

Converts: The Mysterious Triune Meaning of the Original Hebrew Word

Discover Your Spiritual Identity: The Revelation of the Names and Titles God Has Given His People

“Zion shall be redeemed with justice and her converts with righteousness” (Isa. 1:2).

Though the word “converts” is used quite often in Christian theology and conversation, it is only found one time in the Word of God. The original Hebrew word is *shub* and it has a mysterious triune meaning—to turn away from, to turn toward and to return. In many other places in the Old Testament, *shub* is actually translated “turn” and “return” such as the following passages:

First, it is used in the sense of “turning away” from evil:

“As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why will you die, O house of Israel?” (Ezek. 33:11).

Second, it is used in the sense of turning toward God:

“All the ends of the world will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will worship before You” (Ps. 22:27).

Finally, it is used in the sense of “returning” to a relationship with Him that is right:

“Yet even now, declares the Lord, return to Me with all your heart, and with fasting and with weeping and with mourning” (Joel 2:12).

Moses is a prime example under the Old Covenant. When he was “converted” from his former life, he first “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter” (he turned away from sin); then, “choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a time. He esteemed the reproach of Christ as greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, for he looked to the reward” (he turned toward God). Finally, he forsook Egypt” and “he kept the Passover” (he returned to a relationship with the God of Abraham and led the Israelites to do the same thing) (Heb. 11:24-28 excerpts).

Like many other biblical examples, this shows that conversion is not an act of God like salvation, regeneration, justification, sanctification and redemption. Conversion is primarily an act of man, as is repentance and faith. We are required to do our part; then God is faithful to do His!

First, we turn away from sin with a spirit of repentance in our hearts; second, we turn toward God with a spirit of faith. Third, in doing so, we return to a right relationship with Him. Then He intervenes and graciously saves, regenerates, justifies, sanctifies and redeems.

Of course, it is also true that no person can truly repent, believe or be converted unless God grants him the grace to do so. Romans 2:4 reveals that the “goodness of God” leads us to repentance, and Ephesians 2:8 indicates that saving faith is “the gift of God ... so that no one should boast.” Therefore, in the end, all the glory and all the credit should return to the grace-giver and the gift-giver Himself.

This dependency on God is found in the writings of Jeremiah, who admitted that he (along with the Israelite nation) was like “an untrained calf,” but he pled with God, “turn me back and I will be turned, for you are the Lord my God” (Jer. 31:18). In other words, he was saying, “We can’t change, the way we need to change, without Your help, God.”

The Two Main Means of Conversion

God uses two main supernatural influences in assisting us to make this sacred transition in our lives, as indicated by the following verses:

– The Word. “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul” (Ps. 19:7).

– The Spirit. “Turn at My rebuke; surely I will pour My Spirit on you; I will make My words known to you” (Prov. 1:23).

By the Word and the Spirit, God turns our lives around and gets us moving the right direction.

Jesus verified the Holy Spirit’s involvement in the following powerful passage:

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away. For if I do not go away, the Counselor will not come to you. But if I go, I will send Him to you. When He comes, He will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I am going to My Father, and you will see Me no more; and of judgment, because the ruler of this world stands condemned” (John 16:7-11).

In other words, by convicting us, the Holy Spirit helps us turn away from sin, then turn toward the Lord Jesus (taking Him as our example of how to live righteously). Then finally, He helps us return to God in the full assurance that the enemy of our souls has been judged and condemned, so we are free to become one with our heavenly Father once again. That’s what conversion is all about. It will culminate in a grand conclusion, being converted from earthbound, carnal, cursed sons and daughters of Adam to eternal, resurrected, glorified sons and daughters of the Most High God. Praise God!

On *Discover Your Spiritual Identity* on Charisma Podcast

Network, Mike Shreve goes even deeper into this powerful insight as he teaches on *God Calls His People Converts (Miraculous Metamorphosis)*. Next week, in part two of this subject, you will find out the mystery of the meaning of “Zion” and how true converts are called to be contagious.

Mike Shreve has taught on the spiritual identity of believers for over 30 years. This powerful revelation is featured on his weekly podcast on and a weekly TV program on “It’s Supernatural Network” (ISN)—both titled Discover Your Spiritual Identity (also posted weekly on YouTube here). It is also the theme of his Charisma House book titled WHO AM I? Dynamic Declarations of Who You Are in Christ. A product of the Jesus movement era, Mike has traveled evangelistically in the United States and overseas since 1970 with an added emphasis on healing and the prophetic.

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The Mystery of the Book of Life

David claimed that God keeps a record of every tear we shed in His “book” (see Ps. 56:8). Surely, that was a reference to the “Book of Life,” a concept found only in Judaism and Christianity.

Since God is omniscient—and He knows all things past, present and future—why would He need a book or a registry of all His people? Could this just be poetic and metaphorical, a symbol

God uses to compare a heavenly truth to an earthly object to make it more understandable on a human level? Or is it literal? Only God knows for sure.

The "Book of Life" is mentioned 16 times in the Bible. It is first cited in Exodus 32. Moses had been on Mount Sinai, communing with God and receiving the tablets of stone bearing Yahweh's handwriting. But while Moses was away from the camp, the children of Israel, just 40 days after hearing the audible voice of God declare the Ten Commandments from fiery Mount Sinai, brazenly broke the first two—creating an idol (a golden calf) and dancing around it in a demonic frenzy of false worship. God was minded toward destroying them all and raising up a new nation from Moses' seed. But this great prophet of Israel interceded:

"Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold! Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written" (Ex. 32:31-32).

