

BURNING BUSH NETWORK

Pastor Tumi Letoka and the Revival Team

Then Opened He Their Understanding

Burning Bush Media

Booklet 15

Then Opened He Their Understanding

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Introduction

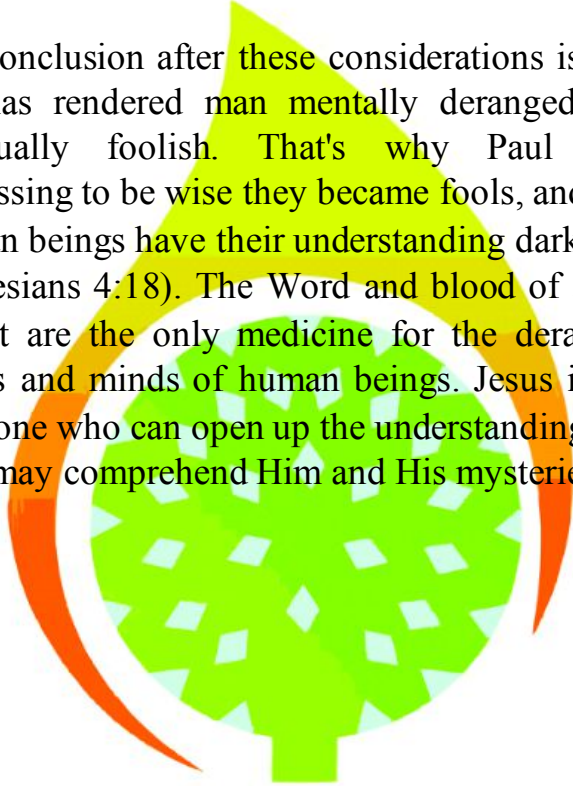
The entrance of sin and the fall of man has rendered him astoundingly dull and callous spiritually, mentally and emotionally. I mean imagine the marvelous miracles of God the Israelites saw by the hands of Moses to deliver them out of Egyptian slavery: a rod turned into a serpent and the sea opened and they walked in the midst of it on dry ground. In their sight the Lord had come down with glory on Mount Sinai, yet after a mere forty days of this glorious sight and the other wonders these same people created a golden calf and declared that it was the one that took them out of Egypt; something that they had just created took them out of Egypt, how ridiculous is that? Consider the following facts that illustrate the ludicrousness of their behaviour:

1. A calf is an animal, a creature of lower value than man himself and we all know cows are not the smartest creatures in the world.

1. Aaron made them the calf with their own jewelry.

2. The calf was not alive.

My conclusion after these considerations is that sin has rendered man mentally deranged and spiritually foolish. That's why Paul said professing to be wise they became fools, and that human beings have their understanding darkened (Ephesians 4:18). The Word and blood of Jesus Christ are the only medicine for the deranged hearts and minds of human beings. Jesus is the only one who can open up the understanding that man may comprehend Him and His mysteries.



Chapter 1

Total Depravity

I am not a Calvinist, in fact I am anti-Calvinism, but man is truly totally depraved, his mind and heart are so darkened and desperately wicked he is hopeless unless God has mercy on him to save. That being as it may, the omnipresence of God indicated by Paul in Acts 17:27-28 indicates to us that God has set up things in such a way that he makes it possible for man to be able to seek Him and find Him if he so wills. The fact that man does not seek God is simply because he is resisting the promptings of the Spirit of the Lord who is operating on earth right now. I mean how did Enoch and Noah manage to walk with God in their rather wicked generations? Furthermore, Paul in Acts 17:30 says that now God calleth all men everywhere to repent, which means even in his total depravity, God provides some prevenient grace for all men everywhere to

repent if they so will, otherwise God would not call men to repentance if they could not repent.

The natural man

In 1Corinthians 2:14 Paul tells us that the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit because they are foolishness to him. Paul is talking here about the very depraved man we are discussing. His mind and spirit have become so degenerated, corroded and alienated by sin to the extent that he thinks the operations of his own Creator are foolishness, imagine, man thinks the things of God his Creator are foolish. This is like me creating a robot that gets infected with a virus that makes it snap out the word "nuts" whenever I give it instructions. God, an infinite Being with unmeasurable knowledge, and man thinks His operations are foolish; that is how darkened and hopeless man is.

