

Exposed...



Seven fatal errors in the churches!



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“The Bible Says”

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

This book exposes many of the fallacies of men. May God increase your understanding of His word as you read.

“Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. “For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, - and he said to them, “All too well you reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.” Mark 7:7-9

Jesus very own nation He called His peculiar people, that nation that was said to be the “apple of His eye” rejected His commandments while thinking to honor Him!

It is the same today, God is warning His people from every “fold” to “come out of” the delusions of the end time. His warning is clear. “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” Rev. 18:4

The fallen churches, the great spiritual Babylon of today, have mingled the doctrines of men with the Word of God and deceives many by its strange fire.

Pastor Floyd Gungl

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Israel in Prophecy: Still God's Chosen?

The “sheer numbers (of Christians who support Israel) surpasses that of American Jews.” *Toledo Blade*, 8-28-02.

Why the fervor concerning the welfare of Israel? What part do they play in end time events? To answer these questions, we must turn to the scriptures: After all, we were promised, “Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.” Amos 3:7. Therefore, we can always find the answers in the Bible.

There are a few things we must understand to fully understand how Israel fits in to things today.

What does the name Israel mean?

In the Hebrew culture, every name had a deeper meaning. The names meant more than just a simple title.

To find out the true meaning of a name in the Bible, we must look at the first time it is used.

The name “Israel” is first used in Genesis 32:28: “And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.”

Jacob had deceived his father to obtain the blessing that was due Esau.

Upon discovering the deception of Jacob, Esau said, “Is he not rightly named Jacob?” Gen. 27:36. The name Jacob meant “deceiver,” and he lived up to the name!

Twenty years later, as Jacob journeyed home, he received news of his brothers approach and feared that he, and his family, would pay for his sins of old. Jacob hid his family and “...was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.” Gen. 32:24. Upon the realization of who his “assailant” was, Jacob pleaded, “I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.” vs. 26. The angel, although he knew who Jacob was, asked him for his name. As Jacob answered in humility, it represented a confession of, and turning away from, his past sins. The new name that he received from the angel, Israel, meant “overcomer.” The angel said that Jacob had “...power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.” vs. 28. Jacob had overcome his sins, he was now a new creature, able to serve God.

The name Israel was a *spiritual* name given to a man who overcame sin in his life.

The descendants of Jacob were to become the “Nation of Israel.” Moses was instructed to say to Pharaoh, “Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn: And I say unto thee, Let my son go, *that he may serve me.*” Exo. 4:22-23. It was God’s desire to make these people a great nation of overcomers that would serve Him.

Unfortunately, most of the Jews never fully lived up to this name. They never realized the significance of the term Israel: *Israel is a spiritual name for the spiritual kingdom of those who overcome sin, not just a physical place.*

A Conditional Promise and the Results of Failure

Upon reaching Mt. Sinai, the Israelites were given a conditional promise: “Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel...Now therefore, *if ye will obey* my voice indeed, *and* keep my covenant, *then ye shall be* a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” Ex. 19:3-6. Notice God said, “*if ye will obey...then ye shall be.*” If they didn’t, they *would not* be!

After entering the “promised land,” the Hebrew nation turned from God and worshipped Baal time and time again. They failed to meet the conditions of the promises listed in Exodus 19. In 722 B.C., the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom were taken to Assyria. Judah realized the same retribution because of

her disloyalty to God when she was carried to Babylon in 586 B.C. and the glorious temple built by Solomon was destroyed.

The captivity of Judah was to last seventy years [Dan. 9:2]. After this time period, Israel was to get a second chance. Jerusalem and the temple were to be rebuilt. Israel would become a nation again, but the same conditions would apply to them as before the captivity. They must walk in the ways of righteousness or betray God's favor and kindle His wrath.

While in captivity, "In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar," king of Babylon, Daniel received a vision portraying the rise and fall of the worlds empires and a 2300 "day" prophecy. Some of the scenes were terrifying to him and he did not understand what the vision was about: "And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the King's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it." Dan. 8:27.

"In the first year of Darius," the ruler of the now Medo/Persian Empire, while Daniel was in prayer, Gabriel comes to explain the vision and tell him what was to become of his people. This prophecy was to reveal the probation of the Jews and mark the beginning of the 2300 day prophecy in the vision of Daniel 8 of which the 70 weeks, which we are about to look at, was the first part. Just as the covenant made at Sinai, this was a conditional prophecy:

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city." Dan. 9:24. The word translated to "determined," "chathak" (Strong's # 2852), means "to cut off." If the Jews failed to meet the requirements laid out within the following verses, they would forfeit their "birthright."

Now lets look at what they had to do: "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." *ibid*. The Jews needed to repent of their wickedness and usher in "everlasting righteousness." If they fulfilled this condition, they would "seal up the vision and prophecy." In other words, the terrible scenes portrayed in the visions of Daniel would be sealed, that is, "closed up."

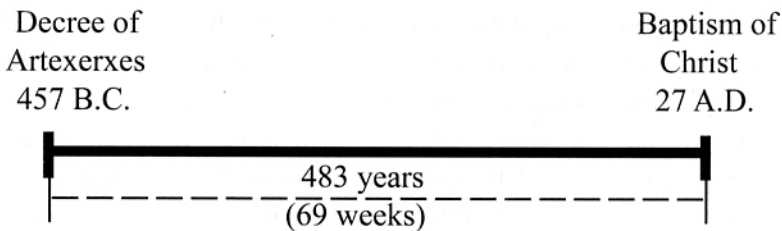
Daniel is given a starting date for this prophecy: "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three-score and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times." vs. 25.

Ezekiel, a contemporary of Daniel says, "I have appointed thee each day for a year." Eze. 4:6. The 70 weeks then would last for 490 years: $7 \times 70 = 490$. (Thus, the 2300 "days" of Daniel 9:14 is actually 2300 years!)

Persia conquered Babylon in 538 B.C. Then King Cyrus issued a decree for the Jews to return to their land and to rebuild their temple (Ezra 1:1-3). Later, King Darius issued another decree that led to the completion of the temple (Ezra 6:1, 8). Still later, King Artaxerxes gave Nehemiah permission to rebuild the wall around the city (Nehemiah 1:3; 2:1-9). Yet the predicted “commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem” did not occur until Persian King Artaxerxes issued a lengthy decree giving Ezra official authority to “set magistrates and judges” over Jerusalem and to “execute judgment” upon all who refused to follow the laws of God and the king (Ezra 7:21, 25, 26). This was the only decree which fully restored civil authority to Jerusalem and to the Jewish state.

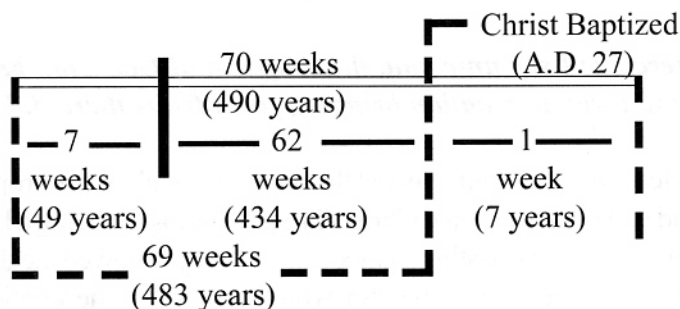
That commandment occurred “in the seventh year of Artaxerxes.” Ezra 7:7. The date was 457 B.C. The Jews were given 490 years from 457 B.C. to fulfill their calling.

Continuing with the vision, we read, “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks [49 years], and threescore and two weeks [434 years]: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.” vs. 25. The Messiah, or the “Anointed One,” is Christ. From the starting point of 457 B.C. until the Messiah should come, we have 483 years [49 + 434]. $483 - 457 = 26$ A.D. There was no “zero” year between “B.C.” and “A.D.,” thus instead of A.D. 26, we have A.D. 27. This was the exact year of Jesus Baptism!



Next, Gabriel breaks the time periods into to three:

“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.” *ibid.*, vs. 26-27. Now we have 7 weeks + 62 weeks + 1 week = 70 weeks. We have already seen that the 7 weeks + 62 weeks is 69 weeks and brings us to A.D. 27, that leaves the 70th week of the prophecy.

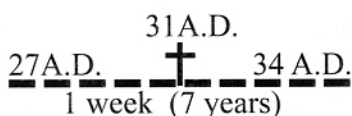


Within this final week, “Messiah the Prince” shall be “cut off, but not for himself.” The Messiah, Jesus Christ, was crucified in 31 A.D. Verse 27 tells us that “in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.”

When Christ was crucified, we read, “the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.” Matt. 27:51. The sacrificial system, the temple services and the “handwriting of ordinances” (Col. 2:14) were nailed to the cross.

Christ had entered the temple in the beginning and at the end of His ministry and declared that *His Fathers house* had become a house of merchandise. [See John 2:16] The Scribes and Pharisee’s had rejected every evidence, every plea from Infinite Love. Finally, Jesus declared, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, *your house* is left unto you *desolate*.” Mat. 23:37-38. Notice that Christ now referred to the temple (which He never returned to) as “your house” instead of “my Father’s house,” further fulfilling Daniel’s prophecy: “for the overspreading of abominations *he shall make it desolate*.”

In verse 26, we are told that “he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week.” From the start of Christ’s ministry in A.D. 27 until 34 A.D., the Gospel was preached solely to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel.” Matt. 10:6. After the stoning of Stephen [see Acts 7:59], the Gospel went to the Gentiles [Acts 8]. The stoning of Stephen, in 34 A.D., ended the seventy week prophecy closing the Jewish probationary period (as a nation, not individually). The prophecy of the 70 weeks had come to an end, right on time.



Jew and Gentile

“Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth fruits thereof.” Matt. 21:43.

The Jewish nation had rejected the warnings of all of the prophets and scriptures and had finally rejected Christ Himself. Instead of being a light to the world and bringing in “everlasting righteousness,” they followed the darkness of the world thus forfeiting their calling. So, who was or is this “new nation?”

Abraham had two sons: Isaac and Ishmael. Ishmael was a child of the flesh; Isaac was a child of faith. It was Isaac, the child of faith, that God was to make His covenant with.

Of this, Paul tells us that, “For ***they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:*** Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, ***In Isaac*** shall thy seed be called. That is to say, ***They which are the children of the flesh, (like Ishmael, not a child of faith) these are not the children of God:*** but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” Rom. 9:6-8. To put this simply, “For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But ***he is a Jew, which is one inwardly;*** and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” Rom 2:28-29. We become “Jews” by ***faith in Christ.***

“And ***if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.***” Gal. 3:29. Thus, this “new nation” is what the Hebrew nation was supposed to be! A nation of God’s faithful, not a nation of the flesh.

We are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ***There is neither Jew nor Greek,*** there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” Gal. 3:26-28.

Paul tells us that the Gentiles and the Jews that accept Christ would become this great new nation: “And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert ***grafted in among them,*** and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree...Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.” Rom. 11:17; 19. Concerning physical Israel, he says, “...because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith.” *ibid.* 20. With this great privilege comes a warning as well: “Be not highminded, but fear, For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, ***if***

thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.” *ibid.*, 21, 22. Here we see the same conditions laid before the new nation of spiritual Israel that was given to physical Israel at Sinai: “*If thou continue*”; otherwise, if not, we “*shalt be cut off*” as they were. We must overcome sin in our lives or lose the Spirit of Grace.

Alas, for the “natural branches,” physical Israel, those that repent and accept Christ, can become spiritual Israel with us: “...if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: *for God is able to graft them in again.*” vs. 23.

Peter clearly states, “God is no respecter of persons: “But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.” Acts 10:34; 35.

Lastly, we have this passage from the Epistle to the Ephesians: “...ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, *who hath made both one*, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances [not the ten commandments, rather the commandments contained in the handwriting of ordinances. See Col. 2:14.]; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might *reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross*, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For *through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father*. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but *fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God*; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.” Eph 2:12-20.

In 2 Peter 2:9-10, the men of faith, that is, the Christians, are referred to as a *nation*: “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, *an holy nation, a peculiar people* (this is what God had asked Israel to be - see Deut. 14:2; 26:18); that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: *Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*”

The Bible is very plain: Those who follow after Christ, the Christians, are the new nation of Spiritual Israel - God’s “peculiar people.”

The Destruction of Jerusalem

"If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." Luke 19:42-44.

The hour of hope and pardon was fast passing; the cup of God's long-deferred wrath was almost full. The cloud that had been gathering through ages of apostasy and rebellion, now black with woe, was about to burst upon a guilty people; and He who alone could save them from their impending fate had been slighted, abused, rejected, and was soon to be crucified.

"What could have been done to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" Isaiah 5:1-4.

For nearly forty years after the doom of Jerusalem had been pronounced by Christ Himself, the Lord delayed His judgments upon the city and the nation. There were still many among the Jews who were ignorant of the character and the work of Christ. The children had not the light which their parents had spurned. The children were not condemned for the sins of the parents; but when, with a knowledge of all the light given to their parents, the children rejected the additional light granted to themselves, they became partakers of the parents' sins, and filled up the measure of their iniquity.

During the siege of Jerusalem, Titus would willingly have put an end to the fearful scene, and thus have spared Jerusalem the full measure of her doom. He was filled with horror as he saw the bodies of the dead lying in heaps in the valleys. He made an earnest appeal to the Jewish leaders. Josephus himself, entreated them to surrender, to save themselves, their city, and their place of worship. But his words were answered with bitter curses. Darts were hurled at him, their last human mediator, as he stood pleading with them.

The blind obstinacy of the Jewish leaders, and the detestable crimes perpetrated within the besieged city, excited the horror and indignation of the Romans, and Titus at last decided to take the temple by storm. In their fury the soldiers hurled blazing brands into the chambers adjoining the temple, and then with their swords they slaughtered in great numbers those who had found shelter there. Blood flowed down the temple steps like water. Thousands upon thousands of Jews perished.

"The slaughter within was even more dreadful than the spectacle from

without. Men and women, old and young, insurgents and priests, those who fought and those who entreated mercy, were hewn down in indiscriminate carnage. The number of the slain exceeded that of the slayers. The legionaries had to clamber over heaps of dead to carry on the work of extermination." Milman, *The History of the Jews*, book 16.

"A false prophet was the occasion of these people's destruction, who made a public proclamation in the city that very day, that God commanded them to get up on the temple that there they should receive miraculous signs of their deliverance. Now, there was then a great number of false prophets...to impose upon the people that they should wait for deliverance from God." Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, book 6, chapter 5.

