

BASIC TEACHING
(Milk for Babes)
#12

GUIDANCE FROM GOD
By Sam Fife



The Highest Purpose for Man

To be content with food and raiment,
the necessities of life

To be in a place free from the influence of
Babylon and free to exercise and grow in God

To find your place in the Kingdom of God
which is coming on the Earth

Guidance From God by Sam Fife

Part I

This is a study of guidance from God, the Holy Spirit. When we say guidance, we do not mean simply teaching in the area of knowledge from Scripture. We do not mean simply guidance as to whether this is a sin or whether that is a sin, and whether it is all right to do this or whether it is all right to do that. We mean Divine guidance from the Holy Spirit so that we will have God's direction as to whether we should go here or go there, or whether we should do this or not do this. This is the area in which we will be studying.

Let me say first that concerning this subject we do not claim to be an infallible authority. We can only share those things which we have learned from the Scriptures and from our own experience in past years of following the Lord. The teachings that you will hear are not the ultimate that will be revealed on this subject by God to His servants in these last days. We do not claim to have arrived at all of the knowledge on the subject of guidance that can be had, nor do we claim to be able to walk in perfect, infallible guidance ourselves at this point in our spiritual growth.

In I Corinthians 13, beginning with the eighth verse, Paul explains to us that now, at this stage of our Christian growth, we see through a glass darkly. Now we are in the childlike stage, so to speak, and as such we use childish things - such as prophecy, tongues, interpretation, as Paul lists in I Corinthians 13:8. But he says that when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away with. At this point in our Christian growth, we use that which is given to us but it is only in part - and some day that which is perfect is going to come in us. Then that which is in part, Paul says, shall be done away with. By the way, tongues, prophecy, knowledge shall not cease until that which is perfect comes in us. Let me state here in rebuttal to the argument presented by those who would decry and

detract from the gift of tongues: many Christians have interpreted this statement of Paul's, "When that which is perfect is come," to mean the coming of Jesus; but when Jesus comes, that which is imperfect will have come to an end because He is perfect. Actually, in I Corinthians 13 Paul was not talking about Jesus coming, but he was talking about that which is perfect coming - in us. This is made very clear. He said, "now we see in part."

He is talking about our in-partness. But when that which is perfect is come in us, then that which is in part in us shall be done away with. It says perfection will come to us in conjunction with the return of Jesus. There is a sense in which this will all come to pass when Jesus comes, but we want to stress that Paul was saying that when that which is perfect shall have come in us, then our in-partness will have been done away with. He said, "Now we see through a glass darkly, then we shall see face to face. Now we know in part, then we shall know even as we are known." Then we shall know all truth even as God knows all truth about us. When that day comes, we will then be walking in infallible guidance, never failing, never being misled, never being misguided; and this, of course, is what we are reaching toward.

But, since that which is perfect has not yet come in me, I can't claim to have infallible guidance, or that these teachings are the ultimate on the subject, or that I can even yet walk perfectly in all the truth that I see about guidance and that I will present to you in this study from the Scriptures. But at all times and in all points in our Christian growth, we must strive to do as well as we can. We must strive to know as much as we can about this subject of guidance. Also, we must strive to walk in all that has been revealed to us even as the Apostle Paul says, "whereunto we have attained; so let us also walk." And so we shall present to you this truth from the Scriptures, and from our own experience (which is a result of that which has been revealed

to us from the Scriptures), and pray that God will make it a blessing to your heart.

Now let me state, first, that infallible guidance from the Holy Spirit is provided for us right now and is provided for us by God. The Scriptures very clearly reveal this. Please turn in your Bibles to Luke 12:11-12. Here Jesus, speaking to His disciples and to all of His disciples for all times said,

"And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say. For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say."

Here it is clearly revealed to us by the Scriptures that infallible guidance is provided for us. This is one, of my favorite verses of Scripture. It sends the greatest thrill through my soul when I see its full meaning. For you see, Jesus knew that His disciples whom He was leaving in the world, both then and today, would often be brought before judges and counsels and placed on trial. He knew that their very lives would depend on the answers that they gave. And yet, He was so certain that there would be One with them who is so willing, so eager, at any given hour of trial or testing, to give them the very thoughts to think and the very words with which to answer. He knew this One would be so eager to do so, that all that was needed in order for Him to do so, was that they settle it not in their hearts beforehand that which they would answer. Jesus was so certain that the Holy Spirit would be with them to give them the very words to say and the thoughts to think in any of their trials and testings that He was willing to stake the lives of His disciples on it. He is still willing to stake the lives of His disciples on it. So this makes it very clear that such infallible guidance is provided for us.

Yea, that there is One ever with us, even the Holy Spirit, who is so willing at any given hour of trial or testing to give us the very thoughts to think and the words to say that the only thing He needs, in order for Him to do so, is for us to

settle it not in our hearts beforehand what we are going to say. It is at this very point that infallible guidance becomes fallible to us. For the problem is that we, instead of trusting in this One who is with us, and settling it not in our hearts beforehand what we are going to say; instead of believing that He is in us and that He will at any given moment give us the right thought and the right answer and the right move to make; instead of trusting Him to do so, we are always settling it in our hearts beforehand what we will do and what we will say. And thereby the infallible guidance that is provided for us becomes fallible and susceptible to error, not through the weakness of the provision of God, but through our own weakness.

So there are two reasons why we do not at this point walk in the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit that is provided for us. One is the weakness of our own flesh, the fact that we have within our flesh aspirations, desires, lusts, weaknesses, which make us susceptible to temptations, to things other than that which is God's good will and purpose for us. Secondly, because there are demon spirits in the world who play upon, count upon, and use our fleshy weaknesses to deceive us out of the way of God and away from the leadership of the Holy Spirit, by presenting to us temptations, false ideas, and guidance's which appeal to the weaknesses and the desires of our flesh. Therefore, if we are not very careful we follow these guidance's.

Now, these guidance's are usually presented to us in such a sly manner, particularly when we are earnest Christians, that the spirits who present them make us think that they are the Holy Spirit speaking to us and leading us and guiding us. Out of the weakness of our flesh we are often quick to accept ideas which are tempting and delicious to our appetite but against the will of God for us. We are often quick to believe these seducing spirits, yea, even to count them as being the Spirit of God and accept them as the Spirit of God. Therefore, it is in this area that our guidance becomes fallible, through the weakness of our own flesh and through

the presence of demon spirits in the world, whom the Bible says transform themselves into angels of light in order to deceive us and guide us into falsehood and error, suffering and sorrow. Someday we will walk in the infallible guidance that is provided for us, that is, we will walk in perfect union with the Holy Spirit.