The devil

This state of man makes the world an oyster for this creature called Satan. In fact, he is the one who catalyzes what is in man. He fuels the sin

that causes the darkness that is in man, ever thickening the darkness. Oh! Yes, just as in Christ we move from glory to glory, in sin man moves from darkness to darkness. That is why God at times eventually gives man over to his vile passions according to Romans 1.

Sin spoils everything

Hitchens said religion poisons everything, what he did not know was that it was the sin in man that poisons everything, which poisoned even his own mind into atheism. Sin spoils our capacity to think, sin spoils our relationship with God, it spoils our perception of God and His will, it spoiled this planet, it spoils sex, etc. That's why God had to wipe out the human race with the flood and Sodom and Gomorrah with fire. Sin spoils everything.

By the time Jesus landed on earth, sin had wrecked such havoc in men that the Gentiles had pantheons of demonic deities and the Jews had added thousands of their man-made traditions and opinions to the 613 Commands of the Law of Moses. To the commandment to keep the

Sabbath holy, which meant that the Jews were not supposed to work on Saturdays, the Pharisees and Jewish scholars had created 39 separate categories to clarify what “work” means, and within those 39 categories there are many sub-categories. So to follow the rule of not working on the Sabbath, there are literally thousands of sub-rules to follow, including how many steps you can take, and how many letters you can write on the Sabbath.¹ Most of these traditions of the Pharisees focused on external rituals and did nothing to address the sin in the heart; how could they? They were born out of sin. Sin produces a religion that accommodates it, no wonder the Islamic heaven is a sexual orgy paradise where men get 72 voluptuous virgins and retain eternal erections; that right there is a “heaven” born out of sin. Sinlessness was given one wife, sin wants 700 wives plus 300 concubines. The heart of man is twisted and his understanding is dark indeed.

Enter Jesus

Look at my Lord, born pure through a pure miracle. Unaffected by sin, here to confront sin

and to destroy the works of the devil. His mind is clear and His heart is sparkling clean. At twelve years of age His mind confounds aged scholars. Who is this man? He is God and man.

When the Lord Jesus began ministry, He called His twelve men who would work with Him. Now these men were ordinary human beings subject to the power and degradation caused by sin. So, Jesus was perfect holiness walking among...you know...sinners. They often surprised Him with their sin-locked-up understanding. He performs a miracle of multiplying loaves of bread and feeds thousands of people with it; then He later tries to allegorically warn them against the “yeast” (i.e. doctrine) of the Pharisees. Their minds are so carnal and clouded with fleshly things that, as Jesus is talking of yeast, they think what makes Him talk of it is because the group had no bread. Imagine that! But we would not have done any better. The Bible says they had not perceived the miracle of the multiplication of bread because their heart was hardened (Mark 6:52), neighbor that’s the power of sin. I mean a very remarkable

miracle took place before their very eyes and they saw nothing, what? Jesus said to them about it, “Having eyes, do you not see? Having ears, do you not hear? Do you not remember?” (Mark 8:18). Oh! Yes, when sin has darkened the mind the eyes see nothing of God. They see only food, god is the stomach.

How many times did Jesus tell the twelve disciples about His coming crucifixion? About three times clearly, but they did not get it. It was like “talk to the hand.”

Look at the following passage:

31 Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.

32 For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on:

33 And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.

34 And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

Were the twelve disciples born again?

One may say, “perhaps it was because they were not yet regenerated.” Well...that’s probably true. Evidently, they were not yet born again when they were working with the Lord for the whole three years. That can be deduced from the fact that, verse 34 of the passage quoted above says that “this saying was hid from them,” then Paul in 2Corinthians 4:3 says, *but if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.* Most commentators believe they became born again in John 20:22 which says, *and when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.* The Holy Spirit is the one who performs the work of regeneration, so if they had not yet been given the Spirit until John 20, they could not have been born again.

Dr. R. L. Hymers substantiates this by noting that Thomas was not there on that night when

Jesus breathed on the disciples, so he remained in unbelief until later.

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, we have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

27 Then saith he to Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name

Dr. Hymers notes, “It is clear, from his own words and unbelief, that one of the twelve disciples, Thomas, was not born again before he encountered Christ that night. Thus, I believe that he and the other disciples were not born again until they encountered the risen Christ. Then, and only then, He ‘opened their understanding, that they may understand the Scriptures’ (Luke 24:45).” Remember He opened their understanding on the same night that He breathed the Holy Spirit on them. Before this time, they had struggled to understand and please Jesus.²

The healing of the mind

The healing of the heart and mind begins with regeneration (the born-again experience). This is when a person's understanding begins to open up and they begin to understand the things of God.

