

TELLING THE END FROM THE BEGINNING

Jesus Christ and His Apostles were convinced that the world would go from bad to worse, even to the point of self-annihilation. Here is an excerpt from one of Jesus' most explicit prophecies.

Mat 24:12 "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

Mat 24:13 "But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

Mat 24:14 "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and

Mat 24:21 then the end will come. "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the

Mat 24:22 beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened."

"Lawlessness will abound and the love of many will grow cold", now can anyone say that this is not true of our world today? Where in the world can one live now that would not be affected by lawlessness, coldness and hatred? Apostle Paul associated the end time with danger and lawlessness too.

2 Tim 3:1 "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:

2 Tim 3:2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to

2 Tim 3:3 parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of

2 Tim 3:4 good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

2 Tim 3:5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!"

And so did the other Apostles and most of the prophets of the Old Testament. Daniel even associated the disappearance of the people of God with the end of the world.

Dan 12:7 "Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished."

In other words, the time will come when there would be no room for the people of God in this world. Since Jesus Christ also said that His disciples are the salt of the earth, and that if the salt loses its flavor it is good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled under foot (Mat 5:13), it means that when the people of God disappear from the face of the earth, this world will bring catastrophe upon itself. Jesus Christ associated that time with a tribulation of such magnitude that no flesh would survive if it were not for the intervention of God Almighty.

Mat 24:21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this

Mat 24:22 time, no, nor ever shall be. "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened."

So while the people of God become scarcer and scarcer until none are left, the lawless ones multiply and grow worse until they bring catastrophe upon the whole world. Now we have a paradox here. For while the vast majority of people believe that we live in the last days, and that includes religious as well as secular people, the gospel that is being preached in the churches these days is one of steady growth, which is contrary to the scriptural sign for the end of this age.

It is customary for churches to begin their service with a report on church growth, and an eulogy to the ministers who draw more members to the church. Judging by the number of people that call themselves "Christians" – about a quarter of the world's population – this world is still a long way off from coming to an end. And yet, conditions in the world unmistakably point to the fact that this world is on its last legs. So what is the explanation?

While many people would agree that we live in the last days, few believe that the world is as bad as biblical prophecies make it. Surely this is a selfish generation and we have many problems in the world, but is the world really all that bad? Millions of people, who go to church on a regular basis, would hardly agree with that. For that would mean that they are not "holy people" or Christians. Which raises the question, could it be that these "believers" are like the ones mentioned in this passage from the book of Revelation?

Rev 3:14 "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:

Rev 3:15 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.

Rev 3:16 "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

Rev 3:17 "Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'; and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked;

Rev 3:18 "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that

Rev 3:19 you may see. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.

Rev 3:20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

Rev 3:21 "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with

Rev 3:22 My Father on His throne. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." "

These words come from the glorified Christ, and are addressed to the very last church mentioned in that book. That church therefore must be in our midst at this very moment. It does not mean that the other churches are not in the world at

present, for they may well be, or at least their remnants, but the descriptive words for each church indicate a chronological order more than a contemporaneous geographical existence. Compare for example the church mentioned above, the Laodicean Church, with the first church mentioned in the book of Revelation, the Ephesian Church.

Rev 2:1 "To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His
Rev 2:2 right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: "I know your works, your labor, your
patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are
not, and have found them liars;
Rev 2:3 "and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not
Rev 2:4 become weary. "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.
Rev 2:5 "Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you
quickly and remove your lampstand from its place; unless you repent.
Rev 2:6 "But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.
Rev 2:7 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to
eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

Notice the specific descriptors associated with each church. For the Church of Ephesus, Jesus Christ said that it has lost its first love, which is what you would expect from a first church, whereas for the Laodicean Church He said that He stood at the door, which is what He would say to the last church that should be ready to meet Him.

These people are wealthy and well fed, and think that they have need of nothing, when in fact they are spiritually slack, are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. In other words, these are the very people that would be thrust into the Great Tribulation so that they are purified, made white, and their nakedness covered.

Now consider the wider implication of this scenario. For while these people are living an indulgent life, two poor people, "clothed in sackcloth", are crying their heart out, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to a world that neither hears them nor accepts them (Rev.11:3; Mat 24:14). Now why would the lackluster Christians join the rest of humanity in rejecting their message and hounding them until they are killed, then rejoice over their death? Could this be the reason?

2 Cor 4:3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded,
2 Cor 4:4 who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them."

Our Gospel is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded. And who is the god of this age?

Luke 4:5 Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a
Luke 4:6 moment of time. And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has
been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.
Luke 4:7 "Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours."
Luke 4:8 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the
LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"

Satan said that the kingdoms of this world have been given to him and he gives them to whomever he wishes.

Now many churches, particularly those of a fundamentalist orientation, such as the Seventh Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses, have built their edifice upon this claim, yet this could easily be demonstrated to be false. Notice carefully, the kingdoms of this world, were not stolen by Satan, nor grabbed or usurped by him, but given to him. Jesus Christ could have quoted other Scriptures to disprove this claim, yet He let Satan believe that he is the god of this world.

Dan 2:20 "Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His.
Dan 2:21 And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And
knowledge to those who have understanding."

Dan 4:17 "This decision is by the decree of the watchers, And the sentence by the word of the holy ones, In order that the living
may know That the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, Gives it to whomever He will, And sets over it the lowest of men."

Dan 4:25 They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass
like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the
kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses."

Here we have at least four statements that prove it is the Most High who rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He wishes, not Satan. Nevertheless God let Satan veil people's minds about this truth. Satan then proceeded to set up a whole machinery of deception that included him posing as an angel of light and his servants as ministers of Christ.

2 Cor 11:13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.
2 Cor 11:14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his
2 Cor 11:15 ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works."

This explains why the millions of people who call themselves Christians in the end time do not accept the last two of God's true witnesses. They have been duped with a false gospel, their minds have been veiled by the wicked one to the truth of God, and are no longer able to recognize the Gospel of the Kingdom of God that is being preached by the two witnesses.

That there are millions of people in the world who worship God in one form or another right up to the end of the age cannot be denied, but that the deception of the world is complete by now and they worship a false god cannot be denied either.

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES

Conditions in the world are now virtually identical with those associated in the Bible with the end of this age. All prophecies leading to the Great Tribulation have been, or are in the process of being, fulfilled. These include:

- The preaching of the Gospel as a witness to all nations before the end comes (Mat 24:14);
- The striking of the world with unprecedented plagues, epidemics and "natural" disasters (Rev 11:6);
- The general falling away from the truth of God (2 Th 2:3);
- The preaching of false gospels and the appearance of widespread religious deceivers (Mat 24:11);
- The identification of the "abomination of desolation" and the holy place (Mat 24:15, 2 Th 2:3);
- The unveiling of biblical prophecies that deal specifically with the end of this age (Dan 12:4-13; Eph 3:5, Col 1:26), etc.

The most telling sign however that we are in the last days is the intolerable level of lawlessness that has made this world an extremely dangerous place to live in. There seems to be no place in the world where the people of God can retreat and lead a decent life anymore. Such being the case, you would think that preachers would be zealous to study the Scriptures and understand the will of God. And what does God want of them? To cry aloud the sins of their people and turn them back to God in order to save them from the trials of the Great Tribulation.

On September 15, 2001, during a memorial service in Washington's National Cathedral for the victims of the terrorist attack on Washington and New York four days earlier, attended by many dignitaries including the current and two former Presidents of the USA, the famous evangelist Billy Graham stirred his audience to attention by telling them: "I am sure you all want an answer to the question of why God allows these things to happen?" Then he stunned them by saying, "I really have no answer. Totally!"

Now if the man who has dedicated his life to preaching the Word of God does not have an answer to that fundamental question, who could have it? Is it possible that the Bible – declared by many holy people, including Jesus Christ, to be the inspired Word of God – would give us no answers to such a question? Would God leave His people in the dark about His work in the world? The Scriptures say that, "Surely the Lord God does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7). Why then do God's prophets not know His secrets anymore? All of Jesus' priests and ministers are prophets of God therefore one has to wonder why He has not revealed His secrets to those who claim to be His servants?

The Apostles expected God's people to grow in grace and knowledge until they acquire the mind of God.

2 Pet 3:17 You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own
2 Pet 3:18 steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

Phil 2:5 "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,
Phil 2:6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God".

And what mind was in Christ Jesus? The mind of God of course!

John 17:11 "Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We
John 17:19 are. "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.
John 17:20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;
John 17:21 "that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.
John 17:22 "And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:
John 17:23 "I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me."

Jesus Christ had the mind of God and was one with the Father, but He also wanted His followers to be one with Him and the Father, and be "sanctified by the truth". Now if we are in union with God and have the mind of God, and are sanctified by the truth, then we know His secrets and understand what He is doing in the world. God is telling us in his inspired Word, that whatever He does for His people it is for their own good.

Heb 13:5 "Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Rom 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."

Even the death of His people makes God happy: "Precious in the sight of the LORD Is the death of His saints" (Psa 116:15). This implies that the saints of God are made while still alive, not after death.

Now by the way Billy Graham handled that question, which no one asked him to answer in the first place, he revealed himself to be a bitter old man who holds a grudge against God for letting so many people die ahead of their time. He planted doubts in the minds of his audience about the goodness of God, and that is an unforgivable sin. Every evil word against God, every evil thought and intent against Him represent unforgivable blasphemies.

There are two reasons why God allows such tragedies occur in the life of human beings.

- 1) To test their faith.

1 Pet 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
 1 Pet 1:4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,
 1 Pet 1:5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
1 Pet 1:6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by
1 Pet 1:7 various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that
perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,
 1 Pet 1:8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy
 1 Pet 1:9 inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith; the salvation of your souls.
 1 Pet 1:10 Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that
 1 Pet 1:11 would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.
 1 Pet 1:12 To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven; things which angels desire to look into.
 1 Pet 1:13 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to
 1 Pet 1:14 be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves
 1 Pet 1:15 to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all
 1 Pet 1:16 your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

Heb 12:5 "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by
 Heb 12:6 Him; For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives."
 Heb 12:7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?
 Heb 12:8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate
 Heb 12:9 and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?
 Heb 12:10 For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we
 Heb 12:11 may be partaker of His holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.
 Heb 12:12 Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees,
 Heb 12:13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed."

2) To punish their sins.

