

Understanding offering

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UNDERSTANDING OFFERING

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Understanding offering

Christ is the Seed

- In the fellowship of Their Covenant, before the creation of 'the heavens and earth', the Father, Son and Holy Spirit agreed together to make man in Their image and according to Their likeness. Gen 1:26.
- To accomplish Their covenant purpose, the Father and the Son gave to the Holy Spirit the seven Spirits of God, which is the sum and full capacity of God, who is Spirit, establishing Him as 'the Helper'. As the Helper, the Holy Spirit enabled the Son, with the capacity of seven Spirits, to empty Himself to the bosom of the Father in order to reveal the Father by becoming His Son. The Holy Spirit enabled the Father, with the capacity of seven Spirits, to bring forth Yahweh Son as *the Son of God*, when the Father said, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You.' Heb 1:5.

- The harvest of this offering within the fellowship of Yahweh, *before*, was a single Seed. As the only begotten Son and Seed of the Father, Christ was the manifestation, or harvest, of the *zoe* life of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In this regard, He was the prototype of all the seeds who would spring from Him. Heb 1:2-4.
- In this one Seed was the potential for a great multitude of unique sons of God who would be one Spirit with Yahweh and would live by Their one life. That is, all the sonship names of every identity who would ever be brought forth from the Father, by the Holy Spirit, were written into the Seed. These names would be brought forth and multiplied through the process of sowing and reaping, empowered by the seven Spirits of God from the Holy Spirit. The one Seed had the potential to become a great field of wheat. Every grain would be unique, but would be one Spirit together, and of the one life of the first Seed.
- As we have detailed in Chapter 3 of *The pathway of our pilgrimage*, Jesus said to His disciples, 'Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.' Joh 12:24. Jesus Christ was this one Seed who, through offering, fell into the ground and died, in seven wounding events, and came up as a sheaf of firstfruits on the day of His resurrection. 1Co 15:20.
- It is important to recognise that, as the Seed, Jesus was Yahweh Son in identity, inasmuch as He was the Son of the Father, and the Son of Man. Yahweh Son is the substance and expression of all sonship. However, through offering, by Eternal Spirit, He revealed the Father by fulfilling the works of sonship that belong to the unique name of every identity sourced from the Father. As we have already noted, these names from the Father were written in Christ when He was begotten as the Son of God, *before*.

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- The works that Christ did in the course of His offering journey from Gethsemane to Calvary were the works that belong to the sonship name of every identity brought forth by the Father. Establishing this amazing point, the prophet Isaiah declared, 'Lord [Jesus], You will establish peace for us, *since You have also performed for us all our works.*' Isa 26:12. At the conclusion of His offering journey, the Son had brought forth, through seven wounding events, the sonship name of every person *by fulfilling their works*. This is how we were 'made in secret, and skilfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth'. Psa 139:15-16. With this understanding in view, we could describe Christ's seven wounds as seven 'name-developing steps'.

Revealing Christ as sons of God

- As sons of God whom the Father has baptised into Christ, we are to reveal the works that Christ, the Seed, has already accomplished for us *as His works of offering*. Just as He revealed us by accomplishing the works that belong to our name, we are to reveal Him by doing these works. We can do this only by the capacity of seven Spirits, as a temple of the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus used the imagery of a vine and branches to explain this offering fellowship, where each One reveals the Other. He said that He is the Vine, the sons of God are the branches of the Vine, and the Father is the Vinedresser. Joh 15:1,5. As a son of God, the works that we are to do are the *fruit* of a branch that draws its life from the root of the Vine. Emphasising this reality, Jesus said, 'I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; *for without Me you can do nothing.*' Joh 15:5.
- The fruit that we bear as branches on the Vine, who is Christ, are the works that He, as the Seed, personally produced for us in seven wounding events. This fruit belongs to our name

in heaven. It is our reward, and becomes our glory. We see that it is not we who live, but *Christ* lives within us, and we live by His faith and works. As the apostle Paul testified, 'I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.' Gal 2:20.

