

II. Greater Than Angels - Continued (1:4 to 2:18)

Bible Study Guide - Hebrews 2:1-18

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Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

"What we have heard"

- The message of the Son (v.3)
- The Whole Gospel
- What is the danger if they (we) "drift away from it?" We will no longer be able to escape!

-Since the SON is so much greater than the Angels, we must pay more careful attention to his message.

Law of Moses -> (De 33:2; Ps 68:17; Acts 7:53; Gal 3:19)

²For since the **message declared by angels** proved to be **reliable**, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, <- Gal 3:10; 19-26; Jam 2:8-13

How reliable? -> 100%

Why is the message of the Son essential?

- Because the message declared by angels is Perfect and there is no other escape.
- Rom 1:16-20

Declared

1. **By the Lord (Son)**
-Lk 1:67-79; 2:11; 19:9; Jn 4:22
2. **By those who heard**
-Lk 1:2
3. **By God through:**
-Signs, Wonders, Miracles
Mt 12:22-24
Jn 3:1-2
Acts 2:22, 43; 4:30; 5:12
2Co 12:12
-Gifts of the Holy Spirit
I Cor 12:4-11

³how shall we escape if we **neglect** such a **great salvation**?
It was declared at **first by the Lord**, and it was **attested to us by those who heard**, "to us" -> likely indicates the author received the Gospel from one of those who heard.

Escape

- Rom 3:19-31 "But now"
- Eph 2:1-22 "But God"

⁴while **God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit** distributed according to his will.

How do we "neglect" this "great salvation?"

i.e. "The Messianic Age"

⁵For it was not to angels that God subjected the **world to come**, of which we are speaking.

Even though the author expresses indifference to the source, he provides an exact quote from Ps 8:

⁶It has been testified somewhere, "What is **man**, that you are mindful of him, or the **son of man**, that you care for him? ⁷You made him for **a little while lower than the angels**; you have crowned him with glory and honor, ⁸putting everything in subjection under his feet." <- Ps 8:4-6

- This Psalm describes humanity as a collective individual.
- "A little lower" was a place of honor for humanity.

Son of Man

- "Son of" Describes a quality
- Means the same here as "man"
- Example:
Son of Strength = A strong man

Now in putting **everything in subjection to him**, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we **do not yet see everything in subjection to him**.

The name of the Son is identified by the author

Not yet see

The extent of the Son's authority over this age has not yet been fully expressed.

The author clearly sees the ultimate fulfilment of this Psalm in the Christ.

Phil 2:5-11

⁹But we see him who for **a little while** was made **lower than the angels**, namely **Jesus**, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

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Perfect = τελειῶ (teleioō)

-Can also mean "Complete" or "Succeed Fully"
 -His mission was completed by His suffering and death.

God the Father

"Bringing many sons to glory"
 -Those redeemed by the perfecting

¹⁰For it was fitting that he, **for whom and by whom all things exist**, in **bringing many sons to glory**, should make the **founder of their salvation perfect through suffering**.

The Suffering Servant -> Isa 52:13 - 53:12

God's Eternal Plan
 -Acts 2:22-24
 -Rom 3:21-22
 -Gal 3:5-9; 28-29

"One source"
 -All from God's eternal plan
 -Made possible by the suffering and death of the Son
 -Made possible by becoming a man (i.e. descending from Adam).

¹¹For he **who sanctifies** and those **who are sanctified** all have **one source**. That is why he is not ashamed to **call them brothers**, <- Mt 12:49-50; Mk 3:33-35; Lk 8:21; Rom 8:12-17, 29

Psalm 22
 -Regarded as Messianic in the early church
 -Quoted by Jesus on the cross (Mk 15:34; Ps 22:1)
 -Seen as being fulfilled by the casting of lots for Jesus' garment (Jn 19:24; Ps 22:18)
 -Author sees Jesus as the speaker in this Psalm.

¹²saying, "**I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.**" <- Ps 22:22

Isa 8:17 (or Isa 12:2, 2Sam 22:3)
All 3 are the same in the LXX

Refers to the faith that Isaiah had in God during difficult times. The author applies both texts to Christ, who trusts in God and stands in solidarity with God's people.

¹³And again, "**I will put my trust in him.**" And again, "**Behold, I and the children God has given me.**" <- Isa 8:18

¹⁴Since therefore the children **share in flesh and blood**, he himself likewise **partook of the same things**, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. <- Victory 1Co 15:50-57

"Partook of the same things"
 -4:14-16
 -Phil 2:5-11

High Priest
 -High priests interceded for God's people by offering sacrifices, such as on the Day of Atonement (Lev 23:26-32)
 -Jesus is our new High Priest, and Himself became the sacrifice for all sins.
 -Only in Hebrews is this term applied to Jesus

¹⁶For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the **offspring of Abraham**. <- Could mean Jews (physical offspring) or Christians (spiritual offspring / Gal 3:7, 29)

¹⁷Therefore **he had to be made like his brothers in every respect**, so that he might become a merciful and faithful **high priest** in the service of God, to make **propitiation for the sins of the people**. <- Rom 3:21-26

¹⁸For because he himself has suffered when **tempted**, he is able to help those who are being **tempted**. <- The suffering of Jesus was not just limited to His time on the cross.

Matt 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; and Luke 4:1-12.
 James 1:2-18

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Hebrews Chapter 2 - Questions for Discussion

What exhortation (or commandment) does the writer give in verse one concerning the danger of drifting? What is the reasoning for this exhortation? How do we make practical application of this instruction today? (vv. 1; Rom 12:1-2)

Verse 2 mentions the Law of Moses as the word "spoken by angels." What other verses in the NT mention this also? What is the significance of it being given through angels?