Luke 13:1 There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answered and said to them,
 Luke 13:2 "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans,
 Luke 13:3 because they suffered such things? "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.
 Luke 13:4 "Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwell in Jerusalem?
 Luke 13:5 "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."
 Lev 26:1 'You shall not make idols for yourselves; neither a carved image nor a sacred pillar shall you rear up for yourselves; nor shall you set up an engraved stone in your land, to bow down to it; for I am the LORD your God.
 Lev 26:2 You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I am the LORD.
 Lev 26:3 'If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them, then I will give you rain in
 Lev 26:4 its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.
 Lev 26:5 Your threshing shall last till the time of vintage, and the vintage shall last till the time of sowing; you
 Lev 26:6 shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none will make you afraid; I will rid the land of evil beasts, and the sword will not go through your land.
 Lev 26:7 You will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you.
 Lev 26:8 Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; your enemies
 Lev 26:9 shall fall by the sword before you. 'For I will look on you favorably and make you fruitful, multiply you
 Lev 26:10 and confirm My covenant with you. You shall eat the old harvest, and clear out the old because of the
 Lev 26:11 new I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you.
 Lev 26:12 I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.
 Lev 26:13 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that you should not be their
 Lev 26:14 slaves; I have broken the bands of your yoke and make you walk upright. 'But if you do not obey Me,
 Lev 26:15 and do not observe all these commandments, and if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors
 Lev 26:16 My judgments, so that you do not perform all My commandments, but break My covenant, I also will do this to you: I will even appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart. And you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.
 Lev 26:17 I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies. Those who hate you shall reign over you, and you shall flee when no one pursues you.
 Lev 26:18 'And after all this, if you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins
 Lev 26:19 I will break the pride of your power; I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze.
 Lev 26:20 And your strength shall be spent in vain; for your land shall not yield its produce, nor shall the trees of
 Lev 26:21 the land yield their fruit. 'Then, if you walk contrary to Me, and are not willing to obey Me, I will bring

Lev 26:22 on you seven times more plagues, according to your sins. I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, destroy your livestock, and make you few in number; and your highways shall be
 Lev 26:23 desolate. 'And if by these things you are not reformed by Me, but walk contrary to Me,
 Lev 26:24 then I also will walk contrary to you, and I will punish you yet seven times for your sins.
 Lev 26:25 And I will bring a sword against you that will execute the vengeance of the covenant; when you are gathered together within your cities I will send pestilence among you; and you shall be delivered into the hand of the
 Lev 26:26 enemy. When I have cut off your supply of bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall bring back your bread by weight, and you shall eat and not be satisfied.
 Lev 26:27 'And after all this, if you do not obey Me, but walk contrary to Me,
 Lev 26:28 then I also will walk contrary to you in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.
 Lev 26:29 You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters.
 Lev 26:30 I will destroy your high places, cut down your incense altars, and cast your carcasses on the lifeless
 Lev 26:31 forms of your idols; and My soul shall abhor you. I will lay your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries to desolation, and I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas.
 Lev 26:32 I will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it.
 Lev 26:33 I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and
 Lev 26:34 your cities waste. Then the land shall enjoy its Sabbaths as long as it lies desolate and you are in your enemies' land; then the land shall rest and enjoy its Sabbaths.
 Lev 26:35 As long as it lies desolate it shall rest; for the time it did not rest on your Sabbaths when you dwelt in it.
 Lev 26:36 'And as for those of you who are left, I will send faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; the sound of a shaken leaf shall cause them to flee; they shall flee as though fleeing from a sword, and they
 Lev 26:37 shall fall when no one pursues. They shall stumble over one another, as it were before a sword, when
 Lev 26:38 no one pursues; and you shall have no power to stand before your enemies. You shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.
 Lev 26:39 And those of you who are left shall waste away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; also in their
 Lev 26:40 fathers' iniquities, which are with them, they shall waste away. 'But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, with their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, and that they also have walked
 Lev 26:41 contrary to Me, and that I also have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of
 Lev 26:42 their enemies; if their uncircumcised hearts are humbled, and they accept their guilt; then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and My covenant with Isaac and My covenant with Abraham I will remember; I will remember the land.
 Lev 26:43 The land also shall be left empty by them, and will enjoy its sabbaths while it lies desolate without them; they will accept their guilt, because they despised My judgments and because their soul abhorred My statutes.
 Lev 26:44 Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, nor shall I abhor them, to utterly destroy them and break My covenant with them; for I am the LORD their God.
 Lev 26:45 But for their sake I will remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of
 Lev 26:46 Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am the LORD." These are the statutes and judgments and laws which the LORD made between Himself and the children of Israel on Mount Sinai by the hand of Moses."

Now have any of these punishments fallen upon ancient Israel? Not just some, but all of them!

Dan 9:1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over
 Dan 9:2 the realm of the Chaldeans; in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.
 Dan 9:3 Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting,
 Dan 9:4 sackcloth, and ashes. And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His
 Dan 9:5 commandments, we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by
 Dan 9:6 departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. "Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land.
 Dan 9:7 "O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face, as it is this day; to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You.
 Dan 9:8 "O Lord, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You.
 Dan 9:9 "To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him.
 Dan 9:10 "We have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by
 Dan 9:11 His servants the prophets. "Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him.
 Dan 9:12 "And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to
 Dan 9:13 Jerusalem. "As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth.
 Dan 9:14 "Therefore the LORD has kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for the LORD our God is righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice.
 Dan 9:15 "And now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made Yourself a name, as it is this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly!

Dan 9:16 "O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and
Dan 9:17 Your people are a reproach to all those around us. "Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and for the Lord's sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate.
Dan 9:18 "O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and see our desolations, and the city which is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because
Dan 9:19 of Your great mercies. "O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name."

All the things that happened to ancient Israel are example for us today.

1 Cor 10:1 Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud,
1 Cor 10:2 all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,
1 Cor 10:3 all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink.
1 Cor 10:4 For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.
1 Cor 10:5 But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.
1 Cor 10:6 Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they
1 Cor 10:7 also lusted. And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."
1 Cor 10:8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell;
1 Cor 10:9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents;
1 Cor 10:10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer.
1 Cor 10:11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come."

Did you notice? "All these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come". The whole world knows that we live in the end times, a fact confirmed by anyone who cares to admit the true condition of the world and the truth about the environment. The world eco-systems are simply not able to sustain for much longer the burdens that are being placed upon them. Hundreds of species disappear from the face of the earth every year – a rate that will leave the earth denuded of life in a near future. It will not be long before human beings themselves begin to feel the pressure and apply the law of the survival of the fittest, which they have so enthusiastically, but foolishly, embraced in the last couple of centuries or so.

Apostle Paul believed that the "ends of the ages" would come in his time. Well, he got it wrong by a couple of thousand of years, but now the signs are much too obvious that the end will come in this generation, the strongest pointer being the astonishing prophetic developments that are occurring before our very eyes. This should be of concern to every human being, because the sins that caused the fall of ancient Israel are rampant in the whole world today, particularly in the United States of America. This is what we wrote a decade ago in the very first edition of *The Christian Herald*.

"At the beginning of the current Middle Eastern crisis, President Bush [senior] said that the Middle East represented an area of vital interest to the United States and its allies. The invasion of Kuwait by Iraqi forces posed a direct threat to that interest and as a result a concerted military campaign was organized with the participation of a surprisingly large number of countries.

President Bush went on to say that the world had entered an "era of promise, freedom and peace", and that a new world order was being established in which acts of "naked aggression" like the one perpetrated by Saddam Hussein against Kuwait would not be appeased as was Hitler's aggression against his neighbors that led to the Second World War.

Promising words from the leader of the world's greatest power, and worthy of praise if he remains consistent, but so far he has not explained why one aggression is worse than another. Saddam Hussein, the darling of the West when he invaded Iran, became its foe when he invaded Kuwait. It seems that in this new world order aggression is allowed against some countries but not against others, depending on whether they are friends or foes of the USA.

Neither did President Bush explain since when is the Middle Eastern oil vital to the survival of the U.S.A. and its allies, for no doubt oil is what he had in mind when he spoke of their vital interest. Would these countries perish if a quarter of the Middle Eastern oil were cut off? Would any nation perish if all the oil from this region were to be cut off - a most unlikely occurrence anyway? To be sure, there would be major disruptions to many countries' economies and life-styles – not a bad development as far as the environment is concerned – but no nation would perish as a result of it, certainly not the U.S.A. and its allies, most of which still have substantial energy resources of their own plus supplies from other areas of the world. No, the current Middle Eastern military campaign has an entirely different objective of which most of its participants are not even aware. But more of this later, now let us find out what is the USA's truly vital interest.

In a front page article, in one of Australia's major newspapers (*Sydney Morning Herald*, August 10, 1990), a journalist described what he discovered when he inquired about the latest in children's computer programs. What appeared at first sight to be a seemingly innocuous article, of interest mainly to the younger generation, turned out to be neither innocuous nor childish, but a grisly saga of unspeakable abominations and perversions that sent shivers through one's body. Here is part of what he wrote:

"Without much trouble, I arranged a meeting this week with a young man who prefers to be known by his nom-de-modem of Crud. I was shown a selection which ranged from shots of 'Penthouse' centerfolds to the latest

La Cicciolina movie (The Rise and Fall of a Roman Empress) to Animal House, which features unspeakable acts with dogs, donkeys and chickens, to 'interactive party games' in which the player(s) can compete... The kids don't need access to the family video, they can do it in the privacy of their bedrooms... anyone who knows how to use a computer and a modem can obtain this stuff, and parents wouldn't have a clue."

One might have expected that such a story would have stirred to action the custodians of society's moral and spiritual standards, but one would have been very disappointed if he thought that way. Not a voice of concern from a preacher, a Member of Parliament, an educationist, a community leader, or from the ordinary people. These people's feelings have been dulled to such an extent by the fall in moral standards that nothing shocks them anymore. The religious leaders (in most countries but especially in America) are busy preaching week by week, telling people what they want to hear, instead of what they ought to hear, feeding themselves instead of feeding the flock (Eze.34: 8). Is it any wonder that national leaders are blind to their countries' true vital interests?

One would be excused in hoping that perhaps what the journalist described was an isolated case in some sleepy suburb of Sydney, but he would be very wrong again if he thought that way. The young man's computer was connected to an international network distributed from, where else but - you guessed it - the United States of America:

"Most of the material is taken from an overseas network of bulletin boards - there is much demand for the output of a military installation in the US Mid-West where bored computer operators create much of the raunchier electro-porn... 'There is no control over it at all,' said Crudd..."