The levels of understanding

The things of God are from glory to glory. The mind opens from level to level. That's why Peter said to desire the sincere milk of the Word as “new born babes” (1Peter 2:2) that growth may take place. Children don't understand what adults do. Remember Jesus had said to His disciples that they have eyes but they see not. Now this brings to mind the miracle of the healing of the blind man who saw man as trees walking in Mark 8:

22 He came to Bethsaida. They brought a blind man to him, and begged him to touch him.

23 He took hold of the blind man by the hand, and brought him out of the village. When he had spat on his eyes, and laid his hands on him, he asked him if he saw anything.

24 He looked up, and said, "I see men; for I see them like trees walking."

25 Then again, he laid his hands on his eyes. He looked intently, and was restored, and saw everyone clearly (WEB).

Now at first the man saw, but not clearly, then after further healing he saw clearly. I believe when Christ begins opening the understanding of a person at conversion that is what happens. They don't immediately see everything clearly but as they continue to follow the Lord the Spirit guides them into deeper and deeper gospel truth.

The Lord

The Lord said, "For without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). I have learned this by bitter experiences. As a teenager, I one day tried to preach while in sort of a backslidden condition and felt so bad and embarrassed I told myself then that I would never preach again. I have also learned over the years that you can preach the truth to people for years and at the time when you expect them to eventually start showing the fruit of your labour you see them

instead doing the opposite, and even some shocking stuff. What is needed is for a minister of the gospel to pray fervently for the Lord to open the understanding of God's children to comprehend the Word and make it come alive to them. That is what Paul did in Ephesians 1:

15 For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you, and the love which you have toward all the saints,

16 don't cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers,

17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

This is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 2

The Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation

The manifestations of the Holy Spirit

From Isaiah 11:1-2 we see that the Holy Spirit manifests different anointings:

- The spirit of wisdom and understanding
- The spirit of counsel and might
- The spirit of knowledge
- The spirit of the fear of the Lord

We could dwell on any of these but our point of focus here is the spirit of wisdom and revelation. Without the spirit of wisdom and revelation or understanding, things can be very slow, just like with the case of the Lord's disciples. The Spirit was on Jesus but He had not yet breathed on them and opened their understanding. Even when people are born again they can be slow to

understand the things of the Lord. That was why the writer of Hebrews was frustrated with the Hebrew believers telling them that they are not yet even ready to receive the solid food of God's Word but only the milk at a time when they were actually supposed to have been teachers (Hebrews 5:12).

What the Spirit (anointing) of wisdom and revelation reveals

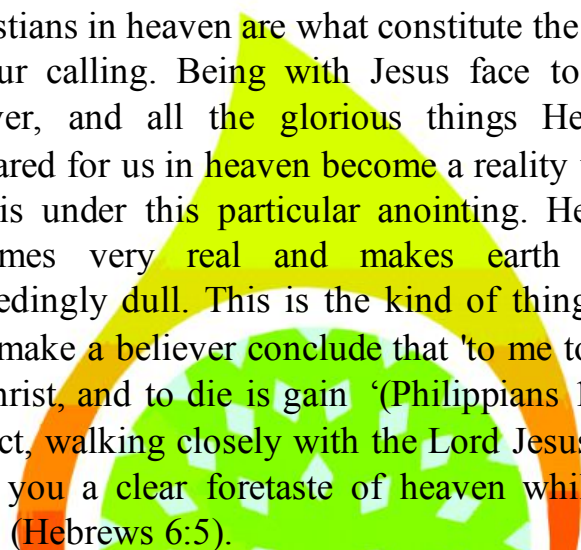
1. The Lord Jesus and His Word

The anointing of wisdom and revelation can take a new born believer and make them a spiritual adult in just a year. This manifestation of the Spirit makes the Scriptures come alive and Jesus to become more real than anything else. The Spirit reveals the holiness of Christ in a way that causes the believer to work out their salvation in fear and trembling. Most of these Christians going around babbling about grace and talking of the need to fear nothing do not know the holiness and firmness of Jesus Christ. The fake grace message they're touting has presented to them only the sweet side of Jesus. Nevertheless, the