Over 1 million Jews perished - God left them to the leader they chose.

At Christ's trial, looking upon the smitten Lamb of God, the Jews had cried, "His blood be on us, and on our children." That awful cry ascended to the throne of God. That sentence, pronounced upon themselves, was written in heaven. That prayer was heard. The blood of the Son of God was upon their children and their children's children, a perpetual curse.

"Not this man, but Barabbas." Barabbas, the robber and murderer, was the representative of Satan. Christ was the representative of God. Christ had been rejected; Barabbas had been chosen. Barabbas they were to have. In making this choice they accepted him who from the beginning was a liar and a murderer. Satan was their leader. As a nation they would act out his dictation. His works they would do. His rule they must endure. That people who chose Barabbas in the place of Christ were to feel the cruelty of Barabbas as long as time should last.

Terribly was it realized in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70., in the Inquisition and the Holocaust! Terribly has it been manifested in the condition of the Jewish nation for two thousand years, a branch severed from the vine, a dead, fruitless branch, to be gathered up and burned. From land to land throughout the world, from century to century, persecution to persecution. Even to this day, there is no peace for the tiny nation of Israel.

Does the Bible Predict the Rebuilding of the Temple?

There are three main arguments used in favor of the theory that a third temple must be built, but before we look at these ideas, let's remember a few key points concerning the second Jewish temple.

1.) At Christ's crucifixion, "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." Mat. 27:51 This signified that the services in the temple and its animal sacrifices had come to an end - the true Lamb of God had just

been slain for the sins of men.

2.) When Jesus cried out, “It is finished,” (John 19:30) type had met antitype, “Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross” Col 2:14. Would God again initiate services that were made to point to the cross? No, this would be a denial of the Lordship of Christ! Again, animal sacrifices mean nothing.

3.) Jesus declared to the Jews: “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate,” (Mat. 23:38.) and that “There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” (Mat. 24:2). The temple was no longer the house of God and was destroyed in A.D. 70 by Titus.

4.) Jesus is the “minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” Heb. 8:2. “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” Heb. 9:12. We need no earthly temple.

Now for the “proofs” of a rebuilt temple:

1.) Daniel 9:27 describes one who will cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease. The idea is that the “Antichrist” will stop the services of this new temple. We have already seen in our exposition above and on the seventy week prophecy that it is Christ who stopped the sacrificial system, not Satan!

2.) Various temple texts in Revelation: All of the texts in Revelation that mention a temple refer directly to the temple in heaven, not in Israel; Jesus ministers for us in heaven, not here on earth.

3.) 2 Thess. 2:4: “Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”

Paul well knew that the temple in Jerusalem was to be destroyed within a few years and never referred to it as Gods temple. The key to understanding what this verse means is by remembering that word used in this verse “temple” is “*naos*.” In writing to “the church which is at Corinth,” he said, “know ye not that ye are the temple [*naos*] of God.” 1 Cor. 3:16. The temple of God is the Christian church! The man of sin will “sit” in a position of authority over the Christian churches at the end and “if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Mat. 24:24. Paul calls the antichrist “the son of perdition” (2 Thess. 2:3) which is the same thing Jesus called Judas. This shows us that, like Judas, it will be a professedly Christian power. We are warned thus: “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” 2 Cor. 11:13-15.

The Battle of Armageddon

As we have seen, modern Israel is a spiritual nation, not a physical nation. In this light, it is important to remember that the things that affected Israel of old, have a spiritual significance for us.

The book of Revelation uses Old Testament things to describe the spiritual battle of the end time in the same way that Christ uses Earthly things to describe Heavenly things. For instance, “Babylon.” Rev. 14:8, etc.

Babylon, in prophecy, represents confusion and defiance to God’s will. The ancient Hebrews referred to Babylon as “balal”, a word which means *confusion*. Babylon was established by Nimrod who built the tower of Babel in *defiance to God’s will*, a monument to *apostasy*. God put a stop to this by confounding the languages of men. “Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did *confound* the language of all the earth” Gen. 11:9. Therefore, the spiritual condition represented by the word “Babylon” is “defiance to God’s will, apostasy and confusion.” Babylon will not be resurrected to control the world from Iraq!

The “original” event or name is referred to as a *type*. Moses was a *type* of Christ because he brought the children of God out of the bondage of Egypt just as Christ will deliver all that follow Him out of the bondage of sin.

Now, with that understanding, we can unlock the truth about “Armageddon.”

“Armageddon” is not a literal place anywhere on earth; it never has been. The word “Armageddon” is a combination of two words: Ar, which means mountain and, Mageddon, which is a reference to the valley of Megiddo.

A mountain in prophecy represents a spiritual nation; good or apostate: “...my holy mountain Jerusalem” (Isa. 66:20) is a reference to God’s people, while “...I will render unto Babylon...all their evil...I am against thee, O destroying mountain” (Isa. 51:25; 27.) is a verse that figuratively describes Babylon as a destroying mountain. The Spiritual Babylon of the end is a destroying mountain: She will destroy many people spiritually.

The valley of Megiddo was the place where King Josiah “hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God” and was slain. (2 Chron. 35:22) Josiah had gone against the clear admonition of the Lord, and the battle of Megiddo had become a judgement against him.

“Ar” is a “spiritual nation” in the “valley of judgement;” - mageddon. This is Armageddon - the great battle of God almighty. The battle between God and His faithful and the those who stand under the banner of the Prince of Darkness.

That this is not the literal valley of Megiddo in the Middle East is also evidenced by the preceding verses: “And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, ***which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world***, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” Rev. 16:13-14. This is a ***global*** event! Since the people here mentioned are gathered together by the “three unclean spirits,” these people are those who would defy God as Josiah did and perish.

Joel 3:14 says, “Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.” All will face judgement: “And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Rev 22:12. Paul tells us that at Christ’s second coming, He shall come “In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” 2 Th 1:8.

Gog and Magog

President Ronald Reagan was convinced that the Soviet Union, which he referred to as the “evil empire,” was Gog. He was heavily influenced by Hal Lindsey’s *The Late Great Planet Earth*. Others today believe that it might be China; Is this realistic? No!

A close examination of the verses associated with Gog and Magog show it to be entirely different.

“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.” Rev. 20:7-9.

The first thing we notice is that ***this battle follows the millennium [the 1000 years] in heaven!***

At Christ’s second coming, only those with the seal of God “lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead [the wicked] lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” vs. 4-5. John 5:29 tells us that this is “the resurrection of damnation.”

Satan, released from his “prison” after the millennium, will convince the wicked [Gog and Magog], that have been resurrected [to face their final judgement], that they can take the Holy City, but “fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.” Literal Israel, Russia and China that exist

today have no part in this prophecy!

The Kings of the East

“And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.” Rev. 16:12

Because of the belief that Armageddon is going to be a battle fought in literal Israel, many have interpreted this scripture as referring to a time when the literal Euphrates river will be dried up to allow the armies of China to invade Israel. Common sense should tell us that this is not so - What would China want with Israel anyway?

To properly understand this verse, we will look at some literal events from the past.

“...Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus...” Isa. 44:28; 45:1. This prophecy was made about 150 years before it actually happened - it even named the person before his birth!

Cyrus the Mede diverted the waters of the Euphrates River (which supported and supplied life to Babylon) that he might enter the city of Babylon, thus capturing it. Cyrus was a “King from the East,” and immediately made a decree allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple.

Cyrus was a *type of Christ*. Just like Christ, Cyrus is referred to as the “Lord’s Anointed.” Just as Cyrus dried up the literal Euphrates, Christ will cause those at the end of time who were supporting “Mystical Babylon” to “hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.” Rev. 17:16. Babylon shall be supported no more.

The “King of the East” represents Christ at His second coming. (In the original Greek, the word translated “Kings” is **not plural**) Throughout the Bible we see the power of God coming from the east to deliver His people: In Exo. 10:13, the East wind brought the plague of locusts upon Egypt; Exo. 14:21 tells of the east wind that parted the Red Sea; Ps. 48:7 says, the ships of Tarshish are destroyed by an east wind; Hosea 13:15 calls the east wind the Lord’s wind; The three wise men saw Christ’s star in the east; Rev. 7:2 says the angel with the seal of God comes from the east.

The 144,000

Many believe that the 144,000 are literal Jews from the lost tribes of

Israel; is this true? A closer look shows that this is not so at all.

First of all, the 144,000 are those which have the seal of God in their foreheads. In talking to the Ephesians, Paul warns, “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” Eph 4:30. The Ephesians, like us, are spiritual Jews “inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” Rom. 2:28.

Christ has “made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us,” (Eph. 2:14) why would He erect a new one? He wouldn’t: “For there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.)” Rom 2:11-13. Only those who follow in the ways of righteousness will be sealed for redemption regardless of your ancestry!

As mentioned before, the names used in the Bible are more than mere titles, they have a deeper meaning. In Rev. 7:5-8, the order and names of the tribes given are different than anywhere else in the Bible. If we look for the first time the name was used, usually at the birth of one of the people, we can discern the meaning of the name.

By doing this, we see a hidden message in these verses.

The names given are [followed by the “birth text” in parenthesis]: Judah (Gen. 29:35); Reuben (Gen. 29:32); Gad (Gen. 30:11); Aser (Gen. 30:13); Nephtalim (Gen. 30:8); Manassas (Gen. 41:51); Simeon (Gen. 29:33); Levi (29:34); Issachar (Gen. 30:18); Zabulon (Gen. 30:20); Joseph (gen. 30:22); Benjamin (Gen. 35:18; Benoni was the name given by Rachel, it was changed by Jacob to Benjamin - son of my right hand).

By putting the meanings of each of the names together we get: Now will I praise the Lord. The Lord hath looked upon my affliction and a troop cometh [Christ and His angels].

Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed. [“Behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Rev. 3:9. Mystery Babylon is the *mother* of harlots, those that follow her are her *daughters* and they will realize that God has favored those the persecuted].

With great wrestling [or struggles] I have wrestled and have prevailed, and God will make me forget all my toil. [Like Jacob, these people are over-comers. Jesus says, “To him that over-cometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne,” and “the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces.” Isa. 25:8; Rev. 3:21.] The Lord heard that I was hated. [Jesus warns us: “And ye shall be

hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved." Mat 10:22]

My husband will be joined unto me. [Christ is the bridegroom, His faithful church is the bride; they shall be united at the "Marriage supper of the Lamb." Rev. 19:9.]

God has given me my hire [reward], God hath endued me with a good dowry [gift]. [Jesus says, "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12.]

God hath taken away my reproach with the son of His right hand. ["the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth;" Christ sits at the right hand of the Father. Isa. 25:8; Mark 16:19].

Satan wants men to look to the physical world that we might not discern the spiritual. The great failure of the Jews was the fact that they were carnally minded. Christians are in danger of doing the same thing. Satan uses literal Israel to obscure the events concerning spiritual Israel!

Don't get caught up in the delusions surrounding Israel: "Study to show thyself approved unto God...rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Tim. 2:15.

Are the Dead Really Dead?

Where do we go when we die?

To answer these questions, we must understand what a soul is.

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” Gen. 2:7.

Thus, we have this simple equation:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Dust of the ground} \\ + \text{Breath of life} \\ \hline = \text{Living Soul} \end{array}$$

A soul is the breath of life plus the dust of the ground. A soul is not a separate entity, rather it is the whole being.

In 1 Samuel 24:11, David is talking to Saul and says, “...and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it.”

David called himself a soul and knew that he was mortal, that is, subject to death.

The Bible tells us that people and animals are the same in the fact that they are living souls, that is, the breath of life plus dust of the ground, and that both return to the dust:

“For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.” Eccl. 3:19-20

The words “soul” and “spirit” are mentioned in the Bible 915 times, and not once are they referred to as “immortal.” Quite to the contrary, we read the following verses from the Bible:

“As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.” Job 7:9.

“Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” James 4:14.

“But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.” Job 14:10-12.

“The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.” Ps. 115:17. (If you were in heaven after you died, wouldn’t you praise the Lord?)

“His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.” Ps. 146:4.

“For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.” Eccl. 9:5-6.

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” Eccl. 9:10.

Immortality of the soul is not a biblical teaching!

Paul, in talking to Timothy about Christ, says, “Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting.” 1 Tim. 6:16. (If you went to heaven when you died, wouldn’t you see the Lord?)

We must receive immortality at Christ’s second coming!

“For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. (If you had an immortal soul, why would you have to “put on” immortality?)

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” 1 Cor. 15:53-54.

Immortality of the soul is a doctrine based upon the very first lie.

“And the serpent said unto the woman, ***Ye shall not surely die:*** For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened,

and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” Gen. 3:4-5.

First, Satan tells Eve that you will not truly die; then he follows it with the statement that you will be a god!

Satan well knows that humans are not immortal and that they can not be God! This very first lie is the basis of modern spiritualism.

The Pharaohs of Egypt and the Babylonians were spiritualist. The Pharaohs believed that they were gods with immortal souls.

God’s people would leave all that they had as an inheritance for their children, while the spiritualist would be buried with unimaginable riches for the “afterlife.”

The Bible says, “for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” Gen. 3:19. We shall remain in our graves until Christ returns! There is no life after the grave, until Christ brings His reward of immortality for the righteous!

In reference to the “breath of life” Job says, “All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils.” Job 27:3.

If the spirit were a separate, intelligent entity, why would it be in your nose?

The spirit that returns to God at death is the “breath of life,” and nothing more. At no time is this spirit given any wisdom or feeling when a man dies. Again, “the dead know not anything.” Eccl. 9:5.

“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit [the breath of life] shall return unto God who gave it.” Eccl. 12:7.

The Resurrection

The hope of all Christians is the resurrection to life eternal. The resurrection is mentioned 35 times!

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: (This includes everyone who ever died in Christ, from the faithful martyr, Abel, to the last Christian who died before Christ comes. If they were already in heaven, there would be no need of their resurrection!) Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thess. 4:16-17.

Further, both the wicked and the righteous will have a resurrection.

“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” John 5:28-29.

“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: (Who are

they that have part in the first resurrection? The “blessed and holy.”) on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” Rev. 20:6. This text also shows that the wicked will suffer a second death; there is no ever burning hell.

Also notice that there is nothing secret about this event, “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him...” Rev. 1:7. “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” 2 Thess. 2:8. There is no secret second coming!