No, there is no control over it at all, nobody cares what happens to our younger generation anymore. No one cares what kind of adults they will grow up to be with that kind of garbage in their minds, for once it is fixed in there it cannot be taken out. The people who created such despicable programs are now in the Middle East, trying to right the wrongs of the Arabs and perhaps impart to them some of their precious knowledge. Any wonder that some of the Arabs protest against the Americans, saying that they are polluting their holy places simply by being there.

The United States of America has become the most, morally and spiritually, polluted land on earth. They glorify homosexuality, bestiality, Satanism, adultery, teenage promiscuity, crime, theft and blasphemies, in movies that are then exported to every corner of the earth. Everything God condemns in the Bible they do and encourage others to do too. And now the children, the last frontier as it is, they too have to be corrupted and infested with these unspeakable abominations through the insidious use of modern technology. And as if it is not enough to do it to their own people, they are forcing other nations to adopt their norms and lifestyle too. These days, in order to be in the good grace of the USA, you must allow your people the same kind of "freedoms" they allow to their people, otherwise you are not a good friend.

For more than two centuries, the U.S.A. and the British Commonwealth have been the beneficiaries of the greatest of God's blessings. These countries have well and truly been "flowing with milk and honey", a promise made by the Almighty to those nations that obeyed His voice and kept His commandments. Until recent times they seemed to be good examples to the world too, with a work ethic and spiritual values that were worthy of emulation. Their pioneers gave us the term, "Puritan work ethic", and zealously tried to make the Word of God the foundation of their living.

These nations also produced and exported most of the Bibles of this world, and were always ready to help others less fortunate or who fell on hard times. But what has happened to them lately is nothing short of astonishing. They have fallen into a deep morass from which there seems to be no way out. Their obsessive emphasis on personal freedoms and "human rights" is threatening the very fabric of their society. Freedom without responsibility, without decency, without God, is no freedom at all; it is enslavement to one's uncontrolled passions and desires, and to Satan's clever devices and deceptions.

The Bible, the unshakable Word of God, has preserved for us the example of those nations that have defiled themselves with the kind of pollutions that are now rampant in the western world, and especially the USA. God made it clear that there is a heavy penalty for such depravity, even to the point of national annihilation.

Lev 18:22 'You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination.

Lev 18:23 'Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It is perversion.

Lev 18:24 'Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you.

Lev 18:25 'For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out

Lev 18:26 its inhabitants. 'You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations, either any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you '(for all these abominations

Lev 18:27 the men of the land have done, who were before you, and thus the land is defiled),

Lev 18:28 'lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you.

Lev 18:29 'For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit them shall be cut off from among their people.

Lev 18:30 'Therefore you shall keep My ordinance, so that you do not commit any of these abominable customs which were committed before you, and that you do not defile yourselves by them: I am the LORD your God."

Can President Bush see now where his nation's truly vital interest lies? Does he realize the danger in which he finds himself, and the catastrophe that is about to engulf his nation and the world?

If he does, he ought to take quick measures to rectify it, for the conditions are all set for the most spectacular fall in the history of the world. That this coincides with the fast approaching Great Tribulation that will change the face of the earth should make it that much more obvious that the nations of this world in general, and the U.S.A. in particular, are about to face the truth and consequences of their way of life." (*The Christian Herald* No 1, p. 22).

Have things changed since then? Hardly! If anything they are worse now. So should Billy Graham be surprised that God allowed that tragedy to fall upon his people? He knows about God's warnings not only from

the Bible, which we assume he has read sometimes, but also from our magazines, for we have sent them to him and to thousands of other religious and secular leaders from around the world. We have done what God required of us, and what His people have always done.

Isa 58:1 "Cry aloud, spare not; Lift up your voice like a trumpet; Tell My people their transgression, And the
Isa 58:2 house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek Me daily, And delight to know My ways, As a nation that did righteousness, And did not forsake the ordinance of their God. They ask of Me the ordinances of justice; They take delight in approaching God.
Isa 58:3 'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and You have not seen? Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?' "In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, And exploit all your laborers.
Isa 58:4 Indeed you fast for strife and debate, And to strike with the fist of wickedness. You will not fast as you
Isa 58:5 do this day, To make your voice heard on high. Is it a fast that I have chosen, A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, And to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast,
Isa 58:6 and an acceptable day to the LORD? "Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of
Isa 58:7 wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free. And that you break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh?
Isa 58:8 Then your light shall break forth like the morning, Your healing shall spring forth speedily, And your
Isa 58:9 righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.' "If you take away the yoke from your midst,
Isa 58:10 The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, If you extend your soul to the hungry And satisfy the afflicted soul, Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, And your darkness shall be as the noonday.
Isa 58:11 The LORD will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.
Isa 58:12 Those from among you Shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.
Isa 58:13 "If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, From doing your pleasure on My holy day, And call the Sabbath a delight, The holy day of the LORD honorable, And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, Nor finding your own pleasure, Nor speaking your own words,
Isa 58:14 Then you shall delight yourself in the LORD; And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the LORD has spoken."
Isa 59:1 Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear.
Isa 59:2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So
Isa 59:3 that He will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, And your fingers with iniquity; Your lips
Isa 59:4 have spoken lies, Your tongue has muttered perversity. No one calls for justice, Nor does any plead for
Isa 59:5 truth. They trust in empty words and speak lies; They conceive evil and bring forth iniquity. They hatch vipers' eggs and weave the spider's web; He who eats of their eggs dies,
Isa 59:6 And from that which is crushed a viper breaks out. Their webs will not become garments, Nor will they cover themselves with their works; Their works are works of iniquity, And the act of violence is in their hands.
Isa 59:7 Their feet run to evil, And they make haste to shed innocent blood; Their thoughts are thoughts of
Isa 59:8 iniquity; Wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace they have not known, And there is no justice in their ways; They have made themselves crooked paths; Whoever takes that way shall not know peace."

In the New Testament, the book of Revelation also speaks about God's punishment upon this sinful world.

Rev 9:20 But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk.
Rev 9:21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.
Rev 11:15 Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"
Rev 11:16 And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God,
Rev 11:17 saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come,
Rev 11:18 Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth."
Rev 14:6 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth; to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people;
Rev 14:7 saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water." (See also Rev. 14:17 – 20;15:1– 8;16:1– 11).

There are several important points that come out of these passages:

1. It is God, not Satan, who strikes humanity with plagues and tribulations for disobedience to His laws.
2. It is God who judges the world and destroys those who destroy the earth.
Now do the Americans destroy the earth? They are the most reckless polluters of the environment in the world. Not far behind are the Australians.
3. Human beings ought to fear and love God, and give Him glory (Rev 14:7). But have you ever heard a preacher telling his people to fear God? They all blame Satan for their misfortunes, and then wonder why God is punishing them. By telling people to fear Satan, they have elevated him to equality with God, which is what Satan has craved from the very beginning.

Isa 14:12 "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground,
Isa 14:13 You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north;
Isa 14:14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'
Isa 14:15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.

Satan does not want people to fear God, but to fear him, and his ministers have done a thorough job in conditioning people to do just that. But what did Jesus Christ say?

Mat 10:28 "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

Who is He who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell? God, of course, not Satan! And what do today's religious leaders tell their followers? Not that their soul would be destroyed by God if they continue to sin, but that they have an immortal soul that will live forever in paradise or in hell. This belief is not peculiar to Christianity, but to virtually all religions of the world, for they all believe in the immortality of the soul.

Now if Jesus Christ preached one Gospel, and people preach another, could they be His ministers?

As early as the time of the Apostles there appeared in the Churches of God false ministers who sought to introduce false gospels.

Gal 1:6 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel,
Gal 1:7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we,
Gal 1:8 or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.
Gal 1:9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.

2 Cor 11:13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.
2 Cor 11:14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.
2 Cor 11:15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

The Scriptures are revealing another fact that people find it hard to accept. When God is punishing the world for its sins, He is using His holy angels for that purpose, not Satan and his demons. Here are two examples, one from each of the two Testaments.

2 Sam 24:15 "So the LORD sent a plague upon Israel from the morning till the appointed time. From Dan to Beersheba
2 Sam 24:16 seventy thousand men of the people died. And when the angel stretched out His hand over Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD relented from the destruction, and said to the angel who was destroying the people, "It is enough; now restrain your hand." And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. Then David spoke to the Lord when he saw the angel
2 Sam 24:17 who was striking the people, and said, "Surely I have sinned, and I have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let Your hand, I pray, be against me and against my father's house."

Rev 15:1 "Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete.
Rev 21:9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife."

Now when God is punishing people, He does it temporarily in order to turn them around from their sins, so that He may bless them and cause them to live a more fulfilling life.

Psa 69:33 For the LORD hears the poor, And does not despise His prisoners.
Psa 146:7 Who executes justice for the oppressed, Who gives food to the hungry. The LORD gives freedom to the prisoners."

Psa 36:7 "How precious is Your loving kindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of
Psa 36:8 Your wings. They are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house, And You give them drink from the river of
Psa 36:9 Your pleasures. For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light."

John 10:10 "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."

This gives us the difference between the role of Satan and that of Jesus Christ. Satan is involved in people's sufferings too, but there is a big difference between the trials that come from God and those that come from Satan. While God is using His holy angels to punish people temporarily in order to turn them around and save them from their own wretchedness, Satan is using his demons to enslave people permanently and destroy them spiritually if he is allowed to.

Isa 14:16 "Those who see you [Satan] will gaze at you, And consider you, saying: 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble,
Isa 14:17 Who shook kingdoms, Who made the world as a wilderness And destroyed its cities, Who did not open the house of his prisoners?'"

Luke 13:11 And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and
Luke 13:12 could in no way raise herself up. But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her,
Luke 13:13 "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity." And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she
Luke 13:14 was made straight, and glorified God. But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, "There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day."
Luke 13:15 The Lord then answered him and said, "Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it?
Luke 13:16 "So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound; think of it; for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?"

Mat 17:14 And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying,
 Mat 17:15 "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire
 Mat 17:16 and often into the water. "So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him."
 Mat 17:17 Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me."
 Mat 17:18 And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.
 Mat 17:19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?"
 Mat 17:20 So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.
 Mat 17:21 "However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

Jesus Christ said that when even a single sinner repents, God's holy angels rejoice in heaven.