Spirit of revelation and wisdom reveals the holiness, kindness, and beauty of Jesus Christ in such a splendid way that makes this world look like the filth it really is. When you behold Christ, you would want to immediately leave this mortal coil. You will grieve for abusing the love, kindness, mercy, and patience of our good God. When Isaiah saw the Lord, he said 'woe is me, for a I am a man of unclean lips, dwelling among a people of unclean lips' (Isaiah 6). When you behold Christ, you see yourself as you really are, a poor, pathetic man who needs forgiveness and grace to ever make it. When John saw the Lord in Revelation 1, he said 'I fell at His feet as though dead,' that's how glorious He is.

2. The glories of heaven and the horrors of hell

After Ephesians 1:17 mentions the spirit of wisdom and revelation, verse 18 continues, *the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.*



The question is, what is the hope of His calling? Meaning, what has the Lord called us for? Jesus Christ Himself, and what He has prepared for Christians in heaven are what constitute the hope of our calling. Being with Jesus face to face forever, and all the glorious things He has prepared for us in heaven become a reality when one is under this particular anointing. Heaven becomes very real and makes earth look exceedingly dull. This is the kind of thing that will make a believer conclude that 'to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain' (Philippians 1:21). In fact, walking closely with the Lord Jesus will give you a clear foretaste of heaven while on earth (Hebrews 6:5).

At the same time, the terror of the Lord becomes very real under this anointing, you cannot simply know one side of the Lord. That is why the Apostle Paul said, *knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men* (2 Corinthians 5:11). The Lord Jesus Himself warned much about eternal punishment in hell or the lake of fire.

3. The power of God

Verse 19 continues, *and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.*

Once you get a revelation of God's power that is available to the Christian, nothing shall stand against you. Why do you think Paul simply shook the snake off his hand into the fire without any panic whatsoever? (Acts 28). Under this anointing you will believe beyond any shadow of doubt that God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us (Ephesians 3:20). With this revelation of God's power, you can say with Paul that, "none of these things move me" (Acts 20:24). You can face sickness, disasters, serpents, poison, Satan, trials and temptations, and anything this world could ever bring your way. After all you will stand (Ephesians 6:13).

The spirit of wisdom and revelation will also expose the evil one. The evil one is ever

conniving and maneuvering how to bring you down as a Christian and how to eventually make sure you land in hell. He will use false doctrines that appear so true, he will use friends that appear godly but are his agents, he will use all the glitter of this fallen world and he will even use force and oppression plus some of the most sophisticated tricks that anyone could ever imagine. He is indeed sly. He is a snake invisibly slithering in the grass. But the Christian whose eyes have been enlightened by the Holy Spirit will detect his hissing every time by the grace of the Lord. That is why Paul said we are not ignorant of the devices of Satan (2 Corinthians 2:11).

The anointing of wisdom and revelation is clearly essential to the victory of the Christian for it helps in knowing God, His will and His promises. Thus, it provides for rapid growth in the believer. This is the anointing we need today just as the Lord Jesus opened the understanding of the disciples that they may understand the Scriptures.

The spiritual man

At the beginning of this booklet I discussed the state of the natural man. In regard to the spiritual man, the apostle Paul said, *but he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man* (1 Corinthians 2:15). By the term “spiritual” Paul evidently means “mature,” using it interchangeably with “perfect.” However, when it comes to the word perfect, it also means real perfection of character, not merely maturity. Other passages where Paul talks of “spiritual” people are 1mCorinthians 14:37 and Galatians 6:1:

If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord (1 Corinthians 14:37).

Brethren, even if a man is caught in some fault, you who are spiritual must restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to yourself so that you also are not tempted (Galatians 6:1).

Before we deal with how a spiritual person looks, we must remove misconceptions about the subject. Firstly, we don't consider a person to be spiritual because of the operation of the gifts of the Spirit through them, or because they're a good preacher. There are powerful preachers who are abusing their wives, who are childish, and are money mongers out there. So that is not the gauge of spirituality or maturity. Secondly, the spiritual person is not the one who talks a lot about God and is the favourite of the Pastor and the congregation. In fact, spiritual people are not talkative.