All of the righteous are in heaven, and all of the wicked are dead. How long will the wicked remain in their graves? “...they [the saints] lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” Rev 20:4-5. The wicked are dead and the earth is empty! “I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the LORD, and by his fierce anger.” Jer. 4:23-26.

This also clearly shows that there will be no one on earth being saved during the “millennium.” There is no second chance; we must be ready in this life!

Objections Answered

There are some texts within the Bible that may tend to make us think that we have an immortal (undying) soul. We will examine a few:

The “Rich man and Lazarus” is one such story.

“There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst

thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Luke 16:19-31.

The key to the understanding of the above texts is to keep in mind that it is only a parable. Common sense and intelligence beg us to note the obvious clues:

1). Abraham's bosom is not heaven! The promised land is the "New Jerusalem," not Abraham's bosom! Jesus said this, because the Jews believed that they were saved on Abraham's merits!

2). We will not be able to see the wicked for eternity! "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Rev. 21:4. If you could see your loved ones in everlasting torment, wouldn't you feel sorrow and cry? God Himself declares that, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Isa. 43:25. How could God forget their sins if He could see them in pain? He couldn't! God has promised to forget; God's promises are good!

3). If one went strait to hell at death and burned forever afterward, Cain would have burned 6,000 years longer for the murder of one soul than Hitler would for murdering millions! This would not be justice! Our God is just!

4). What good would a drop of water do if you were engulfed in flames? NONE!

In fact, the wicked will not be rewarded with immortality! Jesus says of His second coming, "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12. As we have seen, the wicked are "destroyed with the brightness of His coming." 2 Thess. 2:8. The "reward" of the wicked is TOTAL destruction!

In a real life scenario of John 11, we read in verse 11, 12 and 14, "He saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well . . . Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead." When Jesus had arrived, Lazarus had

been dead for four days!

“Jesus saith unto her [Martha], Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” vs. 23-24. Notice that Martha was well aware that he would stay in his grave until Christ called him forth at the last day, at His second coming!

Then Jesus “cried with a loud voice, Lazarus come forth.”

After being resurrected Lazarus neither complained about being brought back from heaven nor thanked Jesus for releasing him from hell. Lazarus had been nowhere! Lazarus was called forth from the grave, not up from hell nor down from heaven!

Here is another commonly used set of verses: “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.”

2 Cor. 5:1-9.

This is simply a metaphor. Like Christ, Paul is using earthly things to represent the spiritual.

Our earthly house must be covered with the garment of Christ’s righteousness. “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; **and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.**” Rev. 3:18.

Paul says that it is “...for this we groan, being burdened, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.” Christ tells us that “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame.” Rev 3:21.

We must, like Christ who “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” [Heb 4:15], overcome our carnal natures to gain immortality.

“Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord” simply because “the carnal mind is enmity against God...” If we are content with our carnal nature, we are not of, nor are we walking spiritually with, Christ! For this we are admonished to “...abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.” Rom. 8:7 & 1 Pet. 2:11

Denial of self, being absent from our body, is to be walking with the Lord. “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal...) 2 Cor. 10:3-4.

We must “labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.”

Because we walk today with [are present with] the Lord does not mean that we’re set for life. At any time a Christian can fall or turn away. Paul himself feared the loss of eternity: “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” 1 Cor. 9:27 & 1 Cor. 10:12

If we are absent from the Lord, walking in our fleshly ways, we must labor to be reconciled to God [see 1 Cor. 5:17-18]. In either instance, present or absent, we must strive to be “accepted of Him.”

Plainly, therefore, this is talking of dying to self and arising anew in Christ. This is not a literal out of body experience!

The conclusion of the matter is found in 2 Cor. 5:17. “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

These texts also tell us that once saved, always saved is yet another lie based on the first lie, “Ye shall not surely die.”

The next item we’ll look at is the thief on the cross.

“And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” Luke 23:43.

Did the thief go into paradise that day? The answer is in the Bible! “The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.” John 19:31-32. The obvious answer is, NO! Crucifixion was a slow and cruel punishment. They may have lived for many days before dying.

Another fact is that Jesus Himself did not go into paradise that day. After His resurrection, He told Mary, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father...” John 20:17.

The punctuation in the Bible is not inspired. Since Jesus cannot lie or err, Luke 23:43, properly punctuated should read: “Verily I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with me in paradise.” Now this verse is in harmony with John 20:17 as it must be.

Finally we will look at Matthew 10:28.

“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”

This text makes it seem as though there is a definite separation between the body and soul. A closer study shows that this was not the meaning the writer intended.

Everyone agrees that the word “body” in this text refers to the mortal flesh; there is no doubt of this.

The word “soul” here is the Greek word “psuche,” which means life, the mind, or a living being. Never is it used in the sense of a immortal, conscious entity that can live apart from the body!

Of course, only God can truly give or take life! Life is His to give and to take. Man may be able to destroy the mortal body of this life, but not in the eternal sense.

To verify this view, we need only go to Luke 12:5. “Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell...Fear him.” Both texts are saying the exact same thing in reference to the same incident, but in different words! Man can kill this mortal, physical being, but only God has power to cast you into hell, the second death, which will come after the resurrection of the wicked at the end of the 1000 years. [see Rev. 2:11; 20:6; 21:8].

The Bible refers to the first death as a “sleep.” The first death is not eternal; but, like this first life, it is temporal (temporary).

“And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn.” Then Jesus “...said unto her, Talitha cumi; arise. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.” Mark 5:39-42.

In yet another place (as we have already discussed) Jesus plainly talks of death as sleep. “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. ***Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.*** Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.” John 11:11, 13-14.

Jesus teaches us that the first death is not permanent. Another man may put you to sleep, but only God can take your life away!

Many encounters with lost family members have been cited in various forms of literature. Are these really the spirits of the dead loved ones that they are supposed to be?

Since the Bible plainly teaches that the dead are dead, it would seem that these “spirits” are impostors. These impostors have an agenda. They are to help set mankind up for the final deceptions. “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to

seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” 1 Tim 4:1.

Could anything better convince us to follow ways contrary to sound doctrines and follow the doctrines of devils than to have your newly lost loved one visit you and give you a “message from heaven”?

Is the Virgin Mary Dead or Alive?

Many have claimed to have seen an “apparition” of the Virgin Mary, could this really be her? No!

Jesus Himself gave her no special place among mankind. “While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.” Mat. 12:46-50.

Since this can’t be Mary, what spirit is it?

With this in mind, we must remember two things:

1. “...it is appointed once to men to die.” Heb. 9:27 [again, Mary is dead!],

2. “...he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell upon the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do...” Rev. 13:13-14.

“Apparitions” have been reported since around A.D. 40, multiplying greatly in the 10th century. 20th century apparitions surpass the total of all previous centuries combined! “...the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” Rev. 12:12.

These “apparitions” are a fraud of the Devil.

Out of Body (Near death) Experiences?

As sophisticated medical technology has permitted more and more people to journey back from the brink of death, mystical reports of scenes from an “afterlife” have become almost commonplace. Of the nearly 18 percent of Americans who claimed in a recent U.S. News poll to have been on the verge of dying, many researchers estimate that a third have had unusual experiences while straddling the line between life and death—perhaps as many as 15 million

Americans. A small percentage recall vivid images of an afterlife—including tunnels of light, peaceful meadows, and angelic figures clad in white.

Tales from the realm between life and death aren't limited to the West. In Micronesia, "experiencers" have reported that heaven resembles a bustling American city with skyscrapers and plenty of automobiles. In India, the afterlife has frequently been described as a giant bureaucracy, in which survivors are sent back to life because of "clerical error." "There's a lot of cultural overlay," says Greyson, who also edits the *Journal of Near-Death Studies*. ***Your "after-life" experiences are guided by your own idea of what heaven or hell might be.***

Says Greyson, "Many people describe it as an ineffable experience, so it's no surprise that they come up with models based on their background." Almost all reports from around the world bear similarities to familiar daytime TV fare—the out-of-body feeling, the life review, the presence of deceased relatives on "the other side." (Taken, in part, from *US News* 3/31/97.)

Often, 2 Cor. 12:1-4 is quoted to prove an Apostolic "out of body" experience:

"It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth); such an one caught up to the third heaven.

"And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth); How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." 2 Cor. 12:1-4.

Some have quoted this verse to show Apostolic "near death experiences." Still others maintain that Paul is referring to his soul leaving his body to visit God. Neither assumption is correct as the Bible gives no hint of a separate entity of intelligence living within us.

The second verse informs us that he is speaking of himself in the past [in a third party sense, see verse 5 also].

Concerning the things he was allowed to see, he says that he was not allowed to repeat it. John the revelator had a similar experience: "And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not." Rev. 10:4. Many prophets saw things that God did not allow them to repeat, as Satan is an ardent Bible student.

Of the third heaven, the Bible refers to the earth's atmosphere as the first; the stars as the second; and God's abode as the third: Paul was taken to see the glories of God's abode.

Paul does not know whether he was taken to heaven only in vision (out of body - not physically, but in vision) or if he was taken up bodily; to this he says, "only God knoweth." This is not a out of the body experience!

Many people, who don't actually understand the scriptures, will be deceived because they believe that evil angels, impersonating loved ones that have passed on, have come from heaven with a message of salvation.

Says Peter of the Apostles words, "...some things are hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." 2 Pet. 3:16.

We must understand the true state of the dead: They await the second coming of Christ and can not speak to us!

Ever Burning Hell?

Part of the issue of what happens when you die is whether or not you will burn forever in a place of torment known as Hell.

Many people believe that the wicked shall burn in hell forever, but is this true? A careful study of the scriptures shows something all together different!

Satan ever attempts to convince us that we are immortal - that “ye shall not surely die.” Gen. 3:4. This lie has been repeated in many different ways. By mixing truth with error and by taking scriptures out of context, Satan has convinced most Christians and other religions that we are immortal - ever burning hell is one of the means he employs.

So, what is Hell? More specifically, what did the original translators mean by the English term Hell? *The Middle English/Anglo-saxon term “Hell” [from the word helan] means, “to cover or conceal.”* Not the definition you were expecting? With this definition in mind, the following scripture becomes clearer: “The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.” Psalms 34:16. The Lord will “cover” up the very remembrance of sin. *It is obvious that the original translators did not mean a place of eternal torment, for it would not harmonize with the rest of scripture.*

The definition of one the original words translated into to “hell,” “Geenna,” (or “Gehenna”) is listed in Strong’s Concordance of the Bible as: “Of Hebrew origin [HSN1516 and HSN2011]; valley of (the son of) Hinnom; ge-henna (or Ge-Hinnom), a valley of Jerusalem, used (figuratively) as a name

for the place (or state) of everlasting punishment.”

The “Valley of Hinnom,” a gorge near Jerusalem, was the place where the barbaric rite of burning children as sacrifices to Molec was committed. (2 Chron. 28:3; 33:1, 6. This practice was banned by Josiah.) Jeremiah predicted that because of this sin the “Valley of Hinnom” would become a “valley of slaughter.” Jer. 7:32-33. This valley had become a symbol of shame and judgement, a symbol of destruction and punishment, not existence. Rabbinical writings inform us that this valley was later used to burn trash and corpses.

Jesus used the term “Geenna” three times during the sermon on the mount. At no time did He refer to “Geenna” as a place of eternal life - good or bad, but rather, He referred to it as a judgement against evil doers. Nowhere in the scriptures can this word be found in connection with eternal life.

This is in harmony with the rest of scripture which plainly declares that the wicked shall be blotted out of existence forever, i.e., “...the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: **and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.**” Mal.4:1. “In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with **everlasting destruction...**” 2 Thess. 1:8-9. There will be no more remembrance of them; they will be gone - “root” and “branch.”

The next word translated into hell is the Greek “Hades” [the Hebrew equivalent, and only word translated “hell” found in the Old Testament is “sheol,” Strong’s # 7585]. Hades is defined as: “from GSN0001 (as negative particle) and GSN1492; properly, unseen, i.e. “Hades” or the place (state) of departed souls.”

The place of departed souls is the grave, which is where a corpse is concealed and decomposes until the resurrection. Speaking of the translation of the saints, Paul says, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave [Hades], where is thy victory?” 1 Cor. 15:55.

In a Greek Lexicon, you will find that “Hades,” the grave, is the “**temporary abode of the dead,**” not a place of eternity.

The last word translated into the English word, hell, is found only once in the Bible: “Tartaroo.” In II Peter 2:4, we read, “For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.” This verse excludes the possibility of hell being a place of eternal pain and torment within itself. It says that wicked angels are “**reserved** unto judgment.” Satan and the evil angels have not yet faced their final judgment. Says Paul, “Know ye not that we shall judge angels?” 1 Cor. 6:3. The saints of the Most High shall judge the deeds of the evil angels,

and God's decree will be found to be justified; His laws of liberty, the ten commandments, honorable.

Who is in charge of Hell?

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell (Hades, the grave) and of death." Rev. 1:18 Jesus Christ is in charge of hell; It is Christ that will decide who shall live and who shall perish.

The Reward of the Wicked

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28-9. "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." Acts 24:15. We all wait in the grave to hear the Masters voice. Some will be raised up into life eternal, some to face final judgment.

"...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise *perish*." Luke 13:3.

"But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall *utterly perish* in their own corruption." 2 Pet. 2:12.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not *perish*, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

In all three preceding verses the word translated to "perish" is "apollumi" (Strong's #622), *to destroy fully*.

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the *second death*." Rev. 21:8. Notice: It is a second death, not life of burning hell.

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. *This is the second death*." Rev. 20:14. (If hell was a place of eternal burning and torment, how could it be thrown into a lake of fire? It couldn't.)

The wicked are rewarded with eternal death, not immortality in any realm. Ezekiel 18:4 says, "*The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*"

When Does this Occur?

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are

kept in store, *reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*” 2 Pet. 3:7.

Just as the wicked angels await their final judgment, so the wicked dead await theirs in the grave. The word translated into “perdition” (apoleia) means “destruction.”

Of Christ’s second coming we read, “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thess. 4:16-17.

At Christ’s second coming, all the righteous that ever lived will be brought forth from the grave, and the rest of the righteous, those that are living, will meet them in the air. We are told that “they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years... This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” Rev. 20:4; 6.

Of the wicked at Christ’s second coming Paul says, “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” 2 Thess. 2:8. The wicked are slain by the brightness of Christ’s coming, and Jer. 25:33 says, “the slain of the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.”

