

(2 Corinthians 3:1-18)

CORINTHIANS

THE *Second Letter* OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS

**"Contrast Between The
Old & New Covenant"**

2 CORINTHIANS 3:1-18 (NKJV)

¹ Do we begin again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, as some others, epistles of commendation to you or letters of commendation from you? ² You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; ³ clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

2 CORINTHIANS 3:1-18 (NKJV)

⁴ And we have such trust through Christ toward God. ⁵ Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, ⁶ who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

2 CORINTHIANS 3:1-18 (NKJV)

⁷ But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away, ⁸ how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? ⁹ For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory.

2 CORINTHIANS 3:1-18 (NKJV)

¹⁰ For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. ¹¹ For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious. ¹² Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech—¹³ unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away.

2 CORINTHIANS 3:1-18 (NKJV)

¹⁴ But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ.

¹⁵ But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. ¹⁶

Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

2 CORINTHIANS 3:1-18 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. ¹⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

The Dividing Power of The Gospel

Nature of The New Covenant - (4:1-3)



2 Corinthians 3:1 (NKJV)

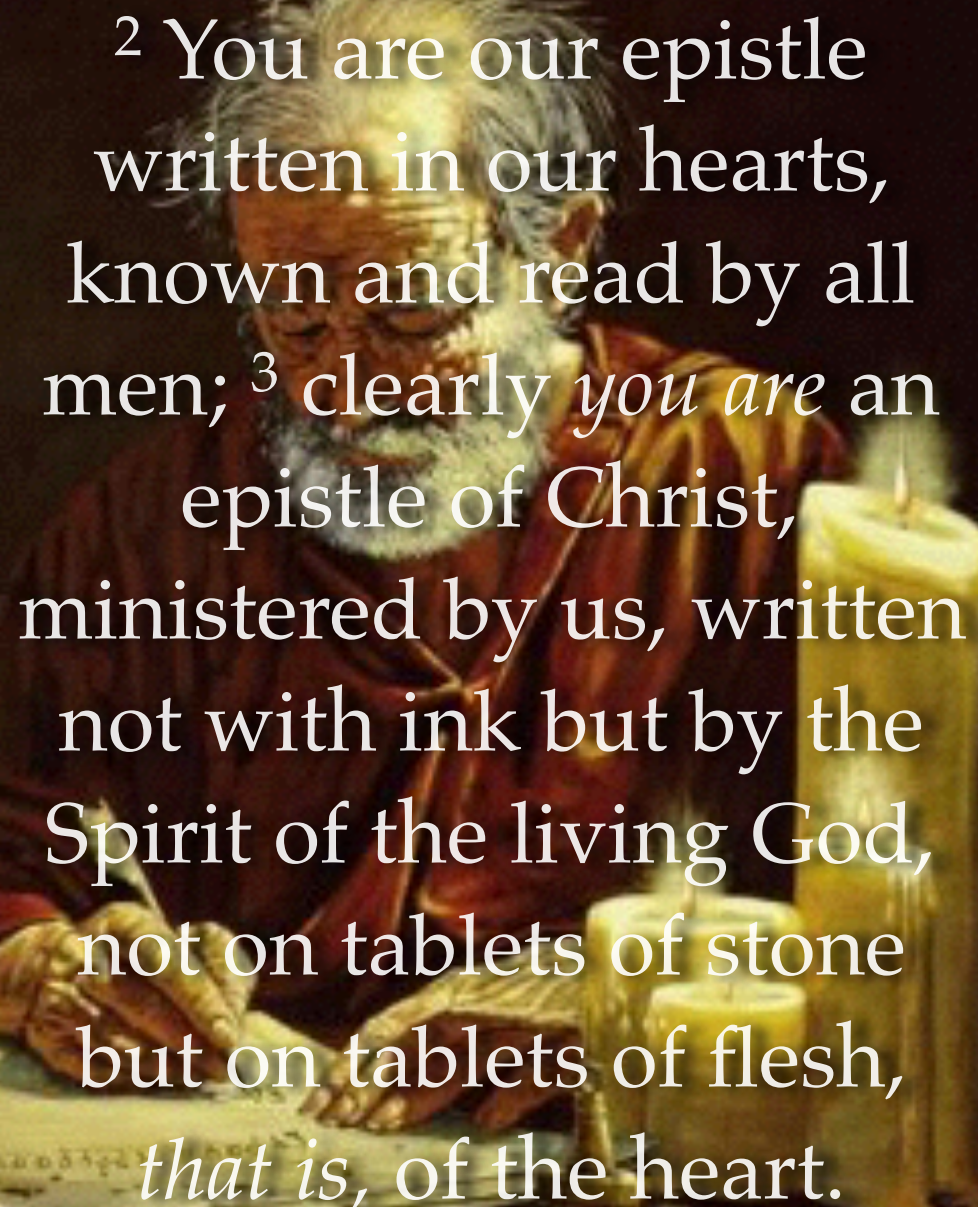
¹ Do we begin again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, as some *others*, epistles of commendation to you or *letters* of commendation from you?