List some examples from the O.T. of those who received a just reward for their transgression and disobedience.

What comparison was made regarding the Law of Moses that shows that we dare not neglect the great salvation? Why is there no escape? What makes God's plan of salvation "great?" (vv. 3; Rom 1:16-20; 3:19-31)

What are some ways in which we can "neglect" the great salvation? (v. 3)

What are three ways mentioned in which the "great salvation" was declared (vv. 3-4)

What is the difference between signs, wonders, various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit? (v. 4)

Through whom did God bear witness by "signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit?" (v. 4; Acts 2:22,43)

What is meant by "gifts of the Holy Spirit?" How did these aid in the spread of the gospel? (v. 4)

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- What were these “gifts?” (I Cor 12:4-11)
 - _____ (v. I Cor 13:2)
 - _____ (v. I Cor 13:2)
 - _____ (v. Heb 2:1-4)
 - _____ (vv. Acts 21:8-9 ; I Cor 14:1-25)
 - _____
 - _____ (vv. Acts 2:1-11; 10:44-46; 19:1-7)
 - _____ (vv. I Cor 14:1-33)

- Why were these gifts given?
 - _____ (v. Mark 16:15-17)
 - _____ (v. I Cor 14:4)
 - _____ (vv. Eph 4:1-14 ; I Cor 12:27-31)

- How were these gifts given?
 - _____
(vv. Acts 8:4-25 ; Acts 19:1-7 ; Rom 1:11 ; II Tim 1:6)

- When were these gifts to cease?
 - “When perfection comes” (v. I Cor 13:1-13)

What is “perfection?” What are the possibilities? If we conclude that “perfection” is something other than the completion of the NT canon, what potential dilemma do we face?
 - “...until we all reach unity in the faith” (Eph 4:1-14)

To what does the expression "the world to come" refer? (v. 5)

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What is being described in the quotation from Psalm 8:4-6? How does the writer apply this passage to Jesus? (vv. 6-8)

What does the phrase mean: “At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him?” (v. 8)

Why did Christ become a little lower than the angels?

- To become the _____ (v. 10)
- To become our _____ (vv. 11-13)
- To become our _____ (vv. 14-16)
- To become our _____ (vv. 17-18)

Why does the author say that this plan was “fitting” for God? (v. 10; Acts 2:23)

What was God's purpose in making the author of salvation perfect through sufferings? What does “make...perfect” signify? (vv. 10; Rom 3:19-31)

What is the significance of the author’s explanation of Jesus’ sufferings in view of his intended audience? (vv. John 12:34; Psalm 72:7, 17; 89:36, 37; 110:4; Isa. 9:7; Ezek. 37:24,25; Dan 2:44; 7:13,14; Mic. 4:7)

In what sense are Jesus and his followers “brothers?” In what way do we all have one origin? (vv. 11-15; Psalm 22:22; Isaiah 8:17,18)

In what sense has the devil been destroyed? If he has been destroyed, why does evil continue to be present in this world? (v. 14)

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What "release" or "deliverance" was brought through the death of Jesus?
(v. 15; Rom 7:4-6)

Who are the "offspring of Abraham?" (vv. 16; Gen 12:1-3; Gal 3:7-9, 23-29)

Why did Jesus have to become "like his brothers in every respect?" (v. 17)

Why is Christ well-fitted to aid those who are tempted? (v. 18)

Teacher's Notes

LAW OF MOSES DECLARED BY ANGELS

Deuteronomy 33:2 (ESV)

² He said,

“The LORD came from Sinai
and dawned from Seir upon us;
he shone forth from Mount Paran;
he came from the ten thousands of holy ones,
with flaming fire at his right hand.

Psalm 68:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ The chariots of God are twice ten thousand,
thousands upon thousands;
the Lord is among them; Sinai is now in the sanctuary.

Acts 7:53 (ESV)

⁵³ you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.”

Galatians 3:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary.

EVERY TRANSGRESS → JUST RETRIBUTION

Galatians 3:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.”

Galatians 3:19–26 (ESV)

¹⁹ Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary. ²⁰ Now an intermediary implies more than one, but God is one.

²¹ Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law. ²² But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

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²³ Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. ²⁴ So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, ²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.

James 2:8–13 (ESV)

⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. ⁹ But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. ¹¹ For he who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹² So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. ¹³ For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

MESSAGE OF THE SON IS ESSENTIAL

Romans 1:16–20 (ESV)

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

ESCAPE

Romans 3:19–31 (ESV)

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰ For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶ It was to show his

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righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷ Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. ²⁹ Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, ³⁰ since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. ³¹ Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

Ephesians 2:1–22 (ESV)

¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

¹¹ Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— ¹² remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, ¹⁶ and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. ¹⁷ And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

DECLARED BY THE LORD

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Luke 1:67–79 (ESV)

⁶⁷ And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,
⁶⁸ “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people
⁶⁹ and has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,
⁷⁰ as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
⁷¹ that we should be saved from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us;
⁷² to show the mercy promised to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant,
⁷³ the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us
⁷⁴ that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,
might serve him without fear,
⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
⁷⁷ to give knowledge of salvation to his people
in the forgiveness of their sins,
⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God,
whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high
⁷⁹ to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

Luke 2:11 (ESV)

¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Luke 19:9 (ESV)

⁹ And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham.

John 4:22 (ESV)

²² You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

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To Us

Luke 1:2 (ESV)

² just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us,

SIGNS, WONDERS, AND MIRACLES

Matthew 12:22–24 (ESV)

²² Then a demon-oppressed man who was blind and mute was brought to him, and he healed him, so that the man spoke and saw. ²³ And all the people were amazed, and said, “Can this be the Son of David?” ²⁴ But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, “It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons.”