The spiritual man abundantly manifests the love of God. Now just as the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, the love of God is the beginning of the other fruit of the Spirit; hence love is patient, longsuffering, humble, etc. That is the main mark of a spiritual man, THE LOVE OF CHRIST in and through him. That is why the Bible in 1Corinthians 13 says that one can have the gifts of the Spirit powerfully manifesting through them and other such things but if the person has no love, everything is pointless.

The spiritual man knows the Word of God and how to handle it. Hebrews 5:12-14 mentions this fact, and says he is that way because he has been consistently exposed to, and using or practicing the Word of God. This makes such a person be able to rightly judge matters, meaning determine between right and wrong. Such a person cannot be easily deceived. I saw on social media a preacher saying that we should consider the fact that false prophets are our brothers, and perhaps they don't know that what they are doing is wrong. That is an example of a lack of spirituality. The language of John the Baptist, of the Apostles, and of the Lord Himself concerning false prophets and teachers was very, very strong; and a modern-day preacher is going to say they are “brothers.” That is a person who does not know how to biblically discern between right and wrong and how to handle matters.

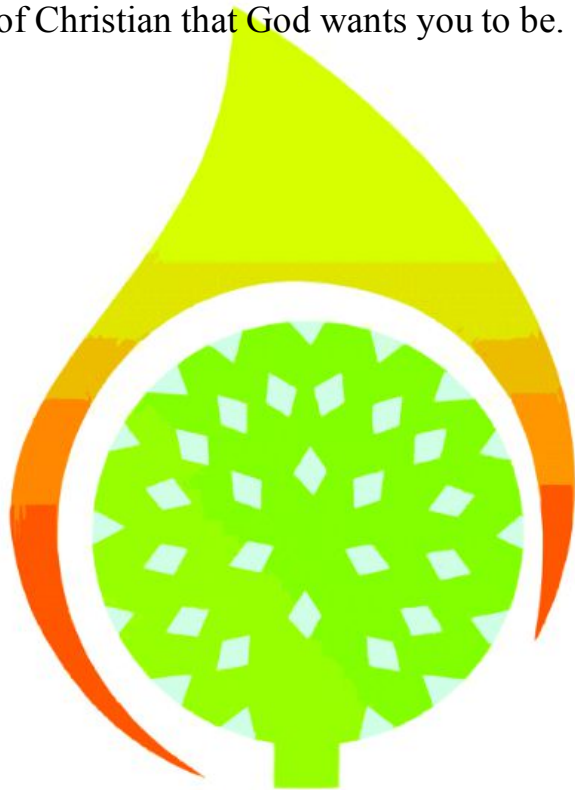
Spiritual people walk in the Spirit and do not fulfill the lusts of the flesh (Galatians 6:16;25). That means they walk completely under the influence of the Holy Spirit and the flesh no longer has power over them. They live holy lives.

A spiritual man has overcome pride, adultery, competition, jealousy, envy, anger, the love of money etc.

A man or woman who is spiritual has learned to tame their tongue. The Word of God says that anyone who thinks they are religious (spiritual?) but does not bridle their tongue, the religion of such a one is worthless (James 1:26). The Apostle James further says that if you offend not in word, then you are perfect and can control your entire body (James 3:2).

If you continue believing, studying the Scriptures, fellowshiping with true believers, fasting and praying consistently, you will become a spiritual man. In a verse quoted above, the Apostle Paul says that a spiritual man judges all things but is himself judged by no one. That is a person who is mature and holy, who has a proper estimate of all things and has become blameless (1 Thessalonians 5:23). This is a person who manifests the spirit of love, power, and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7). It is indeed possible to become like that, don't listen to preachers and theologians who tell you it is not

possible. The Bible says we must be blameless. Paul and the Apostles and early Christians were that way. Strive to become a spiritual man, the kind of Christian that God wants you to be.



Conclusion

The things of God are holy and people who live worldly lives and are attached to the things of this world are not going to understand nor receive them. The church of Laodicea had to repent and spiritually “buy” pure gold, white garments, and eyesalve from Jesus. Eyesalve that their eyes would with it get anointed and be opened to see. How do we buy from Jesus this eyesalve that we may see? Paul prayed for the Ephesians that the eyes of their understanding would be enlightened, so we buy by prayer, strong and fervent prayers, not weak and uninterested prayer. The fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much (James 5:16). Rise up out of slumber and laziness oh Christian and pray, pray, pray, and pray some more, and God will show you mysteries.