That which is perfect will have come in us and we will yield completely to Him at all times. The Bible reveals this glorious fact in Hebrews 8:8-13, where Paul, speaking by the Spirit of God, quotes the prophecy in Jeremiah 31, beginning with verse 34, where God said: In the last days I will make a new covenant with my people, not according to the covenant that I made with them when I led them out of Egypt, when I gave them laws written on tables of stone –visible, written laws to be guided by - but a new covenant wherein I will write my laws in their inward parts; or as Paul says in Hebrews, on their minds and in their hearts. And they shall not teach every man his brother saying, “Know the Lord, for all shall know me from the least to the greatest.” Here, God speaks through Jeremiah and reconfirms it through Paul in the New Testament Age.

God spoke through Jeremiah and spoke of the new covenant, the new contract with His people that He would make. In this new contract day and age they would no longer be guided by visible, outward laws written on stone or paper or anything else which was outside them; but God would put His laws in their inward parts. He would write His laws in their minds and on their hearts. What did He mean? He meant the day would come when Jesus would be sent into the world with the new covenant and would hang on the cross, shed His blood, atone for our sins; and through His shed blood make us clean vessels so that the Holy Spirit of God could then indwell us and live within us; and thereby we would have the guidance of God in our inward parts.

God did not mean that He would write any laws on our inner fleshy organs; neither did He mean that He would take a pen and write on the fleshy organ of the heart. He meant

the Holy Spirit would enter into us; speak to us from within; and put in our minds the very thoughts, the very ideas - yea, we would hear His very voice telling us exactly what to do and how to do it in any given situation.

Jeremiah revealed the day would come when this would be brought to perfection in us; for he went on to say the day would come when we would not teach every man his brother, saying, "Know the Lord." All shall know Him. That is, all who are of the Body of Christ shall know Him, from the least to the greatest. The day would come when we would not need to teach one another at all, but all members of the Body of Christ would be in such perfect union with the Holy Spirit that there would no longer be any need for teachers, preachers, evangelists, prophets, apostles, or anything else. Each would be walking in perfect union with the Holy Spirit, with perfect guidance from the Holy Spirit; walking in the infallibility that is provided for us.

Jesus came 1900 years ago with that new covenant and shed His blood, atoned for our sins, and made us holy vessels so that Holy God could dwell in sinful man, and thereby the Holy Spirit entered into us and completely dwelled with us. However, that prophecy hasn't been completely fulfilled yet, because the day has not yet come that we are walking in such perfect union with Him that there is no longer any need for us to teach one another; but that day is coming in the future.

As the first part of the prophecy has been fulfilled, so will the last part of it be fulfilled. The reason it is not already fulfilled yet in us is because at the point of our growth where we are now, we do not yet fully trust in, and are not fully yielded to, and in perfect union with the Spirit of God which is in us; and therefore we are susceptible to false guidance from other spirits through the weakness of our flesh. But day by day, hour by hour, God is fulfilling His plan in us and we are growing into the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy. We are growing into that which is perfect in us.

The day will come when we shall no longer see through a glass darkly, neither shall we know in part or act in part, but

all the childish things that we use now in our in-partness shall have been done away with. We will be in perfect union with the Spirit of God and thereby walking in the infallible guidance that is provided for us. But, until that time we must use the instruments which have been provided for us and through them come to that perfect walk with the Holy Spirit; and then will come the infallible guidance.

From the Scriptures and from my own experience, I want to share with you what God has taught me in past years about the instruments of guidance that have been provided for us. When I first started out in my Christian walk - when I was first saved - the instrument of guidance that I used mostly was the fleece. We find out very quickly in our Christian walk that Gideon put out a fleece before the Lord and that God was willing to answer Gideon's fleece and this is one of the first instruments of guidance that we begin to use as a Christian. Sadly enough, many Christians who have been Christians for years and years and years are still using this instrument, instead of progressing on into the higher forms of guidance and the higher instruments that God has provided. But, so it was with me and I laid out many a fleece before the Lord. Some of them God was gracious to answer. Some of them the devil tricked me, but I did receive some guidance from God that way, much blessing from God; and I began to grow thereby.

The first and foremost means of guidance, and we should not have passed over it because it is first even before the fleece, is the direct speaking of the Holy Spirit to our mind: putting His thought –projecting His voice - into our minds, which we experience as a very powerful thought. This was first, as I said, before the fleece with me, because it was a powerful thought put in my mind by the Holy Spirit which first revealed to me that I was a sinner and needed a Saviour. This happened as I was standing out on one of my paving jobs one day watching my employees work. At that time I was in the paving contracting business and was considering buying more equipment and doubling the size of my

business. Suddenly the thought hit my mind powerfully, "If you build the biggest business in the city of Miami, you will never find happiness until you find God," This was, of course, the Holy Spirit.

After I was saved, He spoke to my mind also. He let me know that He wanted to call me into the ministry. But, as in every young Christian, I didn't have much faith and confidence in that voice, and was always doubting it when I would hear it; and I knew, of course, that the devil speaks to the mind also.

Therefore, as every other Christian, I felt the need for something added to that so I began to use the fleece. The fleece was successful at times; but since the devil is the imitator of every good thing, he would sometimes imitate the fleece too, so I found out that this wasn't infallible. I found out that this wasn't absolute guidance that I could depend on and so my heart began to long for something more. Many times I've had the experience of God speaking to me through the Scriptures. I'm sure most of you have, too: having, in a particular situation, a particular decision to be made - and the Holy Spirit would place a Scripture in your mind and bring to remembrance someone else who was in the same situation and what they did - for an instruction as to what was the best thing to do in the situation - and the Spirit gave you guidance through the Scriptures. But we find that this is not always infallible because then we recognize that Satan can misinterpret the Scriptures, and often does. And we find our hearts longing for something more, even, than this.

Another instrument that I used many times back in those early days was the one of opening the Scriptures. No doubt some of you have used it, too, when you have a particular decision to make you say, "Now, Lord, I'm going to open the Bible and the first Scripture I put my finger on, I want you to speak to me through it." And God spoke to me a number of times in that way, although I did not make it a habit. I do not think it is wise to do so. When I felt the Holy Spirit leading me to open the Scriptures and look at the first Scripture my

finger fell on for guidance from God, I did so. Never did I make it a rule that any time I wanted guidance I would open a Bible and point at a Scripture.

I was a little afraid that I might have the same experience as the young man who was on a mission field, and he and his fellow-missionary were such very, very close friends and close co-workers. When his fellow-missionary met a young woman, became engaged to her, and decided to marry her, this young man began to see that he was going to lose his very close brother. So he went to praying and crying to God, "What shall I do?" Then he told the Lord, "I'm going to open the Bible, and the first Scripture I point at I want you to tell me what to do through it." He opened the Bible and the first Scripture he pointed at read, "Go thou and do likewise."

So we have established that infallible guidance is provided and it will come to us some day. We have pointed out for you the speaking of the Spirit to the mind; the fleece; and the hearing of the Scriptures.