John 3:1–2 (ESV)

¹ Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ² This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.”

Acts 2:22 (ESV)

²² “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know—

Acts 2:43 (ESV)

⁴³ And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.

Acts 4:30 (ESV)

³⁰ while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

Acts 5:12 (ESV)

¹² Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon’s Portico.

2 Corinthians 12:12 (ESV)

¹² The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, with signs and wonders and mighty works.

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GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

WHAT WERE THESE “GIFTS?”

1 Corinthians 12:8–10 (ESV)

⁸ For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

-WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE (12:8; 13:2)

-FAITH (12:9; 13:2)

-HEALING AND MIRACLES (12:9-10; HEB 2:1-4)

-PROPHECY (12:10; ACTS 21:8-9; I COR 14:1-25)

-DISCERNMENT (12:10)

-INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES (12:10; I COR 14:1-33)

-TONGUES (12:10)

- PENTECOST (ACTS 2:1-11)
- CORNELIUS (ACTS 10:44-46)
- TWELVE MEN (ACTS 19:1-7)
- NOT UNIVERSAL (I COR 12:30)
- TONGUES AND PROPHECY (I COR 14:1-33)

WHY WERE THESE GIFTS GIVEN?

For edification of the church

1 Corinthians 14:4 (ESV)

⁴ The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.

To prepare God's people for service

Ephesians 4:11–12 (ESV)

¹¹ And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ...

1 Corinthians 12:27–30 (ESV)

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸ And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. ²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰ Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?

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For testifying to God's plan for salvation

Hebrews 2:1–4 (ESV)

¹ Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. ² For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, ³ how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, ⁴ while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

HOW WERE THESE GIFTS GIVEN?

The laying on of the Apostles hands

Acts 8:14–17 (ESV)

¹⁴ Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, ¹⁵ who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, ¹⁶ for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

Acts 19:5–7 (ESV)

⁵ On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. ⁷ There were about twelve men in all.

Romans 1:11–12 (ESV)

¹¹ For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you—
¹² that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine.

2 Timothy 1:6–7 (ESV)

⁶ For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, ⁷ for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

DID OTHERS HAVE THIS POWER? (ACTS 8:4-25 ; I TIM 4:14)

1 Timothy 4:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you.

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WHEN WERE THESE GIFTS TO CEASE?

“When the perfect comes” (1 Cor 13:1-13)

What is “the perfect?” What are the possibilities? If we conclude that “the perfect” is something other than the completion of the NT canon, what potential dilemma do we face?

“...until we all attain to the unity of the faith” (Eph 4:13-14)

Ephesians 4:1–16 (ESV)

¹ I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³ eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. ⁷ But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. ⁸ Therefore it says,

“When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,
and he gave gifts to men.”

⁹ (In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? ¹⁰ He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) ¹¹ And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ¹⁴ so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. ¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

1 Corinthians 12:1–31 (ESV)

¹ Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. ² You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. ³ Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.

⁴ Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵ and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶ and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. ⁷ To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit

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for the common good. ⁸ For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apports to each one individually as he wills.

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴ For the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵ If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? ¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” ²² On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, ²⁴ which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, ²⁵ that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸ And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. ²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰ Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹ But earnestly desire the higher gifts.

And I will show you a still more excellent way.

1 Corinthians 13 (ESV)

¹ If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³ If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

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⁴ Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸ Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. ¹¹ When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. ¹² For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

¹³ So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 14:1–33a (ESV)

¹ Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. ² For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit. ³ On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. ⁴ The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church. ⁵ Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.

⁶ Now, brothers, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? ⁷ If even lifeless instruments, such as the flute or the harp, do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is played? ⁸ And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle? ⁹ So with yourselves, if with your tongue you utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what is said? For you will be speaking into the air. ¹⁰ There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning, ¹¹ but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me. ¹² So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church.

¹³ Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret. ¹⁴ For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful. ¹⁵ What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also. ¹⁶ Otherwise, if you give thanks with your spirit, how can anyone in the position of an outsider say “Amen” to your thanksgiving when he does not know what you are saying? ¹⁷ For you may be giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not being built up. ¹⁸ I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. ¹⁹ Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

²⁰ Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature. ²¹ In the Law it is written, “By people of strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners will I speak to this people, and even then they will not listen to me, says the

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Lord.”²² Thus tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is a sign not for unbelievers but for believers.²³ If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your minds?²⁴ But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all,²⁵ the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.

²⁶ What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.²⁷ If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret.²⁸ But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God.²⁹ Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said.³⁰ If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent.³¹ For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged,³² and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets.³³ For God is not a God of confusion but of peace...

SPEAKING IN TONGUES

Acts 2:1–11 (ESV)

¹ When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place.² And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.³ And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

⁵ Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven.⁶ And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language.⁷ And they were amazed and astonished, saying, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?”⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?⁹ Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome,¹¹ both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.”

Acts 10:44–46 (ESV)

⁴⁴ While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word.⁴⁵ And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles.⁴⁶ For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared,

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Acts 19:1–7 (ESV)

¹ And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. ² And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." ³ And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." ⁴ And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." ⁵ On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. ⁷ There were about twelve men in all.

CESSATION OF GIFTS (I COR 13:8-10)

Coffman Commentaries on the Old and New Testament

-Coffman, James Burton

Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.

Beginning here, and to the end of the chapter, it is the permanence of love, as contrasted with the supernatural gifts which were so highly treasured by the Corinthians, which is stressed. And before moving to declare that all of these things which had so dazzled and inflated the Corinthians were soon to end, Paul had just outlined the glory and desirability of Christian love, the same being the "most excellent way" mentioned in [1 Corinthians 12:31b](#). But here he made the unqualified declaration of the end of supernatural gifts in the church. It may only be hoped that the Corinthians got the point better than many of the modern commentators.