Luke 15:7 "I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance."

Therefore when you fall under severe trial, do not turn against God and bemoan your sufferings, but repent, rejoice, and give Him glory that He found you worthy of His chastisement, for whom He loves He chastises.

1 Pet 4:12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened
 1 Pet 4:13 to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also
 1 Pet 4:14 be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.
 1 Pet 4:15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters.
 1 Pet 4:16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.
 1 Pet 4:17 For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?
 1 Pet 4:18 Now "If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Therefore let those
 1 Pet 4:19 who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.

Heb 12:5 And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;
 Heb 12:6 For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives."
 Heb 12:7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does
 Heb 12:8 not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are
 Heb 12:9 illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?
 Heb 12:10 For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we
 Heb 12:11 may be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.
 Heb 12:12 Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees,
 Heb 12:13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

This is what the Scriptures say in both the Old and New Testaments about the right attitude towards God.

Deu 6:5 "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.
 Deu 10:12 "And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the
 Deu 10:13 the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good?"

Mat 22:37 Jesus said to him, " 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all
 Mat 22:38 your mind.' "This is the first and great commandment.
 Mat 22:39 "And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'
 Mat 22:40 "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Failure to love and obey God brings disaster upon individuals, upon nations, and upon the world. At a UN conference on AIDS earlier this year, the President of Nigeria raised the specter of a continent without people. That continent, of course, is Africa, but no country and no continent are immune to this scourge. The whole world is groaning under this and many other epidemics, yet few people call for a return to the laws of God. Instead they preach salvation through the use of condoms and lubricants.

I remember very well how in the early days of AIDS, a Catholic bishop said that this plague could not have come from God because "God would not do such a thing to human beings". Well, maybe He wouldn't, but He would certainly allow Satan to do it to those who prove to be incorrigible. As for the prophets that don't do their work to cry aloud the sins of their people so that they may repent, turn around and be saved, this is what God says:

Ezek 22:25 "The conspiracy of her prophets in her midst is like a roaring lion tearing the prey; they have devoured people; they have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows in her midst.
 Ezek 22:26 "Her priests have violated My law and profaned My holy things; they have not distinguished between the holy and unholy, nor have they made known the difference between the unclean and the clean; and they have hidden their eyes from My Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them.
 Ezek 22:27 "Her princes in her midst are like wolves tearing the prey, to shed blood, to destroy people, and to get
 Ezek 22:28 dishonest gain. "Her prophets plastered them with untempered mortar, seeing false visions, and divining
 Ezek 22:29 lies for them, saying, 'Thus says the Lord GOD; when the LORD had not spoken. "The people of the land have used oppressions, committed robbery, and mistreated the poor and needy; and they wrongfully oppress the stranger.
 Ezek 22:30 "So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it, but I found no one.
 Ezek 22:31 "Therefore I have poured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; and I have recompensed their deeds on their own heads," says the Lord GOD.

God sought one man among them who would stand in the gap before Him, on behalf of the land, that He should not destroy it, but found none. The priests violated God's laws, did not observe the Sabbath, obtained dishonest gain, saw false visions, spoke lies, profaned the name of God, committed other sins, while those who followed them committed robbery, mistreated the poor, oppressed the stranger, etc. That was ancient Israel, but isn't that a mirror image of America and the world today. Is there any wonder that God had to bring someone of another tongue to speak to these people?

Isa 28:11 "For with stammering lips and another tongue He will speak to this people."

Ezek 3:17 "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth,
Ezek 3:18 and give them warning from Me: "When I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will
Ezek 3:19 require at your hand. "Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked
Ezek 3:20 way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul. "Again, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you did not give him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand.
Ezek 3:21 "Nevertheless if you warn the righteous man that the righteous should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; also you will have delivered your soul."

Ezek 34:2 "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD to the shepherds: "Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks?"
Ezek 34:3 "You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock.
Ezek 34:4 "The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them.
Ezek 34:5 "So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field, because there was no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves,
Ezek 34:6 field when they were scattered. "My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them."
Ezek 34:7 "Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:
Ezek 34:8 "as I live," says the Lord GOD, "surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became food for every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves,
Ezek 34:9 and did not feed My flock", "therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the LORD!
Ezek 34:10 "Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them."

Many people believe that these things were spoken for the shepherds of ancient Israel only, and have nothing to do with the shepherds of Jesus Christ. But they forget that the things that happened to ancient Israel are "examples" for us today, and that in the Day of Judgment Jesus Christ will disown those who falsely claimed to be His ministers.

Mat 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of
Mat 7:22 My Father in heaven. "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name,
Mat 7:23 cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

Many American fundamentalists believe that America and Britain have inherited the birthright that the patriarch Jacob bestowed upon his son Joseph. It is for this reason, they say, that these countries have benefited so bountifully from God's blessings in the last two or three centuries. That there is some truth in this there is no doubt, but does that mean that "God loves America" unconditionally as they never tire telling their followers?

What is it about America that God would love these days? It's profligate lifestyle, rampant promiscuity, homosexuality, sexual perversions, and exploitation of the less able? Or its fixation with the notion of freedom at any cost?

When the American fathers enshrined freedom of choice in their constitution they did not do so in order to facilitate the worship of the Judeo-Christian God, but the Freemason's god of ancient Egypt. Why else would they have put the Egyptian symbol of the Pyramid and the overseeing eye of Horus, the Egyptian sun-god of the underworld, on their banknotes beside the slogan, "In God We Trust"? If they had trusted in the God of Jesus Christ, they would have put a Christian symbol – a cross, a fish, a candelabra, the Menorah, etc. – and the biblical statement, "We Trust In The Living God" (1 Tim 4:10), but as it is they have glorified a pagan god that promised them paradise after death. Well, death they will get, but paradise they won't, because there is nothing after death, but after resurrection.

An army of libertarians protests vigorously when public schools offer prayers to the Christian God, but have no objection when their children are exposed to pagan gods, witchcraft, promiscuity, sexual perversions, violence, etc. While Christianity is in broad retreat everywhere, stargazers, witchcraft, and pagan native religions, have taken the country by storm.

So does God love America? Maybe its Egyptian gods would, but we doubt that our Father would love a land that resembles Egypt, Babylon, and Sodom and Gomorrah, combined?

America's blessings are not due to its own values and righteousness, but to the unconditional promises God made to the patriarchs. So instead of basking in their blessings, its prophets ought to cry aloud the sins of their people, for their nation is now in grave danger.

"The time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7), has indeed begun.

IT IS NOT MOSES OR CHRIST, OR MOHAMMAD OR CHRIST, BUT MOSES AND CHRIST, AND MOHAMMAD AND CHRIST

In the aftermath of the terrorist attack on Washington and New York, on September 11, 2001, American churches and cathedrals were filled to capacity, whereas prior to that they seldom were. In the weeks since then, most churches have reported an average of twenty per cent increase in their regular attendance, but as the memory of those events fade and people go about their normal business, you can be sure that those buildings will revert to their normal state of emptiness again.

Jewish synagogues follow a similar pattern to that of the Christian places of worship. In times of crisis they overflow their capacity, whereas in normal times they are mostly empty.

By comparison, Muslims are universally expected to attend religious services in their mosques every Friday, and worship God five times a day wherever they are in the world. So if attendance at a religious service is the mark of religiosity and faith, Muslims leave the Christians and the Jews way behind. But if peoples' well-being and blessedness is a sign of their standing before God, one would have to admit that by any standard the Christian world is ahead of the Muslim world as indeed ahead of the whole world. How can that be explained?

Christianity as practiced in this world is not perfect, it is certainly not the Kingdom of God on earth as some people believe, but it is infinitely better than anything else this world has to offer. The fact that present day Christian leaders have forgotten their role, and that we criticize them for it, should not be construed as criticism against all the principles and values that the West stands for.

Christianity in order to flourish needs the free exercise of individual choice, and western civilization offers that. Belief in the individual, in his rights and enterprise is the hallmark of western civilization. The Muslim world on the other hand, places the well being of the community ahead of individual freedoms. Unfortunately, history has shown that when individual enterprise is shackled, opportunities for progress and economic advancement are limited, and the whole society suffers. The best example, and most spectacular failure of a society that repressed political freedoms and individual enterprise, is that of the Communist world.

Freedoms of the individual, freedom of worship, freedom of speech, as well as genuine expressions of faith are more valuable in Christianity than large numbers in the pews. The Muslim world on the other hand, values universal adherence to religious principles at the risk of genuineness. Since God values more what is in the heart of man than external expressions of faith, it is clear why faith of conviction is preferable to faith by dictate, and why God has elevated Christianity above all other religions.

Christianity looks upon human beings as images of God, and treats life as a unique and precious gift of God, even to the point of letting the guilty free rather than condemning the innocent. That is why the death penalty is such a contentious topic in the western world at present.

Judgment is an individual affair between God and man, and since character cannot be created in a mob, it is clear why God is using Christianity to raise and refine the leaders of His Kingdom. For even in the midst of the morass that the West is at present, God is molding the leaders of the world tomorrow. All the kings and priests of the Kingdom of God are drawn from Christianity.

Rev 1:4 John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

Rev 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

Rev 1:6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and

Rev 1:7 ever. Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

Rev 5:5 But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals."

Rev 5:6 And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits

Rev 5:7 of God sent out to all the earth. Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat

Rev 5:8 on the throne. Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

Rev 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

Rev 5:10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth."

Rev 11:15 Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

Rev 11:16 And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God,

Rev 11:17 saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to

Rev 11:18 come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the

prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth."

All civilizations have had good and bad points, but what matters now is not how great a civilization may have been in the past, or even how great it is now, but which one offers the best opportunity for salvation from the current world difficulties. We live at a time when nothing else matters anymore. The world is at the crossroads – either it finds a way for all people to live in peace, prosperity and harmony, or it will perish by its own hand.

Now much has been said recently about the peril of a “war of civilizations”. It all started when the Italian Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi, said that, “We should be conscious of the superiority of our civilization”. Immediately afterwards a chorus of protests from Christian and Muslim leaders assailed him and forced him to retract his remarks on the pretext that he was misinterpreted.