The wicked will have a resurrection, and they shall face the second, eternal death. They are not already burning somewhere. ***“But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.”*** Rev. 20:6.

After the 1000 years in heaven, the wicked dead are raised to face the final judgment with Satan and his wicked angels.

“... the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone... whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire... And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.” Rev. 20:10, 14 & 15.

Notice that “hell,” that is, the grave [Hades] and death are “cast into the lake of fire.” Paul tells us that “the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” 1 Cor. 15:26.

Common Sense Points

1.) If people went straight to a place called hell to burn for all eternity, Cain would burn about six thousand years longer for the murder of one man than Hitler would for killing millions!

2.) There would be no need of a “resurrection of damnation.” In fact, if man were already immortal, why would we read, “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and *this mortal must put on immortality*. So *when* this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, *then* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” 1 Cor. 15:53-54. No man, righteous or wicked, is immortal. “For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast.” Eccl. 3:19.

3.) “I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.” Isa 43:25. If there were people burning forever in a place called hell, how could God forget? Sin and sinners alike will be blotted from existence and “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” Rev. 21:4. If your loved ones that didn’t make it were burning in hell forever, wouldn’t you feel sorrow? Wouldn’t there still be tears? Crying?

Very simply put, the wicked “shall be punished with everlasting destruction.” 2 Thess. 1:9.

What About Revelation 20:10?

“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” Rev. 20:10.

Upon reading this verse we might think that the fire of justice will burn for all eternity, but is this what it really means?

Let us look to some other scriptures where the term “for ever” is used.

“But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide for ever.” 1 Sam. 1:22. How long did Samuel appear before the Lord in the temple?; how long was “for ever”? Until life ended.

“...his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever.” Ex. 21:6. How long would the servant serve his master; how long was “for ever”? Only until life ended.

How long will the wicked burn? How long will for ever be? Until life ends.

Remember: “the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: ***and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.***” Mal.4:1

“Ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him” 1 John 3:15.

Generalizations of this sort are common in all languages. For this reason we must remember to use “line upon line and precept upon precept” and some good old common sense!

The Second Coming of Christ

Thanks to “Christian fiction” such as the *Left Behind* series, there seems to be widespread misconceptions concerning the second coming of Christ. As Christ’s followers, we must do as He instructed us and look to the scriptures that we may discern the truth.

What Takes Place at His Second Coming?

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thess. 4:16-17.

All the righteous that have ever lived from Adam to the very last Christian that died before His second advent will be resurrected at this time. They meet the Lord in the air first. “Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them.” All the righteous living at that time are also gathered to the Lord.

Now, what about the wicked? In 2 Th 2:8-10 we read: “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.”

All the wicked that are alive are slain by the “brightness of His coming.” We are told that the wicked will wish to be hidden from the wrath of Christ: “And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.” Rev. 6:15-16.

The wicked will perish at His second coming: “The slain of the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.” Jer. 25:33.

All of the righteous are with the Lord in heaven, and all of the wicked are dead! So, who is left? No one except Satan and his angels.

Is His Second Coming Secret? Is There a “Secret Rapture?”

The secret rapture is a fairly popular doctrine among Evangelicals, but is it Biblical? Let’s check it out.

“...two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.” Mat 24:41-42.

These verses have been used to imply that there will be a special or a secret rapture for the “elect of God,” that they might avoid the “tribulation.” Is this so? Will the “elect” be spared the tribulation of the end? Will they be secretly removed?

With a closer look at some of the previous verses in the same chapter of Matthew, we can see that Christ has no intention of concealing His second coming. In fact, He teaches that **any kind of secrecy concerning His second coming is a false doctrine!** “Wherefore if they shall say unto you, ...behold, he is in the secret chambers; **believe it not.** For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Mat 24:27-28. This will be the greatest event in history! “He cometh with clouds; and **every eye shall see him,** and they also which pierced him: and **all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.**” Rev. 1:7. There’s nothing secret about this event! So, you might say, “maybe the saints are raptured out and brought to heaven before the tribulation.” But, dear reader, **the elect are rewarded at His second coming, not before:** “And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Rev. 22:12.

What about “tribulation?” Will God’s people have to endure it? Yes!

We are warned, “Yea, and **all** that will live godly in Christ Jesus **shall suffer persecution.**” 2 Tim 3:12. Throughout the entire Christian era those who have stood for Christ have had to suffer for their faith. Would those of us at the end time be given a free ride? Would it be fair? Christ and the Apostles have warned us that we would suffer as they did. John the Revelator says of the saints that will be in heaven: “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Rev. 7:14. Christ says: “He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.” Mat. 10:38-39.

Of the final spiritual battle to be waged prior to Christ’s second coming, we read: “He causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” Rev. 13:16-17.

What happens to those who stand firm for the Lord at this time? “As many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.” *ibid.*, vs. 15.

God made known this same terrible time period to Daniel. In Daniel 12:1 we read: “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.” Notice that God’s people are delivered, not before, but during this time!

God’s people will endure great hardships at the end of time - many will even lose their lives. Jesus, looking forward to this time said, “The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.” John 16:2.

The Millennium (1000 years) of Revelation: Where are we?

Many believe that the wicked will get a second chance during the 1000 years [millennium] and that Christ will set up His kingdom here on earth during that time period directly following His second coming. Are these claims so?

Let us look again at what happened at Christ’s second coming.

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be **caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air:** and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thess. 4:16-17. According to these passages, the righ-

teous, both dead and living, are to meet Christ in the air; there is no indication that we come right back down.

Matt. 24:31 says: “he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and *they* shall gather together his elect.” Here again there is no mention of Christ actually setting foot on this earth; rather, the Bible tells us that He sends His angels to gather the living saints.

When talking with His disciples about what to expect when He returns, Christ told them: “In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” John 14:2-3.

Christ tells the disciples that in His Father’s house there are many mansions. His Father’s house is in heaven! Then, Christ says that He will go there to prepare a place for them, that He may take them there when He comes back. Why would He say this, if it were not so? In fact, He says, “If it were not so, I would have told you.” *ibid*. In answer to Peter’s question concerning where Jesus was going, Jesus said: Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; *but thou shalt follow me afterwards.*” John 13:36.

What about the “second chance” theory; is there anyone saved after Christ’s second coming? The plain answer is found in Revelation 22:11-12. “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”

The decision for every soul that ever lived is decided before Christ returns. There are no other opportunities to gain eternity!

Simple logic tells us that, since the righteous will be immortalized in Heaven, and the wicked will be slain (thus, they will be dead) at Christ’s second coming, no one will be left upon the earth to repent!

Is there not a Millennium of Peace on Earth before Christ returns?

Today many look forward to the “Great Millennium of Peace and Prosperity,” which they are told is promised to them within the prophecies of the Bible. This time is believed to begin before or with the second coming of Christ. Is this true?

Just prior to Christ’s second coming the vials of God’s wrath, “unmixed with mercy,” are poured out upon the guilty inhabitants of the world that have received the mark of the beast, “and in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.” Rev. 9:6.

There's nothing prosperous or peaceful about this!

Afterwards at Christ's second coming, concerning the wicked, we read: "The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. 6:15-17. These people are not happy about Christ's arrival; in fact, they suffer His wrath.

The truth is that there is no mention anywhere in the Bible of a world conversion or a 1000 year time period of peace on earth upon Christ's return or any other time. In fact, Christ plainly teaches that doctrines such as this will lead many to become wrapped up in the affairs of this world, and they will lose eternity. After all, if Christ is merely coming to set up His kingdom and give us another chance, we don't have to worry about His wrath; so why get ready?

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. 24:37-39.

Says Paul, "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." 1 Thess. 5:3.

Like the doctrines of "once saved, always saved" and immortality of the soul, the millennium of prosperity is just another twist on the very first lie that all people desire to believe: "Ye shall not surely die." Gen. 3:4.

We have been warned that at His second coming, "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, *In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God*, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ," [2 Thess. 1:7-8] and that the earth will be made desolate. [see Isaiah 24; Jer. 25:31-37].

Beware dear friend, His reward is with Him for both the good and evil in that great and terrible day of wrath!

What about the "seven years of Tribulation," don't those who made mistakes get a second chance to repent?

Many believe that there will be a period of tribulation lasting seven years after the "rapture" in which some may get their "second chance." As we have already seen, there is no special or secret rapture. The Bible is quite clear: All

shall be rewarded at Christ's second coming. So, how does this seven year tribulation fit in? It doesn't; It's not Biblical!

The supposed seven year period comes from Daniel 9:27: "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

People correctly interpret the one week to be seven years, based on the principle of a day for a year in prophetic time [Eze. 4:6; Num. 14:34]. Next, it is said that the antichrist will make a covenant with the nations. They back this attempt to back this theory by connecting it with Rev. 17:12: "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast." It is simple to show this to be completely absurd.

First of all, this verse is not a "textual island" because it is part of a larger thought. As such, all we need to do is read the verse just before it!

"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself..." Dan 9:26. The "Messiah" of the Bible is Christ, not the antichrist! Christ was cut off for the sins of man, not for Himself!

The sacrifice and oblation that ceased [Dan. 9:27] are the animal sacrifices that were done away with when the True Sacrifice was offered. When Christ was crucified, we read, "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." Matt. 27:51. The sacrificial system, the temple services and the "handwriting of ordinances" (Col. 2:14) were nailed to the cross.

What of the desolation? Christ had entered the temple in the beginning and at the end of His ministry and declared that His Father's house had become a house of merchandise. [see John 2:16] The Scribes and Pharisees had rejected every evidence, every plea from Infinite Love. Finally, Jesus declared, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, **your house** is left unto you **desolate**." Mat. 23:37-38. Notice that Christ now referred to the temple (which He never returned to) as "your house" instead of "my Father's house," further fulfilling Daniel's prophecy: "For the overspreading of abominations **he shall make it desolate**."

Lastly, within verse 27 itself, we see that this "person" makes a "covenant." The Bible discloses no one other than God making a covenant with man. Nowhere within the Bible is there a record of Satan making a covenant!

What takes place on earth during the 1000 years?

Of the earth after the second coming we read: “*I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void;* and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, *there was no man*, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the LORD, and by his fierce anger.” Jer. 4:23-26.

There was no man, because the wicked living were destroyed by the brightness of Christ’s coming (the rest of the dead “lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” Rev. 20:5), and the righteous were taken with Him to the Father’s mansions in Heaven!

“The slain of the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.” Jer. 25:33. Again, no one will gather or bury the dead, because there is no one alive on earth to bury them!

It is crystal clear that the 1000 years will not be spent on earth. In fact, the earth is in ruins at this time: “Behold, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof (Jer. 25:33 says, “like dung upon the ground”) ... The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word... The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.” Isa. 24:1; 3; 19-20.

Where is Satan during the 1000 years?

Where will Satan be during this time?

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.” Rev. 20:1-3.

The “bottomless pit” here described is none other than a description of the earth after the second coming of Christ.

The word translated into these verses to “bottomless pit” is “abussos.”

The English word “abyss,” meaning “a deep place,” is derived from “abussos.” This same word, “abussos,” is used in the Greek version [the Septuagint] of Genesis 1:2: “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.” Before God brought everything into order the earth was referred to as “abussos;” being in disorganized darkness, it was called a “bottomless pit.” Jeremiah 4:23 says that the earth will be in the same condition following Christ’s return: “I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light.”

What is the great chain?

First of all, we must remember that Satan is a spiritual being - a fallen angel. You cannot bind a spiritual being with a literal, physical chain! Therefore, we must realize that this is a symbolic chain.

In 2 Peter 2:4 the Bible speaks of the evil angels being delivered into “chains of darkness.” In other words they are held in darkness by circumstances. How is he bound? Simply by being here on the earth during the 1000 years that she is desolate! There is no one to deceive. Satan himself is now bound in “chains of darkness.”

The End of the 1000 Years

There are a few very important events that occur at the end of the 1000 years: the “New Jerusalem” comes from heaven to earth; the resurrection of the wicked, who must face their final judgement; and Satan, who must be released for a short time and faces his final judgement.

Of the New Jerusalem we read: “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” Rev. 21:1-2.

Christ did not set foot on the earth at His second coming, but on His final return, “His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.” Zech. 14:4.

The earth, as we have already seen, was a desolate and dark place “utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled.” But now the Lord will restore the earth for His people and will dwell with them there.

Now we turn to the activities of Satan.

Remember, Satan was “bound,” “that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and *after that* he must be

loosed a little season.” Rev. 20:3.

Of this time we read: “When the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.” vs. 7-8.

Satan is allowed to show the entire universe that, even after 1000 years to reflect on his wickedness, he will not change; he will again go about deceiving who he can! The whole universe will see that God is just!

Who will Satan be able to deceive after the 1000 years? “The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” *ibid.*, vs. 5. Those that are partakers of the second resurrection are the wicked; they will also be part of the second death. It is the resurrected wicked that Satan will be able to deceive. Concerning the righteous, we read: “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power.” vs. 6. The righteous are within the city with Jesus and cannot be deceived. At this time Satan convinces the wicked legions at his command to try to take the Holy City, but God is all powerful, and does not allow this to happen: “And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.” Rev. 20:9.

The Final Judgement

The great controversy between good and evil, between God and Satan, will finally end with the total destruction of the wicked.

Before we discuss the ultimate end of sin, it is well to know that God has made a very special promise to us: “I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.” Isa 43:25. Our Lord has promised to erase from the memory the sins of all who follow Him and walk the streets of gold. Our sins will be blotted out of existence forever! Praise God! Our Lord will also remove the pain of this life from us: “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” Rev. 21:4.

What is the ultimate fate of the wicked?

“And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Rev 20:14-15. Notice that both death and hell are done away with. Hell (Hades) is the grave. This verse alone shows us that hell is not a place of ever burning torment. If it was, it would not be thrown into the lake of fire to

be destroyed!

After this there will be no sin in the universe. The sinners and the Devil himself will be destroyed.

“The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are.” Rev. 20:10. Malachi 4:1, speaking of the finality of this cleansing, says: “For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” There will be nothing left to remind us of the awful curse of sin.

Tongues of Fire

In many of today's churches, the "gift of tongues" is used as a test of whether or not you have the Holy Spirit. It is called by some "the language of heaven" or of prayer. How do these manifestations hold up to the Biblical test? Are they the same tongues experienced by the Apostles on the day of Pentecost?