Love never faileth ... As in the **RSV**, "Love never ends."

Prophecies ... shall be done away ... This cannot mean that prophecies shall be contradicted by events, but as Hodge said, "The gift (of prophecy) shall cease to be necessary, and therefore shall not be continued."^[17]

Tongues ... shall cease ... This means that the **TRUE** gifts of tongues would cease. In many generations after those days, the gift of so-called "tongues" would flourish at intervals throughout the history of Christendom; but Paul's words here absolutely deny any authenticity whatever to the so-called charismatics of the present day. True, it is only said here that "tongues **SHALL** cease"; but there is no reason whatever to believe that this least of all supernatural gifts should have survived when supernatural knowledge, divine prophecy, and the gift of miracle-working faith perished; which, of course, they did. Any authentic speaking in tongues is here restricted by the apostle Paul to the age of miracles; and when that ceased, the tongues ceased, except for the

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affectations of those who indulge, from whatever motives, the counterfeit "tongues" of the present day.

The very fact of Paul's showing "the more excellent way" declared that the supernatural gifts would soon pass away, otherwise that generation would not have needed the instruction. Those gifts at Corinth had a purpose. In that day in Corinth, no man had a copy of the New Testament; therefore it was necessary that supernaturally endowed men should teach and lead them; but today, "No preacher or teacher has any message from God unless he gets it from the Bible."^[18]

During the childhood age of the church, miracles authenticated the message of the inspired preachers (Mark 16:20). Miracles were to confirm the word of God. "No miracle today could confirm the word of God; it is already confirmed. Men need simply to believe and obey it."^[19]

The burden of proof must rest upon those who suppose the age of miracles is still upon us. If there are super-natural gifts, where are they? The contradicting claims of religious bodies pretending to work miracles are mutually destructive. This writer believes that there are no miracles being performed today by any persons whomsoever. Paul said they would cease; and they have ceased! That there are marvelous providences, so singular and astonishing as to startle people, is not surprising; for it may not be denied that God is still working in the world, and especially in his kingdom; but that quality of miracles bearing witness as a confirmation of God's word is not discernible in such merciful providences. What about the answer to prayer? Yes indeed God answers prayer, and sometimes in the most astonishing ways; but such a thing bears no likeness to the supernatural and visible wonders of the apostolic age.

The character of people pretending to perform miracles in this generation refutes their claims. They get rich doing it; but the apostles never took money for healing anyone.

As Foy E. Wallace stated it:

The miraculous endowments designated **SPIRITUAL** gifts have **FAILED**, have **CEASED**, have **VANISHED AWAY** and are therefore no longer in force. All such powers were temporary and provisional and cannot now be exercised.^[20]

There is a meaning in such words as "cease ... fail ... vanish away," not merely of continuing no longer, but of being superseded by something else. As Russell noted, "Tongues prophecies, and ... knowledge shall be superseded."^[21] Despite the fact of Russell's taking a dispensational view of this passage, his idea of "superseded" is correct. And what was to supersede the tongues, etc.? It was the inspired writing of the New Testament. Thus, the fact of the appearance of that which was to do the superseding proved the near approach of the time for it to occur. In a sense, this Epistle superseded the tongues of Corinth.

When that which is perfect is come ... The great problem before Paul was the instruction and guidance of the church in Corinth; and the most acceptable view of what

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might be called "perfect" in connection with that problem would be the completed canon on the New Testament. McGarvey understood it as "the recorded word."^[22] Kelcy called it "The body of truth fully revealed."^[23] DeHoff identified it as "The New Testament."^[24] The comparison which Paul at once made contrasted the childhood age of the church with the church's maturity, not the present dispensation with the ultimate condition of the saints in heaven; and this demands that the expression "that which is perfect" must be associated, not with conditions in heaven, but with the maturity of the church; and that condition is met only by referring the words to God's completed revelation, the Bible.

A great many commentators insist upon referring "that which is perfect" to conditions in heaven, as for example in the following:

This anticipates the Parousia, the culmination of the age. To suggest that "the perfect" refers to the completion of the Canon of Scripture fails to find any support in the Biblical usage of perfect ... Such an interpretation exists to explain the absence of certain **CHARISMATA** in many churches today.^[25]

Regarding the "Biblical usage" of "perfect," it should be noted that even of the Old Testament it was said, "The law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul" ([Psalms 19:7](#)); thus "perfect" most assuredly is applied to the revealed word of God; and such being true of the Old Testament makes it even more applicable to the New Testament. As for the absence of "certain [[@charismata](#)]" in present-day churches, it may be dogmatically affirmed that "ALL [[@charismata](#)]" is absent from all present-day churches, with the exception of counterfeit tongues affected by certain groups, the behavior of whom invariably demonstrates their so-called "manifestations" as being contrary to the orders of the Holy Spirit, unscriptural and thus bearing no resemblance whatever to the genuine gift which existed in the times of the apostles.