- The picture of the vine and branches reveals the transfer of life through offering. As we noted earlier, this life is transferred from the root to each branch that abides in the vine, and it is revealed by the fruit brought forth by the branch.
- The imagery of 'a seed' further develops this principle and its implications. Through offering, the one seed multiplies to a sheaf of seeds. Each new seed is a unique 'name'. When these seeds are planted, they bring forth new plants and multiply seed. Every seed is of 'the one life and one Spirit' of *the first Seed*.
- Drawing our attention to this implication of Christ's offering as the Seed, Paul wrote, 'For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one [Father], for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: "I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You." And again: "I will put My trust in Him." And again: "Here am I and the children whom God has given Me." ' Heb 2:11-13.
- The seed of our name, which was brought forth from the travail of the one Seed, is planted in the 'soil' of our spirit. This seed, which contains our name, is *the divine nature*. Through the germination of the seed, by the Holy Spirit, we are *conceived* as a new-creation son of God and are then placed by the Father into the body of Christ. We see that being born as a new-creation son of God, depicted in Jesus'

parable as 'a plant', requires the 'soil' of our identity *and* the seed. We bring forth, from our humanity, which is likened to 'the soil', the fruit that comes from the seed.

- As a consequence of the fall of mankind, there are other seeds that can be planted in the spirit of a person. These seeds, sown by the enemy, impact upon the definition and formation of one's life. This is evident, for example, in the identity expression of those who are homosexual or transgender. In one way or another, the word of truth concerning their identity has been suppressed. Rom 1:18. The apostle Paul explained that 'for this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for *what is against nature* [for their own nature has changed]. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and *receiving in themselves* the penalty of their error which was due.' Rom 1:26-27.
- The impact of that which is sown in the heart upon the identity formation and expression of a person is also likened in the Scriptures to a certain type of plant. In contrast to becoming 'the plant' that God predestined a person to be, those who reject the word of the Father receive and live by another word, and *bring forth thorns and thistles*. In this regard, Paul said, 'For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.' Heb 6:7-8.

The washing of regeneration

- Writing to Titus, the apostle Paul explained that we are saved through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. Tit 3:5. The washing of regeneration through the

ministry of the Holy Spirit specifically applies to our *humanity*. It is first evident when, by prevenient grace, a hearer who is dead in trespasses and sins is made alive, enabling them to hear and to respond to the invitation to be born again as a son of God. Eph 2:1-2.

- Once we have been born of God and baptised by the Father into the body of Christ, this washing and renewing work continues in our life as we journey each day with Christ on the pathway of salvation that He pioneered for us as our great High Priest. We journey by the capacity of the Holy Spirit through obedience to the word of the Father, which is ministered to us from a presbytery by messengers who are sent by Christ. Heb 5:9-10.
- In this regard, regeneration and renewing are operative in our life as we walk each day in the reality of our baptism by water into the fellowship of Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Our participation in this process, which includes the circumcision of our heart, delivers to us a new heart and a new spirit, as promised by the Lord. Through the prophet Ezekiel, He declared, 'Then I will sprinkle clean water on you [ministering the washing of regeneration], and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgements and do them.' Eze 36:25-27.
- The effect of regeneration is a *new heart*, from which 'thorns' and 'the stones' of the other law are being removed, and a *spirit that is made new* through new birth. This highlights that the process of regeneration and renewing is addressing the 'soil' of our heart. As we embrace the process through which our carnality is being removed, and we walk in the word that we are hearing, the divine nature, which is planted in the soil

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of our spirit, continues to take root, grow and become the expression of our identity as a son of God. Summarising this progressive work, Paul said, 'But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image [as the Son] from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.' 2Co 3:18. Notably, the parable of 'the seed and grounds' teaches us that if the soil of our heart is not being changed through this process, we, as a new-creation 'plant', can die, even though what is born of God does not sin. 1Jn 3:9.

- As our spirit is being regenerated and our soul is being renewed, we are able to mature as a son of man and a son of God, and to reveal Christ by doing the works of obedience that He fulfilled for us. The seed of the divine nature, containing our name from the Father, defines who we are and also the expression of our identity in the fellowship of one Spirit. These are *His statutes*, which have become the *rule of our life*, which we are progressively expressing by the capacity of the Holy Spirit. Paul exhorted us to this orientation to life, writing, 'Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, *let us walk by the same rule*, let us be of the same mind.' Php 3:15-16.
- In summary, we are being connected to all that Christ has already accomplished for us. He has fulfilled the works that belong to our name as a son of God. Because of the ongoing work of regeneration, we are able to obey from the heart that form of teaching to which we were delivered. We have become slaves of what Christ documented in the Scriptures as His teaching, or 'commandments'. Rom 6:17-18.
- These are the works that God the Father planned for us to do, which He wrote in His book of life. The Son accomplished these works for us so that, by the Spirit, we could fulfil them

in the way that the Father planned. For this purpose, as we come to Christ, He yokes us to Himself so that we can do these works with Him because they are our works. He says to us, 'Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and *learn from Me*, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find *rest for your souls*. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.' Mat 11:28-30.

