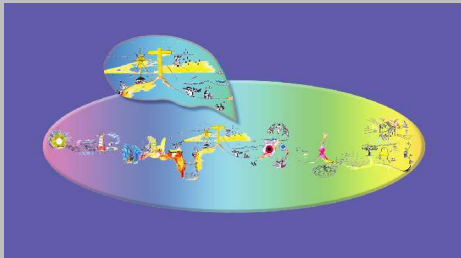


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We believe in one GOD, in three persons; FATHER, SON and HOLY SPIRIT. We regard the Bible (both Hebrew Bible and New Testaments) as the only infallible authoritative WORD OF GOD.

HULDAH MINISTRY aims to return to the Word Of God, founded on Hebrew background and to interpret it from Hebraic perspective, acknowledging that Jesus is a Jew and the Jewish-ness of His teaching as a continuation from the Hebrew Bible. The Ministry also aims to put His teaching into practice, to have a closer relationship with the Lord, Jesus Christ, and to regularly have a Christian fellowship so that this-worldly kingdom of God will materialise in the midst of the followers of Jesus here and now, as well as earnestly seeking Christ's Return to establish the otherworldly Kingdom of God on earth.

All activities are free of charge and no obligation whatever. Just enjoy our fellowship!

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HULDAH MINISTRY

LETTER TO THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST

【DEPOSIT OF GOD'S FUTURE PLAN】

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.... Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? ... Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"... Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ..."Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. David said about him: "...you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your holy One see decay...."Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. ..."therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you

crucified, both Lord and Christ.” When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” Peter replied, “Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off.” With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” Those who accepted his message were baptised, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. ACTS 2:1-41.

On the day of the Passover Feast in April 32 C.E. Jesus the Nazarene died on the cross in Jerusalem. The heart of the apostolic proclamation became none other than the very offensive cross and His resurrection, rather than His incarnation (birth), as Paul put it: ***‘I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve....For I am the least of the apostles...Whether, then, it was I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.’*** (1Co.15:3-11, Lines added).

The Romans regarded the cross as an emblem of guilt, pain, shame and above all, loathing, and a humiliating death such as a death on the cross was something that was never applied to proud Roman citizens. For the Greeks, the ‘sophisticated’ of the ancient world, the cross was abhorrent, far different from their idealism characterised by goodness, beauty, freedom, truth and universality. For the Jews it was a great insult and nothing less than blasphemy that their Messiah had miserably died on the cross after suffering as a sinner, contrary to their expectation that their Messiah would have successfully delivered the nation out of the then Roman occupation. As anyone hanging on a tree symbolised divine judgment and rejection according to the Jewish law, the cross was God’s curse and a death that desecrated the land. Thus, the cross was without doubt for everyone a symbol of an appalling and offensive object, as prophetically put by Isaiah: ***‘Just as there were many who were appalled at him — his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness — ... He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.’*** (Is.52:14, 53:3). However, despite all those negative connotations associated with the cross, there was an unmistakable power in the death of Christ, which began with the genuine confession of a Roman centurion who witnessed the death: ***‘Surely this man was the Son of God!’***, an impulsive proclamation by a non-believer. A train of unthinkable happenings and their message; the scandal of crucifixion, burial and the unheard of resurrection of Christ must have captured the hearts of many and consequently, faith in Christ’s empty cross rapidly prevailed in Rome, and among the Greek and the Jews. Eventually it turned to capture the whole Roman Empire.

Interestingly, the cross became a fatal paradox for the devil as well. God, who came down to earth clothed in fallen, filthy flesh (‘sarx’ in Greek, which the devil had claimed as his dwelling place since the Fall), in other words, Christ who became truly man, in the likeness of sinful man in His incarnation, killed the sinful flesh, which the devil had claimed as his own to get access to man, by His death on the cross. As the result of Christ’s death, the devil not only lost his dwelling place but was also fatally defeated by Christ’s glorious life-giving resurrection. His resurrection with a brand-new imperishable body (‘soma’ in Greek), was a final sentence of the devil’s eternal doom. Paul triumphantly proclaimed: ***‘When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.” “Where, O death, is your sting?”...But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.’*** (1Co.15:54-57). Ironically for the devil, Christ’s death, i.e., His seeming failure and defeat, turned out to be a passage into new life. Christ’s death on the cross brought about a ***‘new creation’*** to the world. What Christ achieved through His suffering and death was a complete fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies concerning Isaiah’s “suffering servant”, the Son of David’s line, and also the

resurrection on the last day. The sacrifice on the cross also satisfied the law and thus, Christ became the perfection of the requirement of Moses' law.

The historic Exodus of the Israelites out of the servitude in Egypt was a foreshadow of another Exodus by Jesus. The latter achieved the deliverance of man from sin and man's soul's salvation from death. Followed by His resurrection, the death of Christ turned out to be the most unique and paradoxically the most celebrated one, which completely broke the power of evil; sin and the ultimate grip of death. To put it differently, it was the pledge of the messianic age to come that had already begun to materialise even now among the believers and it was offered by the gift of the Holy Spirit along with forgiveness of sins simply by virtue of Christ's achievement on the cross.

