Chapter 2

Definitions and Basic Explanations

As we begin this critical course of study, it is necessary to be on the same page concerning the root of the subject matter. As we saw in chapter 1, Satan has been in the business of rebelling against the authority of Elohim from eternity past when he was Lucifer the arch angel. The first mention of him in the earth realm was when he engaged in dialogue with Eve in Genesis chapter 3. In that dialogue we see a being whose operational strategy include lying and distortion of the word of Elohim. We saw him resort to the playbook of lies and distortion of truth when confronting the Prince of Life, Yeshua in Matthew 4:1-10. Going further into a root cause analysis, let us take note of how Yeshua described him:

> *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it (John 8:44).*

This then is the master key to understand the key terms: Error, Heresies, Apostasy and the pseudo-gospel and all other spin offs from them: they are all various dimensions of Satan's attempt to pollute the gospel through distortion of the truth. Ultimately, he seeks to have as many people as possible to walk in deception, blindfolded, inching closer to his eternal abode in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone. As we move further into end of the age, the strategy will be fired up which ensures that the 'church' built on distortions of truth becomes one of the avenues leading multitudes to him.

> *Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it (Matthew 7:13-14)*

The Definitions

Error: Wikipedia offers the most gracious definition of error, and we can then apply it to the subject matter: An 'error' is a deviation from accuracy or correctness." An error occurs when an individual deviates from the accuracy of the Word of God when preaching, teaching, or writing a book. Because of our finite minds, everybody can make a mistake on any issue. Error however comes into being when a mistake is not corrected and rather is accepted as truth and people live off it.

The nature of the Word of God and eternal consequences of getting the Word and the Spirit right or wrong is too great to be trifled with! Elohim God will not at any time countenance the growing spirit of liberalism which takes out the fundamental basis of His word which is its immutability. The moment saints buy into the theory that whatever you believe about God and His Kingdom is right, what will follow is the spiritual equivalent of Babel!

> *Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1:20-21).*

Heresy: Let us again resort to Wikipedia to set the stage for further discussion.

> "Heresy is a controversial or novel change to a system of beliefs, especially a religion, that conflicts with established dogma. It is distinct from apostasy, which is the formal denunciation of one's religion, principles or cause, and blasphemy which is irreverence toward religion. The founder or leader of a heretical movement is called a heresiarch, while individuals who espouse heresy or

> commit heresy, are known as heretics. Heresiology is the study of heresy."

Real heresy is based on departure of the absolute truth of the Word of Elohim God as documented in the Bible. Interestingly, various religions including Christian sects have branded any departure from their dogma and acceptable statements of faith as "heresy." This is self-serving however and in no way diminishes the central fact that Yeshua Jesus did not come to set up a religious system. He rather came to restore mankind to a living, loving relationship with God based on acceptance of His sacrifice at the Cross of Calvary. Relationship with God is however not to be confused with lawlessness. Yeshua, Jesus Himself made it clear in His epic conversation with the woman at the well of Samaria that relationship with The Father must be based on two core pillars: in spirit and in Truth.

> *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24).*

Any time you notice a substitution of the Truth of the Holy Scripture with the ideas and concepts of a mortal, let your spiritual antennae be alive to the fact that heresy may be unfolding! Beware of preachers or teachers who would labour to shake your confidence in the written word because they claim to have a new revelation. "*Thus says the Lord*" should explain and expound "*it is written*" never to substitute it. It was with this approach that Jesus defeated Satan at the temptation in the wilderness! Whenever anyone utters "Thus says the Lord" which contradicts "It is written," you owe yourself a duty of care; run away as fast as you can!

Apostasy: We will generously cite some insights from Wikipedia to highlight this very dangerous state of being which many people seem bent to pursue with all vigour:

> Apostasy in Christianity refers to the rejection of Christianity by someone who formerly was a Christian. The term apostasy comes from the Greek word apostasia ("ἀποστασία") meaning defection, departure, revolt or rebellion. It has been described as "a willful falling away from, or rebellion against, Christian truth. Apostasy is the rejection of Christ by one who has been a Christian...." "Apostasy is a theological category describing those who have voluntarily and consciously abandoned their faith in the God of the covenant, who manifests himself most completely in Jesus Christ." "Apostasy is the antonym of conversion; it is deconversion."

The Christian understanding of apostasy is "a willful falling away from, or rebellion against, Christian truth. Apostasy is the rejection of Christ by one who has been a Christian...." "Apostasy is the antonym of conversion; it is deconversion." The Greek noun apostasia (rebellion, abandonment, state of apostasy, defection) is found only twice in the New Testament (Acts 21:21; 2 Thessalonians 2:3). However, "the concept of apostasy is found throughout Scripture." The Dictionary of Biblical Imagery states that "There are at least four distinct images in Scripture of the concept of apostasy. All connote an intentional defection from the faith." These images are Rebellion; Turning Away; Falling Away; Adultery.

Rebellion: "In classical literature apostasia was used to denote a coup or defection. By extension they always uses it to portray a rebellion against God (Joshua 22:22; 2 Chronicles 29:19)."