That which is in part shall be done away ... Failure to see that "**MIRACULOUS** knowledge, tongues, prophecies, etc." called in these chapters "spiritual gifts," are to be identified with the things in part that shall be done away involves interpreters in an impossible position. Take ordinary "knowledge," is this to be done away with when we get to heaven? Certainly not. Later, at the end of the chapter, Paul gives a glimpse of eternity, but not here. The things in part which were soon to be done away were the supernatural gifts of the infancy age of the church. "Paul considered the days of spiritual gifts as the process by which the goal of maturity should be reached."^[26] As Lipscomb said it:

These gifts were to continue in the church to guide and instruct it until the completed will of God was made known. They were to serve a temporary purpose; then when their office was fulfilled, they were to pass away and give place to the revealed will of God.^[27]

The pattern of many commentators is like that of Macknight who paraphrased this thus:

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When the perfect gift of complete illumination is bestowed on all in heaven, then that which is partial, namely, the present gifts of knowledge and prophecy, shall be abolished as useless.^[28]

However, who can believe that Paul was trying to control the outrageous situation in Corinth by assuring them that all of those miraculous gifts would disappear when they all got to heaven? The perfect illustration of what he really means was childhood giving way to maturity, stated in the very next line.

[17] Charles Hodge, op. cit., p. 271.

[18] George W. DeHoff, Sermons on First Corinthians (Murfreesboro, Tennessee: The Christian Press, 1947), p. 96.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Foy E. Wallace, Jr., A Review of the New Versions (Fort Worth, Texas: Foy E. Wallace, Jr., Publications, 1973), p. 435.

[21] John William Russell, Compact Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1964), p. 426.

[22] J. W. McGarvey, op. cit., p. 132.

[23] Raymond C. Kelcy, First Corinthians (Austin, Texas: R. B. Sweet Co., Inc., 1967), p. 61.

[24] George W. DeHoff, op. cit., p. 96.

[25] Paul W. Marsh, A New Commentary (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1969), p. 404.

[26] Raymond C. Kelcy, op. cit., p. 62.

[27] David Lipscomb, op. cit., p. 200.

[28] James Macknight, op. cit., p. 219. ¹

¹ Coffman, James Burton. "Commentary on 1 Corinthians 13:4". "Coffman Commentaries on the Old and New Testament". "www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/1-corinthians-13.html". Abilene Christian University Press, Abilene, Texas, USA. 1983-1999.

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Gospel Advocate – A Commentary on the New Testament Epistles: First Corinthians

- David Lipscomb, ed J.W. Shepherd

8 Love never faileth:—He now shows that spiritual gifts were temporary, and must pass away; while love, the doing of God's will to all, as a principle of action and a means of justification, would never pass away. Love is the ruling principle in heaven, and is eternal.

but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away;—Prophecy, the foretelling of future events and the teaching by inspiration the will of God after it had been given by the apostles, would be done away.

whether there be tongues, they shall cease;—The speaking with tongues they had never learned would cease.

whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away.—The time would come when miraculously bestowed knowledge would be known no more. All those spiritual gifts pertained to the introductory age of the church. These powers were given to help men do what they could not do without the power, as the New Testament had not been completed.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part;—At the time this was written, some things were unknown, had not been revealed. For the knowledge of God's will they were dependent upon those possessing the gift of prophecy. Most expositors think this refers to the partial knowledge of divine things we possess in this world, compared with the clear vision we shall possess when we shall have passed into the future; but this is wholly outside the scope of the apostle's writing here. He is contrasting the spiritual gifts, their teachings and blessings, with the service of love under the completed and perfect law.

10 but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.—These gifts were to continue in the church to guide and instruct it until the completed will of God was made known. They were to serve a temporary purpose; then when their office was fulfilled, they were to pass away and give place to it.

That perfection was completed, so far as God's work of the revealing work of the Spirit is concerned, when the full will of God should be revealed, or made known, and his provisions for saving men should be set in operation, as is set forth in the following: "And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the

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measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men in craftiness, after the wiles of error; but speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ." ([Eph. 4:11-15.](#)) In this passage Paul explains the whole matter; showing that these miraculous gifts were to serve till the full knowledge was received to make them one in faith and to bring them to the fullness of men and women in Christ. That knowledge is given in the New Testament.

There are two reasons why the gifts of the Spirit are not now imparted. These gifts were miraculous powers. First, there are no apostles now to impart gifts. The apostles were inspired men; so they knew all truth through inspiration, and they had seen and heard Jesus. Secondly, having revealed all truth needed to make men perfect, and thoroughly furnish them to all good works, having put in operation all the provisions of God for instructing and blessing men, there is no further need for miraculous revelations. Men can now learn all truth needed for present and eternal well-being from his will revealed and recorded in the Bible, and it will lead him into all the blessings of God in this world and in that to come, if he will study it to know and do the will of God. What man can learn himself, God will not work miracles to make known to him.

Again, to all creations and orders of God there have been creative and procreative ages. The creative age is that in which new creatures and a new order of things are brought into being; the procreative age is that in which these beings are multiplied and developed and the order is continued. In the creative age, the age of miracles, things are miraculously formed and created, afterwards they multiply and grow through the workings of law. Life was imparted to Adam and Eve by miracle; life, the same life that was given to them, has been passed on to their children through all the generations from them to us by law. No miracle has been needed to impart physical life since they were made alive. A miracle giving physical life would be a violation of the order of God. The same is true in the spiritual world. In the beginning spiritual life was imparted miraculously. Jesus Christ came into the world; through his teaching in precept and example; his suffering, death, burial; his struggle in the grave with the power of death and hell (in the grave the battle for man was fought and the victory won); his resurrection and ascension to his Father's throne, he created the material for the new spiritual kingdom. The apostles and their fellow disciples constituted the nucleus. Christ completed his work and left them with the words ringing in their ears: "Behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high." ([Luke 24:49.](#)) The Holy Spirit came, imparted unto them spiritual life miraculously, organized them, gave laws to guide in the operation and development in the spiritual realm. The same spiritual life bestowed on them through miracle has been perpetuated and multiplied through "the law of the Spirit of life in

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Christ Jesus" ([Rom. 8:2](#)), so that all Christians now enjoy that life without miracle. It was given by miracle; it is perpetuated by law.²