What Are Tongues?

The first biblical use of the term "tongues" is found in Gen. 10:20: "These are the sons of Ham, after their families, after their *tongues*, in their countries, and in their nations."

This verse is part of the genealogy given for the sons of Noah after the flood, showing from where the various nations came after God confused the languages. Genesis 11 tells us why the languages were confounded and the inhabitants scattered abroad: "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one

language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth." Gen. 11:1-9.

From this time forward there would be many different languages or tongues on the face of the earth.

Tongues are languages; plain and simple! *In fact, on the inside of the Authorized King James Version, where the use of the term "tongues" originates, we read: "Translated out of the original tongues..." It is self evident that the translators meant languages by the word tongues.*

Tongues In The Christian Church

The ability to speak in tongues is a spiritual gift. Paul lists some of the gifts of the Spirit thusly: "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." 1 Cor. 12:28.

For what purpose are these gifts of the Spirit for? Paul tells us exactly why they were given: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the *perfecting of the saints*, for the *work of the ministry*, for the *edifying of the body of Christ*: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Eph. 4:11-13. The gifts of the Spirit are given to build up and strengthen God's church. The gifts of the Spirit are never said to be a test of faith or fellowship in the Bible as are the "fruits of the Spirit" listed in Galatians 5:22 - 23: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

The first mention of these Spiritual Gifts in the Christian church is found in Acts 2: "...suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with *other* tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." vs. 2-4.

Were these "other" tongues some "mystical language" of the Spirit? No! They were different languages previously unknown to the disciples. It is the ability to speak in a foreign language, previously unknown to the speaker, that

comprises the true gift of tongues. It is given to enable a believer to give the Gospel where there would have been a language barrier. Notice the Biblical definition given in verse 4 that it is various languages that are referred to as *other tongues*.

The people gathered at Jerusalem “were confounded, because that every man heard them speak *in his own language*. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?” Acts 2:6-7. “Galilaeans” were easily recognized and generally held in contempt by other people, because they were considered unlearned, compulsive, violent and disorderly people. The people of Galilee were *especially noted for errors in grammar!* They were known for absurd pronunciation errors, therefore making ridiculous mistakes; thus Peter was easily detected as one of Christ’s disciples at Christ’s trial. With this in mind, it is easy to imagine the great surprise of the multitudes. Since the Galilaeans couldn’t even speak their own language very well, “how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?” *ibid.*, vs 8.

Then verses 9-11 tell us where the various people were from (and thus, what other “tongues” the disciples spoke in): Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamians, Judaeans, Asians, Egyptians, Libyans, Romans, etc.

That these Galilaeans could fluently speak other languages seemed so impossible that some thought they must be drunk! (vs. 13).

God gave the disciples the ability to speak in tongues for the purpose of spreading the Gospel. By using the “ignorant” men of Galilee, He was able to confound the wise. It made a great impression upon the multitudes and resulted in many conversions of people from every part of the known world, thus taking the Gospel to many different regions.

I have read various tracts by different authors claiming that there was a two fold miracle going on at Pentecost, one of speaking in tongues and one of hearing. This is not substantiated by the biblical account, for there is no mention of “ears of fire!”

There are only three examples of speaking in tongues recorded in the Bible: Acts chapters 2, 10 and 19. In all three instances, the gift was bestowed upon the believers to promote the Gospel message *only* when there was a group of people present that spoke different languages! Proof of this is found in Acts 4. In this chapter there is a repeat of all the events that took place in chapter 2, but because the people there spoke the same language, the gift of tongues was absent. Acts 4:31 says, “And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.” God does not just pour out the gifts of the Spirit, tongues or otherwise, where it is not neces-

sary!

Unknown Tongues

The word *unknown* found in the King James version of the Bible is a “supplied word;” it is not found in the original texts. The translators added this word to help us to understand the verse. Unfortunately, it seems to have brought about some confusion as well.

Once again, before the day of Pentecost the men of Galilee spoke only their native language (Very poorly at that!). At the outpouring of the Holy Spirit they gained the ability to speak new languages. These new languages were *unknown to them* before this time; however, they were known languages in other areas of the world. To many of those who read this paper, Russian is an unknown tongue, but not to a person living in Russia.

A Desired Gift

After Pentecost tongues had become a much coveted gift to many; a proof of their high calling; and as such it was an abused gift. By the tone of Paul’s counsel concerning the proper use of this gift, it was used for outward show to gain the admiration of other people. This temporarily became a problem in the early Corinthian church. The fact that Paul does not mention it in his second epistle to the Corinthians indicates that the problem was most likely remedied by the admonition in his first epistle.

Paul said to the Corinthians: “He that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue edifieth himself. . .” 1 Cor. 14:4. To speak in a language that no one else understands is no help to the cause of Christ! For this reason Paul warns: “except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air . . . Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me.” *ibid.*, vs. 9 and 11. Why would a servant of Christ want to become as a babbling barbarian!? We must give the Gospel in clarity so that he who hears may take it elsewhere!

A Special Language To Talk With God?

Many will quote the following verse to prove that there is a special language that we need to speak to God: “For he that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.” 1 Cor. 14:2.

The first thing to remember is a common sense point: God understands all languages - He invented them! There is no need of a special language to talk with Him.

This statement from Paul was a rebuke to those engaging in this activity vainly! Paul warned those people that unless they were to give the Gospel message in the local language so that people could understand, they would speak in vain, and it would accomplish nothing for the cause of Christ. Speaking French to an English audience is useless - "When thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?" *ibid.*, v. 16.

Tongues Of Angels?

Many will say, "but Paul says he spoke with tongues of angels!" Is this true? NO! Lets look at the passage in 1 Cor. 13:1. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

If read in context, one quickly realizes that Paul is saying that the gift of tongues is far inferior to love (charity). It is quite obvious that the term "though" means "even if." In verse 3 Paul said, "Though I give my body to be burned . . ." Paul was beheaded! Therefore, he certainly means "even if I give my body to be burned."

Are Tongues "The" Sign Or Test Of The Indwelling Spirit?

Many of our charismatic friends put tongues at the top of the list when it comes to "proof" of a man's calling, but this is directly opposite of what the Bible teaches.

"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." 1 Cor. 12:28. In this list, tongues is last, in fact, he goes on to say, "greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues." 1 Cor. 14:5. Why then do so many consider tongues to be so important? According to Paul, a teacher is also greater! If it is so important, why does the Bible say that not all are given this gift?

"Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?" 1 Cor. 12:29-30. The intelligent answer to all of the above is: NO! The gift of tongues *is not* the ultimate test of your Christianity! Again, the Bible says, "the fruit (test) of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, good-

ness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” Gal. 5:22 and 23.

Another observation that makes it obvious that tongues is not the only or most important fruit of the Spirit is that, of the more than fifty times the Bible mentions someone being filled with the Spirit, tongues is connected with it in only three instances!

Consider this admonition from Christ: “This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.” Mat. 15:8. ***God reads the heart - talk is cheap in any tongue!***

John tells us of a much better way in which we can discern a true follower of Christ from a merely professed follower. “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” 1 John 2:3-4.

Keeping God’s commandments of love, the ten commandments, is proof of the indwelling Spirit. With the indwelling of the Spirit comes the desire and the ability through the grace of God to keep His commandments; “And his commandments are not grievous,” because we love the Lord and our fellow man. 1 John 5:3. Therefore, this is the ultimate test of true Christianity. Tongues is never mentioned as a requirement for the saints.

“Here is the patience of the saints, here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ.” Rev. 14:12.

The Oracle of Delphi: Pagan Tongues

From around the sixth century B.C. until Christianity appeared, in their quest for information or direction, the Greeks would visit an oracle, a shrine where questions could be brought to the gods through a human medium. These temples existed throughout Greece and were dedicated to Apollo, the Greek god associated with prophecy. None were more famous than the Delphic Oracle.

At the temple of Delphi, along with Apollo, Dionysus, the god of wine and ecstasy, was honored equally for having the ability of prophecy.

During a typical ritual, while music was being played, a priestess, titled the Pythia, would go into a trance and utter strange sounds. These vocalizations were then interpreted by priests and considered the voice of Apollo or Dionysus!

The interpretations given were intentionally vague, whereas a true prophet is direct, plain and to the point - God sends His prophets to warn His people; He desires their speech to be crystal clear!

As we shall see, throughout the ages, down to the present, music, trances and ecstatic utterances play a key role in all Pentecostal religions.

This first recorded, false gift of tongues was eradicated by the introduction of Christianity in the first century A.D., however it would soon be revived in the second century under the new name of Montanism.

Pagan Tongues Enter the Christian Church

Montanism, also known as the New Prophecy and Cataphrygian heresy, arrived in the Christian church during the second century A.D.

This movement was started by the so called, self proclaimed, prophet Montanus. Montanus was formerly a priest in the Oriental ecstatic cult of Cybele. Upon his supposed conversion to Christianity, he introduced some of his previous pagan rituals under the name of “The New Prophecy” to his followers.

Eusebius of Caesarea, the famed church historian, tells us that Montanus would enter into a ecstatic state, fall into a trance and begin prophesying. The interpretations were said to be the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Montanus and his followers insisted that this was the fulfillment of the promise made by Jesus to send the Spirit of Truth, and that this Spirit was made manifest to the world through himself and the prophets and prophetesses associated with him. Most of the early Christians realized that this was a false gift, as a true prophet *never* intentionally induced any kind of ecstatic intensity nor maintained that these actions were of God.

Throughout Asia and North Africa Montanism flourished. Termed a Pentecostal outgrowth of Christianity, it lasted from its beginnings in the second century until Emperor Justinian I enacted legislation with severe penalties against its practise in the sixth century, essentially destroying it. Some remnants of this religious practice seem to have survived until the ninth century.

The “Classical Pentecostals”

Charles Fox Parham declared in 1901 that speaking in tongues was the sign of baptism in the Holy Spirit. The very first person to speak in tongues was Agnes Ozman, one of Parham’s students, on January 1, 1901. This new movement might have sputtered if not for William Joseph Seymour, a black preacher who listened to Parham through an open door in his Houston Bible school. Soon Seymour set out for Los Angeles, where his own [supposed] baptism in the Spirit in 1906 brought him an enthusiastic following. Within two years of founding a mission in an abandoned church on Azusa Street, his multicultural

ministry sent missionaries to 25 countries.

The Azusa Street movement merged the white American holiness religion with worship styles derived from African-American traditions. The Azusa Street “Apostolic Faith Mission” conducted three services a day, seven days a week, where thousands received the “tongues baptism.”

The expressive worship and praise at Azusa Street, included shouting and dancing. The admixture of tongues and other “charisms” with black music and worship styles created a new indigenous form of Pentecostalism extremely attractive to the general populace in America and around the world.

This “new” worship style was not really new. It is almost identical to the Delphic worship style and Montanism.

Many have referred to this movement as “Neo-Montanism.”

The Charismatic Movement

The Charismatic or “Neo-Pentecostal Movement” was founded in the 1960’s. It first received attention when Dennis Bennet announced to his congregation in Van Nuys, California at St. Mark’s Episcopal Church that he had received the spiritual gift of speaking in tongues. His church divided and he was sent to a small parish in Seattle. There Bennett preached his new wave doctrines. TIME and NEWSWEEK carried Bennett’s story, giving the movement national recognition.

The Charismatic Movement derives its name from the Greek “charismata,” meaning “gifts of the spirit.” For charismatics, baptism in the holy spirit is an intensity, a spiritual breakthrough. One author relates his experience thusly: “We are to be edified. Edify means to build up or charge up - much like charging up a battery . . . one of God’s ways to charge up your spirit is by speaking in tongues.”

It is this “spiritual charge up” that draws so many into the Charismatic Movement. It is an interesting fact that music and mystic chanting have also long been associated with both the Native American religious experience and the practitioners of Voodoo.

The unintelligible vocalizations uttered by the priests of these religions are interpreted by others in the same way that the various Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians do. In fact, the Haitian Voodoo practitioners venerate many of the Christian saints and believe in the sovereign God of the Christians! For both the native American Indians and the Haitian Voodoo converts, the Charismatic and Pentecostal religions are the most popular. By being so similar in their styles of worship, it is a quite natural step.

Is the loud music and chanting accompanying these styles of worship the

way God would have us to worship Him?

The Bible tells quite a different story. When in communion with God, Christ, our Example, sought out a secluded, QUIET place for prayer.

In fact, all throughout the Bible, when people sought communion with the Lord, it was in simple quietude.

The example of Elijah's search for the Lord gives us clear example of how He communicates with us:

“And a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire *a still small voice*. And it was so, when Elijah heard it that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave.” 1 Kings 19:11-13.

God does not work in a bedlam of noise; He works in a still small voice. None of the Bible writers were “Charismatics;” they all approached their communion with God in quiet reverence on their knees.

“Be still, and know that I am God.” Psa. 46:10.

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Eternal Security

Am I saved? Millions believe that once you are baptized and profess the name of Jesus Christ your salvation is a sure thing - you can never be lost. If the promise of eternity is unconditional, then it is the greatest doctrine in existence. But if it's false doctrine, then it is a lethal trick straight from the Devil!

The Bible says, "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Acts 2:21. Does this verse mean that all you must do is call on Jesus and you're saved? How do we reconcile it with the following verse: "...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Phil. 2:12. If all we have to do is call on Jesus, why is there "fear and trembling?"

In order to answer these questions properly, we must understand the reason we are calling on the Lord.

It is commonly thought that we will be sinners until Christ comes, and that there is nothing we can do about it. In other words, we will be saved *in our sins*. To this our Lord states: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Mat. 7:21-23.

By this statement it is easy to see that there is more to calling on the Lord than most realize. We are to call on the Lord to help us overcome sin in our lives. We can feed multitudes of hungry people, but if we are adulterers and

liars, we will still miss heaven. In fact, we are told, “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? ***Be not deceived:*** neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.” 1 Cor 6:9-10.

What about grace? We’re under grace, we are saved no matter what! Well, Paul says, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” Rom 6:1-2.

Paul then expounds on this point: “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; ***whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?*** But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then ***made free from sin***, ye became the servants of righteousness.” Rom. 6:14-18.

We are to be made free from sin not free to live in sin; We are not to be servants of sin unto death.

So, what exactly is sin? “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for ***sin is the transgression of the law.***” 1 John 3:4.