Turning away: "Apostasy is also pictured as the heart turning away from God (Jeremiah 17:5-6) and righteousness (Ezekiel 3:20). In the OT it centers on Israel's breaking covenant relationship with God though disobedience to the law (Jeremiah 2:19), especially following other gods (Judges 2:19) and practicing their immorality (Daniel 9:9-11). Following the Lord or journeying with him is one of the chief images of faithfulness in the Scriptures. The Hebrew root (swr) is used to picture those who have turned away and ceased

to follow God ('I am grieved that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me,' 1 Samuel 15:11). The image of turning away from the Lord, who is the rightful leader, and following behind false gods is the dominant image for apostasy in the OT."

Falling away: "The image of falling, with the sense of going to eternal destruction, is particularly evident in the New Testament. In his [Christ's] parable of the wise and foolish builder, in which the house built on sand falls with a crash in the midst of a storm (Matthew 7:24-27) he painted a highly memorable image of the dangers of falling spiritually."

Adultery: One of the most common images for apostasy in the Old Testament is adultery. "Apostasy is symbolized as Israel the faithless spouse turning away from Yahweh her marriage partner to purse the advances of other gods (Jeremiah 2:1-3; Ezekiel 16). *'Your children have forsaken me and sworn by god that are not gods. I supplied all their needs, yet they committed adultery and thronged to the houses of prostitutes*' (Jeremiah 5:7, NIV). Adultery is used most often to graphically name the horror of the betrayal and covenant breaking involved in idolatry. Like literal adultery it does include the idea of someone blinded by infatuation, in this case for an idol: *'How I have been grieved by their adulterous hearts which have lusted after their idols*' (Ezekiel 6:9)."

Speaking with specific regards to apostasy in Christianity, Michael Fink writes:

> Apostasy is certainly a biblical concept, but the implications of the teaching have been hotly debated. The debate has centered on the issue of apostasy and salvation. Based on the concept of God's sovereign grace, some hold that, though true believers may stray, they will never totally fall away. Others affirm that any who fall away were never really saved. Though they may have "believed" for a while, they never experienced regeneration. Still others argue that the biblical warnings against apostasy are real and that believers

maintain the freedom, at least potentially, to reject God's salvation.

The Pseudo-gospel: This is the general phrase for all doctrines encapsulating philosophies of human beings concerning what Yeshua Jesus came to accomplish. They are pseudo because they do not capture the fundamental intent of Elohim God, are defective in their narration of the Kingdom message and present a make believe to those who buy into their worldview. If there is any single phrase which captures the main content of the pseudo-gospel it is this: the kingdom of man! The reason is that all variations of this cancerous growth on the Body basically aim to make man the reason why God exists! Within this false narration of the gospel can be found these peculiar strains:

- **The pseudo-prosperity message.** This is the popular movement which intentionally screens our suffering and the Cross from the messages that are preached. Rather followers of preachers are regaled with a carefully curated compilation of 'Promises' of Prosperity, health, and blessings from Genesis to Revelation. As people ingest this 'skimmed milk' of the word, they believe their own lie and lose all sense of balance and proportion. Ultimately, they are in 'church' for themselves, not for Elohim.

- **The pseudo-kingdom movement.** This is a false twisting of the overall message of the New Testament which presents Yeshua as a Supreme Monarch Who reigns in the hearts of saints in the now and will reign over all the earth when He returns. The pseudo-kingdom movement essentially doubts his divinity and advocates that believer should preach the 'Kingdom' rather than Yeshua, Jesus. The distortion is so insidious that many do not realise it is a falling away from the Faith. This movement also denigrates the Church as obsolete because it does not understand the biblical concept of the Church as the Body of Yeshua, His Bride and habitation of Elohim by The Spirit.

- **The Vengeance movement.** These are believers who have been brainwashed to believe that fellow humans are causes of their lack of progress or prosperity. They are then programmed to reject all teachings of Yeshua and the New Testament concerning need to forgive those who oppose and leave vengeance to Elohim. Taking the law into their hands, they compile a long list of prayers at various times of the day and night targeted at 'enemies'

Blasphemy. Wikipedia defines blasphemy as irreverence toward religion. Blasphemy is often uttered in the form of words.

Secular humanism. This is the tendency to frame the scriptures in a humanistic rather than Divine perspective. Consequently, what is preached and taught loses the aura of virtue which makes it attract reverence and conviction of Holy Spirit.

Syncretism. This is the tendency to mix elements of the New Testament which are found convenient with idolatrous practices. All syncretism arise from a foundation of belief that the Blood sacrifice of Yeshua at the Cross was insufficient. Consequently, those who embrace syncretism often add blood sacrifices of humans, animals, or birds to their liturgies. To others, there is worship of fallen angels and much emphasis on substances such as incense, candles and other carnal substances which are used as points of contact. Often this leads to misuse of olive oil and hand kerchiefs or mantles.

We will dwell at length on these departures from the Faith and more as we continue this very insightful course.

Assignment

1. Please summarise what you learnt about Errors, Heresies, Apostasies, and the Pseudo-Kingdom.
2. How important is it that saints and ministers should learn these concepts?