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Chapter 1

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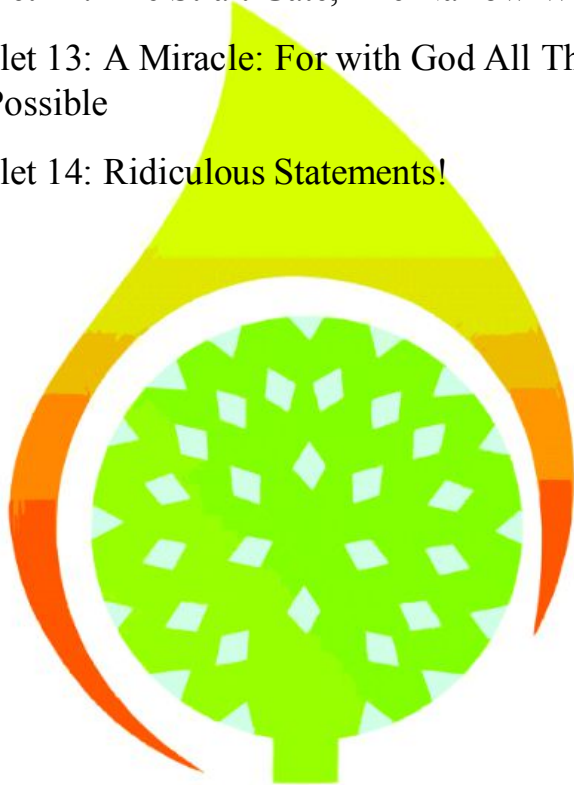
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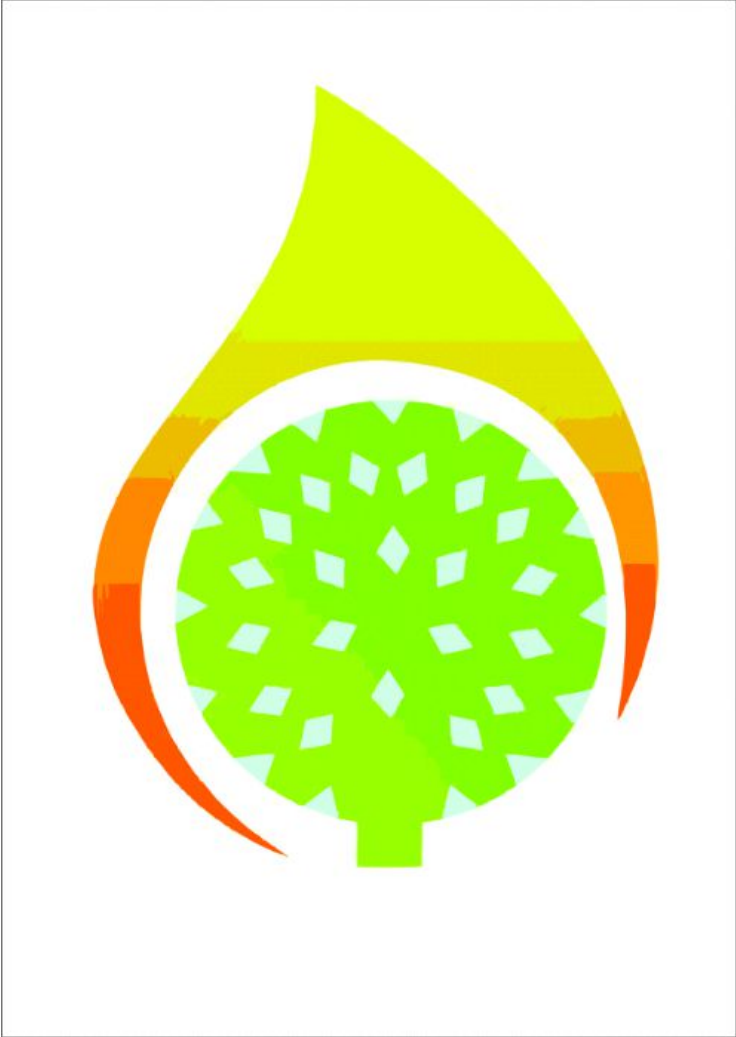
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