- ✦ Paul's ministry is sufficient commendation -
 - Some charged that Paul lacked commendations in an attempt to discredit his authority.
 - Apparently some teachers had such letters - (*cf.* 2:17; 10:2)
 - Paul did not need any man, including the church in Corinth, to commend him to other men - (2:1-5; 5:12; 10:8, 12; 11:5; 12:11,12, 19; 1 Co. 3:10; 4:15; 9:1,2; 10:33)

The Dividing Power of The Gospel

Nature of The New Covenant - (4:1-3)

2 Corinthians 3:2–3 (NKJV)



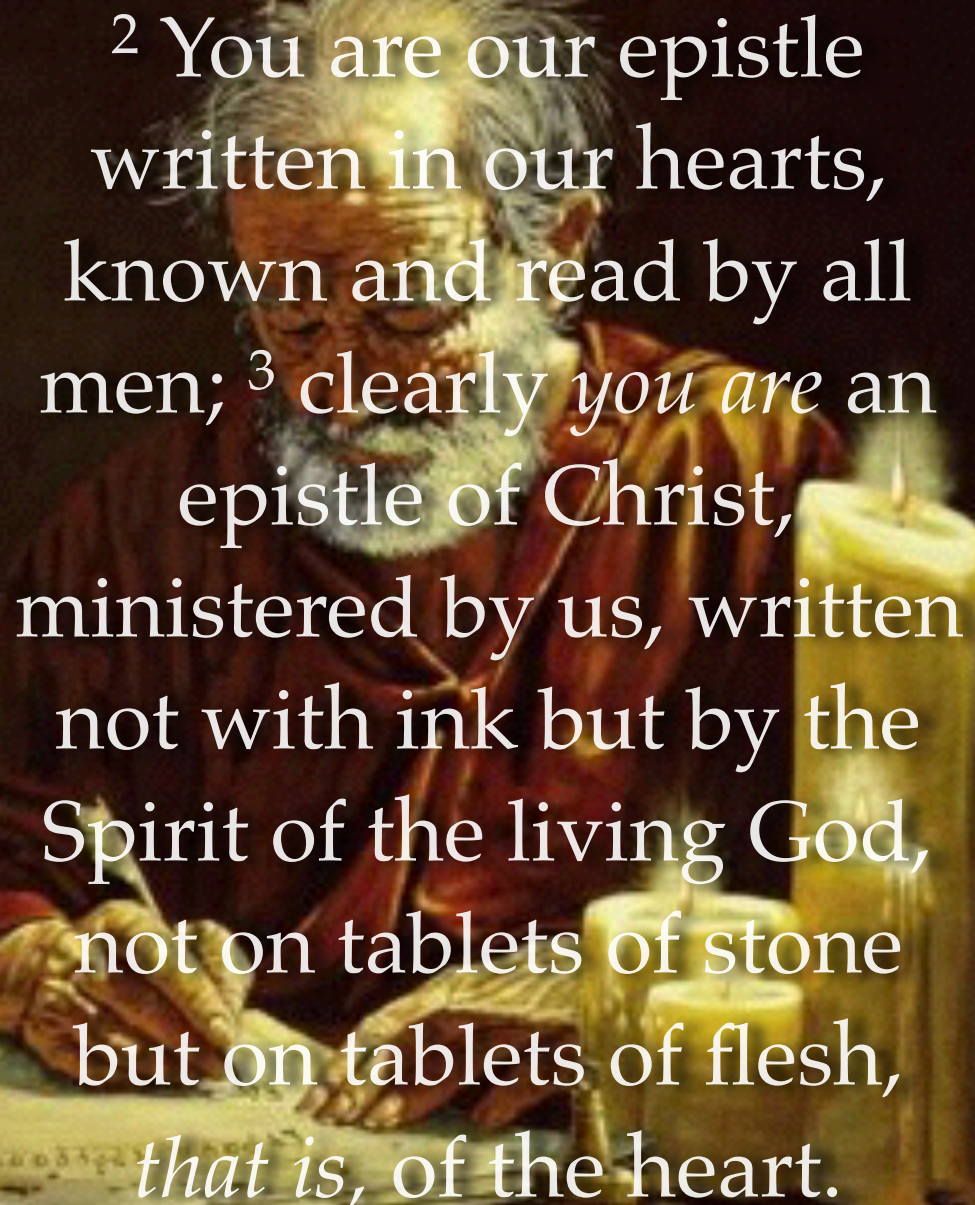
² You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; ³ clearly *you are* an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, *that is*, of the heart.