After such a self-sacrificing plea, God changed His mind, pouring out mercy on Israel instead of judgment. However, God did add, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book" (Ex. 32:33).

Centuries later, David mentioned this book in his poetic masterpiece, Psalm 139, confessing to God:

"Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them" (v. 16).

So apparently, the Book of Life contains, not only names, but a detailed prophetic forecast of the potential, the purpose and the destiny of every person in covenant with God. The steps of good men and women are "ordered of the Lord" (Ps. 37:23). It is up to us to prayerfully become sensitive to His revealed will and then boldly walk in it.

When Jesus sent out His 70 disciples to preach the kingdom of God with signs and wonders, they came back thrilled over the manifestation of God's power, declaring, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name" (Luke 10:17). Jesus responded, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven ... Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:18-20). There is no greater joy than being included.

The book of Revelation contains the most references to this famed book. In it, the resurrected Savior declares to the church in Sardis:

"He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels" (Rev. 3:5).

This and other passages reveal that our goal is not to get our names written in God's book but to make sure they are never blotted out. Does that mean that every living person in this world starts out included in that heavenly registry, but those who rebel against truth are erased? It seems so. In this case, the old hymn didn't exactly get it right:

"There's a new name written down in glory, and it's mine, oh yes, it's mine."

The idea crafted by that song was this: As soon as a person gets saved (born again), his or her name is "written down" in God's book in the heavenly sphere. Not so, according to the passages already mentioned.

In *Revealing the True Light* on Charisma Podcast Network, I fully examine all the Scriptures pertaining to this mysterious subject. You will be intrigued and blessed by this study.
{eoa}

Mike Shreve has studied comparative religion most of his life. Before his conversion to Christianity in 1970, he was a teacher of yoga at four universities and running a yoga ashram, then Jesus revealed Himself. Now his outreach website is impacting seekers in over 70 nations. It is filled with relevant articles and testimonies. Visit today.

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Children of Promise: Confessing and Claiming 7,487 Promises in God's Word

Discover Your Spiritual Identity: The Revelation of the Names and Titles God Has Given His People

"Now we, brothers, like Isaac, are the children of promise" (Gal. 4:28).

A "promise" is a pledge, a firm and unwavering agreement, an announcement that one will do, or will not do, something specified. God's Word is replete with promises. Herbert Lockyer writes in *All the Promises of God*, there are exactly 7,487. Having studied them for years, I am convinced these divinely inspired pledges cover every area of need we could ever face during this earthly sojourn.

How important are these biblical promises? Simple answer. If they were removed from the Bible, no one would want to study its content. A Bible without promises would only serve to decry our dark and dreadful condition as fallen human beings

and forewarn us of the utter bleakness and emptiness of our future—eternally. Ephesians 2:12 describes those outside of a relationship with God as being “Strangers to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world.”

Yes, that was the grievous condition of our souls until the Word of God became our treasure trove. By mining its contents, faith-filled readers become convinced that no matter what happens—God has already given His people promises strong enough to push us through any opposition to sure victory on the other side—one way or the other.

Here’s a short list of just 10 needs all human beings possess, matched to 10 powerful promises revealing God’s commitment to meet those needs:

Forgiveness. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

Mercy. “For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him” (Ps. 103:11).

Peace. “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will protect your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4:7).

Joy. “Therefore with joy you shall draw water out of the wells of salvation” (Isa. 12:3).

Love. “And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us” (Rom. 5:5).

Wisdom. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men liberally and without criticism, and it will be given to him” (James 1:5).

Authority. “Look, I give you authority ... over all the power of the enemy. And nothing shall by any means hurt you” (Luke

10:19).

Health. “Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed” (1 Pet. 2:24, NKJV).

Mental stability. “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind” (2 Tim. 1:7).

Eternal life. “And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life” (1 John 2:25, MEV).

Just these 10 promises alone could launch any person into an orbit of triumph over this world and its destructive power, but there are still 7,477 more to go. How amazing is that! No wonder Peter passionately and excitedly concluded:

“His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who has called us by His own glory and excellence, by which He has given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, so that through these things you might become partakers of the divine nature and escape the corruption that is in the world through lust” (2 Pet. 1:3-4).

Of course, if we are to see these “precious promises” fully manifested in our walk through this world, we must fulfill the conditions (and usually each promise has one). When we do, we become absolutely, irrefutably unbeatable and unconquerable—and that’s a promise (see Rom. 8:28-39).

The Connection Between Isaac and the Church

Our key verse compares New Covenant children of God to a well-known, Old Covenant personality: the firstborn son of Abraham and Sarah. Galatians 4:28 insists that both Isaac and all born-again believers of this era can be described as “children of promise.” What’s the spiritual connection? Read carefully.

Though childless, Abraham and Sarah had a promise from God that He would bless them with offspring as numerous as the stars in the sky above. Over a decade had passed, and nothing had taken place to move this promise toward its fulfillment. So Sarah came up with an ingenious plan and persuaded Abraham to participate. They decided to “help” God by Abraham entering Hagar, Sarah’s maid (an Egyptian bondswoman), and having a child by her. Ishmael was the result of that union. Then 13 years after his birth, it happened according to God’s predestined plan. Ninety-year-old Sarah became pregnant with Isaac (no wonder his name means laughter—can you imagine the reaction among all who heard it).

Note the following carefully:

Ishmael was the product of human effort.

Isaac was the product of the promise of God.

Galatians 4:23-24 (NKJV) explains, “He who was of the bondswoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, which things are symbolic.” There is more than one way that this symbol can be applied. One powerful application is this—that there is an “Ishmael Church” and there is an “Isaac Church.” Let me explain.