Another instrument of guidance that I used and counted on much, back in those early days, was the open door. I had the idea that when an open door was placed before me to do this or to do that, or to go this way or to go that way, that it meant that God was leading me to go in that direction, and so I usually went through. Then I discovered that Satan can also open doors. One needs to consider very carefully after a door has been opened, to see whether it is an open door that God has set before him to go the way He wants him to go, or whether it is an open door that Satan has set before him, which appears very appealing and yet is a trick of the enemy to lead one away from that which God has for him.

To illustrate this, I'm reminded of a man who, not too long ago, received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and began to be led by God into the way that God had for him. Shortly after he began to walk in the way that God had set before him and to rejoice in it, Satan began to open all kinds of doors for him through which he could achieve great financial status and great worldly wealth. In spite of all the warning that was

given him, even supernaturally by God, he was tricked into going through those doors. Now he is rising high in financial status and worldly wealth, but is missing the leadership of the Spirit and the will of God for his life. I soon learned that one needs to carefully consider the door that is opened to find out whether it is from God or not.

Then the day came when I felt I must have a more certain, a more experiential, a closer guidance from God than I had ever had before. This day came some years ago when God, in the process of three weeks' time, poured out His Spirit upon the Southern Baptist Church that I pastored and 95 per cent of all of the members received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, including myself. The manifestations of the Spirit began to come forth and the whole Church was transformed. As a result of this, God began to make real the Scriptures concerning Divine healing - which I had always passed over, as a Southern Baptist pastor - very quickly; relegating them back to the first century; since I had been taught that Divine healing was not for today. The Spirit began to make them leap out at me. He gave me revelations from them to urge me to preach it, and I realized that God was beginning to lead me into the Divine healing ministry.

This is a big step of faith, for a Southern Baptist minister to stand a person before his whole congregation for the first time, who has deaf ears or a cancer, and tell that person, "I'm going to pray for you and we are going to believe God and God is going to heal you now."

And so for a period of time the Spirit of God was moving powerfully upon my heart. Yet, in the weaknesses and the fears of my flesh the demons of hell were putting all sorts of ideas in my mind, such as: "Suppose the person doesn't get healed," or, "What will your congregation think of you? Your ministry will be ruined etc., etc." During that period of time I was in the valley of indecision; and I felt that I then must have supernatural guidance from God above and beyond what the average Christian, as I knew Christians, experienced. Above the voice speaking to your mind

through which you think the Holy Spirit has spoken to you, and you hope He has –and you act upon it; above an open door which could be from God or could be from Satan; above the fleece which sometimes is answered and sometimes is not; above opening the Scriptures which sometimes works and sometimes does not.

It was at this point that God led me into a higher form of guidance and a higher instrument of guidance, which was: speaking to me through visions and dreams. Let me say, at this point in our study, the other forms of guidance that I had used up to that point; the fleece, opening the Scriptures, the open door, etc.; had stood me in pretty good stead. I hadn't gotten into too much trouble and I had been able to follow them in accepting Christ as Saviour, answering the call to the ministry, and leaving my home and by faith going to seminary in a strange city a thousand miles away with practically no money.

They had stood me in good stead, and I believe that if the average Christian faithfully seeks to follow them on that level, they will stand him in good stead. But I believe when God begins to lead a Christian into a more dangerous area of warfare against the enemy, such as moving into the Divine healing realm and the walk in the Spirit; that it is at this point God wants to reveal to that Christian, and lead him into the higher, more supernatural instruments of guidance. So it was with me and so I believe it will be with each Christian who desires to go all the way with God.

And so at this point, as God was leading me into the Divine healing ministry, in order that I might have the faith to go into that ministry, He revealed to me that He would speak to His servants in dreams and visions today. He did not reveal it to me through a man, through another teacher, or through a denomination. He revealed it to me directly from the Scriptures and He led me into it without any association with Pentecostalism, but directly by the Scriptures and directly by the Spirit.

I would like to reveal to you the pattern which God revealed to me from the Scriptures, which made very clear to me God's pattern and God's plan for speaking to His servants today and giving them Divine guidance through dreams and visions.

It all happened to me during the period when I was in the valley of indecision about following the Holy Spirit into the Divine healing ministry. As a result of that indecision - longing to do what I felt the Holy Spirit was calling me to do, yet not absolutely certain it was God calling me to do it - I went to God in prayer and I told Him, "God, if I'm going to go into the Divine healing warfare, then you have to speak to me in a manner above and beyond what you have spoken to me before and let me know that is exactly what you want me to do." Shortly after I prayed that prayer, the Holy Spirit took me in my studies into the twelfth chapter of Numbers. There He showed me that when Moses was leading the children of Israel

through the wilderness - Miriam, his sister, and Aaron, his brother - spoke against him because he married an Ethiopian woman and claimed he was not the only prophet given to lead God's people; that they were prophets also. Then the Bible says that God called the three of them into the Tabernacle of the Congregation and there God spoke to them in an audible voice, saying, "How dare you speak against my servant, Moses. If there be a prophet among you, I will speak to him in a vision or a dream. But my servant Moses is an exception. With him I speak mouth to mouth." Here the Holy Spirit showed me that God's pattern for speaking to His prophets, that He would raise up from the nation that He had set in the world as His testimony, was to be through visions and dreams.

As I studied the rest of the Old Testament truth through the next 2,000 years of Israelitish history, I discovered that that is the way God spoke to His prophets that He raised up - in visions and dreams. I had often wondered when I had read "the Word of the Lord came to Ezekiel," and "the Word of

the Lord came to Isaiah," just how the Word of the Lord came to them so efficiently. Here God revealed to me from the Scriptures that His pattern was to speak to His prophets through visions and dreams, as I had read many times, "if a prophet hath a dream let him tell a dream, if he hath a vision let him tell a vision."

Then the Spirit led me to the New Testament. If the New Testament taught that that pattern was to cease with the coming of the New Testament Age then I could not expect God to speak to me in that manner. But, if the New Testament taught that it was not to cease, then why couldn't I expect God to speak to me in that manner also? As I studied the New Testament, I discovered that it not only did not teach that the pattern was to cease with the coming of the New Testament Age, but it taught that it was to be heightened and increased during the New Testament Age. Joel, in his great prophecy in Joel 2:28, said, "In the last days I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh – all the people of the earth – and your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions, and upon my servants and handmaidens – the men and the women – I will pour out my Spirit and they shall prophesy."

Peter stood up on the day of Pentecost, as we read in Acts 2, and said those last days Joel spoke of began on the day of Pentecost when they spoke in tongues and the Spirit was poured out. He said God also said in those last days that the sun would be turned to darkness, the moon into blood, and Jesus would return.

That hasn't happened yet, but the lord showed me that we are living in the days that began on the day of Pentecost and will end when Jesus returns. We are living in the days when God is pouring out His Spirit upon all flesh; therefore, it ought to be the natural normal things – not the abnormal thing – for us to expect to dream dreams and see visions, and the men and women to prophesy. Yea, I saw that the New Testament taught that the pattern was to be heightened and increased in the New Testament Age.