- ◆ As the New is far superior to the Old, so was Paul's ministry when compared to that of his critics.
- In contrast with the Old Covenant inscribed in stone (*Ex. 24:12*), the New Covenant is inscribed on human hearts (*Ezek. 11:19; 36:26; Jer. 31:33; Heb 8:10; 10:16*)
- The Corinthians were Paul's letter of commendation - read by all - (*cf. 1 Thes 1:8; Rom 1:8*)

The Dividing Power of The Gospel

Nature of The New Covenant - (4:1-3)

2 Corinthians 3:2-3 (NKJV)



² You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; ³ clearly *you are* an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, *that is*, of the heart.

- ◆ As the New is far superior to the Old, so was Paul's ministry when compared to that of his critics.
- The Holy Spirit both inspired & confirmed Paul's ministry. (1 Cor 1:4-9; 2 Cor 11:1,2)
- The Holy Spirit had changed their lives through Paul's ministry, yet they question His authority?
- The apostle uses this accusation to contrast the Gospel of Christ with the Law of Moses.

The Dividing Power of The Gospel

Ministers of The New Covenant - (4:4-6)



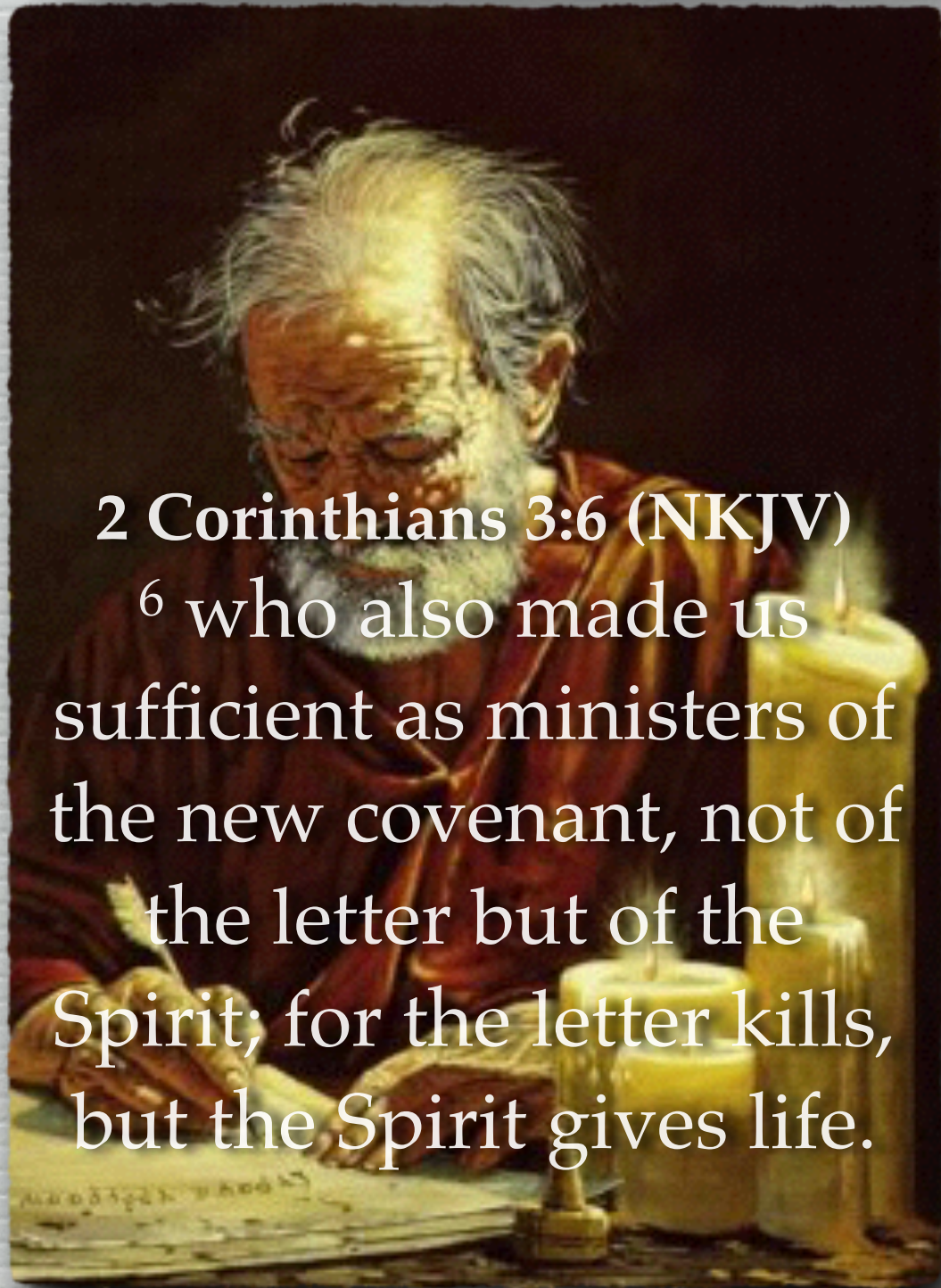
2 Corinthians 3:4–5 (NKJV)