The “Ishmael Church” is the professing church—A large portion of those who “profess” to embrace Christianity are actually Christian in name only—a product of human effort. The various organizations and their church gatherings may look and sound very “Christian” with high-spired cathedrals, ecclesiastical clothing, Bible-based theology and songs, rituals, ceremonies and a religious calendar—yet far too often, the absolutely essential experiences of being “born again” and “filled with the Holy Spirit” are noticeably absent: unpreached and usually, unreceived.

The “Isaac Church” is the possessing church—A smaller nucleus of believers make up the true church—a transdenominational group who have been regenerated and actually “possess” a

relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ (see Titus 3:5, NKJV). They don't just know about God; they know God. They are not just members of an organization; they are part of an organism: the living body of Christ. This marvelous transformation took place in their lives by acting on divinely inspired promises like the following:

"Yet to all who received Him, He gave the power to become sons of God, to those who believed in His name" (John 1:12).

"That if you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved, for with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:9-10).

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith" (Eph. 3:17a).

All blessed individuals who are "saved" by this process become the New Testament fulfillment of Old Covenant prophetic promises that foretold what was coming. Ezekiel prophesied that God would put "a new spirit" in us and give us "a new heart"—and also, by putting His "Spirit" in us, He would cause us to walk in His statutes (Ezek. 36:26). Jeremiah claimed that the same God who wrote the Ten Commandments in tablets of stone would write His law on our hearts and in our minds—supernaturally changing us (see Jer. 31:31-34). No wonder the writer of Hebrews described this plan as a "better covenant established on better promises" (Heb. 8:6).

Most wonderfully, if we are truly "children of promise," we can also claim being "heirs of promise": inheritors of all the wonderful divine pledges that will successfully carry us through time and into eternity (Heb. 6:17).

Explore this wonderful subject more deeply by listening to three former episodes of Mike Shreve's weekly podcast on Charisma Podcast Network, *Discover Your Spiritual Identity*.

These teachings explain three related titles God has given His people, our calling to be: *Children of Promise, Heirs of Promise, and Partakers of His Promise in Christ.* {eoa}

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Heirs of the Grace of Life: God’s ‘One-Way-or-the-Other Plan’

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“Likewise, you husbands, live considerately with your wives,

giving honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they too are also heirs of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered" (1 Pet. 3:7).

The Definition of Grace

The word "grace" can be defined four primary ways:

1. Grace is unmerited love from God (Eph. 2:8-9).
2. Grace is divinely imparted ability (1 Cor. 15:10).
3. Grace is the abundant generosity of God toward us (2 Cor. 9:8).
4. Grace is the sum total of all the activity of God in our lives (1 Cor. 15:10).

Strong's Concordance explains that grace is: "The divine influence on the heart and its evidence in the life."

You may ask, "How could grace be unmerited love and divinely imparted ability—simultaneously?" Those two qualities are so different. Consider a simple analogy. When a man and woman come together in marriage, their physical union is first an expression of love. However, once that consummation of marriage takes place and conception results, what begins as an expression of love ends as an impartation of ability. Imparted to the fertilized egg in the mother's womb is the potential ability to be a fully functional human being: a child who sees, hears, smells, walks, talks and thinks.

In like manner, when grace made its entrance into our lives, what began as an expression of love from God (forgiving our sins) ended as an impartation of ability (granting us "power to become sons of God," John 1:12).

Bridging the Impassable Gulf

In his definition of grace, William Barclay spanned the huge

chasm between fallen human beings and the lofty God of all creation: “The word grace emphasizes at one and the same time the helpless poverty of man and the limitless kindness of God.”

The bridge across this “impassable gulf” was reared by God, not by man. It was His compassionate idea, not our desperate plan—constructed with two heavenly “materials” of the highest quality:

1. The Word of His grace (Acts 20:32).
2. The Spirit of grace (Zec. 12:10).

Through His grace-filled Word and by His grace-filled Spirit, God lowered this spiritual bridge into the dark, wretched, turbulent depths of our inherited depravity. Then He beckoned us to cross over, returning to a heaven-on-earth paradise of communion with Him. Moreover, He promises that no matter how tough life may get, His “grace is sufficient”—for His “strength is made perfect by weakness” (2 Cor. 12:9).

The Requirements

We could never earn grace because salvation is “not of works, so that no one should boast” (Eph. 2:9). “Otherwise, grace would no longer be grace” (Rom. 11:6). Yet even though this marvelous gift is freely given, three attitudes of heart are required to usher us into a receptive position:

- 1. Faith.** “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not of yourselves. It is the gift of God” (Eph. 2:8).
- 2. Humility.** “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (1 Pet. 5:5).
- 3. Sincere love.** “Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity” (Eph. 6:24).

All three of these heart-attitudes must be woven together for

grace to flow powerfully and effectively into our lives. Any child of God can confidently claim being “strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 2:1)—unbeatable and unconquerable by anything he or she faces in this valley of the shadow of death.

The Inexhaustible Supply of Grace

If you are saved, here’s an important question—when was grace first extended to you? Second Timothy 1:9 gives the amazing answer: “[God has] has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not by our works, but by His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”

Before the earth existed, before this tiny orb was spinning on its axis, traveling around the sun, God’s offspring were a part of His plan—anticipated with much affection and forethought.