Then the spirit took me over to the book of Hebrews, the twelfth chapter. There he showed me the Scriptures teach that we in the New Testament age have a better revelation, a better High Priest, a better covenant, better fellowship, a better everything. Then the Lord said this to me – if the Israelites, when they were about to go into the battle against their enemies in the days of old, could go to God and ask a direct question, (through their prophets, to whom god spoke in dreams and visions) “Lord, if I go up into battle against the enemy wilt thou deliver him into Thine hands?” and the Lord would speak to them and either say, “go up, I will deliver, “or, “don’t go up, I wont deliver” – God said to me, if they could do that and I who live in a day when I have a better everything cannot, then there must be something wrong. I soon realized the something that was wrong was not that God did not do it any more, but only that I hadn’t been taught that God would do it. I had not believed it and desired and sought God to do so. With this, the spirit had finished His dealings with me. When I knelt down at my bedside that night, I prayed, “Lord. I want you to speak to me tonight in a dream or vision, and I want you to tell me, if I lead my people up against Satan in a Divine healing ministry will you give me the victory over him?”

That night I dreamed that I and all of my people were walking through fields and woods. In the dream we were all little children. Suddenly, we came to a clear place, and there, stretched out in the clear space was a great, big serpent about twenty feet long. One of my members reached down and picked him up behind his head with his hands, because he looked like he was dead. All of them said, “Look, he’s dead.” But when this one reached down and picked him up he came to life, and the member dropped him and he slithered off. Then all of us children sat down on the ground and made a covenant to search and seek out this serpent until we found him and destroyed him. In the dream, during a period of time after that we were seeking and searching through fields and woods for this serpent to destroy him. The

rest of the dream showed us going through a series of experiences until we found this serpent, and ultimately blew his head off with a shotgun.

God had directly answered my prayer, an absolute, direct answer and direct guidance within hours. I was absolutely certain by all the laws of logic, since I had prayed and said, “God, speak to me concerning this subject,” that in my dream God had spoken to me. That dream has been and is being fulfilled in my life ministry.

Soon after that God began to speak to me in visions as I began to pray for him to do so. One of the first I’ll illustrate for you. My congregation was making plans to build a new building. They drew up the design for the kind of building we would want. We submitted it to the architect and he drew up the blueprints. When he submitted the blueprints to me, I noticed that he had designated pilings to be placed under the walls of the building all the way around, but he had not designated any pilings to be placed under the centre of the slab floor of the building. I knew all of the ground was very swampy, so I said to him, “Shouldn’t we put some piling under this concrete slab floor? It’s liable to cave in.” He said, “No, there is no need for it.” I questioned him and said “Are you sure?” He said, “Yes, I’m sure. I’m the architect. I know my business. You are the preacher.” I did not question him any more, but went home and knelt down by my bed and prayed, “Lord, if it is necessary to put pilings under this concrete slab floor, I want you to speak to me in a vision or dream and let me know.” That was Friday afternoon. Sunday afternoon as I was praying by my bed I suddenly began seeing a vision of a concrete slab floor with a great hole in the centre of it where it had caved in. I went out the next day and ordered the contractors to put pilings under the slab floor. Since that time God has spoken to me many times in dreams and visions straight out of the heavenly realm and given me guidance. In this area, as we begin to move into the more serious areas of warfare where we are in greater

danger, God gives us more supernatural means of guidance. I believe that it will be so with every Christian.

But now we come to the area of warning. The Bible teaches that Satan is the deceiver of the brethren and the confuser of every good work. This reveals that every good work that God begins to do in our lives, Satan is going to come in and begin to bring confusion. So every time God begins to do a new thing in our lives, Satan is going to step in, to try to bring confusion there.

He is also the imitator of every good work. Lucifer is able to imitate everything God does, and he does it to seek to deceive us; to give us a false imitation of every reality of God. Therefore, at every point of this guidance, every instrument which is revealed to us and which, God uses as guidance, as soon as God begins to use it in our lives, Satan is going to begin to step in and imitate it, and thereby seek to cause confusion.

Let us stress at this point, beloved, that at the point where we hear it the voice of the Holy Spirit doesn't sound a bit different than the voice of a demon spirit. They both are spirits. They both speak with a spiritual voice. We hear it as a powerful thought projected into our mind; and every spiritual voice that we hear is most certainly not the voice of the Spirit of God, just because it speaks in the same manner. One might well ask, "How can we know then when it is the Spirit of God speaking and when a demon is speaking?" These are the things that we are going to learn, so that we may grow in the knowledge of guidance, in our study.

Satan will imitate the fleece; he will trick one into opening the Scriptures to get God to speak to them, he'll point out a Scripture and it won't be God speaking. As for the open door, we have already pointed out that Satan can open doors; and yes, sadly I say to you, Satan can also deceive through dreams and visions.

I learned this lesson the hard way. In my life, the Lord began to speak to me by the Spirit and Satan began to try to imitate it. I was at the point where God began to speak to me

through dreams and visions. He began to use me mightily. He gave me mighty guidance. As I taught my church, He began to speak through them in dreams and visions and gave us all mighty guidance's. We were beginning to win mighty victories over Satan, setting demon-possessed people free, and so on. I guess I thought that this was a realm that was higher than Satan could deal in because I had not really realized myself that Satan could deceive also with visions - could give one visions and dreams and make them think it was from God and deceive them.

Some years ago, when I had risen to a point where I was being mightily used of God for the deliverance of God's people, Satan did just that with me because I had not realized he could deceive in this area also. He very cunningly laid a plan through visions and dreams and deceived me into something which I thought was a special ministry for God. Finally, I was deceived by the enemy, my ministry almost destroyed, and my life almost destroyed; until God spoke to me in an audible voice at 3:30 one morning and revealed that it was the enemy that had deceived me. God then delivered me, healed me, and restored my ministry.

Yes, Satan can deceive in this area also. You might well say, "Brother Fife, is there no place that we can come to, where we are absolutely protected from Satan's imitations of the things of God; where we can know absolutely when it is God speaking to us and giving us the guidance; and when it is Satan?" Yes, there is a place that we can come to: when that which is perfect is come in us; when we are in full union with the Spirit of God and the weakness of our flesh has all been purged out, so that we have no desire but the perfect will of God for our lives; when we are walking in perfect union with the Spirit - actually, when we have come to the point where Jesus was when He walked out into His three-and-a-half-year ministry here upon the earth. Then, and then alone, we will be walking in infallibility; we will be free from Satan's imitations.

The next question one may ask is this: if Satan can deceive in dreams and visions, should I not be afraid to ask God to speak to me in visions; and to step out from visions in faith that I have received, and act, following the guidance? Beloved, we must; because if this was not a reality from God, Satan wouldn't bother to imitate.