- Paul's own summary of this amazing principle was, 'For I through the Law died to the Law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.' Gal 2:19-20.

The sign of Jonah

- In the publication, *The pathway of our pilgrimage*, we explained that the first expression of the sign of the Son of Man is *the sign of Jonah*. Making this point, Jesus said, 'An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, *and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah*. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.' Mat 12:39-40.
- Evidently, the experience and ministry of Jonah, detailed in his prophetic book, are essential for us to understand. As we will consider in these notes, they have implications for how we are to live and walk each day as a Christian, as well as for the ministry of the gospel, both at this time and in the time of the end.
- With this in view, it is notable that several Bible scholars have described the book of Jonah as being a parallel to the book of Acts. They have observed that Jonah's prophetic ministry was

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to a Gentile nation, in the same way that the book of Acts detailed the ministry of the gospel to the Gentiles, particularly through the apostle Paul and his fellow messengers. We also recognise that the effectiveness of Jonah's ministry was the fruit of his figurative 'immersion' into the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Likewise, when Paul was commissioned as an apostle and a light to the Gentiles, the Lord said to Ananias, 'Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake.' Act 9:15-16.

- We recall that the prophet Jonah was called by the Lord to proclaim judgement upon the city of Nineveh. Jon 1:1-2. However, Jonah arose to flee from the presence of the Lord and from the works of obedience to which he had been called. As he made his way to Tarshish, in Spain, the Lord sent a great wind on the sea, bringing the boat and its passengers into peril. At Jonah's direction, the mariners picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, causing the terrible tempest to cease.
- The Lord prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. The prophet remained in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights. Jon 1:17. This initiative toward Jonah identified him with Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Jonah received and joined this sign, as evidenced by his personal expression of the prayer that belonged to Christ's travail in the course of His offering and suffering journey. For example, foreshadowing the resurrection life of the Father that brought Christ back from the dead, Jonah prayed, 'I went down to the moorings of the mountains; the earth with its bars closed behind me forever; yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O Lord, my God.' Jon 2:6.
- Having received and been identified with the death, burial and resurrection of the Son of Man, Jonah *became this sign* to

the city of Nineveh. Jesus, Himself, noted this point, saying, 'For as Jonah *became a sign* to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation.' Luk 11:30. This sign, which Jonah had become, was expressed to the citizens of Nineveh through the words of judgement that Jonah had been sent to proclaim to them for forty days.

Some commentators, such as the authors of *The Pulpit Commentary*, have suggested that the Ninevites were receptive to Jonah's message because they had been informed of his miraculous deliverance from death, as he became to them a sign of the judgement and power of God.

- The apostle Paul, likewise, became this sign to his hearers, saying to the Christians in Galatia, 'O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose *eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?*' Gal 3:1. Paul's testimony exemplified the *sign* of the Son of Man, which is resurrection life in a mortal body. To this end, he confessed that he had suffered the loss of all things, 'that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.' Php 3:10-11.
- Through the ministry of the word of Jonah, who was a participant in Christ's death, burial and resurrection, the whole region of Nineveh repented and found deliverance from the judgement of God. In this regard, they were raised up by the sign of the prophet Jonah! They were exalted because of their repentance. Once they were established as the second world kingdom, they became the rod of Yahweh's anger to chasten the children of Israel.
- When Assyria came against Israel, the nation was scattered like 'seed' among the nations of the world because of their idolatry. Yet, the Lord promised that not one seed would

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be lost, saying, 'For surely I will command, and will sift the house of Israel among all nations, as grain is sifted in a sieve; yet not the smallest grain shall fall to the ground.' Amo 9:9. As 'the seed of Israel' that has been sown among the nations, they will be gathered in the time of the end when 'the stone that is cut without hands' becomes the sign of the prophet Jonah that strikes the seventh world order at its feet.