As quoted at the beginning, on the day of Pentecost, Peter, addressing a crowd probably somewhere in the temple precincts, gave a sermon about Christ's death and resurrection, and also an exhortation to repentance and baptism. Such a style actually reflected a common pattern of gospel preaching in the early church. Having heard Peter's sermon, those who expressed mixed feelings of belief and regret over their rejection of Christ, were now encouraged to repent and to be baptised, so that they will not only receive a gift of forgiveness of sins but also another gift; the indwelling gift of the Holy Spirit. The outpouring of the Spirit into the lives of the believers materialised only after Christ's death and resurrection, as Jesus promised: ***'It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.'*** (John16:7). The Holy Spirit is the pledge of the new creation and He will help Christ's followers and primarily take the following threefold roles.

- 1) He will transform believers to the likeness of Christ, which Paul expressed: ***'And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.'*** (2Co.3:18).
- 2) He will build up the corporative body of Christ, to celebrate, praise and worship in one accord. For this purpose He will provide each individual believer with gifts of the Holy Spirit. Paul taught: ***'There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of addressing to the crowd probably somewhere in the temple precincts by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.'*** (1Co.12:4-11, Lines added).

In the above passage, Paul lists nine gifts of the Holy Spirit. The message of 'wisdom' is taken as an utterance (a word) of wisdom, which is the power of communication to others. Wherever decisions are required to take proper courses of action in the Christian community, the real worth of the gifts of wisdom and knowledge will be proven. 'Faith' should be distinct from saving faith, which will be required to meet the need of the Christian community. Gifts of 'healing' (literally "healings"), in their plural form suggest different gifts for different diseases, in that God's way of healing would be various. 'Miraculous power' (literally "deeds of power") should be distinguished from acts of healing. It denotes an unexplained divine action that proves the presence and power of God. 'Prophecy' primarily refers to 'forth-telling' God's message in inspired words, but it includes 'fore-telling' future events as well. 'Distinguishing between spirits' is an ability to tell the true from false, the good from the evil. This gift would be in big demand in the last days because of the increase in false prophecies and teachings as the Lord's second coming approaches. This battle was already present in John's day and he warned: ***'Dear friends, do***

not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognise the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world....We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognise the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.’ (1Jn.4:1-6).

‘Tongues’, which denote ecstatic speech in languages of praise and prayer usually unknown, should ideally be accompanied by the gift of the ‘interpretation of tongues,’ However, what happened to Jesus’ disciples on the day of Pentecost was a bestowal of the ability to speak in unlearned human languages, rather than unknown spiritual languages. For the purpose of edification and understanding of Christian community, the gift of ‘interpretation of tongues’ would necessarily be required, while for the purpose of individual praise and prayer, it is needless to say that ‘tongues’ alone would be worthy. The source of all these gifts is one and the same Spirit and it is He that determines to give different gift and gifts to each individual believer.

The Holy Spirit also builds up the body of Christ by making each individual participate in different part of it with a different office; ‘apostles’, ‘prophets’, ‘teachers’, workers of the spiritual gifts, helpers of others (as the product of a spiritual gift), administrators, in order to organise and project plans in the church (1Co.12:27-28). Thus, the purposes of the Spirit are to equip the Christian community so as to be able to demonstrate the principles of the coming kingdom of God even in the present age. Because of this demonstration, the gifts and the help of the Holy Spirit to the believers are of utmost necessity.

- 3) The Spirit will also equip the Christian community for mission. The Gospel writer Mark significantly connected the necessary guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit to the difficulty of mission. The warning that an opportunity of preaching of the gospel, or standing as witnesses may be given in a context of suffering such as standing in courts of justice, rather than in a favourable context such as standing before expectant congregations, is a stern truth which is unfortunately lost sight of in modern times of triumph-oriented evangelicalism. However, under such difficult situations for evangelism, but for the help of the Spirit, outreach to all the nations would never be achieved.

This outpouring of the Spirit over the believers today is an assured deposit of God’s future plan for us and His world as Paul taught: ***‘He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.’ (2Co.1:21-22), ‘Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession – to the praise of his glory.’ (Eph.1:13-14).*** Given such invincible confidence about the future, we are called to bravely face any hardship even to the edge of death ahead of us by the help of both the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts until we surely enter the kingdom of God.

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This month a money gift has been sent to MARY JANE in the Philippines to support her ministry. Also, a gift of a car is planning to be sent to FREDERIC to help to improve the efficiency of his ministry for salvation of his countrymen, Burundians.

Pray for the Lord’s assured guidance, best arrangement for their needs, and protection upon both of them, their co-workers and their ministries so that His salvation will work out through them especially where Christ is not known yet. Also remember in your prayers our newly planned projects of outreach to the weak, poor and the outcast in society with loving care and the Word of God in the Tokyo area of Japan. Prayer is really powerful. We appreciate it.