The next question is: What does Paul say about keeping the law?

The answer is simple: “For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but ***the doers of the law shall be justified.***”) Rom. 2:12-13.

We must obey the law of God - the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are not merely ten suggestions, they are the expressed will of God, so important, that God wrote the commandments in stone with His own finger!

Faith is not enough. We are told, “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that ***faith without works is dead?***” James 2:19-20. The fruit of faith is in your works! “...***faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.*** Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and ***I will show thee my faith by my works.***” *ibid.*, 2:17-18.

Only those who love righteousness and love Christ will enter into heaven. The commandments are laws of love; the first four deal with our relation to the Lord, the other six with our relation to our brethren. John says, “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his

commandments. For *this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments*: and his commandments are not grievous.” 1 John 5:3-4.

To claim to be a follower of Christ and intentionally break the law of God makes a mockery of the Sacrifice of Calvary. Christ Himself, the Son of God, was not so presumptuous! When Satan asked Christ to jump off the temple, the answer given was quite clear: “Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.” Luke 4:12.

Of those that claim Christianity while disregarding the Decalogue, John says, “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” 1 John 2:4.

Satan has somehow convinced mankind that the Ten Commandments are laws of bondage, an unfair restriction from which Jesus came to free us. The truth is that the law of God is freedom from the bondage of sin!

James 1:25 says, “whoso looketh into the *perfect law of liberty*, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”

It is easy to realize why it is referred to as the “perfect law of liberty.” If you tell a lie, you must remember that lie; tell other lies to substantiate the first one; remember those lies, etc. You become a slave to that very first lie! Freedom is simple: “Thou shalt not bear false witness.” There is nothing to cover; nothing to worry about - your conscience is clear, and you are free!

It is within our fallen nature to do those things which are at enmity with God; therefore, Infinite Love sends His Spirit to help us to overcome sin.

It is a day by day struggle against self to achieve victory over our carnal desires and gain eternal life. Paul himself feared the possibility of losing eternity: “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” 1 Cor. 9:27.

“Once saved, always saved” is just a new slant on the very first lie: “Ye shall not surely die.” Gen. 3:4. Concerning the ministers that teach the doctrine of salvation *in sin*, we read, “While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption.” 2 Pet. 2:19. We are not saved until we’re actually walking the streets of gold. Until then, it is a day by day choice.

Another evidence against the idea of “once saved, always saved” is as follows:

Concerning the end of time, we are told “that in the latter times *some shall depart from the faith*, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” 1 Tim. 4:1.

If the people “depart from the faith,” that shows that they have chosen another way *after* knowing the truth. They have lost eternal life! One of the most fearful warnings given in the Bible concerning this issue is found in Heb.

6:4-6: “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”

Take heed, dear friend. We can not count our election as a sure thing and call ourselves “saved” at this time - it is a day by day struggle against our carnal nature!

“Here is the patience of the saints: Here are they that keep the commandments of God *and* the faith of Jesus Christ.” Rev. 14:12.

The “Dispensation of Grace”

Many believe that we are now under the “new dispensation of grace.” But Genesis 6:8 says, “Noah found *grace* in the eyes of the LORD.” In fact, we are told: “He hath chosen us in him *before* the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” Eph 1:4.

The “dispensation of grace” therefore, was in effect before the fall of man. There was already a plan to redeem our race before the “foundation of the world.” Praise God!

The simple fact is that there never was a “dispensation of works.” All who will be in heaven will have been saved by grace.

However, we must not presume upon the gift of grace. The Bible says that the Lord is “merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that *will by no means clear the guilty.*” Exo. 34:6-7. Remember, Paul says: “shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; *whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?*” Rom. 6:14.

Jesus warns us: “*Strive to enter in* at the strait gate: *for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.*” Luke 13:24. And further: “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Rev 22:14.

The Old and New Covenants

There is a widespread misunderstanding of what constitutes a covenant.

A covenant is defined as, “An agreement between persons or parties.” (ala Webster). A law is not a covenant, therefore a covenant is not a law!

God and the children of Israel made an agreement, “Now therefore, *if* ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, *then* ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:” Exo. 19:5
The Israelites replied, “All that the LORD hath spoken we will do.” Exo. 19:8.

How did the law fit in? It is the corner stone. If they would keep His laws, they would be His people. This is a “covenant”.

God has now made a new agreement (covenant) with us, which had to be explained to the Hebrews who wanted to keep the ceremonial laws contained in ordinances: “This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:” Hebrews 8:10.

The new covenant is written “*not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart*” (2 Cor. 3:3) and ratified by the blood of Christ (as opposed to the blood of animal sacrifices in the old covenant). But, the conditions are still the same: “For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.” Heb. 10:26-27.

Chapter 7

The Mark of the Beast

Exactly what the mark of the beast is has been the object of much speculation and curiosity. Men have come up with many different possibilities, but which idea, if any, is correct? Since it is also tied to the most terrible threatening given to mankind in the sacred texts, it would seem to be a very important point.

One of the problems we face in understanding what the mark of the beast is the fact that the book that gives this description is highly symbolic in nature. Can it be understood?

Revelation: Not a Mystery

Many are taught and believe that the book of Revelation is a mystery; Is this true? What does the book of Revelation say about what is in it?

The very first verse calls the book a “revelation,” not a “mystery!” “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass.” Rev. 1:1

Our Lord desires that we would know what events will “come to pass,” and has given John these visions in order to show His servants what to expect!

The next thing that we see about the prophecies contained in this book is: “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.” 1:3. And again at the end of the book, “the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his

servants the things which must shortly be done...Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” 22:6-7. How could we possibly get a blessing or “keep those things which are written” if we couldn’t understand them? Is God trying to trick us? NO! That’s what the Devil, the arch deceiver does, not God! The truth is, if we don’t understand, it is our own fault - the Revelation is an open book: “Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.” 22:10

We must study and understand the Revelation of our Lord to us!

The meaning of each symbol in the revelation is defined in the Bible. We are not to use our own interpretations: “no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.” 2 Pet. 1:20.

Identifying the Mark

To identify the mark of the beast, we must know what and who the term “beast” represents. In both the book of Daniel and Revelation the term beast is employed. It is in the book of Daniel we find the biblical definition of the term beast. In Daniel 7, verses 3 through 8, Daniel describes four great beasts that come up out of the sea (In Revelation 13:1, the first “beast” is said to come up out of the sea). As he looked in awe at the scenes presented, we read, “I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.” vs. 15.

He then asks for the interpretation of these symbols: “I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things.” vs. 16.

We now get the interpretation of the term “beast” in prophecy: “The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth.” vs. 23.

Thus a beast in biblical prophecy represents a kingdom or nation. (See also Daniel 8 in which “Grecia” and the Medo-Persian Empires are likened to various beasts.)

Horns represent political powers within a beast. The ten horns on the fourth beast are the ten divisions of the Roman Empire. Of these ten, the prophet Daniel says, “...there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.” Dan. 7:8. Simply put, this little political power is the cause of the downfall of three of the others.

So, who is this little horn and what is its significance to the mark of the beast?

This little horn is listed as doing many things - it is the power who’s

mark we are to avoid. Daniel and the Revelation both describe this beast and its activities in the same ways. It is by comparing the descriptions found in Daniel and Revelation with history that we can discern who the "antichrist" is.

The Antichrist Identified

We will follow the Biblical description with historical FACTS. Please keep in mind that there are many wonderful Catholic Christians - salvation is an individual action. We are here discussing *a religio/political system and its forms of worship*, not every single adherent to this faith! This does not mean that because at present you belong to this (or any) organization that you are branded for destruction - God put the message out so that we can learn the truth and then make up our minds.

1.) Out of the ten nations of divided Europe there shall arise another power "diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings." Dan. 7:8, 24.

Out of the ten political kingdoms (ten horns in Daniel's prophecy) of the Roman Empire, which appeared between AD 351 & 476, there arose a different kind of kingdom, the religio/political kingdom of the papacy.

How can we be sure that this is the power discussed? Before this power would rise to its supremacy, three of the ten kingdoms that stood in its way would fall. Of the ten kingdoms of Rome, the Heruli, Vandals, and the Ostrogoths were overthrown. The religion of these three kingdoms was "Arian." Arianism competed with Roman Catholicism. With these three kingdoms out of the way in 538 A.D., the Papal See would begin her reign under the auspices of Emperor Justinian. (See John Mosheim, *Ecclesiastical History & Gibbon's Rome*)

2.) "He shall speak great words against the most High" & "blasphemies." Dan. 7:8, 25. Rev. 13:5. The popes have assumed infallibility which belongs only to God. (They claim spiritual infallibility. See *Converts Catholic Catechism*, pg. 30). They profess to forgive sins, which belongs only to God. They go against God by giving indulgences for sin (as if anyone can prepay to commit a favorite sin). The pope claims the title of "In Place of the Son of God." This is blasphemy!

3.) "And think to change times and laws" Dan. 7:25. Of the ten commandments, the Catholic church has deleted the second, which deals with idolatry. This was done, of course, because they venerate various "relics" and "icons." They "transferred the solemnity" of the Sabbath (which they hold as the third commandment instead of the Biblical fourth) from Saturday to Sunday (See *Converts Catholic Catechism* pg. 50). Eusebius, Constantine's friend and eulogist, says, "All things whatsoever that it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord's day." (See Eusebius, Psalm 92) Lastly, the church divided the tenth commandment into two to keep the number the same! (Who on earth should

think they could change God's laws?)

Special note: In the New Catholic Catechism (1994), the first and second commandments are now joined together. This is a very recent move. In the original version (of which this author owns a copy printed in 1977) the second commandment is left out completely (Interestingly, the New Catechism alludes to the idea that just as the second commandment is not found in the original Catechism, it is not mentioned in Deuteronomy 5, but it is there!). In the new Catechism we are told that Christians now keep Sunday because "it is the eighth day following the sabbath, it symbolizes the new creation ushered in by Christ's Resurrection." This too is a new approach, for in the 1977 edition, we read, "We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday." A more in depth look at this is presented later.

4.) Shall rule for 1260 years. Dan. 7:25 & Rev. 13:5. (prophetic time is read a day for a year. See Eze. 4:6 & Num 14:34). Did she rule for 1260 years? Yes! By the edict of Emperor Justinian, dated 533 A.D., the Bishop of Rome was made ruler of all churches and was backed by secular law enforcement authorities to enforce his dogma. This decree didn't go into effect until 538 A.D. when the last of the Arianists, the Ostrogoths, were driven from Rome. This supremacy lasted until General Berthier entered Rome, declared Rome a republic and took the pope prisoner. He suffered his deadly wound. This happened in 1798 - right on time!

5.) Will suffer a deadly wound that would be healed. Rev. 13:3. Was the wound healed? Almost! In 1929, with the signing of the Lateran Treaty, the Pope regained sovereign rule over Vatican City. Interesting that it should be signed by a Fascist dictator (Benito Mussolini) that wanted to restore the Roman Empire and had ties to Hitler! No wonder the Vatican refuses to release its WWII files to the Jews! In act, the history of the 20th century is replete with unholy alliances like the ones mentioned above, i.e., the Ustashe of Croatia, Tojo and more recently, Pinochet! As Rome steadily regains her political power throughout the world, her wound closes up all the more.

6.) Will "wear out the saints of the Most High." Dan. 7:21 & 25. Rev. 13:7.

Can anyone doubt that this is true of the Papacy? From the Inquisition to the persecutions of the Waldenses the papacy may be appealed to in proof that this is applicable to that power. If anything could have "worn out the saints of the Most High," could have cut the saints off from the earth so that evangelical religion would have become extinct, it would have been the persecutions of the papal power. In the year 1208, a crusade was proclaimed by Pope Innocent III against the Waldenses and Albigenses, in which a million men perished. From the begin-

ning of the Order of the Jesuits, between the year 1540 to 1580, nine hundred thousand were destroyed. One hundred and fifty thousand perished during the thirty years of the Inquisition. In the low countries fifty thousand persons were hanged, beheaded, burned, and buried alive for the crime of heresy within a space of thirty eight years, resulting from the edict of Charles V against the Protestants. Eighteen thousand suffered by the hand of the executioner in a space of five and a half years during the administration of the Duke of Alva. Indeed, the slightest acquaintance with the history of the papacy will convince anyone that what the Bible says of "making war with the saints" and "wearing out the saints of the Most High" is strictly applicable to that power, and will accurately describe its true character.

The practices mentioned above are known as Genocide! Christ says, "I stand at the door and knock:" He wants our allegiance to be founded upon love not force!

7.) Will have the "number of a man" - 666. Rev. 13:18.

The title of the Pope reads: "Vicarius Filii Dei", that is, "In place of the Son of God." Other than the fact that this is blasphemy (calling yourself God), in the languages of the Bible, Latin, Hebrew and Greek, the various descriptive titles identifying the Papacy add up to 666. (Letters without numerical value are considered 0 in the Latin language).

| | | |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| V = 5 | F = 0 | D = 500 |
| I = 1 | I = 1 | E = 0 |
| C = 100 | L = 50 | <u>I = 1</u> |
| A = 0 | I = 1 | = 501 |
| R = 0 | <u>I = 1</u> | |
| I = 1 | = 53 | |
| U = 5 | | |
| <u>S = 0</u> | | |
| = 112 | | |

In the language of the New Testament, Greek, we have:

(An "accented" Ê=8 - a regular E=5)

HÊ LATINÊ BASILEIA = The Latin Kingdom

H=0 Ê=8

Λ=30 A=1 T=300 I=10 N=50 Ê=8

B=2 A=1 Σ=200 I=10 Λ=30 E=5 I=10 A=1

TOTAL=666

ITALIKA EKKLĒSIA= Italian Church
 I=10 T=300 A=1 Λ=30 I=10 K=20 A=1
 E=5 K=20 K=20 L=30 Ê=8 Σ=200 I=10 A=1 TOTAL=666
 LATEINOS = Latin Speaking Man
 Λ=30 A=1 T=300 E=5 I=10 N=50 O=70 Σ=200 TOTAL=666
 In Hebrew, it comes out the same:
 Romiith= Roman Kingdom
 ר=200 י=6 מ=40 י=10 ן=10 ן=400 TOTAL=666

Please notice that these are the same three languages used by Pontius Pilot to identify Christ. It is not just a coincidence that these same languages would identify the antichrist!