Well of course he was misinterpreted, for the man did not call for a war of civilizations. All he said was that, “We should be conscious of the superiority of our civilization”, which is not the same thing. That Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and other leaders might have a problem with that statement would be understandable, but why did the Christian leaders pounce on him too? They were even more vociferous than the Muslim leaders. Don’t they believe in the superiority of their civilization and the freedoms and rights of the individual that it upholds? If they don’t, why ask the youth of their countries to die for it? Isn’t that hypocritical?

And why should there be “a war of civilizations” for voicing one’s belief that his civilization is superior? If people have qualms with that, let them sit down around a table and put forward their own arguments why they think that their own civilization is superior, but let them not start a war over it. For if we look back in history, we find that virtually all countries have at one time or another been part of a great civilization. However, we are not talking about history here, but about present day realities and the civilization that has survived the test of time. Those who do not know which civilization offers better opportunities for life and is currently preferable, let them ask the crowds of Africa and Asia that clamor to enter the Christian countries of Europe, America and Oceania.

When the Secretary General of the National Arab League, Amr Moussa, heard of Berlusconi’s statement, he said: “I consider his remarks as racist, and by such remarks he has crossed the limits of reasons and decency”.

“Racist?” “Crossed the limits of reasons and decency?” Is it not racist when Muslim leaders vilify the West with slanderous invectives and incite their followers to a “holy war” against “Satan” and against “the infidel?”

Muslim clerics never tire of telling us that their civilization is superior because Mohammad was a later prophet than Jesus Christ, yet Christian leaders do not complain that they call us satanic and infidels, or that such remarks are racist and cross the limits of “reasons and decency”. Or is it only the Muslims that have the right to proclaim the superiority of their civilization?

Well, Christian leaders may have been cowered into silence by their threats, but there are two people who will never be kept quiet, for when they are silenced the whole world will be silenced with them too.

We would welcome a round the table discussion with our Muslim counterparts on the merits of each civilization, for we acknowledge that Islam was once a great and flourishing civilization, and still is in many respects, but the future belongs to the one and only civilization that offers salvation to the whole world, and that is Christianity.

When Jesus Christ sent His followers into the world and told them to make disciples of all nations, He did not expect them to just meekly walk down the street in silence with crosses in their hands hoping that others would get the message and become their followers. He expected them to make a stand for their faith and explain to the whole world why their faith was superior.

Mat 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on
Mat 28:19 earth. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father
Mat 28:20 and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you;
and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Acts 4:10 "Let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, . . .

Acts 4:11 "This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.'

Acts 4:12 "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Rom 12:1 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

Rom 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

It is to their shame that the current Christian leaders have forgotten what their Lord expects of them. But then, isn’t this why He had to raise two faithful witnesses in these last days in order to tell the world about His coming Kingdom? What did Jesus Christ say of those who do not deny their Lord and affirm confidently their faith even in the face of adversity?

Rev 3:8 "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

Rev 3:9 "Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie; indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

Rev 3:10 "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth."

In preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to the world, Jesus Christ expects His followers to make a strong case that their religion is not only superior, but the only one that is worth dying for. It is the only religion that offers true salvation to the world and a real hope for the future.

One is entitled to ask where were the Pope – the idol of Catholicism, Billy Graham – the idol of Protestantism, the big mouths of fundamentalism, and the myriads of Christian preachers, when Berlusconi came under attack for expressing his belief that Christian civilization is superior? Why ask people to become Christian if this religion is no better than any other?

The Pope has criss-crossed the world, kissing every piece of pagan ground and embracing their leaders as if they were his equal, but we have never heard him say, 'I come to bring to you the religion of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world'. Of course he couldn't say that, for he does not take with him the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but a parody of it. He conducts a meaningless mass that has nothing to do with the Scriptures and everything to do pleasing everyone. But what did Jesus Christ say?

John 15:20 "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. "But all these things

John 15:21 they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me."

They couldn't persecute the Pope for he tells everyone that they have immortal souls and continue to live after death – the very opposite of the message Jesus Christ brought to this world. This is what He told His disciples: "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Mat. 10: 28). Yes, God is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Souls are being DESTROYED in hell, not live forever in torment.

Television cameras from around the world highlighted images of grief and sorrow from the scene of the attack on New York. A weeping middle-aged man said that he would give anything to bring his innocent daughter back. Bring her back from where? If innocent people go to heaven after death, why bring her back to this wretched world? Or is the idea of life after death as believable and transparent as the hypocrisy of those who preach it?

Jesus Christ brought to this earth the Gospel of life after resurrection in a Kingdom that is yet to be established, not the gospel of life after death. Christian preachers know this, or ought to know it, yet they continue to preach this false gospel week after week.

Some people say that it does not matter if people believe in life after death or life after resurrection, as long as they believe in something. Well, it may be better to believe in something than nothing, but it is not good enough for salvation. That is because salvation requires the development of a frame of mind and a character that are conducive to continuous spiritual growth and the attainment of nothing less than the mind of God and unity with Him. That cannot be achieved through false gospels.

Phil 2:5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

Phil 2:6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,

Phil 2:7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men."

John 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

John 17:1 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify

John 17:2 Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. "And this is eternal life,

John 17:3 that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

John 17:4 "I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.

John 17:5 "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the

John 17:6 world was. "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.

John 17:7 "Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You.

John 17:8 "For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.

John 17:9 "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.

John 17:10 "And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them.

John 17:11 "Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.

John 17:12 "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

John 17:13 "But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in

John 17:14 themselves. "I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of

John 17:15 the world, just as I am not of the world. "I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

John 17:16 "They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.
 John 17:17 "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.
 John 17:18 "As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.
 John 17:19 "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.
 John 17:20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;
 John 17:21 "that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us,
 John 17:22 that the world may believe that You sent Me. "And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:
 John 17:23 "I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.
 John 17:24 "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.
 John 17:25 "O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known
 John 17:26 that You sent Me. "And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

God is truth; God is life; God is permanent! Jesus Christ was one with God, and wants His followers to be sanctified by truth and be one with Him and the Father. False gospels, by their very nature, obscure God's characteristics and prevent union with Him. Falsehood could never come near God.

Many detrimental doctrines and beliefs emanate from false gospels: immortality of the soul, false notions of paradise, worship of the dead, worship of angels, reincarnation, disrespect for God's Word, restrictions on foods and marriages, etc. In their extreme form, false gospels lead people to sacrifice their lives for futile causes, destroying in the process thousand of other lives, as we've seen in the attacks on New York and Washington.

When news of their bravado reached the Middle East, some parents rejoiced that their children chose "martyrdom" to life in this world. How people can imagine that they could reach paradise through cowardly acts and wanton destruction of innocent life is hard to understand.

Now contrary to the general belief, true Christianity does not compete with either Judaism or Islam, but complements both of them. Let us explain what we mean by this. Mohammad was a great prophet, for no simple and uninspired man could have created such a mighty and powerful civilization and religion. But there is no competition between him and Jesus Christ, because they came to serve different purposes. God raised Mohammad to bring unity, purpose, and knowledge of God, to the scattered Arab tribes, in the same way that He raised Moses to do the same for the Israelite tribes. Jesus Christ however came to bring salvation to the whole world.

Acts 4:12 "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

John 1:17 "For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
 John 3:13 "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is
 John 3:14 in heaven. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be
 John 3:15 lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.
 John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.
 John 3:17 "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him
 John 3:18 might be saved. "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is
 John 3:19 condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because
 John 3:20 their deeds were evil. "For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.
 John 3:21 "But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

Now why should that be offensive to Jews and Muslims, or to any other people for that matter? The common objective of all religious leaders should be to give people the chance to improve their condition – to attain eternal life in a world that is preferable to this one. Such a world does not come after death, but after resurrection! This is the message that the Man who proved Himself through unequalled miracles to be the Son of God brought to this world. And He made no difference between one people and another, for He told His disciples to make converts of all nations. That is why no one should be jealous of, or compare Himself with, Jesus Christ. He did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life for the world, something that no other human being has done before or after Him.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

The Muslims are descendants of Abraham just like the Jews, but salvation did not come through Ishmael or Esau, their forefathers, but through Isaac and Jacob, the Jews' forefathers. Jesus Christ said that salvation is of the Jews, but in the New Testament Jews are those who are of the faith not of the flesh.

Rom 9:1 I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit,
Rom 9:2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart.
Rom 9:3 For I could wish that I myself were accused from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to
Rom 9:4 the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the
Rom 9:5 law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh,
Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God.

Rom 9:6 But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel,
Rom 9:7 nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be
Rom 9:8 called." That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the
children of the promise are counted as the seed."

Gal 3:26 "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Gal 3:27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek,

Gal 3:28 there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Gal 3:29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

So whether people are Europeans, Americans, Africans, Arabians, or any other nation, if they believe in Jesus Christ, they are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. And what promise was that? The Kingdom of God, of course!

Jesus Christ told the Jews that in the Day of Judgment He won't condemn them. He said that there would be another who will condemn them, Moses, whom they regard as their prophet, but whose advise they did not follow.

John 5:43 "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him
John 5:44 you will receive. "How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor
that comes from the only God?"

John 5:45 "Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you; Moses, in whom

John 5:46 you trust. "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.

John 5:47 "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

The Muslims should not be surprised if they find themselves condemned in the Day of Judgment by their own prophet too. Would Mohammad have taught his followers to break the universal law of hospitality that is highly regarded by God? We all remember what the Muslim leaders did two and three decades ago when they made a practice of taking hostage their foreign guests –even those with diplomatic accreditation. To add insult to injury, they took hostage even the religious envoys that were sent to them to negotiate the release of the first. That "crossed the limits of reasons and decency". After that, Muslim leaders issued a fatwa on a citizen of the West over whom they had no direct jurisdiction. That "crossed the limits of reasons and decency" too. Now they encourage their followers to wage a savage clandestine war against innocent Christian people. Need we say it?

It is clear that Islam has fallen into the hands of false teachers in the same way that Judaism and Christianity have fallen. Salmon Rushdie rightly said that Muslim leaders ought to examine themselves in order to see why their religion keeps producing such mutant strains.

That is why we say that Judaism and Islam need a good doze of Christianity. For Jesus Christ did not come to destroy people's cultures and laws, but to enlighten them spiritually and enhance their religious outlook.

John 1:17 "For the law was given through Moses [and Mohammad], but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Christianity is perfectly happy to operate within the codes of law of both Judaism and Islam. Jesus Christ told the Jews that He did not come to destroy their law but to fulfill it. He would have told the Muslims the same if He had come into the world after Mohammad. The order in which they came into the world has nothing to do with their messages.