Dan 2:34-35. This seed is gathered, as the nations, into the body of Christ, which is the true Israel of God in our day.

- The sign of Jonah is now in the heavens where Christ sits. It will be activated when the Lamb, the Lion of Judah, stands to rule from heaven over the earth through His administration. This will happen after the Father takes His seat to be the God of all the families of the earth. At this time, the sign of the Son of Man, which is the sign of Jonah, will be given to all the nations. In this regard, we can liken 'the 144 000' to Jonah when he went preaching judgement to Nineveh.
- Like Jonah, the 144 000 will go forth in the world proclaiming the judgement of God upon all nations. They are the rider of the white horse, or messenger administration, under the direction of the twenty-four elders who sit upon thrones. These are the thrones of the house of David, which have been set for judgement. Psa 122:5.
- Jonah had to resolve that, with the message of judgement, came the opportunity for mercy. This was a crisis for him. Once the Lord's mercy was manifest in response to Nineveh's great mourning and repentance, he prayed, 'Ah, Lord, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm. Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live!' Jon 4:2-3. Notably, the Lord responded to Jonah, asking, 'Is it right for you to be angry?' Jon 4:4.

- It is interesting to consider what the 144 000 will have to resolve in relation to God's judgement and mercy as they declare the gospel of the kingdom during the period of the great tribulation. As we have already noted, the judgement of God will be proclaimed and executed upon the whole world at this time. Yet, through the cross, which is the instrument of God's judgement, mercy is manifest. Psa 85:10. In fact, mercy rejoices, or triumphs, over judgement. Jas 2:13. This mercy will be evident when the Lord shortens the days of the great tribulation so that a numberless multitude, *identified by Jesus as 'the elect'*, can be saved. Mat 24:22.
- Although it will be manifest in a global way in the time of the end, *the sign of Jonah is also our sign in this day*. This is our fellowship in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, as a daily participation in our baptism. We are to become 'obedient from the heart' to this doctrine to which we were delivered. Rom 6:17.
- We *die* with Christ from the rudimentary trading principles of the world by which fallen man lives. We are *buried* with Christ as we rest in hope of resurrection life with Christ in the wounding events of life. We are *raised* each day by the *exanastasis* life that is out-flowing from Christ's resurrection. This life was first manifest in the garden of Gethsemane as His sweat became great clots of blood all over His body, and was then revealed in full on the day of resurrection after His body had rested for three days and three nights in the tomb.
- As we noted earlier, his daily participation in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ was the whole focus of Paul's life and ministry. It was his desire to express the sign of the Son of Man by knowing Him and the power of His resurrection, embracing the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death as the means of attaining to *exanastasis*, or resurrection life in his mortal body. Php 3:10-11. Paul became a great light to the Gentiles as he

expressed the sign of the Son of Man, which is the sign of Jonah. Act 13:47. Isa 42:6. This must become our desire as well.

- As we consider the ministry of firstfruits believers, it is important to recognise the implications of Jesus' statement, 'An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, *and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.*' Mat 12:39. Jesus warned His disciples, saying, 'If anyone says to you, "Look, here is the Christ!" or "There!" do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show *great signs and wonders to deceive*, if possible, even the elect.' Mat 24:23-24. The only sign that accompanies the declaration of the gospel in our day, and in the time of the end, is the sign of Jonah - it is the manifestation of the sons of God who are living by resurrection life in their mortal bodies, through fellowship in Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Any other sign is a deception, and accompanies the proclamation of false gospels by false prophets.

Spirit and life

- After being baptised by John the Baptist in the Jordan River, Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness, where He was tempted by the Devil for forty days. At the end of this time of fasting, Jesus was hungry, and the Devil said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.' Jesus answered Satan, saying, 'It is written, "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God*".' Luk 4:1-4.
- Sons of God live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Father, through the ministry of Christ, by the Holy Spirit. This word is proceeding from the covenant fellowship of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, who determined together, saying, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.' Gen 1:26. The substance of this word was manifest when Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, and the

Word became flesh. Joh 1:4,14. Then, through the offering and suffering journey of the Son of Man, from Gethsemane to Calvary, and through His resurrection as the first Man made in the image and likeness of God, this substance was made available to everyone who would receive and walk in His word.