⁴ And we have such trust through Christ toward God. ⁵ Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as *being* from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God,

- ◆ The New Covenant brings life - the Old Covenant brings death.
- Jesus had been received by them, therefore Paul expresses his confidence in them - (4)
- Paul asserts that gospel ministers are not worthy within themselves - (*vs. 5; 2 Cor. 2:16; 1 Tim. 1:12*)

The Dividing Power of The Gospel

Ministers of The New Covenant - (4:4-6)



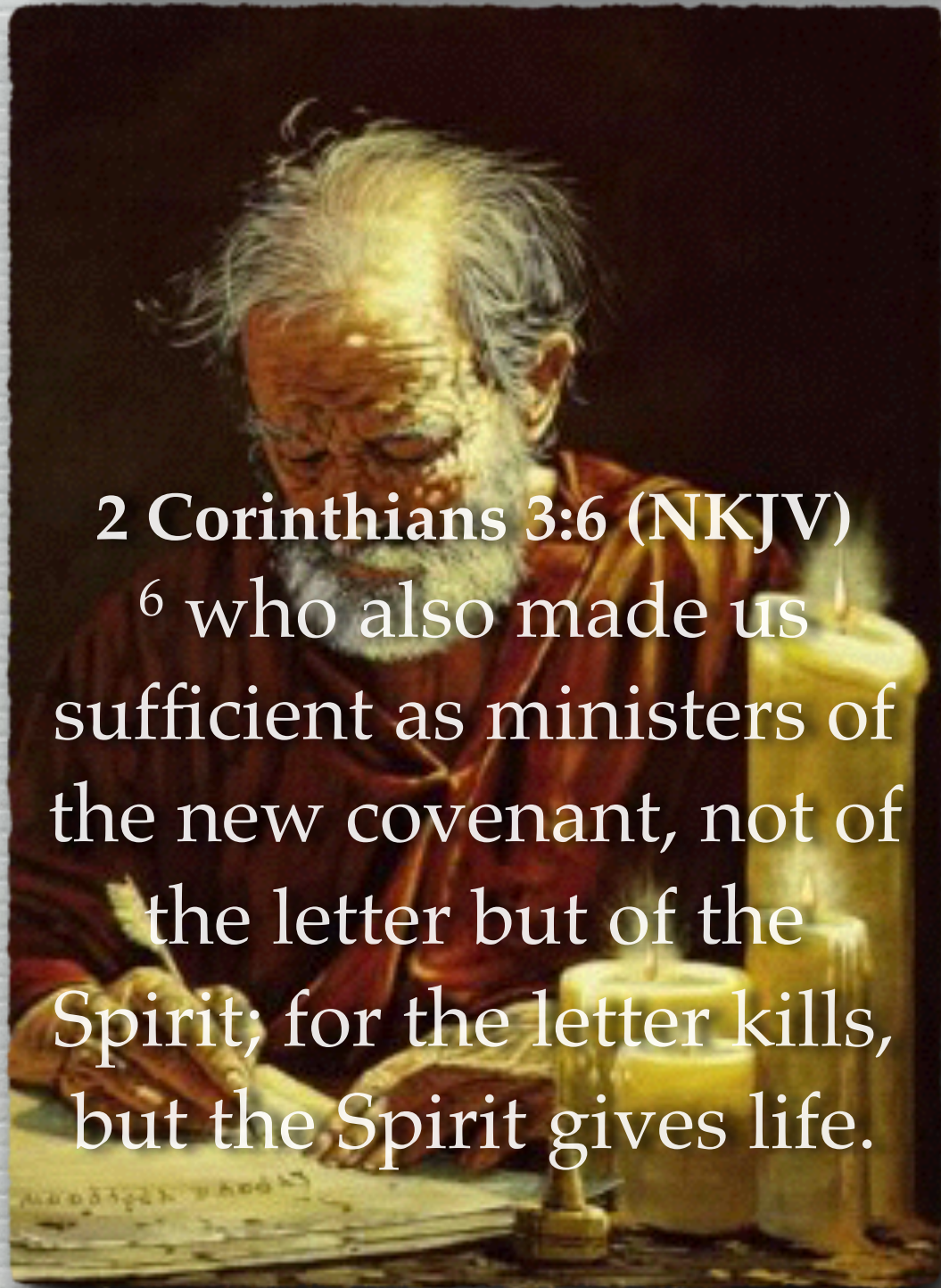
2 Corinthians 3:6 (NKJV)