The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Romans through Galatians

8–12 Love is permanent, in contrast with prophecies, tongues, and knowledge—all of which will cease to exist because they will cease to be needed. In v. 8, Paul uses the verb (*katargeō*, “abolish”; hence “cease,” “pass away”) to describe the cessation of prophecies and of knowledge; of tongues, he says “they will be stilled” (NIV). Here the verb is *pauō*, which also means “cease.” The reason these three will cease is that they are imperfect and partial (vv. 9, 10) compared to perfect knowledge and prophetic understanding in heaven. He does not say when they will cease. Some think he meant that the need for miraculous gifts would cease to exist at the end of the apostolic period. This view is based in part on the implications of the meaning of the term *teleion* (“perfection”) v. 10, which is taken to refer here to the completion of the canon at the end of the first century A.D. With this view, the term “prophecies” in v. 8 is taken narrowly as referring to direct, inspired revelatory communication from the Holy Spirit or possibly to some special aid given by the Spirit to understand and present truth already revealed, as given in the written Scriptures (cf. Hodge, in loc.). All this, then, was done away when the canon was completed about A.D.100. This cessation would apply also to tongues and to the special gift of knowledge (vv. 8, 9)—the “gift correctly to understand and properly exhibit the truths revealed by the apostles and prophets” (Hodge, in loc.).

There is something to commend this view as an argument against the position that the gifts mentioned in vv. 8–10 continued, beyond the apostolic period, especially prophetic revelation. For if such revelation is held to continue, then might not the Koran, *The Book of Mormon*, and *Science and Health* be considered inspired revelations from God?

Nevertheless, it is difficult to prove the cessation of these gifts at the end of the first century A.D. by taking *teleion* to refer to a completion of the canon at that time, since that idea is completely extraneous to the context. While *teleion* can and does refer to something completed at some time in the future, the time of that future completion is not suggested in v. 10 as being close.

On the other hand, in a number of contexts the related words *telos* (“end,” “termination;” “last part”) and *teleō* (“bring to an end”) are used in relation to the second coming of Christ. This is true in both non-Pauline writing (cf. James 5:11; Rev 20:5, 7; 21:6; 22:13) and 1 Corinthians 1:8; 15:24. Since in the contexts of the Second Coming these related words are used and since Paul himself used *telos* in talking about the Second Coming elsewhere in 1 Corinthians, it seems more normal to understand

² David Lipscomb, *New Testament Commentary – A Commentary on the New Testament Epistles: First Corinthians*, ed. J.W. Shepherd, (Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate Co., 1987), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 205-208.

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teleion in v. 10 to mean that “perfection” is to come about at the Second Coming, or, if before, when the Christian dies and is taken to be with the Lord (2 Cor 5:1–10).

There are other problems regarding the completion-of-the-canon view of *teleion* here. The conditional temporal *hotan* with the subjunctive form of the verb, “[whenever the end] should come” (v. 10), suggests that Paul felt an indefiniteness about when the end he has in mind would come. But he shows no such indefiniteness in regard to the written Scriptures or the special position of the apostles (9:1, 2), whose work would be assumed to be coming to an end shortly upon their death. Similarly, the *hotan* with the subjunctive clauses and *telos* used of the Second Coming in 15:24, are also indefinite and open-ended: “then ... when [or, whenever] he hands over the kingdom....” Here again, Paul does not know exactly when this will occur. In contrast, the *hote* with the indicative clauses in 13:11 are quite definite as to the time of their occurrences: “When I was a child ... when I became a man.”

One more problem with taking *teleion* to refer to the completion of the canon is found in the *tote*, (“then,” “at that time”) clauses in v. 12. Did Paul really expect to live to the time of the completion of the canon and then expect to “know” or “know completely,” when other apostles (e.g., John) might (and actually did) live longer than he and it would be they who at that time would “know completely”?

All things considered, it is better to argue for the cessation of the gifts of prophecy, tongues, and the special gift of knowledge on the basis of the larger context of Paul’s writings and on the basis of the grammar of vv. 9, 13: prophecies, tongues, and knowledge will pass away soon. Paul’s viewpoint seems to be that it would be when the important office of apostle with its requirement of men having seen the Lord and having been a witness to his resurrection (Gal 1:14–24) is no longer exercised. But “now” (*nyini*) faith, hope, and love continue to remain (*menei*, present continuous sense).

Paul’s illustration of a child’s thoughts and speech, real but inadequately conceived and expressed in comparison with those of a mature person (v. 11) aptly conveys the difference between the Christian’s present understanding and expression of spiritual things and the perfect understanding and expression he will have in heaven (v. 12). The metaphor is that of the imperfect reflection seen in one of the polished metal mirrors (cf. James 1:23) of the ancient world in contrast with seeing the Lord face to face (cf. Gen 32:30; Num 12:8; 2 Cor 3:18). Paul’s thought in 12b may be expanded as follows: Now through the Word of God, I know in part; then, in the presence of the Lord I will know fully, to the full extent that a redeemed finite human being can know and in a way similar in kind to the way the Lord in his infinite wisdom fully and infinitely knows me. The Corinthians, Paul implies, must not boast now of their gifts (cf. 13:4), for those gifts are nothing compared to what is in store for the Christians in heaven.³

³ Mare, W. H. (1976). 1 Corinthians. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Romans through Galatians* (Vol. 10, pp. 268–270). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

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Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible

- Jamieson, R., Fausset

8. never faileth—never is to be out of use; it always holds its place.

shall fail ... vanish away—The same *Greek* verb is used for both; and that different from the *Greek* verb for “faileth.” Translate, “Shall be done away with,” that is, shall be dispensed with at the Lord’s coming, being superseded by their more perfect heavenly analogues; for instance, *knowledge* by *intuition*. Of “tongues,” which are still more temporary, the verb is “shall *cease*.” A primary fulfilment of Paul’s statement took place when the Church attained its maturity; then “tongues” entirely “ceased,” and “prophesyings” and “knowledge,” so far as they were supernatural gifts of the Spirit, were superseded as no longer required when the ordinary preaching of the word, and the Scriptures of the New Testament collected together, had become established institutions.⁴

SUBJECTION / LOWER THAN ANGELS

Psalm 8:4–6 (ESV)

⁴ what is man that you are mindful of him,
and the son of man that you care for him?