It may surprise people to know this, but at their core the Judaic and Islamic penal codes are remarkably similar. The difference being that the Jews no longer enforce their laws as strictly as the Muslims do. But if the zealots of Israel manage to take control of their State, as they have vowed to do, they will most certainly return to that regime again.

Many people misconstrue a gesture of forgiveness in Jesus life with the setting up a new code of law for His followers. Noting could be further from the truth.

John 8:3 Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set
John 8:4 her in the midst, they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act.
John 8:5 "Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?"
John 8:6 This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote
on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear.
John 8:7 So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin
John 8:8 among you, let him throw a stone at her first." And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.
John 8:9 Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to
the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the
John 8:10 woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?"
John 8:11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

In forgiving that woman Jesus Christ did not annul the Law of Moses. He Himself told us so.

Mat 5:17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill."

Now let us assume that that woman went out and sinned again (sinners seldom stop at one sin only), was caught and was brought before Jesus Christ again. Would He have forgiven her again a second time? Perhaps, but most certainly He would not have forgiven her a third time. He told His followers to apply the principle of three strikes and you are out.

Mat 18:15 "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he
Mat 18:16 hears you, you have gained your brother. "But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more,
Mat 18:17 that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." "And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector."

The proviso that one must forgive his brother seventy times seven, of which Jesus Christ also spoke about (Mat 18:22), applies to just that, one's brothers, who commit minor offences, not to perennial sinners. For those who continue to cause trouble even after they are excommunicated from the congregation, the State laws must be allowed to take their course. That may be the Judaic law, Islamic law, or whatever law applies in that particular land. For that woman it would have been the Law of Moses, in which case she most certainly would never have sinned again.

Apostle Paul told his followers to obey the secular authorities because in their own way they were serving God too.

Rom 12:21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities.
Rom 13:1 For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by GOD.
Rom 13:2 Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment
Rom 13:3 on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority?
Rom 13:4 Do what is good, and you will praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be
afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.
Rom 13:5 Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake.
Rom 13:6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing.
Rom 13:7 Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear,
Rom 13:8 honor to whom honor. Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.
Rom 13:9 For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not
bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall
love your neighbor as yourself."
Rom 13:10 Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.
Rom 13:11 And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our
salvation is nearer than when we first believed."

Jesus Christ did not envisage His religion as taking over this world and becoming a State religion everywhere. Rather, He saw it as a venue for drawing out the best in every nation and preparing them to become kings and priests in the Kingdom of His Father. When He returns and sets up that Kingdom, these people will go out to their respective nations and prepare them for the Kingdom of God too.

There is an erroneous belief among many people that in embracing Christianity they have to give up all their former beliefs and customs. Christianity builds upon other cultures not destroys them. Jesus Christ did not intend to annul Judaism but to enhance it. The fact that the Jewish leaders have failed to grasp this fact is beside the point.

Christianity was not designed to be a State religion in this world in the manner of Judaism or Islam. It does not have a code of laws of its own, but builds upon and respects the codes of law of the local peoples.

At His trial before Pontius Pilate, Jesus Christ said that His Kingdom was not of this world.

John 18:33 Then Pilate entered the Praetorium again, called Jesus, and said to Him, "Are You the King of the
John 18:34 Jesus?" Jesus answered him, "Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?"
John 18:35 Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me.
John 18:36 What have You done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My
servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here." Pilate therefore said to Him,
"Are You a King then?"
John 18:37 Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the
world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

Jesus Christ did not tell His followers to go out and take over the governments of nations, but to preach the Gospel to all peoples and make disciples of all nations. By the time Christianity became the religion of the Roman Empire, it was no longer recognizable by the standards of Jesus Christ and His Apostles: not in beliefs, not in practices, and not in Holy Days. That is why the Christianity of this world must not be confused with the Christianity of Jesus Christ that we preach. Now that the time has come for a return to the Christianity of the Scriptures, there is no need for people to abandon all their former beliefs and customs in order to become Christian. They only need to abandon those that are corrupted, no longer necessary, come from false gospels, are of a pagan nature, and are an impediment to spiritual growth and enlightenment.

God wants us to be different. It would be a terribly boring world if we all spoke the same language, sang the same songs, recited the same poetry, ate the same foods, wore the same clothes, built the same homes, etc. But as it is we are all curious to see how other people live, what they eat, what music they play, etc. The more variety the better, and the more interested we are to visit other lands.

True Christianity has no conflict with either Judaism or Islam. Jesus Christ is as much the Savior of the Jews as of the Muslims, as indeed of the entire world. For while Moses is identified with the Israelites and Mohammad with the Muslims, Jesus Christ is identified with the world. That is why it is not a question of Moses or Christ, or Mohammad or Christ, but of Moses and Christ, and Mohammad and Christ

In acknowledging Jesus Christ as universal Savior, people do not need to abandon their respective prophets and codes of law. What they need to do instead is to assess their religious beliefs and practices in light of Biblical revelations, then join us in offering prayer and worship to our common God and our common Savior. That is the only way by which we can put an end to the never-ending conflict that has kept Jews, Muslims and Christians at loggerheads for centuries. They can do that willingly, or it will be forced upon them from above.

WHY JEWS, MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS MUST CHANGE NOW

Ever since the attack on America in September 11, 2001, the conflict with the Islamic extremists has been taking more and more the shape of a war of civilizations, to the consternation of both Christian and Muslim leaders. Which proves that Divine Providence works out His plan independent of the will of men.

In times past, people inquired of God on matters of life and death, war and peace, or matters of major concern, but nowadays they rely on their own instinct and reason. The result is much too obvious – the world is on the brink of catastrophe.

The Bible – the inspired Word of God – has been recorded for posterity so that people would consult it whenever they were faced with difficult choices. In the beginning, God answered personal queries from His people directly, but now He expects them to study His written Word and understand His will from there. In this regard, the Bible gives us two contrasting examples. Before embarking upon what could have been a costly venture, David, the famous king of Israel, asked God whether he would succeed in his war with the Philistines. God told him, yes, he would succeed.

1 Sam 23:2 Therefore David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I go and attack these Philistines?" And the LORD said to David, "Go and attack the Philistines, and save Keilah."

1 Sam 23:3 But David's men said to him, "Look, we are afraid here in Judah. How much more then if we go to

1 Sam 23:4 Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?" Then David inquired of the LORD once again. And the LORD answered him and said, "Arise, go down to Keilah. For I will deliver the Philistines into your hand."

1 Sam 23:5 And David and his men went to Keilah and fought with the Philistines, struck them with a mighty blow, and took away their livestock. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah."

But when Saul, the previous king of Israel made a similar inquiry, he did not get an answer from God. Why? Because his deeds were not right before God!

1 Sam 14:37 "So Saul asked counsel of God, "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will You deliver them into the hand of Israel?" But He did not answer him that day."

And what did Saul do in that difficult circumstance? He did not examine himself to repent of his sins, as humans ought to always do, he made his situation worse by going and inquiring of mediums and spiritists.

1 Sam 28:4 Then the Philistines gathered together, and came and encamped at Shunem. So Saul gathered all

1 Sam 28:5 Israel together, and they encamped at Gilboa. When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was

1 Sam 28:6 afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. And when Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD did not

1 Sam 28:7 answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by the prophets. Then Saul said to his servants, "Find me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her." And his servants said to him, "In fact, there is a woman who is a medium at En Dor."

1 Sam 28:8 So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes, and he went, and two men with him; and they came to the woman by night. And he said, "Please conduct a seance for me, and bring up for me the one I shall name

1 Sam 28:9 to you." Then the woman said to him, "Look, you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off the mediums and the spiritists from the land. Why then do you lay a snare for my life, to cause me to die?" And Saul swore to her by the LORD, saying,

1 Sam 28:10 "As the LORD lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing.

1 Sam 28:11 Then the woman said, "Whom shall I bring up for you?" And he said, "Bring up Samuel for me."

1 Sam 28:12 When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice. And the woman spoke to Saul, saying, "Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul!"

1 Sam 28:13 And the king said to her, "Do not be afraid. What did you see?" And the woman said to Saul, "I saw

1 Sam 28:14 a spirit ascending out of the earth." So he said to her, "What is his form?" And she said, "An old man is coming up, and he is covered with a mantle." And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground and bowed down.

1 Sam 28:15 Now Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" And Saul answered, "I am deeply distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God has departed from me and does not answer me anymore, neither by prophets nor by dreams. Therefore I have called you, that you may reveal to me what I should

1 Sam 28:16 do." Then Samuel said: "Why then do you ask me, seeing the LORD has departed from you and

1 Sam 28:17 has become your enemy? "And the LORD has done for Himself as He spoke by me. For the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David.

1 Sam 28:18 "Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD nor execute His fierce wrath upon Amalek,

1 Sam 28:19 therefore the LORD has done this thing to you this day. "Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines. And tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The LORD will also

1 Sam 28:20 deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines." Then immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, and was dreadfully afraid because of the words of Samuel. And there was no strength in him, for he had eaten no food all day or all night." Then the Philistines gathered together all their armies at Aphek,

1 Sam 29:1 and the Israelites encamped by a fountain which is in Jezreel."

That was the last battle Saul fought – he died there and David became the new king of Israel. But this passage offers another important lesson: Should people inquire of mediums and spiritists when God does not

answer them? How did it help Saul to know that he was going to die? It simply sapped any strength that he may have had and hastened his demise.

Now what about that woman's ability to bring up the dead? How true was that? Well if that was indeed Samuel whom she brought up, then that would be contrary to everything God has taught us in the rest of the Bible. It would mean that she had the power to resurrect people to life, which raises the question, why would they want to go back to being dead again if they could be woken up as easily as that?

The Scriptures clearly state that, "the living know that they will die; But the dead know nothing, And they have no more reward, For the memory of them is forgotten" (Eccl 9:5). Who then was the one who delivered that message to Saul, for obviously he spoke the truth? That was a demon, a wicked spirit masquerading as Samuel. The fact that what he said turned out to be true is because he had no choice – God forced him to speak that way. Even the Devil, the leader of demons, obeys God and speaks only what God allows him to (See the story of Job, and 1 Ki 22:19-23). Knowing what that medium had to say, not only did not advantage Saul, it ruled out any chance he may have had of success. In fact it killed him altogether, for that is what God said that He would do all those who go after mediums and familiar spirits.