In His limitless knowledge, even before you were you—the Creator anticipated every valley you would ever pass through, every mountainous challenge you would ever face, every pit of human weakness you would ever fall into and every strategy the evil one and his cohorts would ever raise against you. In advance, He gave you more than enough grace to make it through every negative or challenging circumstance to fulfill your God-given destiny.

So we need not beg God to give us grace to overcome our difficulties or fulfill our callings. Why ask the Father for something He’s already given? According to our main Scripture, grace is part of our inheritance. So instead, let us praise God that abundant grace is our present possession, enabling us, not only to survive, but to thrive, in every situation.

God’s One-Way-or-the-Other Plan

I love to refer to grace as “God’s-one-way-or-the-other plan,” because one way or the other, our Father intends for grace to

bring absolute victory to us, both now and forevermore. The primary Scripture enshrining this idea is Romans 6:14: "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law, but under grace."

Sin is one of our most powerful adversaries. At the moment of salvation, when grace first made its appearance in our lives, we were cleansed from sin by the precious blood of Jesus. From that point forward, grace also strengthened us to live above sin, coaching us how to function in a God-pleasing way. Titus 2:11-12 reveals: "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly desires, we should live soberly, righteously, and in godliness in this present world."

Through the internal influence of the Word and the Spirit, the God of all grace awakens divinely imparted ability in those who have been begotten of the Word and born of the Spirit to resist and overcome sin (which is God's highest desire for us). But if by chance, God's offspring err—and that happens often—there is still abundant hope. If we abide in the three required attitudes of heart (faith, humility, and sincere love), grace in a sense, 'changes its face.' Instead of being divinely imparted ability, giving us power to live above sin, it once again manifests as unmerited love, giving us the power to recover from sin. So, one-way-or-the-other grace makes certain that we abide in that victory the cross and the empty tomb secured for us.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) says, "Therefore, let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Editor's Note: In the archives of his weekly Charisma Podcast Network show, Discover Your Spiritual Identity, Mike Shreve teaches on our calling to be heirs of the grace of life. These powerful teachings are found here, here and here. Watch "Heirs of the Grace of Life" on Discover Your Spiritual Identity TV

on YouTube here. For a more in-depth article, visit [.{eoa}](#)

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Overcomers: Declaring Future Victory as a Past-Tense Fact

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In his ancient treatise on military strategy titled *The Art of War*, famed Chinese general Sun Tzu taught that no army should ever attack an enemy on higher ground. Prior to our salvation, unfortunately, the archenemy of the human race—the prince of darkness—actually was on higher ground, spiritually speaking—and for one primary reason. Adam had relinquished the authority of this realm to the wicked one when the fall took place.

Thank God, this shifted dramatically when Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to heaven. At that glorious moment, He was exalted “far above” all things, so that “all things” are now “under his feet” (Eph. 1:21-22). When we submit to His Lordship and align with His will, we are immediately escorted to this same place of supremacy—an ascended status—seated with Christ in heavenly places (see Eph. 2:6).

Now, all things are under our feet as well, but to live in this amazing portion of our inheritance, we must seize it by faith. If we overcome the doubts and fears that are so rampant in this realm, we obtain an unspeakable gift—sharing the throne of Jesus Christ: the position of power, authority, dominion, victory and rest. There is no place of greater triumph to be found in this vast universe. The following promise from the resurrected Messiah reveals this insight:

“And I shall grant the overcomer to sit with me on my throne, just as I have overcome and I sit with my Father on his throne” (Rev. 3:21, ABPE).

Such a lofty pledge is not just poetical hyperbole; it is powerful, prophetic truth.

Our Multifaceted Source of Overcoming Power

The first step toward living in this portion of our inheritance is developing the mindset of an overcomer. There is no better example than Caleb’s attitude as compared to the 10 spies who brought back a negative report concerning the promised land. With fear-filled hearts and trembling voices, they spoke about the troubling prospect of fighting giants and the impossibility of managing such a large land mass. But Caleb’s words penetrated the atmosphere in the meeting, like polished arrows shot from a spiritual bow:

“Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it” (Num. 13:30).

Do you realize how absurd that statement was in the natural? The Israelites had been slaves their entire lives, so they were used to cowering in fear. They had no military training and no experience on the battlefield. As far as we know—and this is a big one—they had no weaponry. The old saying is, “Three strikes and you’re out!” Naturally speaking, defeat seemed inevitable. But Caleb knew a secret: Their ability to overcome rested solely on God’s ordained purpose, His supernatural intervention, and His intention to finish the work He started.

In like manner, Jesus prophesied victory in the face of overwhelming opposition. Before He even went to the cross, before He was laid in the tomb, confidently, He spoke of “overcoming” in past tense terms. Because He knew resurrection was the predetermined purpose of the Father, instead of saying, “I will overcome the world,” He boldly declared, “I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

Are you ready for this? Those who walk with the resurrected Savior can speak with the same level of blessed assurance. The following declarations clearly indicate that we can claim victory, one way or the other, before we even face the battles that are yet to unfold. Our “overcoming” is spoken of in past-tense terms:

“I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one” (1 John 2:14).

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God ... You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:1, 4).

“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith” (1 John 5:4).

These three passages of Scripture have one primary thing in common. They declare that we already have overcome—even before we wrestle with any negative circumstances or demonic attacks yet to manifest. An English teacher once told me that technically these passages are not in the past tense but the present perfect tense. I quickly reminded him that I had been out of high school long enough to conveniently forget that quirky grammatical concept. He explained, “Present perfect tense refers to something that has happened in the past but continues into the present (and the implication is that it will continue on into the future as well). In other words, this victory is a ‘done deal.’ We can believe that because of four ‘abiding’ truths revealed in the Scriptures we just read”:

– The written Word of God abides in us—Having been “begotten ... with the Word of truth,” God’s Word is inseparably a part of our nature now (James 1:18, JUB). Moreover, the truth inside of us is far more powerful than any evil and deceptive maneuverings of Satan outside of us. So, no matter what the enemy does in the future, we’ve already conquered him.