- This word is now the source of life and understanding for us. Explaining this point, the apostle John said, 'And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.' 1Jn 5:20. The understanding that we receive is eternal life *because* the Word of God became flesh. Joh 1:1,14. We, who are flesh and blood, live by eating and drinking the right food.
- Jesus said that He came down from heaven to be 'food' for us to eat, identifying Himself as 'the bread of life'. Joh 6:35. He further said that His flesh was 'food indeed' and His blood was 'drink indeed'. Joh 6:55. Having established this point, Jesus reiterated that we do not physically eat His flesh or drink His blood. He had already said that we eat by *coming to Him*, and drink by *believing in Him*. Joh 6:35. Importantly, He explained that the message that He brought, if received, would be *Spirit and life to us*. Joh 6:63.
- By identifying His word as being Spirit and life to us, Jesus was explaining that the covenant purpose of Yahweh is accomplished in our life as we receive and live by the word that proceeds from Their fellowship. We are established as participants in the one-Spirit fellowship of Yahweh, and are born of, and live by, Their *zoe* life. That is, as we receive and live by the covenant 'word from the beginning', what is true in God is becoming true in us. 1Jn 2:7-8.

- By the word, the Spirit, who became the *Paraclete*, or Helper, of the Son and of the Father, enabling the Son to become the Seed and substance of our name and identity from the Father, becomes our Helper. As His temple, the Spirit enables our expression, forever, as a son of God and a son of man in the fellowship of Yahweh. By identifying His word as *life* to us, Christ was explaining that the *zoe* life of God becomes the power by which we live. This is God's initiative toward us as *El Shaddai*. Accordingly, as blood gives life to our physical bodies, His word is *zoe* life to us and in us. Living by this life reveals the initiative of the Father as the source of the *book of life (zoe)*, in which our name as a son of God is written. It reveals the Son as the *Tree of Life (zoe)*, of whom we are partakers, and by whom we become trees of life. Finally, it reveals the Holy Spirit as the *River of Life (zoe)*, of whom we are tributaries feeding this great torrent, for out of our bellies 'flow rivers of living water', which refers to the Spirit. Joh 7:38-39.
- In this present season, and *forevermore*, we are to feed on the word, which is the substance and capacity of our life. This is because it is the substance of the *agape* meal of the Father's house. We must not turn the stones of Law into 'bread' and then, through sacramentalism, claim that these 'stones' are the blessing of Christ's substance and life by which we live. This is what Satan wants us to do and brings us back into bondage to the fear of death.

The nature of a seed and its travail

- In Chapter 3 of *The pathway of our pilgrimage*, we identified the pangs of death that belonged to Christ's offering journey as His *travail*. The fruit that is brought forth through these birth pangs of death defines a new creation that possesses the *nature* of the One who travailed to bring them forth.

This is Christ's travail, in whom dwelt the fulness of the Godhead, bodily.

- Jesus travailed in this manner as Yahweh Son in identity inasmuch as He was the Father's Seed and the Son of Man. That is, in identity, the Son is the sum and substance of all sonship. Emphasising that although the Son had come in the flesh, He was Yahweh Son in identity, Jesus quoted King David, saying, 'How then does David in the Spirit call Him "Lord," saying: "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool"'? If David then calls Him "Lord," how is He his Son?' Mat 22:43-45. We are the offspring of God, brought forth and named as sons of God from the seed of the divine nature in the flesh that proceeded from the Father to the Son.
- The intercessory prayer of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is articulated in Their intense love. From this intercession proceeds the word by which we are born as sons of God. This is the word of the Father in which is our name as a son of God. 1Pe 1:23. As we noted earlier, the word of *Elohim* is the expression of Their will. They, therefore, accomplish what They say. The threefold expression of the purpose of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which springs from Their fellowship, became one covenant, called 'Their Covenant'. Their Covenant states, 'Let us make man in *Our* image, according to *Our* likeness'. Gen 1:26.
- The word of Yahweh is the statement of our eternal predestination. This word defines our name and works. It is the proclamation of our name and character as a person. Our name becomes our initiative because it is given to us and belongs to us as we are born by the Father, placed in the body, and join the regenerating work of the Son's offering by the power of Eternal Spirit.