Lev 19:31 "Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God."
Lev 20:1 "Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
Lev 20:2 "Again, you shall say to the children of Israel: 'Whoever of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who gives any of his descendants to Molech, he shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall stone him with stones. 'I will set My face against that man, and will cut him off from his people, because he has given some of his descendants to Molech, to defile My sanctuary and profane My holy name.
Lev 20:4 'And if the people of the land should in any way hide their eyes from the man, when he gives some of his descendants to Molech, and they do not kill him, 'then I will set My face against that man and against his family; and I will cut him off from his people, and all who prostitute themselves with him to commit harlotry with Molech.
Lev 20:6 'And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people. 'Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the LORD your God. 'And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them: I am the LORD who sanctifies you."
Lev 20:26 'And you shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine. 'A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones. Their blood shall be upon them."

Saul began well by trying to rid the land of mediums and familiar spirits, but then fell from God's grace because he was a vacillating man. People who are not sure of themselves, who are unstable in their ways, who flip flop between God and the Adversary, not only cannot please God, but end up losing their link with Him altogether. As Jesus Christ said:

Mat 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

And as James said too:

James 1:5 "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."

These days people can communicate with God through prayer, meditation and Bible study. It is an experience that cannot be explained. At the end of it, you understand the mind of God and know in your heart whether you are right before Him or not. As Apostle John said:

1 John 3:18 "My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.
1 John 3:19 And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.
1 John 3:20 For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.
1 John 3:21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God.
1 John 3:22 And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment."

In studying the Bible, one cannot avoid coming across important prophecies about our own time. Prophecies are God's warnings, promises, or portents for the future. They have been recorded in the Bible so that people may take note of them and act accordingly. And what do the prophecies for our time say? They speak of both wonderful and dreadful things. Wonderful for those who repent, turn to God and obey Him; dreadful for those who disobey Him, despise His Word, and ignore His warnings.

It so happens that the gravest warnings for the end-time are for the countries of the Middle East. While other countries are identified by inference, association, or terms that are not always easy to understand, there is no ambiguity when it comes to the countries of the Middle East. Take this for example.

Zec 14:1 Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst.

Zec 14:2 For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

The Day of the Lord is the day of the Great Tribulation. That comes at the very end of this age, just prior to the return of Jesus Christ. The nations of this world have been against Jerusalem ever since the State of Israel was set up in 1948. They do not need to come together with their armies against Israel, for that would be an impossible feat. All they need to do is condemn Israel at the United Nations and have others – like the Arabs – fight their proxy war for them. This they have amply done from the very beginning. When you stop to think how much time they have spent debating the State of Israel and how many resolutions they have passed against it, it makes you wonder whether they do anything else at the UN but think of new ways and new words for their next resolution against Israel. It is as if the UN has been set for no other purpose than to taunt Israel. Is it any wonder that Jews everywhere, in Israel and outside, are somewhat paranoid about their identity? Or that they act remorselessly towards those who fall into their hands, both friend and foe alike?

In regard to their houses being “rifled”, that seems to be a daily occurrence from the Palestinian side these days. As for their women being “ravished”, we do not know about that, but given the fact that that is not something people shout about loud or expose it on TV, that may happen too.

Zec 14:3 Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle.

Zec 14:4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south.

This is proof that this prophecy refers to the end time not to past destructions of Jerusalem.

Zec 14:5 Then you shall flee through My mountain valley, For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee As you fled from the earthquake In the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, And all the saints with You.

Zec 14:6 It shall come to pass in that day That there will be no light; The lights will diminish.

Zec 14:7 It shall be one day Which is known to the LORD; Neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen that it will

Zec 14:8 be light. And in that day it shall be That living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, Half of them toward the eastern sea And half of them toward the western sea; In both summer and winter it shall occur.

Zec 14:9 And the LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be; "The LORD is one," And His name one.

Zec 14:10 All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be raised up and inhabited in her place from Benjamin's Gate to the place of the First Gate and the Corner Gate,

Zec 14:11 and from the Tower of Hananeel to the king's winepresses. The people shall dwell in it; And no longer shall there be utter destruction, But Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

This gives us a glimpse of what life would be like in the Kingdom of God. Wonderful indeed! But notice the very next few verses for they refer to nothing else but nuclear devastation.

Zec 14:12 And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, Their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, And their

Zec 14:13 tongues shall dissolve in their mouths. It shall come to pass in that day That a great panic from the LORD will be among them. Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor,

Zec 14:14 And raise his hand against his neighbor's hand; Judah also will fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of all the surrounding nations Shall be gathered together: Gold, silver, and apparel in great abundance.

The wealth of the surrounding nations shall be gathered in Jerusalem. What nations might these be?

Isa 17:1 The burden against Damascus. "Behold, Damascus will cease from being a city, And it will be a ruinous

Isa 17:2 heap. The cities of Aroer are forsaken; They will be for flocks Which lie down, and no one will make

Isa 17:3 them afraid. The fortress also will cease from Ephraim, The kingdom from Damascus, And the remnant of Syria; They will be as the glory of the children of Israel," Says the LORD of hosts.

Isa 17:4 "In that day it shall come to pass That the glory of Jacob will wane, And the fatness of his flesh grow

Isa 17:5 lean. It shall be as when the harvester gathers the grain, And reaps the heads with his arm; It shall be as he who gathers heads of grain in the valley of Rephaim.

Isa 17:6 Yet gleaning grapes will be left in it, Like the shaking of an olive tree, Two or three olives at the top of the uppermost bough, Four or five in its most fruitful branches," Says the LORD God of Israel.

Isa 17:7 In that day a man will look to his Maker, And his eyes will have respect for the Holy One of Israel.

Isa 17:8 He will not look to the altars, The work of his hands; He will not respect what his fingers have made, Nor the wooden images nor the incense altars."

It is an incontrovertible fact that the oil rich Arabs live in wealthy countries. Yet even Saudi Arabia, which has received possibly trillions of dollars in the decades since oil became a precious commodity, claims to be on a verge of entering the red zone of countries with foreign debt. That is either a case of gigantic economic incompetence, or a clever disguise of one's wealth in order to keep the burden of international aid on to the Christian countries. Either way, the Scriptures say that in the new world the wealth of the surrounding nations shall flow to Jerusalem.

Talking about foreign debt, have you ever wondered where does all the money go? The amount listed by debtor countries, should equal the amount owed to creditor countries, but it doesn't. The United States of America alone owes in excess of six trillion dollars. If that money were to be split equally between all the

countries of the world, each would receive about three hundred billion dollars. But almost all other countries have huge foreign debts of their own. Japan owes eleven trillion dollars. Which raises the question to whom do they owe all that money? The answer is, to a cabal of international banks that are responsible to no one. They have enslaved the entire world, and things are getting worse by the day.

Not even a revolution can rectify this state of affairs. It is a well-known fact that all revolutions have failed. They have brought more misery to their peoples than they have solved. The world needs a different kind of revolution – one that strikes at the heart of human nature itself, and seeks to redress not material inequalities but inequality of opportunity. For just as all humans are not equally gifted, their needs are not equal either. As the Scripture say: "For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more (Luke 12:48b).

What the world needs is not another revolution, but a new world order. Not like the one the politicians have talked about for the last decade or so, which they have not been able to deliver, but the one our Lord Jesus Christ said that He would deliver when He returns to this world. Our role is to inform the world of the imminence of that event.

If the prophecy about the re-gathering of the Jews from the countries in which they were scattered has been fulfilled exactly as the Scriptures said it would, why do people think that other prophecies would not be fulfilled in the same way? The Scriptures say that Damascus will cease to be a city, but its inhabitants can still save themselves now by believing God and turning to Him in repentance. The same is true of the Jews, for they won't come out well from the end-time conflagration either. Only a few will survive, like the "gleaning grapes", or the few olives left on the top branches after harvesting.

The Palestinians and the Jordanians will not fare very well either if they continue on their present ways. The Jews know these prophecies very well, but it is unlikely that they would ever shout then out loud to the world, for it is certain that no one would believe them.

Amos 1:6 Thus says the LORD: "For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, Because they took captive the whole captivity To deliver them up to Edom.

Amos 1:7 But I will send a fire upon the wall of Gaza, Which shall devour its palaces.

Amos 1:8 I will cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod, And the one who holds the scepter from Ashkelon; I will turn My hand against Ekron, And the remnant of the Philistines shall perish," Says the Lord GOD.

Zep 2:3 Seek the LORD, all you meek of the earth, Who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility. It may be that you will be hidden In the day of the Lord's anger.

Zep 2:4 For Gaza shall be forsaken, And Ashkelon desolate; They shall drive out Ashdod at noonday, And Ekron

Zep 2:5 shall be uprooted. Woe to the inhabitants of the seacoast, The nation of the Cherehites! The word of the LORD is against you, O Canaan, land of the Philistines: "I will destroy you; So there shall be no inhabitant."

Zep 2:6 The seacoast shall be pastures, With shelters for shepherds and folds for flocks.

Zep 2:7 The coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; They shall feed their flocks there; In the houses of Ashkelon they shall lie down at evening. For the LORD their God will intervene for them, And return their captives.

Zep 2:8 "I have heard the reproach of Moab, And the insults of the people of Ammon, With which they have reproached My people, And made arrogant threats against their borders.

Zep 2:9 Therefore, as I live," Says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "Surely Moab shall be like Sodom, And the people of Ammon like Gomorrah; Overrun with weeds and saltpits, And a perpetual desolation. The residue of My people shall plunder them, And the remnant of My people shall possess them."

Zep 2:10 This they shall have for their pride, Because they have reproached and made arrogant threats Against

Zep 2:11 the people of the LORD of hosts. The LORD will be awesome to them, For He will reduce to nothing all the gods of the earth; People shall worship Him, Each one from his place, Indeed all the shores of the nations."

We draw your attention again to Zep 2:3. "Seek the LORD, all you meek of the earth, Who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility. It may be that you will be hidden In the day of the Lord's anger." There is simply no other way by which people could escape that tribulation except by turning to the God of Jesus Christ. Back to Zechariah.

Zec 14:15 Such also shall be the plague On the horse and the mule, On the camel and the donkey, And on all the cattle that will

Zec 14:16 be in those camps. So shall this plague be. And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles."