– The living Word also abides in us and “greater is He”—so all the demonic strategies yet to be wrought against us are doomed to failure in the end because none of them can withstand the power and authority of the Son of God.

– We have been born of God (born of the Spirit), and the Holy Spirit abides in us—so in union with Him, we are in a position of spiritual authority over every other spirit and all their diabolical attempts to subvert our cause will fail in the end (see Rom. 8:28).

– Faith abides in us—and our God is “the author and finisher” of that faith (Heb. 12:2).

By these four “indwellings,” we have been firmly placed in a position of spiritual supremacy—and that will always be the

case. So our “overcoming” status is assured, and we can boldly declare it in advance. If he lived today—and if he understood spiritual matters—Sun Tzu would smile and nod his head in agreement.

Listen to this episode of *Discover Your Spiritual Identity with Mike Shreve* on Charisma Podcast Network to learn more about overcoming through Christ. {eoa}

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Children of the Prophets: Your Identity, Inheritance and Spiritual DNA

In his great sermon, right after raising up the crippled man at the “Gate Beautiful” Peter referred to Israelites as “children of the prophets” (Acts 3:25, KJV). Surely, he assigned this title to them because the Jews owed their

spiritual existence to the ministry of the prophets who had guided them through the process of redemption into a valid relationship with God. With hearts full of gratitude and faith, they often quoted various prophetic voices like Enoch, Job, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and others who wore this holy mantle—spiritual prophetic pillars who, by divine inspiration, mapped out the future of God's chosen nation. Sharing what Yahweh had revealed to them, these oracles of God "begat" in Abraham's seed a revelation of truth that opened the door to their destiny. Thus, they became spiritual "fathers" to the people of God.

Those who have been born again during this era of grace can also claim this name: first, because we have been grafted into Israel, inheriting the titles that rested upon God's holy nation; and second, because our New Covenant worldview was foretold and shaped by the prophets of the former era.

How ironic it is that Enoch, the first recognized prophet, is quoted foretelling the last event of this age, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his saints" (Jude 1:14, NKJV). The ancient patriarch, Job, taught us much about how to react to suffering, but he was also subject to prophetic outbursts revealing the future, such as:

"I know my Redeemer lives, and He will stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God" (Job 19:25-26).

Each prophet after Enoch and Job passed on a unique spiritual legacy and message to future generations:

– Abraham was identified by God as a prophet in Genesis 20:7. He preached monotheism in a polytheistic world (anointed preaching is prophecy on its foundational level). When his wife, Sarah, was barren, he prophesied they would have offspring as numerous as the stars. He foretold that his seed would be strangers for 400 years in a land that was not theirs

and that they would be enslaved and mistreated (Gen. 15:13). Most importantly, he declared that they would come out and that through his seed—the Messiah who would yet be born—"all nations" and "all the families of the earth" would be "blessed" (Gen. 22:18, 12:3).

– Moses, over four centuries later, prophesied the 10 plagues in Egypt and the method and means of Israel's deliverance. He received the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, written by God on tablets of stone, and the Torah and prophesied of an even greater prophet to come.

– Jeremiah, the boy prophet, picked up on Moses' revealed truth and prophetically lifted it to a higher level, declaring that the same God would write His law, not just on stony tablets but on the hearts of His people in the New Covenant.

– Ezekiel also foretold the availability of this transformational, spiritual rebirth: "Thus says the LORD God ... I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you; I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes." (Ezek. 36:2, 26-27)

– Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah, the Anointed One who would make these things happen, would be born of a virgin, and His name would be called Immanuel (meaning God with us). (See Isa. 7:14).

When God was manifested in the flesh and walked in the world, the human race arrived at a pivotal, prophetic turning point. Numerous prophecies converged on that generation. Jesus Himself was not only the Son of God, He was "a prophet, powerful in deed and word"—the greater prophet Moses foretold would come (Luke 24:19; Deut. 18:15-19; John 6:14; Acts 3:22-23, 7:37).

Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension were all necessary steps to make it possible for His prophetic Spirit to be

shared with all who confess Him as Lord—thus, passing on a prophetic kind of spiritual DNA. In Peter’s Pentecost message, he claimed that the Israelites witnessing the event were seeing the fulfillment of a prophecy of Joel had declared centuries prior—that all of God’s people would become prophets through an encounter with the Holy Spirit:

“‘In the last days it shall be,’ says God, ‘that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even on My menservants and maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy” (Acts 2:17-18, based on Joel 2:28-29).

From that pivotal point forward, every child of God in the New Covenant has been empowered to prophesy on at least one of the following three levels:

The first level is declaring the Word of God under the power of the Holy Spirit. The second level is declaring future events by echoing prophets who gave original forecasts for the future. The third level is initiating prophetic insights—to individuals, to groups, churches or the church as a whole, or to all humanity—through dreams, visions, revelations or instantaneous utterances

Of course, the third type of prophetic utterance is the most refined. Not everyone is awakened on that level. However, all New Covenant sons and daughters of God are “children of the prophets,” so the prophetic word is very much a part of our spiritual makeup. Therefore, on the first foundational level, we should all be prophesying every day—just by sharing the gospel.