Revelation 13 tells us that this same beast power and “an image” to it will reign at the close of this earth's history, but many maintain that the papacy has changed, it was only a victim of the “barbaric times” in which she reigned.” So, has the Papacy really changed its ideas? Malachi Martin, a Vatican insider, wrote in *Keys of this Blood* (1991)...that John Paul II "served notice that he intended to take up and effectively exercise once more the international role that had been central to the tradition of Rome...For 1500 years and more, Rome had kept as strong a hand as possible in each local community around the wide world" (pg 22, paperback edition). John Paul scans "the society of nations with a new eye toward a purpose that is as old as the papacy itself" (ibid., 24). Care to guess what this purpose might be? World dominion, to "wield the dual power of authority and control over each one of us as individuals and over all of us together as a community" (ibid., 14). Rome will never change!

The Second Beast of Revelation 13

The second beast of Revelation 13 is said to make an image to the first beast: “He exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed . . . And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” Rev. 13:12; 16.

Who is this second beast? Let’s consider the evidence:

1.) The second beast rises up out of the “earth” as opposed to the “sea” where the first beast of Revelation 13 and the four beasts of Daniel 7 come

from. According to Revelation 17:15 waters represent “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” The earth by contrast would obviously speak of a place very sparsely populated - a place where no nation had previously risen from.

2.) This beast rises around the same time that the first beast receives its “deadly wound.” This, as we have discussed previously happened in 1798. What country was coming into power during this period that would later become a prominent player in world history and the most powerful country ever? The United States; The Revolutionary war ended in 1783 and the U.S. Constitution formally went into effect March 1, 1789.

Of this second beast, Revelation 13 says, “he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.” vs. 11.

Horns, as we have already discovered, indicate various powers. In the U.S. Constitution, we are guaranteed (The first ten amendments are called the “Bill of Rights”) separation of church and state and with it the liberty to choose what and how we worship. The two horns of power in the U.S. upon her ascendancy were Republicanism and Protestantism.

With religious freedom you will always have freedom of conscience. The first beast of Revelation 13, the papacy, said of this “unalienable right”: “The absurd and erroneous doctrines or ravings in defense of liberty of conscience are a most pestilential error - a pest, of all others, to be most dreaded in a state.” Pope Pius IX, 8-15-1854.

Have things changed?

On June 7, 1982, Pope John Paul II, said to be the most seen and popular man in history (...all the world wondered...), and President Ronald Reagan formed an alliance to bring about the fall of the Soviet empire. This was the first such alliance in history between the Protestant U.S. and the papacy! All of Reagan’s key administration people were devout Roman Catholics. (TIME, 2-24-92).

Of the second beast, the Protestant U.S., we read, “...he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.” Rev. 13:12. The second beast (the U.S.) will enforce the dogma of the first (Rome); the mark of her power! Is it just a coincidence that the leaders of the two key players at the end of time, Ronald Reagan and Pope John Paul II, would be united and suffer a deadly wound that would be healed only six weeks apart?

Revelation 17

[All print in brackets is supplied by author]

Now that we have an understanding of some of the symbols used in prophecy, we can unlock the meaning of Revelation 17. For those symbols we have not covered already, their scripture references will be included in the explanatory brackets.

1. And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgement of the great whore [impure church - A women in prophecy represents a church - See Jeremiah 6:2 and Ephesians 5:24-27.] that sitteth upon many waters: [see verse 15; she controls the multitudes & nations.]

2. With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication [political alliances - the Vatican has many political ties to various countries and adds more all the time. In the U.S., on the Sunday before the first Monday of October, the Catholic church holds the "Annual Red Mass" for the Supreme Court to bring "blessings" to the work. *U.S.A. Today*, 10-04-98.], and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication [mysteries (of iniquity), traditions & false doctrines].

3. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast [scarlet represents sin, see Isa. 1:18], full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. [See verse 9.]

4. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour [the colors in the attire of her leadership], and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand [the vessels of her rituals and a representation of her extreme wealthiness] full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:

5. And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

6. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. [a murderous & persecuting church]

7. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

8. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition [She will fully recover from her wound to her former brilliance, before final destruction; compare text with Rev. 13:4.]: and they

that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

9. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. [Mountains represent spiritual nations; seven is the number of completion. Rome is already bringing together, with a great ecumenical movement, the various denominations. She will have power over all of the apostate churches.]

10. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. [This is to be discerned in two ways: 1.) From the signing of the Lateran Treaty that returned political power and statehood to the papacy until now, five popes have died: Pius XI, 1922-1939; Pius XII, 1939-1958; John XXIII, 1958-1963; Paul VI, 1963-1978; John Paul I, 1978 (2 1/2 months); This makes John Paul II the one that is, therefore, he is the one John the Revelator wants us to notice. 2.) The nations that have risen that have had a direct influence on God's covenant people (the Bible is not a secular history book therefore, it does not include every nation that ever existed!): Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecia, Rome, and Papal Rome - this makes the United States the one that is. Both the first and second beasts of Revelation 13 are brought forward in this prophecy.]

11. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. [The eighth king is the revived beast of papal Rome and will see destruction.]

12. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings [world powers at large - ten is a number of Universal law (as the ten commandments are the law of the universe) or allegiance], which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast [still future].

13. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength [One world order and a great ecumenical movement] unto the beast.

14. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

15. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. [She controls them through world governments.]

16. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. [They will finally turn against her.]

17. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom [One world order and the ecumenical movement] unto the beast,

until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

18. And the woman [the church] which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth [With prophetic insight into the future, John was unmistakably telling us about the church of Rome and the nations that she would have power over].

The Mark of the Beast

Now that we are fully aware of who the beast is, we can discern her mark. We will start with Revelation 13:15:

“And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not *worship* the image of the beast should be killed.”

And then Rev. 14:9-10:

“And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man *worship* the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.”

In both instances where the “mark of the beast” is mentioned, *it is in connection with worship*. (See also Rev. 16:2, 19:20 and 20:4) Also notice that for those that follow the beast the punishment is (eternal) death and that those with the mark of the beast will want to punish (kill) those who follow God.

The entire controversy between Christ and Satan is over worship. This all Christians should agree with:

Isaiah 4:13-14 says, “For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.” Satan desires our worship; he desires exaltation; he desires the place of God. Like Satan, it is said of the “antichrist” power that, “he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god.” Daniel 11:36.

In Genesis 4, we have a great illustration of this controversy that is an “archetype” of what will come in the very near future:

“And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.” Gen. 4:3-4.

God had very obviously given Cain and Able specific instructions in regard to how He desired His worship services to be conducted. Able followed the instructions of God, but Cain thought to do it his way. God did not accept his form of worship and thus Cain became angry. In Gen. 4:8 we see that Cain kills Able after some conversation.

In Gen. 4:15, we read, “And the Lord set a *mark* upon Cain...”

(Please notice this parallel: In Revelation 13:15, those who receive the mark of the beast will want to kill those who follow God just as Cain, who received a mark, killed Able because Able followed God.)

The word translated here to “mark” is the Hebrew word “owth.” This is Strong’s #266 which means a “*signal*.” This same word is used in other places throughout the Old Testament:

“Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a *sign* between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I *am* the LORD that doth sanctify you.” Exo. 31:13.

“Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a *sign* between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.” Exo. 31:16-17.

“Hallow my Sabbaths; and they shall be a *sign* between me and you, that ye may know that I *am* the LORD your God.” Eze. 20:20.

In the above verses, the Hebrew word “owth” was translated to “sign.” ***In all three cases, and many others in the bible, it is in connection with the keeping of the sabbath.*** God says that the sabbath is ***His sign*** and, of course, it is an integral part of the ***worship*** of God.

In the New Testament, we also read about God’s signal. The New Testament is not in Hebrew, therefore, the Hebrew word “owth” cannot be found. In the new Testament other words are used to delineate the term signal.

Before we go on, we must first remember that, just as the words “sign” and “mark” are used interchangeably in the Old Testament, the words “seal” and “sign” are used interchangeably in the New Testament; Please note the following: “And he received the *sign* of circumcision, a *seal* of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised.” Rom. 4:11. The definition given in *Strong’s Concordance of the Bible* is basically the same for mark, sign and seal.

In Revelation 7, we read about seal of God:

“And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the *seal* of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea,

nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.”
Rev. 7:2-3.

The word here translated to “seal” is the Greek word “sphragis.” This is Strong’s #4973 - “a *signet*. (as fencing in or protecting from misappropriation); the *stamp* impressed as a *mark* of privacy or genuineness.”

The people that have this seal are God’s people - they have a genuine faith and follow Christ’s example of perfect obedience to His Father’s commandments: “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” Rom. 6:16.

There are two classes of people at the end: those with the seal of God and those who have the mark of the beast. To this end, the Bible says, “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Rev. 14:12.

So, what is the “seal of God?” In the Old Testament, we have already seen that God’s sign is the Sabbath. But, we can also think about this: God always uses the earthly to explain the spiritual. The seal of an earthly king gives his name, office and dominion. This can be found for our Heavenly King in His fourth commandment:

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day *is* the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates: For in six days the LORD (*name*) made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them *is* (*office - Creator of heaven and earth and thus Ruler of all*), and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.” Exodus 20:8-11.

Since the seal of God can be found in the keeping of the true day of worship, His seventh day Sabbath, then likewise, the mark of the beast will be found in the opposite - a false sabbath day.

There are two days on which Christians keep as a holy day: Saturday, the seventh day - the last day of the week, and, at the opposite end, Sunday, the first day of the week.

Nowhere in the sacred oracles can we find any authority for a change in the day of worship. Since this is one of the ten commandments, if there was to be a change, it would have been made very clear!

Her Mark: Catholicism Speaks

“Question: Have you any other way of proving that the (Catholic)

Church has power to institute festivals of precept?" (to create a holy day)
"Answer: Had she not such power, she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scripture authority." Stephan Keenan, *A Doctrinal Catechism*, p. 176.

"Protestants accept Sunday rather than Saturday as the day for public worship after the Catholic Church made the change...But the Protestant mind does not seem to realize that...in observing Sunday, they are accepting the authority of the spokesman for the church, the Pope." *Our Sunday Visitor*, February 5, 1950.

"We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday." Peter Geiermann, CSSR, *A Doctrinal Catechism*, 1957 Edition, p. 50.

"Sunday is a Catholic institution, and the claims to its observance can be defended only on Catholic principles...From beginning to end of Scripture, there is not a single passage that warrants the transfer of weekly public worship from the last day of the week to the first." *The Catholic Press*, Sydney, Australia, August, 1990.

"The *observance of Sunday* by the Protestants is an *homage they pay* in spite of themselves *to the authority of the Catholic church.*" Monsignor Louis Segur, *Plain Talk about the Protestantism of Today*, p. 213.

"The Catholic Church, for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday." *The Catholic Mirror*.

"Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act, and the act is a *mark* of her ecclesiastical authority in religious things." H.F. Thomas, Chancellor of Cardinal Gibbons.

"Sunday is our *mark* of authority. The Church is above the Bible, and this transference of the Sabbath observance is proof of that fact." *The Catholic Record*, London.

Protestantism Speaks

Presbyterian: "There is no word, no hint in the New Testament about abstaining from work on Sunday. The observance of Ash Wednesday, or Lent stands exactly on the same footing as the observance of Sunday. Into the rest of Sunday, no divine law enters." Canon Eyton, on *The Ten Commandments*.

Southern Baptist: "The sacred name of the Seventh day is Sabbath. This fact is too clear to require argument (Exodus 20:10 quoted)...On this point the plain teaching of the Word has been admitted in all ages. Not once did the dis-

ciples apply the Sabbath law to the first day of the week - that folly was left for a later age, nor did they pretend that the first day supplanted the seventh." Joseph Judson Taylor, *The Sabbath Question*, pp. 14:17, 41.

Baptist: "Of course I quite well know that Sunday did come into use in early Christian history as a religious day, as we learned from the Christian fathers and other sources. But what a pity that it comes branded with the *mark* of paganism and christened with the name of the *sungod*, then adopted and sanctified by the Papal apostasy, and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism." Dr. E.T. Hiscox, report of his sermon at the Baptist Minister's Convention in *New York Examiner*.

When the dogma of Sunday worship is enforced, binding men to a religious law in opposition to God's Holy Law in the fourth commandment, Sunday observance becomes the mark of the beast.

The Origin of Sunday "Sacredness" - The First Sunday Law

Sunday wasn't kept as a "Christian holy day" until after the "Sabbatical Edict" given by Emperor Constantine in 321 AD. It was at this time that the reigning Pope "transferred the solemnity" of the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first. Eusebius, Constantine's good friend and eulogist in Rome at the time this transpired, wrote, "All things whatsoever that it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord's Day." (*Eusebius Commentary on the Psalms - Psalm 92*).

The law reads in part: "Let all the judges and town people, and the occupation of all trades rest on the venerable day of the sun." March 7, 321 A.D.

A few years after this law was passed by Constantine it was to become part of the church canon at the council of Laodicea (335 A.D.). His Sunday law then became an enforced Christian institution!

No early Christian ever even hints that you should not keep the Sabbath!

In 177 AD Irenaeus, in his book entitled *Against Heresies*, writes about Christ and the Sabbath and states the following: "For He did not make void, but fulfilled the law" and calls it "the true Sabbath of the righteous." This plainly shows that the early Christians knew that they had to keep the law of God, including the Seventh-day Sabbath.

Sunday sacredness was a Roman and Alexandrian tradition and nothing more. Socrates Scholasticus, who wrote a church history in the fifth century A.D. says, "For although almost all churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the sabbath of every week, yet the Christians of Alexandria and Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, have ceased to do this." *Eccl. Hist.*,

The “Lord’s Day” in Revelation not Sunday

All of the Apostles used the term “first day of the week” to describe Sunday. John, in the Revelation says, “I was in the spirit on the Lord’s day,” but after returning from exile on Patmos where he received this vision, when he wrote his version of the Gospel, he referred to Sunday simply as “the first day of the week.” The seventh day is the Lord’s day, the true sabbath of Christianity; it is the day He blessed and sanctified.

The term “Lord’s day” to describe Sunday was coined by Tertullian at the beginning of the third century A.D., about 170 years after Christ was crucified!

A Call to Return to Apostolic Purity

“And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.” Isa. 58:12.

All of the prophecies throughout the Bible are written for our time - the time of the end: “...they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” 1 Cor. 10:11.