We cannot turn away from the instruments which God has provided just because Satan imitates them. We cannot turn away from the fleece which is used in our early Christian experience because Satan imitates the fleece. We cannot turn away from the speaking of the Spirit because Satan imitates the voice of the Spirit. We cannot turn away from the open door because Satan can set an open door. We cannot turn away from using the Scriptures because Satan can mis-use the Scriptures.

You say, "What, then, is my protection? How can I know when I am hearing from God or a demon spirit?" My answer to these questions will be given in Part Two of this study, "Guidance from God."

GUIDANCE FROM GOD

Part 11

Acts 2:16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 17. And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: 18. And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.

In the first part of this study on guidance from God, we pointed out that infallible guidance is provided for us by the Holy Spirit. We also pointed out that the only reason we are not walking in infallible guidance, is not because it is not provided; but because of the weakness of our own flesh, and the fact that we often have aspirations and desires; and are often tempted through appealing to our aspirations and

desires in our flesh. Therefore, Satan is often able to deceive us, taking us off in the wrong direction and making us think it is the Holy Spirit guiding us. Because of our weakness, because of Lucifer and his demon spirits – his deceiving spirits that are in the world, we are not yet walking in the infallible guidance that is provided for us.

We then pointed out that some day we will come to that which is perfect: that which is perfect in us. Then we will be walking in that infallible guidance. We studied the instruments of guidance that the Holy Spirit uses. First, he speaks to us through the word, he speaks to our minds by his spirit, with thoughts implanted in our minds and in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Second, we pointed out that we had often in the past used the fleece- putting out a fleece before the Lord as Gideon did. Then we had often had God lead us to turn to the scriptures at a certain time, and God would speak to us and give us guidance. But we should only do this when we are led, and not make it a rule, because then the enemy will begin to trick us with it.

Then we revealed how God led us with the pattern of scripture. We revealed that God's pattern for guidance for his sons of God and Daughters of God in these last days – his prophets – is through dreams and visions. That the pattern has not ceased; that God planned for it to be increased in the last days; that He revealed that in Joel's prophecy, which Peter reiterated in Acts two.

In the last days I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh. Your old men will dream dreams. Your young men will see visions. For my servants, my handmaidens – the men and the women – on them will I pour out my Spirit and they shall prophesy.

God is pouring out His spirit in these last days. This is the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. God is leading His children into the experience of guidance through dreams and visions. He is perfecting this ministry in the Church, and when it is perfected, then guidance will be very powerful for the Sons and Daughters of God.

But then we pointed out that Satan, the Bible says is the confuser of every good work, the deceiver of the brethren; that he is the imitator of everything God does. The truth is, every time God begins to lead his people into a stronger form of guidance, Satan will sweep in and begin to imitate it, simply to bring confusion – to bring the reality, the real thing which God is doing into disrepute – and to hinder one in the search for guidance from God. Satan will imitate everything God does. He can imitate the fleece. He can imitate speaking to us through the Scriptures; as he did to Jesus when Jesus stood upon the temple during his temptation, and Satan quoted a Scripture from the psalms to Jesus and said, “If thou be the son of God cast thyself off, for it is written,” and then he quoted a psalm that “the angels will bear thee up, that thou dash not thy foot against a stone.” Satan can speak to us through the scriptures.

He also imitates dreams and visions. The Bible says he transforms himself into an angel of light. He is continually seeking to make us believe that he is God speaking to us, thereby seeking to lead us astray – into a sidetrack, away from God – and he can and does give visions trying to make one believe that he is God. I have had it happen to me, and therefore I know that he does it.

We ended our first study with a big question, that then is always asked, “Well then, how can one be sure when it is the Holy Spirit speaking, and when it is another spirit?” when people learn that Satan imitates everything that God does, sometimes they are inclined to get discouraged and not want to seek the true realities of God, for fear they will get something from Satan. But this we must not do, beloved. We cannot stop using the fleece simply because Satan imitates it. We cannot stop preaching the salvation truth because people make false professions of faith. We cannot stop using the Scriptures just because Satan misinterprets them to us. Nay, neither can we run from dreams and visions simply because Satan will imitate them. We must wade through all of his

imitation and still seek and receive and experience the realities of God.

So in part two of this study, we answer the big question; how to discern between the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking to us, guiding us; and Lucifer or a demon spirit. We briefly touched at the close of our study, on the first step, that is, that we judge the message. At the point where we hear it, the voice of a demon spirit sounds no different to us than the voice of a Holy Spirit. They are both spirit beings. They both speak with a spiritual voice, not an audible voice like we physical beings do. Therefore, at the point where we hear it, it sounds the same. It comes to us as a powerful impression on our minds, a powerful thought planted in our minds. As we've often pointed out, it comes to us as a dream or a vision, and in the other ways that are mentioned.

But Satan is a good imitator, and at the point where we hear the voice of the demon spirit, it sounds the same as the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we must not look to the experience of hearing the voice for our discernment as to who we are hearing from; but our first step is in judging the message that we hear, not the voice, but the message - what has been said to us. We judge it, of course, by the Word of God. If it agrees with the Word of God, then we can most certainly receive it, because a demon spirit is not going to agree with the word of God. If it is contradictory to the Word of God, then we must reject it, because the bible says the spirit and the Word always agree.

The Spirit is the author of the written Word and He is not going to direct us to do, today, something contradictory to what He has commanded us not to do when He gave the written Word centuries ago. This is why it is so very important for us to study the Word, read the Word, learn the Word: so that we can know what God's Word says. So that we can judge that which we hear in the world today from a spirit, or through a spiritual experience; and know whether it is the Holy Spirit or a demon spirit who is seeking to give us guidance. We must judge the message by the Word, and if it

is contradictory to the Word of God, the written Word - then it is not from the Holy Spirit.

One of the chief tricks that Satan seeks to do with many churches or many people who have come to a deep walk in the Spirit, and who have had much experience of supernatural guidance from the Spirit, is to trick them into thinking that they have risen so high that they can lay down the written Word completely, and simply be moved through their spiritual life; receiving revelation straight from the Holy Spirit and guidance straight from the Holy Spirit. It is true that it is in God's plan for us to some day come to a point of spiritual growth where this will be so, when that which is perfect has come in us. But many have been tricked into laying down the written Word long before they come to that which is perfect in them. Until we come to that point, we still need the written Word to check up on the messages that we are receiving from the spirit realm; to check up on the guidance; to check up on the revelations.

As we move out into this realm of walking in the Spirit and being guided by the Holy Spirit, we must carry the written Word with us, both in our hands and in our minds and in our hearts; and we must use it to check and judge every message and every revelation that comes to us; to be sure what spirit we are hearing from.