First Corinthians 14:31 reveals, “You may all prophesy,” and Romans 12:6 claims believers “prophesy according to the proportion of faith.” In the simplest way, this can just involve sharing your faith, for “the testimony of Jesus is the

spirit of prophecy” (Rev. 19:10). If we testify of what Jesus has done (in our lives and the lives of others), we are automatically prophesying that He can and will do them again. When God speaks to you, either by the written Word or the living Word, it is a very compelling thing. Those who hear His voice should burn in their hearts to tell others. Freely we have received; freely we must give—that we might bring to others “edification, exhortation and comfort.” (See 1 Cor. 14:3-5, 2 Pet. 1:16-21.) One of the most edifying and comforting prophetic words to utter is repeating the first one that was given—by the Lord Himself after the fall when He prophesied to the serpent: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel” (Gen. 3:15). There is no better way of summing all of this up than to quote Amos 3:8:

“The lion has roared; who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken; who can but prophesy?”

In this episode of *Discover Your Spiritual Identity with Mike Shreve* on Charisma Podcast Network, learn more about the prophetic nature and calling that is part of your spiritual DNA. {eoa}

Mike Shreve has taught on the spiritual identity of believers for over 30 years. This powerful revelation is featured on his weekly podcast on and a weekly TV program on *It's Supernatural Network*—both titled *Discover Your Spiritual Identity*. It is also the theme of his Charisma House book titled *WHO AM I? Dynamic Declarations of Who You Are in Christ*. A product of the Jesus Movement Era, Mike has traveled evangelistically in the United States and overseas since 1970 with an emphasis on healing and the prophetic.

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Does God Create Evil?

Isaiah 45:7 is one of the most controversial, misunderstood verses in the King James Version of the Bible. Over the past five decades, I have been questioned many times about its true meaning by those who were confused by the wording. God spoke through his prophet, saying:

“I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.”

What? Did I read that correctly? God creates “evil”? If that translation is right, would it not be sufficient evidence to indict Yahweh, not Satan or Adam, with the crime of introducing evil into this world and perpetuating its reign? But how could that be, considering the Scripture also insists that God’s “work is perfect; for all His ways are just. He is a God of faithfulness and without injustice; righteous and upright is He” (Deut. 32:4, MEV)?

For something or someone to be labeled “evil,” normally, that characteristic would proceed from a source that is itself “evil”—wicked, corrupt, immoral and ungodly. How could God Himself be ungodly? That’s impossible!

From time to time, New Agers, or those who embrace a far eastern worldview, have used this verse to try and prove to me that the Bible upholds the “yin-yang” view of the nature of ultimate reality—that God is both darkness and light, both evil and good. This concept is based on the idea that the universe is not a creation but an emanation of God—so both the evil and the good in this world are a manifestation of the divine nature (a doctrine called “pantheism”—meaning “All is God and God is all”). Yet I contend that this erroneous view

robs God of His integrity. The correct stance is this—that instead of God “being” the universe, He exists “apart from” the universe (both the terrestrial and celestial aspects). That way, His absolute holiness is not marred by the uncleanness that is so rampant in this world and the conflict that goes on between angels and demons in the spiritual world.

James 1:13 very plainly states that, “God cannot be tempted with evil; neither does He tempt anyone.” Yet Isaiah 45:7 seems to be supportive of an opposite view. So how do we properly interpret this controversial passage and refute this flawed interpretation?

Dissecting the Details

There are four main ways to dissect the details of this issue and arrive at the core truth:

1. Find other passages in the KJV that wrongly use the word “evil.”
2. Examine the context; discover what Isaiah really intended to communicate in that passage.
3. Examine other ways the original Hebrew word is translated in the KJV.
4. Compare the KJV to other translations of the same passages.

The word translated “evil” in Isaiah 45:7 is translated from the Hebrew word *ra'* or *ra[^]a[^]h* (pronounced rah or raw-aw'—which are the male and female form of the word). This word is rendered “evil” 440 times in the KJV, sometimes correctly and sometimes incorrectly.

For instance, the following is, in my estimation, a grossly incorrect translation of the word:

God had just spoken the Ten Commandments from Mount Sinai and after that, Moses spent 40 days on the mountain receiving more

detailed revelation. When he came back to the camp, much to his shock, the children of Israel had completely backslidden. They were dancing around a golden idol, indulging in a demonically-infested orgy of lust in the name of worship. Moses was furious, and so was God—so much so that God was minded toward wiping out the whole nation. However, Moses interceded for them, and the King James Version describes what surprisingly happened:

“The Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people” (Ex. 32:14, KJV).

What? Evil? Is it “evil” for a just and righteous God to administer righteous judgments to those unrighteous persons who deserve them? Also, does God actually “repent”? Though that word simply means “a change of mind,” in our modern-day vernacular, it also implies remorse over wrongdoing. Since God does no wrong, He has nothing to be remorseful about. Of course, at times, He has changed his mind on a matter, but there are far better ways of describing that shift in opinion than the word “repent.”

Once again, a false representation of the true meaning of the passage is the direct result of the questionable and inaccurate KJV translation. The Modern English Version of Exodus 32:14 says far more precisely, “The Lord relented of the harm which He said He would do to His people.” The words “repent” and “relent” and the words “evil” and “harm” are much different in meaning and, undoubtedly, the MEV rendering conveys what that passage is saying much more effectively.

The MEV translation of the main verse in question (Isa. 45:7) also helps to clear away the fog:

“I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create calamity; I, the Lord, do all these things.”