⁶ who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

- ◆ The New Covenant brings life - the Old Covenant brings death.
- Jesus had been received by them, therefore Paul expresses his confidence in them - (4)
- Paul asserts that gospel ministers are not worthy within themselves - (*vs. 5; 2 Cor. 2:16; 1 Tim. 1:12*)
- Paul's ministry brings life not death ...

The Dividing Power of The Gospel

OT Brings Death; NT Brings Life - (4:7-16)



2 Corinthians 3:6 (NKJV)

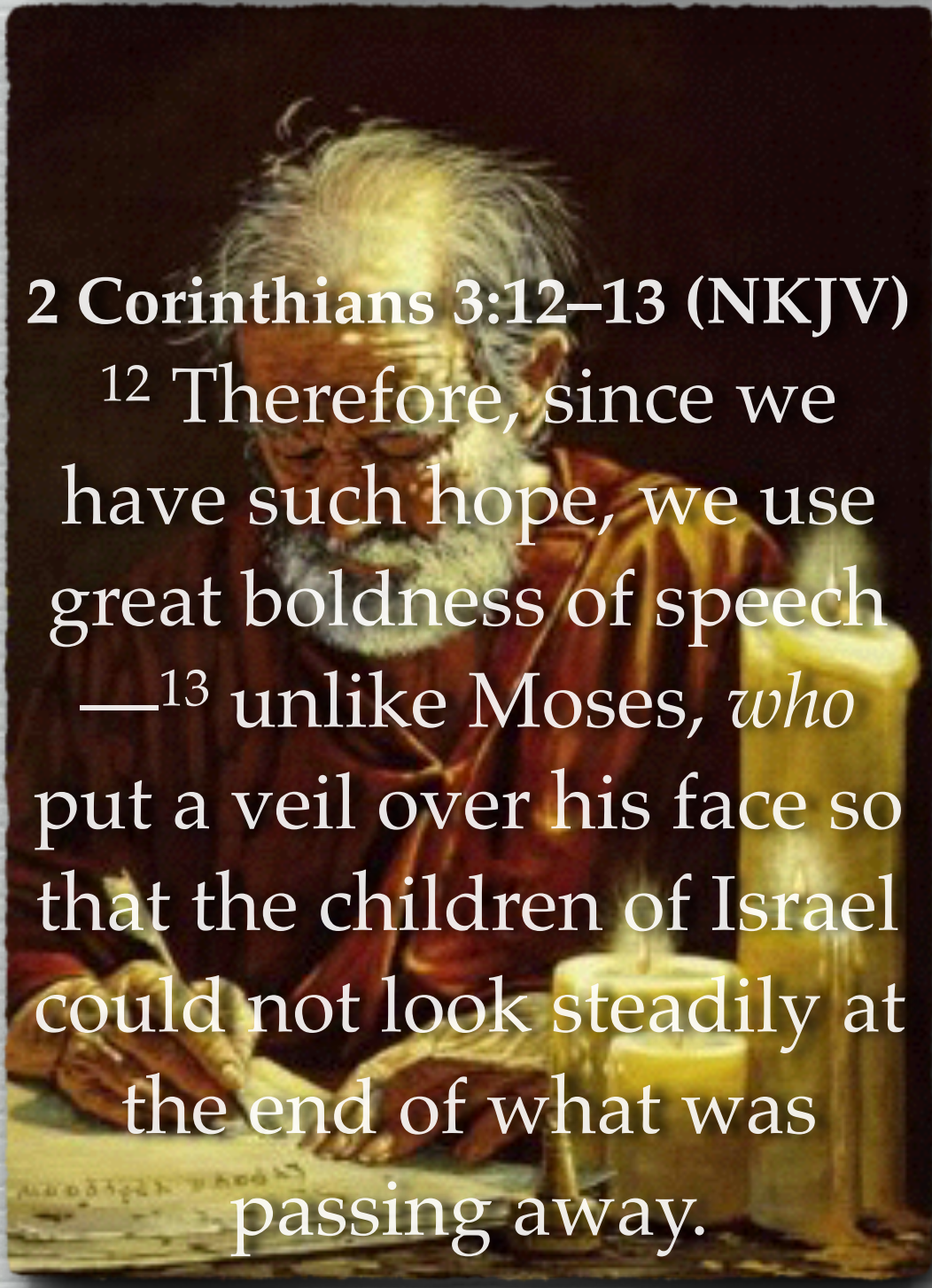
⁶ who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

◆ “The letter kills,”

- Not a reference to God’s revelation in general, but a specific reference to the Law of Moses.
 - * *The letter (v. 6);*
 - * *Ministry of death (v. 7);*
 - * *Written & engraved on stone (v.7)*
 - * *Temporary (8,11)*
 - * *Ministry of condemnation (v. 9).*
- The Law was never given to impart life; it was definitely a ministry of death. (*Rom 7,8*)

The Dividing Power of The Gospel

OT Brings Death; NT Brings Life - (4:7-16)



2 Corinthians 3:12–13 (NKJV)

¹² Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech —¹³ unlike Moses, *who* put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away.