When one has risen very high in God and is being wonderfully used of God, particularly in the supernatural realm; and when one has had much experience with supernatural guidance by the Holy Spirit, through speaking by the Spirit to their minds or in dreams and visions; and so forth; one of Satan's chief tricks is to suddenly reveal to that person that they are being called into a special ministry, or called to do something that is contradictory to the Word of God; and that it is God that is calling them to do so. Satan will point out to them that often in the Scriptures in the past, God has called certain prophets and certain great men of God to do something contradictory to what He has previously commanded in the Scriptures. The demon spirit who is

seeking to trick someone into this, will point out to him that the commandment says, "Thou shalt not kill," and yet God often called his servants to go forth in the days of Israel and kill all nations; such as when God spoke to the prophet Samuel, and told Saul and the Israelites to go and kill all of the Amalekites.

The demons will point out to him that God called Hosea the prophet to do something which was contradictory to the Scripture, when He told him to go and marry an adulteress for a special purpose. He'll point out to him that when Abraham was going up to the top of Mount Moriah, to kill his son Isaac and offer him for a sacrifice, if someone had asked him, "Abraham, where are you going?" and Abraham had said, "I'm going to kill my son," that people would have thought that he was out of the will of God, but that Abraham was called to something special. Therefore, in doing something contradictory to what the written Word said, he was yet in the will of God.

After pointing these things out, Satan will then try to trick that person into feeling that, though the thing that he is feeling led to do is contradictory to the Scriptures; nevertheless God is leading him because he is being called into a special ministry that nobody else but him will ever understand; and that he is to be mightily used of God in this special ministry. Many who have risen high in God and been mightily used of God have been tricked and overthrown by Satan through this, one of Satan's most insidious tricks. We place it here as a warning, that no one who reads this message will ever fall into that kind of trick. If the message is contradictory to the Word of God, regardless of how plausible it seems, we reject it. We judge it by the Scriptures and we reject it.

Then, in the area of judging the message, we want to point out three ways in which Lucifer and his demoniac kingdom seek to deceive concerning revelation. In 11 Thessalonians 2: 1-3, Paul said to the Thessalonian Christians:

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shalt not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed."

In Paul's day some were about to be deceived into thinking that Christ's second coming was right at hand. Paul warned them not to be deceived, and in doing so, he revealed the three ways that Satan uses the most to deceive people in the area of revelation. He said that they be not shaken in mind; neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter. These are the three means that Satan uses most in the world today to deceive people in the area of revelation.

First by spirit - deceiving spirits actually project into their minds false revelations, false ideas.

Then by word -- if they cannot put in people's minds false ideas and false revelations by a spirit (and sometimes they cannot, because people's minds are so filled with the everyday things of the world) then they do it by word. They send those in whose minds and hearts they have already planted false revelations to you, and speaking through the audible voice of that person, they implant their false ideas in your mind.

And then, last of all, by letter - in those days as now, by writings working through human instruments in whose minds they have implanted false revelations - they deceive the individual. Today, they do it by many books that are going forth in the world with insidious ideas (written word - letter) and in this way, they implant in the minds of men false ideas.

How do we fight against this? Again, by judging the message, to see if it agrees with the Word of God. We do not want to place our dependence upon whether a thing is truth or not, in the messenger. God's Word teaches us that

we should judge everything that comes forth by the Word of God, no matter who the messenger is.

Sometimes a messenger, or a servant of God, will have much truth and be mightily used of God, and have a tremendous reputation as having been used of God; and yet minister a thing in which he will be wrong on one point of truth. If you accept what he says simply because of his reputation, as well as his popularity, or even because of your knowledge of his earnest sincerity; and you don't judge this one point and you accept it just because of the messenger; then you may be deceived on this one point. Nay, we should seek as much light as we can - as much knowledge of the Word as we can have, and then we should judge every message that comes forth by the Word.

The next step in judging the message is to learn and know from the Bible the true manifestations of God's Spirit, and God's Divine purpose for them as revealed in Scripture, and how they are to operate. The true manifestations, or so-called gifts, of God are listed in I Corinthians 12 in the Scriptures:

"For to one is given the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge; to another faith; to another gifts of healing; to another working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another tongues; to another interpretation of tongues."

These are the true manifestations of the Spirit of God. The Spirit will manifest Himself to us and through us in these nine different ways. God has a definite purpose for each one of them in His plan for the Body of Christ in these last days. Each one of them is to fulfil a specific purpose in the ministry of the Body of Christ.

When one learns the true manifestations and how they are to operate in the Body, then he will be able to recognize when demon spirits bring forth false manifestations; and this they will most certainly try to do. As soon as an individual receives the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, and begins his walk in the Spirit, and begins to be led by the Spirit of God into

the manifestations of the Spirit operating in his life; demons will immediately begin seeking to trip him into false manifestations. As soon as God brings forth in a Church the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, as He did in mine; and that Church is transformed and begins its walk in the Spirit; demons will immediately seek to bring forth false manifestations of the Spirit.

Therefore, one should seek out those who have been walking in the Spirit and who have been through this stage; who know the true manifestations of the Spirit and how to reveal them from the Scriptures; and learn from I Corinthians 12 the true manifestations of the Spirit of God, God's purpose for them, and how they are to operate in the Body of Christ. Then one will be able to judge what comes forth and decide whether it is from God the Holy Spirit, or whether it is from a demon spirit.

Then we want to say, speaking in the human realm, one should never judge the messenger, but the message. The messenger may be sincere in his preaching, teaching, or giving forth revelations, he or she may be a good man or woman; they may be earnestly seeking the will of God; they may be sincerely deceived themselves. Therefore, we should judge the message, not the messenger. Jesus tells us not to judge one another. So if the message is not from the Lord and is contradictory to Scripture, then we should reject the message but we should never reject the messenger. We should judge the message and reject it, but we should never judge the messenger and condemn him or her and reject them, simply because they have brought forth a false message. If they have brought forth a false message, deceived by

demon spirits, and we have recognized that it is a false message; then far from judging them and condemning them and rejecting them, it is our responsibility to draw the messenger to us in love; and seek to show them where the enemy has deceived them. Let me emphasize this again.

Judge the message and reject the message, if necessary; but never judge the messenger and reject him.

That is, as we have said, when we are speaking of human messengers. When we are speaking in terms of a spirit who seeks to deceive us with a message to our minds, or through a dream or a vision, then of course we reject the message and the messenger.

The next step in judging the message is: judge the message according to God's purpose. Judge the message in the light of God's purpose. Study the Scriptures. Learn what God's purpose is. Learn what God's Divine plan is. Learn what God has purposed to do with His Elect, with the Body of Christ, with Christians. God has a purpose. He did not create mankind just on the basis of a whim that He had. He did not create mankind simply because He wanted something to do. He created mankind because He has a definite purpose. He is building something. He has a Divine plan and purpose for us. When we study the Scriptures and when we learn what God's purpose is, then we can judge every message that we hear, every guidance that we get; and if it leads toward the fulfillment of God's Divine purpose, then it is from God. If it is working in contradiction to God's Divine purpose, then it is not from God.

