ordeal in the next chapter.

*We would be moved by the  
deadline given us by the  
Sheriff...*

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### PARABLES PRECEPT— The Bible

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#### BIBLE STUDY



#### GET INTO THE WORD!

In the last issue we noted that the Old Testament of the Bible was written in the language of the Hebrews. The New Testament was written in Greek, though there is some evidence that parts of it were originally written in Hebrew, or Aramaic, and then later translated into Greek.

The New Testament begins with

the birth of Christ. Jesus, whose Hebrew name was Yahshua, was born as a Hebrew, a natural descendant of Abraham. Mary, His mother was from the tribe of Judah. It is from the name Judah that we get the word Jew.

In one sense, the name Jew refers specifically to the natural descendants of the tribe of Judah, but in a wider sense it has come to signify all of the descendants of Abraham through his grandson Jacob whose name was changed to Israel. The name Jew is also often used to denote someone who has adopted the faith of the Hebrew people.

At the time of Christ's birth, the land of Israel was under the dominion of the Roman Empire. Rome arose after the Greek Em-

pire and adopted the Greek language as the language of commerce. The Romans used Latin for official communications, but Greek was the common language in use among the populace.

The land of Judea, which was under Roman occupation, used Greek as the common language of commerce, though many of the Jewish people spoke Hebrew among themselves and in their homes and synagogues.

The apostle Paul wrote most of his 13 epistles to Gentile believers, and therefore used Greek as the language in which he wrote. Greek was an ideal language for the spread the gospel as so much of the world was under the dominion of Rome, and the language was known widely.