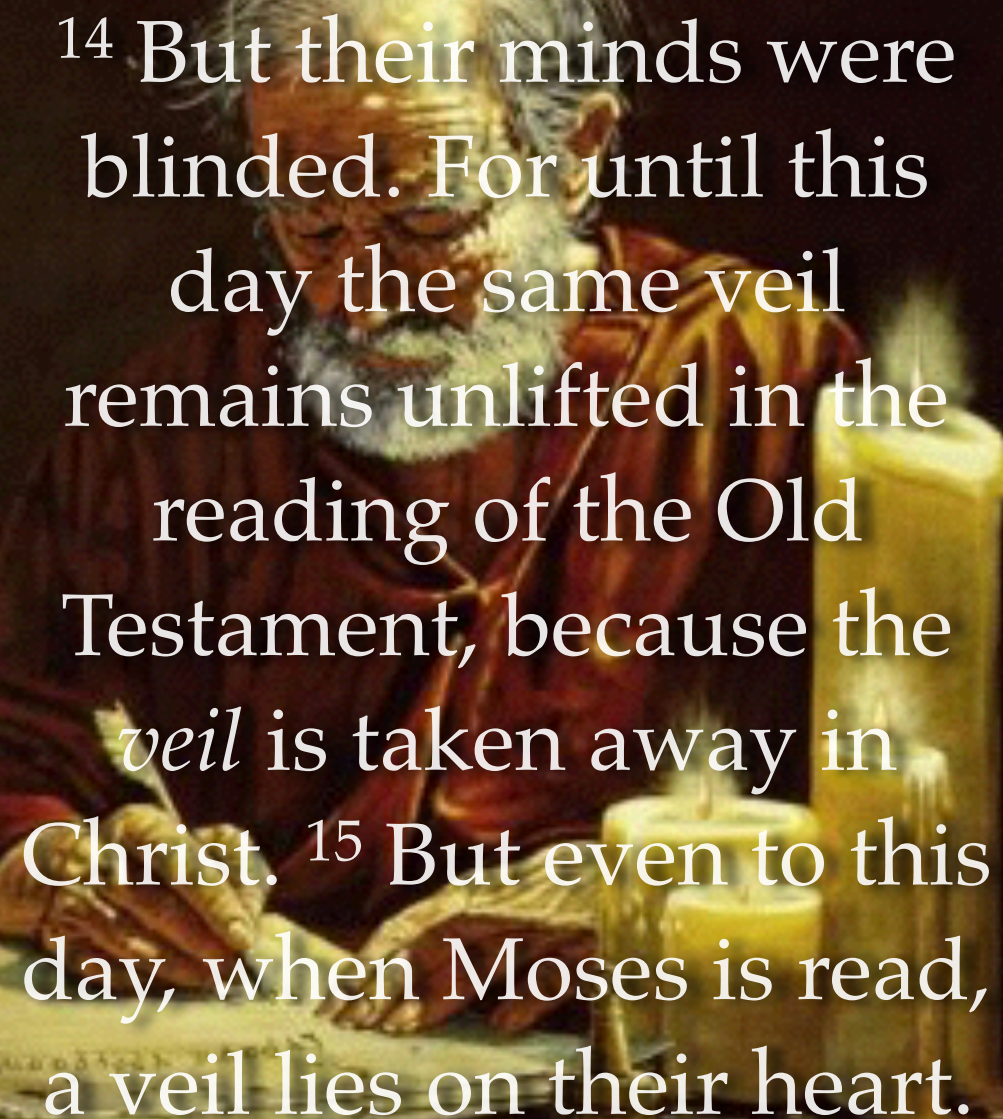
- ◆ The OT had glory, but that glory was passing away
 - Paul cites the experience of Moses from Ex. 34:29–35.
 - Moses knew that this glory would fade, so he wore a veil over his face whenever talking to the people, lest they see the glory fade and lose confidence in his ministry.
 - Paul needs no veil; he has nothing to hide. The glory of the Gospel is there! - (Rom 1:16,17; 8:1,2)

The Dividing Power of The Gospel

OT Brings Death; NT Brings Life - (4:7-16)

2 Corinthians 3:14–15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the *veil* is taken away in Christ. ¹⁵ But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart.



◆ Unveiled, Not Veiled (3:14–16)

- He states that there is still a veil over the hearts of the Jews when they read the OT, and this veil keeps them from seeing Christ.
- Satan blinds the minds of sinners, trying to hide from them the glorious Gospel of Christ (2 Cor. 4:4-6)

The Dividing Power of The Gospel

OT Brings Death; NT Brings Life - (4:7-16)