The above prophecy from Isaiah tells us that God’s last day people would have to restore the “paths to dwell in.”

Over the centuries, with the mixing of paganism and Christianity, the ways of righteousness have been lost. A breach of contract has occurred in our covenant relationship with God. What is this breach? Says Isaiah: “If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” Isa. 58:13-14.

The only commandment that begins with the word “Remember” has been replaced and forgotten.

The seventh day Sabbath is the “seal of God.” In it, just as in any governmental seal, we see His name: “the Lord thy God”; His dominion: “heaven and Earth”; and His office: “Creator.”

Of God’s last day people we read, “Here is the patience of the saints:

here are they that keep the commandments of God, **and** the faith of Jesus.” Rev. 14:12.

It is not enough just to believe, we must keep God’s commandments. “faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?” James 2:17-20.

Questions Answered

What about grace?

We all realize that we are saved by grace through faith in Christ Jesus alone, there is no question of that.

Because of this, many feel that we are now living in the dispensation of grace and that we are saved in our sins. The truth is, grace began at the fall of man. Genesis 6:8 says, “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.” Noah was not a sinless man, or he would have been translated like Enoch. **Noah was saved by grace.** Grace is not something that saves us in sin, rather it is forgiveness for our sins. When Jesus forgave the harlot, He didn’t leave her with the idea that it was okay to continue in sin. He said, “go, and sin no more.” John 8:11.

Do we still use the teachings of the Old testament?

Some say that we no longer use or need the teachings contained within the Old Testament. However the early **Christian church was established** on the precepts of the **Old Testament.** Simply, there was no New Testament for the Apostles to teach from. The New Testament as we know it did not exist until some time around the fourth century. While the four Gospels and the various letters that the Apostles wrote were also widely circulated throughout the early Christian churches “Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three **Sabbath** days reasoned with them **out of the scriptures,**” not the letters of the Apostles. Again, what scriptures? The only ones available, the Old Testament! (Notice also that Paul, as did all of the New Testament writers, kept the Sabbath!) Acts 17:2.

Paul stated that the Bereans “were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and *searched the scriptures* daily, whether those things were so.” Acts 17:11. What scriptures? The Old Testament.

Are we still “under the law?”

Since the Christian church was set up on the teachings of Christ (which were based on His words in the Old Testament) *and the Old Testament scriptures*, we must take into consideration this text from Isaiah. “*To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*” Isa. 8:20. (Christ’s own words would be tested by the scriptures that He inspired!)

Paul could not and did *not* teach contrary to the Law of God. He says, “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: *yea, we establish the law.*” Rom. 3:31

So, are we still under the law? NO! Paul says, “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.” Rom. 6:14.

Praise God! But lets read further on and let Paul clear up the matter himself. (15) “What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.” (16) “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; *whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?*” Obedience to what? The law of God!

We are justified and forgiven under the grace of God, but a true Christian will no longer purposefully commit sin: “*For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,* But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.” Heb. 10:26-27.

Paul further states in Rom. 6:1-2, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”

So, what is sin anyway?

Here is the Biblical definition of sin: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for *sin is the transgression of the law.*” I John

3:4. What law? The 10 commandments! Is there still sin? YES! How do we know what sin is? Paul says, “Nay, I had not known sin, but *by the law*: for I had not known lust, except *the law had said* , Thou shalt not covet.” Rom. 7:7.

What was nailed to the cross?

In the New Testament we read about laws being nailed to the cross; is this a contradiction? NO.

Lets look at Colossians 2:13-17, “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; *Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us*, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, *nailing it to his cross*...Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”

This scripture is dealing with a different law than the one Paul was discussing with the Romans or else it is a contradiction. Since the scriptures do not contradict each other, we need to understand what law he is talking about.

“And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bear the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it *in the side of the ark of the covenant* of the LORD your God, that it may be there *for a witness against thee*.” Deut. 31:24-26.

The law of 10 commandments was kept *inside* the Ark (see Deut. 10:5), secondly, it was written on two *tables of stone* by the finger of God! This was the moral law, the law of God - so important that human hands were not allowed to write it.

The other law, actually a book of laws, was written by Moses, and it was kept in the side of the Ark. These were the laws of ordinances; the “laws of Moses.” Keep in mind also that the ten commandments are not against us, especially the Sabbath, it “was *made for man*.” Mark 2:27.

What was this law of ordinances for? “Wherefore then serveth the law? It was *added because of transgressions*, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.” Galatians 3:19. Added because of transgressions of what? The moral law of God! If there was no law, there could be no transgressions, no sin.

How was it against them? There were instant penalties for going against

it! Look at this text from Leviticus. “And the man that committeth adultery with another man’s wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.” Lev. 20:10. There are *no such penalties* attached to the 10 commandments! Again, the 10 Commandments are not against us, particularly the Sabbath - it was *made for man!*

Contained within the laws of Moses were many Sabbath days, Feast days, and Holy days. (Note: Leviticus 23:38 tells us that these were “Beside the sabbaths of the LORD.” There were six other “sabbath days” besides the seventh day Sabbath. These “Feast day Sabbaths” were a shadow of things to come whereas the seventh day Sabbath is a memorial to God’s creative power - that is “things past.”) The “feast day” sabbaths were all nailed to the cross; Again, this did not include the 10 commandments nor the Sabbath within which was instituted at creation.

Didn’t Christ do away with the ten commandments?

Some say that this verse is where Christ did away with the 10 commandments: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.” Matt. 5:17. The false notion is that the word “fulfill” means to do away with or to bring it to an end.

To this I ask, “Has righteousness been done away with?” Everyone knows it hasn’t! But look at this scripture: Jesus said, referring to His baptism by John, “Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us *to fulfil all righteousness*. Then he suffered him.” Matt. 3:15. “Fulfill” then, can not mean bring it to an end, but rather, to establish it. Again, Paul says, “*yea, we establish the law.*” Rom. 3:31.

Did Jesus replace the ten commandments?

Some say that the verse, “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another” (John 13:34), replaces the 10 commandments. Actually, this was not a new law. Let’s consider the following verse: Leviticus 19:18: “...thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself..” This is *not* actually a new commandment at all! So why did Jesus call it new? Simple! The Jews were keeping the law because they feared temporal loss and what their neighbor might think. God desires that His children keep His law because of love. Keeping the law due to love of their Lord would be **new to them!**

God does not want us to worship Him out of fear, if that were the case,

He could have destroyed Satan and his angels long ago, and all the universe would keep God's laws for fear, not for love.

God's laws are *not laws of restriction* (as the Jews then and Christians now believe); they are "*Laws of love.*" Christ says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Matt. 22:37,39,40.

What about the "New Covenant?"

There is a widespread misunderstanding of what constitutes a covenant.

A covenant is defined as, "an agreement between persons or parties." (ala Webster). A law is not a covenant, therefore *a covenant is not a law!* Webster defines law as, "a divine commandment, or a revelation of the will of God; collectively, the whole body of God's commandments." (2nd def. in Collegiate version).

God and the children of Israel made an agreement: "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:" Ex. 19:5. Their reply was, "All that the LORD hath spoken we will do." Exo. 19:8.

How did the law fit in? *If* they would keep His precepts, they would be His peculiar people. This two party agreement is a "covenant."

God has now made a new agreement (covenant) with us (which had to be explained to the Hebrews who still wanted to keep the ceremonial laws contained in ordinances): "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; *I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts:* and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:" Heb. 8:10.

The new covenant is written "*not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart*" (2 Cor. 3:3) and is ratified by the blood of Christ (as opposed to the blood of animal sacrifices in the old covenant).

They could not keep the law of God in their own power then, and we can not do it now, save in the power of Christ!

Were the ten commandments in force at creation?

Yes! For without the law Adam and Eve could not have sinned. Eve coveted and stole (Gen. 3:6). Cain killed Abel and then lied about it. God called these actions sin in Gen. 4:7-9. Remember, "Sin is the transgression of the law."

The seventh day Sabbath

The first time we see the Sabbath mentioned is in the creation narrative.

“And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.” Gen. 2:2-3.

Notice that it says He “*blessed and sanctified*” the seventh day. Sanctified, as we should all know, means set aside for Holy use. At Creation God set aside a certain day *long before there was a Jew* for man to rest from his earthly duties and devote his time to Holy things.

How do we know which day is the original Sabbath day?

After being in bondage, the Jews knew little of the Almighty. It is interesting that one of the first things that He taught them was about keeping the seventh day Sabbath holy. This lesson is described in Exodus 16.

For food the Lord sent manna. The Israelites could gather “an omer for every man...” (vs. 16). If they gathered more than they needed and tried to save it for morning, “it bred worms and stank.” (vs. 20). On the sixth day however, they were to gather “twice as much bread.” (vs. 22). This they could bake up and it would keep. (See vs. 24). Speaking of the manna, Moses informed them thus, “Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none.” (vs. 26). This event happened *before Sinai!*

The Jews have kept the Sabbath all throughout history from that time, thus eliminating the possibility of not knowing which day is the holy Sabbath day!

In many languages, such as the Spanish “Sabado,” the name for the seventh day is Sabbath!

What did the New Testament Christians do regarding the Sabbath?

Paul kept the Sabbath: “And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and *three Sabbath days* reasoned with them out of the scriptures.” Acts 17:2. The people that he was instructing in this chapter were Gentiles. We read in verse 4, “And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silus: and of devout *Greeks* a great multitude....” In Acts 18:4, we read, “And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the

Greeks.” Paul was in Corinth at least 18 months and never missed a sabbath. These new converts were now Christians and they were keeping the seventh day sabbath. It is very obvious that the Gentiles of the early Christian church kept the seventh day Sabbath. (See also, Acts 13:42, 44). It is well to keep in mind, that once a Jew or Gentile has accepted Christ, he is a Christian: “For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly...But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly.” Rom. 2:28-29. Paul was a Christian and so were his “students.”

If we then are grafted in, that is, have become God’s people, should we not “establish the law”? Of course.

I John 2:3 & 4 reads, “And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, **is a liar, and the truth is not in him.**”

Who wrote the ten commandments?

Jesus said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, ‘Before Abraham was, **I am.**” John 8:58.

“I Am” wrote the 10 commandments with His own finger! (See Exodus 3:14) It was He, Christ Jesus, that led the Jews out of bondage, just as He wants to lead modern Israel out of bondage today! He admonishes us thusly, “If you love me, keep my commandments.” John 14:15.

Didn’t Jesus break the Sabbath?

Many try to say that Jesus broke the Sabbath. This is ridiculous! That is what the Pharisees thought! The Jews had multitudes of trivial laws on keeping the Sabbath Holy. These were the doctrines of men, not of God.

Jesus said, “For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.” He further states, “It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days.” Matt. 12:8 & 12.

Jesus had to take on our fallen human nature and live a sinless life in order to make an atonement for us. He “...was in all points tempted like as we are, yet **without sin.**” Heb. 4:15. That is, ***He did not transgress the law***, for “***sin is transgression of the law!***” He could not break the fourth commandment and still be without sin.

A final thought.

As I ponder the writings of the many faiths opposed to keeping the seventh day Sabbath, I am brought to remember these texts in Ezekiel 8. “Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the LORD’S house which was

toward the north; and, behold, there sat women *weeping for Tammuz*. [today called Lent] Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see *greater abominations than these*. And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD'S house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and *they worshiped the sun toward the east*. "Eze. 8:14-16.

Throughout history, God has had His people keep the memorial to His creative powers; alas, they were seduced over and over again by the various cults of sun worship.

How can we even consider that God would want us to keep the day on which the heathen worshiped as His Holy Day? God wants us to be His peculiar treasure, *different from the world!*

It is amazing that the practice of Sunday worship should replace God's Sanctified Day!

Mark 7:7-9 reads, "*Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men...*Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.*"

Our rest is from *secular labors*, and the time is devoted to *Holy things!*

His commandments are not grievous: God's people love what the Lord has done! It is no problem to keep the Sabbath holy; it's a gift from heaven! God pours out special blessings on the Sabbath that are not available on other days.

Christ has made every provision for our salvation. Christ came and died that we might obtain victory over our sins. He came to save us *from our sins not in our sins!*

Revelation, in speaking of God's last day saints says, "*Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, AND the faith of Jesus.*" Rev. 14:12.

Come out of her my people

What most people don't seem to understand is the plain warnings given against following false doctrines. Christ tells us that most of the world will be deceived and follow after a system of false doctrines at the end time. Rev. 13:3 says, "All the world wondered after the beast." That is to say, most people will follow the ways of death. God shows us what is to come and exhorts us to "come out of her, my people." Rev. 18:4. This is the final warning, the very last invitation of mercy that God offers to mankind.

Babylon, in prophecy, represents confusion and defiance to God's will. The ancient Hebrews referred to Babylon as "balal," a word which means confusion. Babylon itself was established by Nimrod who built the tower of Babel in defiance to God's will; a monument to apostasy. God put a stop to this by confounding the languages of men. "Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did confound the language of all the earth" Gen. 11:9.

Revelation 18:1-8 "After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For *all nations* have drunk of the wine [her false doctrines & traditions] of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings [nations' leaders] of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, *come out of her my people*, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have

reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works, in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her."

Ecumenical movement not ordained in heaven

"And all the world wondered after the beast." Rev. 13:3. Protestant churches are now linking with the Catholic Church. We are putting aside our differences and uniting under the banner of false "love" instead of uniting in the truth as revealed in the Bible.

Revelation tells us that, "These have one mind." There will be a great universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan's forces which shall "give their power and strength unto the beast." (See Rev. 17:13-14) The apostate Protestant churches, like the papacy before them, will use secular authorities to enforce their dogma, thus forming an "image to the beast."

Warfare will be waged in the last days, and there will be united, in opposition to God's people, all the corrupt powers that have apostatized from allegiance to the law of Jehovah. In this warfare the Sabbath of the fourth commandment will be the great point at issue; for in the Sabbath commandment the great Lawgiver identifies Himself as the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

A message of love and warning from God Revelation 14:6-12

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgement is come: And worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine [false doctrines] of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, if any man worship the beast [the mother church now riding the beast - that is, the dogma of the harlot is being enforced by the nations at large] and his image, [separated daughters and supporting her Sunday legislation] and receive his *mark* in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the

wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the *mark* [SUNDAY WORSHIP] of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God [INCLUDING SATURDAY WORSHIP] and the faith of Jesus."