⁵ Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings
and crowned him with glory and honor.

⁶ You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet,

Philippians 2:5–11 (ESV)

⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

⁴ Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., & Brown, D. (1997). *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible* (Vol. 2, p. 289). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

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PERFECT

5457 τελειόω (*teleioō*): vb.; ≡ Str 5048; TDNT 8.79—**1.** LN 88.38 **make perfect** (Heb 10:1; 1Jn 2:5), for another interp, see next; **2.** LN 73.7 **make genuine** (1Jn 2:5), for another interp, see prior; **3.** LN 68.22 **complete**, finish, end, accomplish (Ac 20:24); **4.** LN 68.31 **succeed fully** (Php 3:12), for another interp, see next; **5.** LN 53.50 **initiate**, into the Christian faith (Php 3:12), for another interp, see prior; **6.** LN 13.126 **make happen**, bring to fruition (Jn 19:28); **7.** LN 13.18 **attain** a state as a goal (Jn 17:23)⁵

GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN

Acts 2:22–24 (ESV)

²² “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know—²³ this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.²⁴ God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

Romans 3:21–22 (ESV)

²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:

Galatians 3:5–9 (ESV)

⁵ Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith—⁶ just as Abraham “believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”?

⁷ Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.⁸ And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.”⁹ So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

Galatians 3:28–29 (ESV)

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

⁵ Swanson, J. (1997). [*Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek \(New Testament\)*](#) (electronic ed.). Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

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SUFFERING SERVANT

Isaiah 52:13–53:12 (ESV)

¹³ Behold, my servant shall act wisely;
he shall be high and lifted up,
and shall be exalted.

¹⁴ As many were astonished at you—
his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance,
and his form beyond that of the children of mankind—

¹⁵ so shall he sprinkle many nations.
Kings shall shut their mouths because of him,
for that which has not been told them they see,
and that which they have not heard they understand.

¹ Who has believed what he has heard from us?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

² For he grew up before him like a young plant,
and like a root out of dry ground;
he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
and no beauty that we should desire him.

³ He was despised and rejected by men,
a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;
and as one from whom men hide their faces
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.

⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his wounds we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned—every one—to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he opened not his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he opened not his mouth.

⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away;
and as for his generation, who considered

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that he was cut off out of the land of the living,
stricken for the transgression of my people?

⁹ And they made his grave with the wicked
and with a rich man in his death,
although he had done no violence,
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him;
he has put him to grief;
when his soul makes an offering for guilt,
he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days;
the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

¹¹ Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied;
by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,
make many to be accounted righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.

¹² Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many,
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong,
because he poured out his soul to death
and was numbered with the transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
and makes intercession for the transgressors.

BROTHERS

Matthew 12:49–50 (ESV)

⁴⁹ And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! ⁵⁰ For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”

Mark 3:33–35 (ESV)

³³ And he answered them, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” ³⁴ And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵ For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.”

Luke 8:21 (ESV)

²¹ But he answered them, “My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it.”

Romans 8:12–17 (ESV)

¹² So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³ For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of

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God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Romans 8:29 (ESV)

²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Psalm 22 (ESV)

TO THE CHOIRMASTER: ACCORDING TO THE DOE OF THE DAWN. A PSALM OF DAVID.

- ¹ My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?
- ² O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer,
and by night, but I find no rest.
- ³ Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
- ⁴ In you our fathers trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.
- ⁵ To you they cried and were rescued;
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.
- ⁶ But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by mankind and despised by the people.
- ⁷ All who see me mock me;
they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;
- ⁸ “He trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him;
let him rescue him, for he delights in him!”
- ⁹ Yet you are he who took me from the womb;
you made me trust you at my mother’s breasts.
- ¹⁰ On you was I cast from my birth,
and from my mother’s womb you have been my God.
- ¹¹ Be not far from me,
for trouble is near,
and there is none to help.
- ¹² Many bulls encompass me;
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
- ¹³ they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.

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- ¹⁴ I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;
- ¹⁵ my strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.
- ¹⁶ For dogs encompass me;
a company of evildoers encircles me;
they have pierced my hands and feet—
- ¹⁷ I can count all my bones—
they stare and gloat over me;
- ¹⁸ they divide my garments among them,
and for my clothing they cast lots.
- ¹⁹ But you, O LORD, do not be far off!
O you my help, come quickly to my aid!
- ²⁰ Deliver my soul from the sword,
my precious life from the power of the dog!
- ²¹ Save me from the mouth of the lion!
You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!
- ²² I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:
- ²³ You who fear the LORD, praise him!
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him,
and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!
- ²⁴ For he has not despised or abhorred
the affliction of the afflicted,
and he has not hidden his face from him,
but has heard, when he cried to him.
- ²⁵ From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will perform before those who fear him.
- ²⁶ The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the LORD!
May your hearts live forever!
- ²⁷ All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the LORD,
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before you.
- ²⁸ For kingship belongs to the LORD,

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and he rules over the nations.