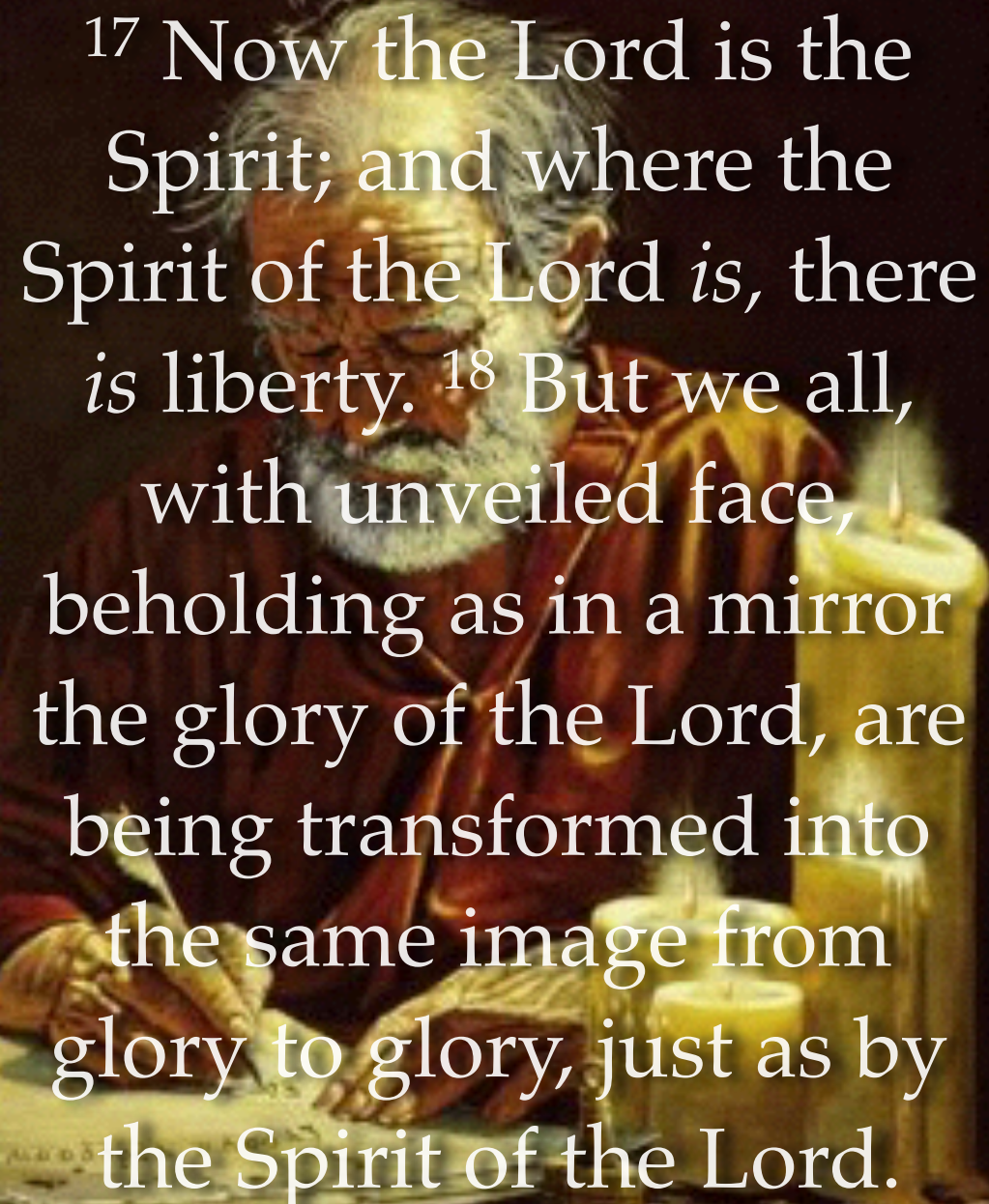
2 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV)
¹⁶ Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

- ◆ Unveiled, Not Veiled (3:14–16)
 - He states that there is still a veil over the hearts of the Jews when they read the OT, and this veil keeps them from seeing Christ.
 - Satan blinds the minds of sinners, trying to hide from them the glorious Gospel of Christ (2 Cor. 4:4-6)
 - But when the heart turns to Christ, that veil is taken away. - (cf. John 6:44,46,63; Rom 11:7-27)

The Dividing Power of The Gospel

OT Brings Death; NT Brings Life - (4:7-16)

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 (NKJV)



¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. ¹⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

◆ Liberty, Not Bondage (3:17-18)

- The Old Covenant was a covenant of works and bondage (*Acts 15:10*).
- But the New Covenant is a ministry of glorious liberty in Christ (*Gal. 5:1ff*)
- This liberty is not license to sin, but the freedom from sins grasp that we can be made into the image of Jesus' glory - (*James 1:23-25; Rom 8:29; 12:2; 13:14*)

HEBREWS 8:7–13 (NKJV)

¹⁰ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ¹¹ None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.

HEBREWS 8:7–13 (NKJV)

¹² For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” ¹³ In that He says, “A new covenant,” He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

(2 Corinthians 3:1-18)

CORINTHIANS

THE *Second Letter* OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS

"Contrast Between The Old & New Covenant"

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HEBREWS 8:7–13 (NKJV)

⁷ For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. ⁸ Because finding fault with them, He says: “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—⁹ not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord.

HEBREWS 8:7–13 (NKJV)

¹⁰ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ¹¹ None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.

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