When taken in context, the “calamity” that God intended to “create” was the collapse of the Babylonian empire through an

attack from Cyrus, king of Persia, who was anointed of God to release the Jewish captives and commission them to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the city and the temple. That is far different than blaming God with the existence of all the evil that abounds in this world.

For an even more complete study of this controversial Bible verse, listen to this episode of Mike Shreve's *Revealing the True Light* podcast on Charisma Podcast Network. You can also visit his comparative religion website for the complete article here. While you're there, be sure to download Mike Shreve's free testimony booklet, *The Highest Adventure: Encountering God*, that tells the story of his conversion from far eastern religions and yoga in 1970 to become a follower of Jesus. {eoa}

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Saints: A Revelation Through Stained-Glass Windows

Discover Your Spiritual Identity: The Revelation of the Names and Titles God Has Given His People

“Gather My saints together to Me, Those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice” (Ps. 50:5, NKJV).

A five-year-old boy once walked with his parents into a high-spired cathedral with dozens of stained-glass depictions of respected followers of Jesus in the history of the church. Bright rays of light from the rising sun began streaming through the windows when suddenly the boy exclaimed, “Now, I know what a saint is!” The stunned parents turned around to hear him conclude, “It’s someone the light shines through.”

The word “saint” has traditionally been used to refer only to Christians who reach an extremely high degree of piety and religious devotion—believers who the “light” really shines through brightly—but not your ordinary churchgoers. However, the following Scripture throws the gate wide open. Saints are all those who sincerely love the Lord, though they may live relatively normal lives:

“To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours” (1 Cor. 1:2).

In this verse, three simple criteria are offered for “sainthood”:

1. Belonging to “the church of God.” The word “church” is from the Greek word *ecclesia*, meaning called out ones. Therefore, it is comprised of all those who have been truly called out of a life of sin into a life of consecration to God. It is not an

organization; it is an organism—a living body of believers worldwide.

2. Being “sanctified in Christ Jesus.” The word “sanctified” has a double meaning: First, it means being cleansed from the defilement of sin, and second, it means being consecrated to the purposes of God.

3. Calling on “the name of Jesus.” In other words, calling on His name for salvation and then living a life of personal communion with Him daily.

So, all who have truly been born again, regardless of denominational affiliation, are not only invited but included in “the assembly of the saints” (Ps. 89:5). Wow! In this age of spiritual laxity and rampant immorality, isn’t this a challenging goal to set?

Sanctified People Automatically Become Saints

Sainthood and sanctification are inseparably interwoven because a “saint” is simply someone who has been “sanctified.” This initially comes as a gift from God. As soon as we confess Jesus to be Lord of our lives, a number of sanctifying influences begin working together to present us holy unto the Lord. At that glorious moment of spiritual rebirth, we are:

- “Sanctified by the truth” (John 17:19).
- “Sanctified by faith” (Acts 26:18).
- “Sanctified ... in the name of the Lord” (1 Cor. 6:11).
- “Sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. 10:10).
- “Sanctified by the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 15:16).
- “Sanctified by God the Father” (Jude 1:1).
- “Sanctified” by the blood of Jesus (Heb. 13:12).

In other words, when we hear the truth, and when we accept it by faith, then we call on the name of the Lord in prayer. As we set our faith on the crucified body of the Lord Jesus and ask to be washed in His precious blood, an internal transformation takes place. At that moment of spiritual transformation, we are sanctified by God the Father through the power of the Holy Spirit. When all of these spiritual ingredients are mixed together—Voila!—a saint is born!

Well ... yes and no. Claiming sainthood from the very start of our walk with God is almost like asserting that an acorn is really an oak tree. It is, but it isn't. It may have the identity and the potential, but to really be an oak tree in a manifested way, that acorn has to fall into the ground and die, then spend a good deal of time growing (John 12:24).

So it is with us. All believers have the identity and the inheritance of being saints from the very start, but to really be saints in a viable and recognizable way (fully awakened to this inner potential), we must die to self, die to the world and die to sin. Then, we must spend a good deal of time growing in God, yielding to His nature and fulfilling His will. Those who do so are blessed to mirror the image of the King of saints Himself (Rev. 15:3). This should be our goal, every single day.

In this episode of *Discover Your Spiritual Identity with Mike Shreve* on Charisma Podcast Network, discover what a pine cone can teach you about becoming a saint. {eoa}

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Priests: The Amazing Privilege and Honor of Living in the Presence of God

Discover Your Spiritual Identity: The Revelation of the Names and Titles God Has Given His People

“To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen” (Rev. 1:5b-6).

In the original Hebrew, the word translated “priest” is *kohen*, and it means one who draws near to God. Those who fill this role do so for two primary reasons: to faithfully minister to God in worship and to effectively represent Him to others. Originally, God’s intention was for all Israelites to function in this sacred calling. After they left Egypt, He gave the promise (which was hinged to a condition, as usual):

“‘Now therefore, if you will faithfully obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My special possession out of all the nations, for all the earth is Mine. And you will be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the

words which you shall speak to the children of Israel" (Ex. 19:5-6).

Unfortunately, in the very next chapter, when the fiery visitation took place on Mount Sinai and God spoke the Ten Commandments, instead of drawing near, the Israelites drew back—pleading with Moses to access the Yahweh in their behalf. Later on, when Moses was in the mountain for 40 days, receiving further instructions from the Almighty, they coerced Aaron to make a false idol, a golden calf—brazenly breaking two of the commandments God had just pronounced with the thunderclap of divine authority. In both instances, in a very real sense, they rejected the priesthood calling. That fateful day, only the tribe of Levi stood with Moses—and for centuries afterward, the priesthood calling remained with them.