- ²⁹ All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
even the one who could not keep himself alive.
- ³⁰ Posterity shall serve him;
it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation;
- ³¹ they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn,
that he has done it.

Mark 15:34 (ESV)

³⁴ And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

John 19:24 (ESV)

²⁴ so they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.” This was to fulfill the Scripture which says,

“They divided my garments among them,
and for my clothing they cast lots.”

So the soldiers did these things,

ISAIAH 8

Isaiah 8:17–18 (ESV)

¹⁷ I will wait for the LORD, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in him. ¹⁸ Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given me are signs and portents in Israel from the LORD of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion.

Isaiah 12:2 (ESV)

² “Behold, God is my salvation;
I will trust, and will not be afraid;
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation.”

2 Samuel 22:3 (ESV)

³ my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield, and the horn of my salvation,
my stronghold and my refuge,
my savior; you save me from violence.

PARTOOK OF THE SAME THINGS

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Hebrews 4:14–16 (ESV)

¹⁴ Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Philippians 2:5–11 (ESV)

⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

VICTORY

1 Corinthians 15:50–57 (ESV)

⁵⁰ I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

“Death is swallowed up in victory.”

⁵⁵ “O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?”

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

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OFFSPRING OF ABRAHAM

Galatians 3:7 (ESV)

⁷ Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.

Galatians 3:29 (ESV)

²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

HIGH PRIEST

Leviticus 23:26–32 (ESV)

²⁶ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁷ “Now on the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be for you a time of holy convocation, and you shall afflict yourselves and present a food offering to the LORD. ²⁸ And you shall not do any work on that very day, for it is a Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God. ²⁹ For whoever is not afflicted on that very day shall be cut off from his people. ³⁰ And whoever does any work on that very day, that person I will destroy from among his people. ³¹ You shall not do any work. It is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. ³² It shall be to you a Sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict yourselves. On the ninth day of the month beginning at evening, from evening to evening shall you keep your Sabbath.”

Romans 3:21–26 (ESV)

²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

THE TEMPTATIONS OF CHRIST

Matthew 4:1–11 (ESV)

¹ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” ⁴ But he answered, “It is written,

“ ‘Man shall not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ ”

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⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple ⁶ and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

“ ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’

and

“ ‘On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.’ ”

⁷ Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ” ⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

“ ‘You shall worship the Lord your God
and him only shall you serve.’ ”

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

Mark 1:12–13 (ESV)

¹² The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³ And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him.

Luke 4:1–12 (ESV)

¹ And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness ² for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry. ³ The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” ⁴ And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’ ” ⁵ And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, ⁶ and said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. ⁷ If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” ⁸ And Jesus answered him, “It is written,

“ ‘You shall worship the Lord your God,
and him only shall you serve.’ ”

⁹ And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, ¹⁰ for it is written,

“ ‘He will command his angels concerning you,
to guard you,’

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¹¹ and

“ ‘On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.’ ”

¹² And Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ”

James 1:2–18 (ESV)

² Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³ for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴ And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

⁹ Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, ¹⁰ and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. ¹¹ For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.

¹² Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. ¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸ Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

The New Testament tells of Jesus’ temptations to assure and encourage believers to trust in His salvation and follow His pattern of faithfulness to God. Though sinless, Jesus experienced the moral struggle between the desire to do right and the desire to sin. Temptation is a basic experience all people encounter. For His mission of salvation, Jesus stood in the place of sinful people, suffered the onslaught of temptation, and triumphed by never giving into sin.

The wilderness temptations (Matt 4:1–11; Mark 1:12–13; Luke 4:1–13) highlight Jesus’ role as the new Adam, and mirror Israel’s 40 years of wilderness wanderings. Like Adam and Eve, Jesus underwent temptation, but where they sinned, Jesus proved faithful.

Jesus’ faithfulness is further seen in Gethsemane, where Jesus asked three times for

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another way (Matt 26:39, 42, 44), and on the cross, where He experienced the despair of feeling forsaken by God (Matt 27:46). Jesus' temptations speak to the authenticity of the incarnation. The temptations also qualify Him for His role as priest, since He is able to identify with His people in their temptations and restore them in relationship to God (Heb 4:14–16). In addition to completing His work as sinless redeemer, Jesus' temptations and sufferings—and His responses—teach those who follow Him how to overcome temptation and difficulty in their own lives.

As Jesus demonstrated in the temptation in the wilderness—and through his faithfulness at Gethsemane—the proper response to temptation is to resist with the help of God. In the wilderness, Jesus showed that God's Word can be used to counter the lies of temptation. Jesus responded to Satan's appeals by relying on God's Word, manifesting the lesson that Israel was supposed to learn in their 40 years of wilderness journeying (Deut 8:2–3). Temptation often presents sin as acceptable and desirable; the antidote is the truth of God's Word. In Gethsemane, Jesus charged His disciples to pray that they not enter into temptation (Luke 22:40).

Christ's temptations occurred for our sake, as part of His work to save His people. The experience of being tempted "in all ways as we are" (Heb 4:15) reassures believers that Jesus, despite being the eternal God, truly understands the experience of temptation. He endured the strain of temptation from childhood until His final moments on the cross. Jesus experienced the temptation to retaliate when sinned against, to withdraw and protect Himself, to shrink back from God's mission, and to avoid suffering. His empathy and willingness to help those undergoing temptation originate in His personal experience. Hebrews 4:16 urges Christians to seek Jesus' help, as He both understands temptation and pain, and possesses the ability to provide the aid necessary to surmount any obstacle.

JOHN MCKINLEY⁶

⁶ McKinley, J. (2012, 2016). [The Temptations of Christ](#). In *Faithlife Study Bible*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.