Now, the first thing that you want to see is God has a purpose for His Elect - for His foreknown Ones who are the Elect Body of Christ. Romans 8 says, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.

For whom he did foreknow, (His foreknown Ones, His Elect) he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of Christ." He has a purpose for His Elect, His foreknown Ones.

He knew, before the foundation of the world, that the rest of the world would never accept Christ, they would continue to reject Him until they had passed the point of no return and would be doomed and lost forever. God could do nothing with them but let them go their own way, so they are not a

part of His purpose. His purpose is for His Elect, His foreknown Elect Body of Christ. Romans 8:28-29 reveals to us just what God's purpose is for His Elect: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." This is God's purpose for the Elect. He has purposed and predestinated them to become conformed to the image of His Son- to become exactly like Jesus. This is God's Divine purpose for the Body of Christ.

He does not purpose just to take men flying off to some physical city somewhere with streets paved with gold and buildings made out of jewels. He purposes to make His foreknown Elect exact images of His Son, Jesus Christ - to bring them into conformation to the image of His Son, Jesus. This is what God is seeking to do with us.

This is His purpose for all that He does - for all preaching, for all teaching, for all Christianity. The Holy Spirit is seeking to lead us into that Divine purpose which God purposed for us before the world was - conformation to the image of Christ. So the purpose is revealed in Romans 8:28-29.

The method by which God will accomplish that great purpose is revealed in Ephesians 4:8-17. When Jesus ascended up, He gave gifts unto men or He distributed ministry gifts unto His church: (v.11) "to some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and some, teachers." Then verse 12 reveals the purpose for these ministry gifts: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the building up, or edifying (as the word is used in the King James, in the Greek it means 'building up') of the Body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith (that is, all believing the same truth, with no more divisions, denominational divisions, and so forth, in the true Body of Christ) in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, (that is, the same knowledge that Jesus has) unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." That is, until we all become worthy, exactly like Jesus.

Here in Ephesians 4 God reveals the method by which He is going to fulfil His purpose. Jesus distributed ministry gifts in its Church- Apostles. Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers -- for the purpose of perfecting the Saints; not just evangelizing the Saints or calling them out of the world into Salvation. That is only the first step.

These ministry gifts are given for the perfecting of the Saints. For the work of the Ministry; which is the building up of the Body of Christ (edifying them) until all of us have come in the unity of the faith; until there are no more divisions of ideas and doctrines among us. And the knowledge of the Son of God: until we come to the same knowledge that Jesus had then. Until we come unto a perfect Man. Until we come unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: until we become exactly like Jesus.

God's method is to perfect the Saints - to bring them into conformation to the image of Christ, through the ministries of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers. You will note that these ministries are earthly ministries, not heavenly ministries. There won't be any need for them in heaven, so these ministries which God gave to perfect the Saints are to operate right here in the earth. Therefore, God intended for the last-day Saints to come to perfection right here, so that when Jesus appears at His second coming, we shall be like Him. L John 3:2: "We know not what we shall be like but when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

This is God's purpose, and the method by which He intends to accomplish it, to make us like Jesus. And everything which works in accord with that purpose - when we are being guided toward that purpose - then we can trust the guidance that we receive. When it is contradictory to that purpose, then we must judge it and reject it.

Now there are other Scriptures which reveal how God is going to work this in us, bringing us into conformation to the image of Christ. And when we know them, then we are able to see God's purpose and how He plans to fulfil it, and all

that leads us toward that -- we know is the Holy Spirit; all that is contrary to that - we know is not the Holy Spirit.

In John 15:2, Jesus says: "Every branch in me that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." So that is what God is doing with the members of the Body of Christ. He is purging us of our imperfections. When we accept Christ and we love Him and we seek to bring forth fruit, then God begins to purge us - to burn all the dross out of us - to make us like Jesus. You see, beloved, the way to the fulfilment of God's purpose to conformation to the image of Christ, is the way down, not the way up. God is enabling us and helping us to die to self, that Christ might come forth in us. He is purging all of the dross out of us. He is taking us down to death to self, that we might come up to perfect Sonship in Christ. Therefore, every guidance that we receive which is in that direction, we can trust it. Every guidance that we receive which is not in that direction, we must reject it.

There are so many Christians and ministers in the world today who are being guided upward, upward to great material blessing; upward to great positions in the Church; upward to great positions of respect and popularity -- not only with the baby members of the Christian Church, but with those who are on the outside - the peoples of the world; and they imagine that it is the Spirit of God who is guiding them. It is not the Spirit of God who is guiding them, beloved.

When the Spirit of God is guiding us; He will be guiding us downward to death to self, and Christ coming forth in us. And the further we go down that road; the more we will resist the world; the more we will reveal to the world its sinfulness and its evil; the more the Spirit will, through us, convince the world of sin and judgment; and the more we will be rejected by the world, just as Jesus was rejected by the world. We will not be popular with the world and its system. Christ is purging us. This is His purpose. Isaiah prophesied of the coming of Jesus; and he prophesied that

Jesus was the cornerstone that the builders would reject; and then he said, "Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken. Upon whomsoever it shall fall, they shall be ground to powder." So those who fall upon Jesus, who surrender themselves to Him: He is going to break them; they shall be broken. Those who reject Him, and the stone falls upon them; they shall be ground to powder. But those who fall upon Jesus and accept Him as Saviour; they shall be broken.

This is what God is doing with us, beloved. He is breaking us. This is God's Divine purpose. Every member of the Body of Christ shall be broken. The Word of the Lord shall stand forever. The grass withereth, and the flower fadeth, but the Word of the Lord shall stand forever, and God's Word shall be fulfilled.

Every member of the Body of Christ shall be broken. We do not have time in this study to reveal just how all are going to be broken; but this is what God is doing with us. This is God's Divine purpose. He is breaking us. He is not leading us to higher positions either in the Kingdom or in this world. He is leading us to death to self; that Christ might come forth in us. He is purging us. He is breaking us. This is His purpose and He will bring it forth in us. Everything that is in line with that purpose: we can follow it. Everything that is not in line with that purpose is contrary to God's purpose, and it is not the Holy Spirit that is leading us.

There is a doctrine going forth in the world today that through taking the teachings of Jesus Christ, and the teachings that Jesus gave concerning the Divine laws of the Spirit and Life, and the law of faith; and by practicing them and living in them, that one can come to perfection and ultimate salvation.