Then the Messiah came and offered Himself as the supreme sacrifice for our sins, doing away with the Mosaic order. After Jesus, the great high priest, ascended to heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit back to dwell inside the hearts of His people (Heb. 4:14). Everything changed then for the better. Through the blood He shed, Jesus (Yeshua) imparted to all believers "boldness to enter the Holiest" (Heb. 10:19b, NKJV). Now all who call on His name—both Jew and Gentile—can function as priests, because we can all "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" and live in that intimate connection with the Father (Heb. 10:22a).

So, in this era, the priesthood is no longer reserved to a select group of God's people. All children of God who abide in a covenant relationship with Him inherit the right to enter His presence: to commune with Him, to receive His revealed wisdom and then to share His grace, His forgiveness and His truth with others. So filling this role is not just a futuristic hope. Revelation 1:5-6 clearly states in the past tense, "He has made us kings and priests." It's something we possess, right here, right now.

2 Powerful Priesthood Declarations

Two of the most powerful “priesthood” verses in the New Testament are found in the writings of Peter:

“You also, as living stones, are being built up into a spiritual house as a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 2:5, MEV).

Children of God are commissioned in this era to present to the Creator not bloody animal sacrifices on a brass altar but “spiritual sacrifices” on the altar of their regenerated hearts:

- Sacrifices of righteousness (Ps. 4:5).
- Sacrifices of joy (Ps. 27:6).
- Sacrifices of thanksgiving (Jo. 2:9).
- Sacrifices of praise (Heb. 13:15).

The second “priest” passage from Peter’s writings adds a new dimension altogether:

“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may declare the goodness of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Pet. 2:9).

Though the idea of a “priesthood” speaks deeply of serving God and others with meekness and humility, the word “royal” implies ruling with authority and power. So New Covenant priests are empowered to also reign as kings—over the flesh, over the devil and his demons, over the power of sin and over all the negative aspects of living in this world. Then, after it’s all over, we will actually “reign on the earth” in the age to come, in a restored paradise world (Revelation 20:6). So by this passage, it becomes very clear: In the kingdom of

God, only those who serve as priests have the right and the privilege to reign as kings. The perfect balance—hallelujah!

In this episode of Discover Your Spiritual Identity with Mike Shreve on Charisma Podcast Network, discover how God is making you a priest.

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Heirs of the Kingdom: The Incredible Spiritual Abundance That Belongs to You Now

Discover Your Spiritual Identity: The Revelation of the Names and Titles God Has Given His People

“Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He has promised to those who love Him?” (James 2:5b).

The word “kingdom” simply means a king’s domain. God’s kingdom is that over which He rules. It is permeated with His presence and infused with His attributes: His power, wisdom, love, righteousness, peace and joy (see 1 Cor. 4:20, Mark 12:32-34, Rom. 14:17). Concisely spoken, the kingdom of God is comprised of all that God is and all that God has. Everything and every being in heaven and earth, submitted to His authority, is a part of His wonderful kingdom.

This theme dominated Jesus’ ministry:

– After 40 days of fasting, He came out of the wilderness preaching, “Repent! For the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 4:17).

– His first recorded sermon began with the statement, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 5:3).

– Many of His parables started with the phrase, “The kingdom of heaven is like” (Matt. 13:24).

– His message was called “the word of the kingdom” and the revelation of the New Covenant He introduced is called “the gospel of the kingdom” (Matt. 13:19, 24:14).

– Finally, after He rose from the dead, He lingered in this world for 40 days, teaching His disciples things pertaining to “the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:3).

So, from the beginning to the end of His earthly sojourn, the establishment of this spiritual kingdom was one of Jesus’ highest priorities. When His disciples asked how they should pray, the Son of God instructed them to make the request:

“Father ... Your kingdom come; Your will be done on earth, as it

is in heaven” (Matt. 6:9b, 10).

Most Israelites thought this prayer would be answered in the manner of former deliverers—that the Messiah would raise up an army, banish the invaders (the Romans) and restore the promised land to its rightful owners—the seed of Abraham. But the strategy had changed—dramatically. The captain of our salvation unveiled His new battleplan with intriguing words:

“The kingdom of God does not come with observation. Nor will they say, ‘Here it is!’ or ‘There it is!’ For remember, the kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:20b-21).

They didn’t get it at first. However, God had predetermined that the progress of the kingdom would not happen visibly by securing one blood-soaked battlefield after another. Instead, it was destined to advance invisibly, from one blood-washed heart to another.

New converts become born-again sons and daughters of the King, translated into His spiritual kingdom, to become citizens of that heavenly sphere forever. All such privileged individuals also become heirs of the kingdom, filled with the divine nature that permeates that supernatural domain—compelling them to declare truth and show love to the world—just like the King did when He walked among us (see John 3:1-5, 17:26).

This has been God’s method for nearly two millennia. However, it’s about to change again—drastically. On the last day of this age, God’s kingdom will take over the world completely in an indescribable burst of power and majesty:

“For as the lightning flashes and lights up the heavens from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in His day” (Luke 17:24).

Until that final climax, all true believers are called to change the world by manifesting kingdom-character, kingdom-power and kingdom-influence everywhere we go, every single

day. Don't ever underestimate the power and the potential of following the King's directives, even when the task seems small and insignificant. Remember, the kingdom has a very peculiar trait—it often hides itself in mustard-seed smallness, but then, once planted and nurtured, it grows into something so large and full-of-fruit that all who behold it say, "That had to be God." {eoa}

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