That simply by coming to Jesus and taking His teachings, accepting Him as the great way-shower - the great teacher sent from God to show us the way -- and using the teachings and the laws of Life and Spirit that Jesus taught, and living in them, one can go on to his perfection. But this is stepping over repentance of sin and the acceptance of the atoning

blood of Jesus by faith, as the propitiation for our sins. This simply comes to Christ and takes His teachings right where you are, starting there and going up, up, up to salvation, to perfection; without ever going down to the foot of the cross and repentance, humble surrender, confessing yourself as a sinner before God and needing an atonement for your sins. This is a demon spirit; this is a lying spirit; this is a deceiving spirit - a spirit that is leading one contrary to the purpose of God.

For the purpose of God is not to take us where we are and take us up, up, up. The purpose of God is to take us where we are and take us down, down, down to brokenness, to purging, to death to self that Christ might come forth in us; and Christ cannot come forth in us until self has died. It is not the taking of self and making it a better self; but it is the killing of the self that is, so that Christ might come forth. This is God's purpose. The other thing is a demon spirit straight out of hell.

The first revelation that the Holy Spirit will give the lost person who is dead in trespasses and sins is that he is a lost sinner and he needs the atoning blood of Jesus as remission for his sins; he needs Jesus as a Saviour through His atoning blood. That is the first revelation the Holy Spirit will give anybody. Many people receive revelations after they have jumped over that one and rejected that one - great revelations - but it is not the Holy Spirit that is giving them to them; it is demon spirits. The Holy Spirit is going to seek to lead us into God's purpose, and the first step in God's purpose for us is to see ourselves as sinners; to see the self that is as a self that needs to die; that a new self might come forth. We must be broken. That is the pathway that the Holy Spirit will lead us on, for that is God's Divine purpose - the way of the wilderness. When we judge all guidance that we receive in the light of that purpose; if it does not lead us toward that purpose, if it leads us up instead of down; it is a demon spirit, not the Holy Spirit.

In Genesis 3:22-24 we read: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

Here we are told that after man fell, God threw him out of his paradise, out of the garden of perfection, out of perfect union with God, and the Bible says God placed before the garden an angel with a flaming sword which turned every way to keep man from getting back into the garden in his fallen state. There is no literal garden of Eden anywhere. The angels are not literally standing before any garden with flaming swords in their hands. God symbolically here reveals the truth to us, that man cannot get back into the garden of perfection that he was in, in the beginning, until he has first gone through the purifying fires of purging, of breaking; and the old self that he is, has died; and the new man, Christ, has come forth in him. That is the angel with the flaming sword in front of the garden, proclaiming to us that man cannot get back into that garden without going through the fire; the purifying fire; the breaking fire; the fires of testing, which brings us to the brokenness - which bring us to death to self - that Christ might come forth in us. This is God's Divine purpose for us. Everything which is in the other direction is not from the Holy Spirit.

Romans 1: 20 reveals to us a great truth. Here we are told that the invisible things, or the invisible truths of God have been before us since the foundation of the world; being seen in things that are made. That is, it is revealed to us here that God has made visible things, things that are made symbols of Spiritual truth, the invisible truths of God. This is why the Bible uses water as a symbol of the Holy Spirit, the serpent as a symbol of the devil, seed as a symbol of the Word of

God that is sown in the hearts of men: not because the Bible arbitrarily decided to use these symbols; but because the Holy Spirit, who authored the Bible, knew God made visible things symbols of Spiritual truths.

One of the greatest symbols we have, that God instituted in human experience at creation - which reveals to us God's purpose for us - is revealed in the tempering of a piece of steel. When the blacksmith tempers a piece of steel so that he can make it into a hard, perfect instrument; he first puts it in the fire and he heats it almost to the melting point. Then, when it is almost ready to melt, he plunges it into cold water and the steel becomes hardened; and it becomes a perfect instrument in the hands of the blacksmith.

This is set before us to reveal to us that this is God's method by which He purges all the imperfection out of us, and makes us what He has purposed us to be. First, He leads us into the fires of testing until we come one day almost to the breaking point, almost to the melting point. Water always is a symbol of God's Holy Spirit. Then He plunges us deep into the water of that Spirit and we are cooled off where we walk fully in His Spirit; and we are made the perfect instrument He has purposed us to be.

Hebrews 2: 10, speaking of Jesus the captain of our salvation, says: "For it became him, for whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering." Jesus was made perfect through testing; and so will we be broken, purged, made perfect through testing. God is leading us through the purifying fires. This is the direction in which the Holy Spirit will lead us. This is God's Divine purpose.

And so, we judge the message that we hear from a spirit -- or from a human who is being deceived by a spirit -- in the light of God's Divine purpose. We judge a dream or a vision in the light of God's Divine purpose. If it fulfils that purpose, then we receive it as from the Holy Spirit; for He will always be seeking to lead us into God's purpose.

Demon spirits will be seeking to lead us away from God's purpose.

And then last, the highest form of guidance that God is bringing forth in these last days is Body Ministry. In the process of our Christian growth we go through three stages. The first one, when we first become Christians we don't feel that we can be led by the Holy Spirit at all, by ourselves. We feel that we must depend on our minister, our denomination; and so we lean completely upon the arm of flesh.

Then we receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and we begin to walk in the Spirit; and we discover, through having our own spiritual experience, that the Spirit will speak to us and guide us. Then, if we are not careful, we go through another stage in which we get the idea, "Well, I've got the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit and I are enough. I don't need anybody."

This will get us into trouble after awhile, and we will come to the third stage, the higher stage in our spiritual growth; where we recognize that we are members of the Body of Christ, and that Christ ministers to His Body through His Body. And at this point we will recognize that we need to move in conjunction with the rest of the Body. Then, when we receive a guidance we're not sure of, we will seek out other members of the Body whom God speaks to in dreams and visions, and ask them to inquire of the Lord. Or, if there are none such in our assembly we will pick out good, earnest brethren who are mature in the things of the Lord; and we will ask them to go and pray and seek the Lord's guidance, that He might speak to them and see whether God confirms to him that this guidance that we feel we've gotten is from the Lord. It is only in moving forward in conjunction with the Body that we are going to be able to go in and possess the land that God has provided for us, in the face of Satan's resistance.

If Moses had run out ahead of the rest of Israel, and tried to go into Canaan land by himself, two things would have happened. First, he would have gotten out of the will of God

by leaving behind, wandering in the wilderness, the very people God had called him to lead in. Secondly, he would have gotten over into Canaan land by himself with no Body of Israel around him to help protect him, and the Canaanites would have stomped him.

Even so, if we seek to run out ahead and possess our Spiritual land, leaving the rest of the Body behind, we will leave those whom God has called us to lead in; and therefore leave behind the leadership of the Spirit of God. We will get out into the land far ahead of the rest of the Body, by ourselves; and not be prepared and not have the Body around us to help protect us against the giants of the land, and will be smashed, and taken over by demon spirits.

God help us to move in the Divine Order that God has provided in the Body of Christ, so that we can all go in together and possess the land that God has given us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.