Zec 14:17 And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the

Zec 14:18 King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain. If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt

Zec 14:19 and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

Here we find another surrounding Muslim nation mentioned by name – Egypt. But in addition to Syria, Jordan, Palestine and Egypt, other prophecies mention Lebanon, Iraq, Iran, Libya and Ethiopia, in a coalition that also involves Russia and China – all against Israel. The fact that Egypt – the leading Arab nation – is specifically mentioned in the context of the end time conflict, and that these nations find themselves right now on opposing sides in the "war on terrorism", may indicate that we have entered the initial phase of the Great Tribulation. Bear in mind that the term Israel in the Bible means all twelve tribes, which includes Israel, Europe and America. It would be an error to think that Russia and China will ever be totally aligned with the USA and Europe. Their political systems, cultural outlook, and especially geo-political aims more readily align them with the Arabs than with the West. It would not take much for them to shift their support behind the Arabs in this conflict. People should remember that it is not humans who determine the affairs of this world or the timing of the end time conflict, but God Himself. Notice what He says about Russia.

Ezek 38:2 "Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and
 Ezek 38:3 Tubal, and prophesy against him, and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I am against you, O Gog, the prince of
 Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal.
 Ezek 38:4 "I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and lead you out, with all your army, horses, and horsemen, all
 splendidly clothed, a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords.
 Ezek 38:5 "Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer and all its
 Ezek 38:6 troops; the house of Togarmah from the far north and all its troops; many people are with you.
 Ezek 38:7 "Prepare yourself and be ready, you and all your companies that are gathered about you; and be a
 Ezek 38:8 guard for them. "After many days you will be visited. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought
 back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out
 of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely."

So at the time of the end, God will put "hooks" into the jaws of Rosh, Meshech, Tubal, Persia, Ethiopia, Libya, Gomer, Togarmah, and whatever other countries are in their coalition, and bring them against Israel. God mentions these nations in order to give them a chance to repent and escape His wrath. For even if at the national level it may be impossible to change one's destiny, at the personal level many people could turn to God and be saved.

The nations that will survive that great conflict will live in an ideal world. There will no longer be an army of tax collectors, for people will gladly and voluntarily contribute ten per cent from their bountiful blessings, and no more, to God's administration. Nor will there be a need for an army of lawyers to interpret the mountains of codes that this world has invented, for the whole world will function according to the simple laws of God.

The world that comes out of the Great Tribulation will no longer be divided in a haphazard manner with no regard for cultural, tribal, national and linguistic links. Since God's "kings and priests" are selected and redeemed from "every tribe and tongue and people and nation" (Rev. 5:9), it follows that the new boundaries will be based along these lines. Of course, those boundaries will not be set in stone, and prevent people from crossing them without a passport. They will merely serve administrative purposes.

So will Egypt convert to the Lord's religion in the end? Not only will it convert to it (perhaps after a few plagues and draughts), but together with Assyria (modern Germany) and Israel, will form the three national pillars in the Kingdom of God.

Isa 19:24 "In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria; a blessing in the midst of the land, whom
 Isa 19:25 the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, "Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance."

What do all these things tell us? That God is no respecter of people or of nations. He accepts all who turn to Him in truth, in love, in prayer, in worship, in submission.

Islam is said to be a religion of submission to God. We are quite happy to submit ourselves to the Creator God and acknowledge that there is no God but God and Mohammad is His prophet. Now whether people call our heavenly Father, Allah, Yahweh, God, or other respectful names, it makes no difference to us. We accept God by whatever name nations have called Him. Therefore in saying that there is no God but God and Mohammad is His prophet, we make Mohammad our prophet too. Now just as we are ready and perfectly happy to acknowledge the Muslim God and prophet, how about a reciprocating gesture on the Muslim side of acknowledging our God and our common Savior Jesus Christ? There is no loss in such a gesture – no loss of face and no loss of faith – only gain all around. Of course this invitation is valid for the Jews and for men of good will from all nations.

The Muslims rightly say that Jews, Christians and Muslims are peoples of the Book. How about then we all start preaching Moses, Mohammad and Jesus Christ the way they should have been preached from the very beginning. Our people and the world would be grateful for that. For although the world's population will still need to be reduced to less than a third its present size, so that a plentiful, prosperous, progressive, and peaceful world could be set up, it does not have to be done through war but through natural attrition. In that way all nations could survive and be represented in the Kingdom of God.

We conclude this article with this universally applicable quote from the Bible.

1 Pet 1:17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves
 1 Pet 1:18 throughout the time of your stay here in fear; knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,
 1 Pet 1:19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.
 1 Pet 1:20 He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you
 1 Pet 1:21 who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and
 1 Pet 1:22 hope in God. Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love
 1 Pet 1:23 one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because, "All flesh is as grass,
 1 Pet 1:24 And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away,
 1 Pet 1:25 But the word of the LORD endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.
 1 Pet 2:1 Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking,
 1 Pet 2:2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,
 1 Pet 2:3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.
 1 Pet 2:4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,
 1 Pet 2:5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to
 1 Pet 2:6 God through Christ. Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame."
 1 Pet 2:7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling,
 1 Pet 2:8 And a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.
 1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;
 1 Pet 2:10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy."
 Amen!

Will The End Ever Come?

No other topic has fascinated humanity more than the question of the end time, and no other generation has been more preoccupied with this concern than our generation. We have just come out of the hysteria associated with the end of a millennium and the beginning of another, yet the much-anticipated revolutionary changes that were supposed to come with it never occurred. Many people staked their reputation on the notion that something drastic would occur at this time, yet all their expectations proved futile. The Olympics, which were not supposed to be, came and went; the year 2000, which was supposed to bring an end to the old world, came and went, and that world is still with us; the year 2001, which was supposed to usher in a prosperous new world, came and, in all likelihood, at the end of it we shall still be shackled with the old world. So will this world ever come to an end?

For fundamentalist Christians, the year 1997 was supposed to be the major landmark in the history of the world, not the years 2000 or 2001. That is because 1997 was supposed to be the 6000th year since creation and as such the completion of man's rule on earth and the beginning of a thousand year Millennial Kingdom under Christ.

Biblical scholars believe that the seven-day weekly cycle, parallels seven thousand years for the world. The first six days are given to man to work and earn his living, but the seventh day – the Sabbath – is a day of rest and worship. In the same way, the first six thousand years were given to man to rule the world as he wished (and learn the lesson that he cannot govern himself), while the last thousand years represent a Sabbatical rest for the earth, and a peaceful rule of Christ over the world. Here are some Scriptures that attest to this fact.

Psa 90:4 "For a thousand years in Your sight Are like yesterday when it is past, And like a watch in the night."

2 Pet 3:7 "But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, do not forget this one thing,

2 Pet 3:8 that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

Rev 20:1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain
Rev 20:2 in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a
Rev 20:3 thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

Rev 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Rev 20:5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Rev 20:7 Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison

Rev 20:8 and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather

Rev 20:9 them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.

Rev 20:10 The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Rev 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

Rev 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

Rev 20:13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

Rev 20:14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Rev 20:15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. Now I saw a new heaven

Rev 21:1 and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.

Rev 21:2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride

Rev 21:3 adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.

Rev 21:4 "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

Rev 21:5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are

Rev 21:6 true and faithful." And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.

Rev 21:7 "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

Rev 21:8 "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Now one could be tempted to dismiss this as fanciful interpretation, except that there is an extraordinary convergence of events at this time that unmistakably point towards an unprecedented climax that could change the face of the earth. For even if biblical scholars were wrong, they could not have been wrong by very long.

Two factors must be considered when looking at the return of Jesus Christ: delay and surprise. Notice.

Mat 24:34 "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

Mat 24:35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

Mat 24:36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

Mat 24:37 "But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. "For as in the days before

Mat 24:38 the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered

Mat 24:39 the arc, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.”

So although there are many signs that point to the imminent return of Jesus Christ, the world will still be taken by surprise by that event. Now let us pause for a moment and consider the likely scenario at the time of Noah. He built his ark on dry land far away from the sea. We don't know how long it took him to build it, but legend has it that it took him one hundred and twenty years. On close analysis many ancient legends have turned out to be based on fact. But whatever length of time it took Noah to build his arc, one thing is sure: his contemporaries must have taunted him incessantly. “Hey Noah, when are you going to sail away? You wouldn't have a few spare seats in that luxurious cruise line of yours would you? And are we going around the world, or just on a one-way trip to nowhere? Tell us so that we know how many sandwiches to take with us.”

Noah and his family kept their calm, kept working, and answered no one. But on the Sabbath, he preached to them loudly, telling everyone to repent and turn to God or they would all perish. But they did not listen, laughing at him all the more.

Then the time came for Noah to load the arc, and everyone inside settled in their respective quarters. The sky was still clear with no clouds in sight. Outside, people were laughing, singing and dancing around a huge bon fire in a merriment that lasted a whole week. Then small drops of rain started to fall, but no one worried about that, they kept making merry for the fire was still burning. Noah could have told them that he who laughs last laughs best, but he couldn't for he had already sealed the arc. As the drops grew in intensity, people started making their way home. They have had enough laughter, dance and love to last a long time. All they wanted now was a good rest. So they went to bed, hoping to wake up refreshed and perhaps start all over again, and have yet more fun at the expense of Noah. No one thought much about work those days, for nature provided bountiful harvests of fruits, grains and vegetables, and there were plenty of domestic and wild animals grazing freely on meadows nearby, ready to be slaughtered for meat whenever they wanted it.

They had a good life, but as it always happens when people are well fed, they forgot to thank God and worship Him who gave them all those blessings. But He did not forget about them, or about their debaucheries.

Jer 5:7 "How shall I pardon you for this? Your children have forsaken Me And sworn by those that are not gods. When I had fed them to the full, Then they committed adultery And assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses. They were like well-fed lusty stallions; Every one neighed after his neighbor's wife. Shall I not Jer 5:8 punish them for these things?" says the LORD. "And shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this? Jer 5:9

These warnings were recorded by Jeremiah many hundreds of years later, but most certainly they were known by Noah and the other people of God of those early days, who must have preached them to their contemporaries. So when they woke up, the waters were already rising steadily around them. Some began to worry: could that lunatic have been right after all about the flood that would cleanse the earth of its filth? As days past and the waters began to submerge the low land buildings, they began to panic. Some made their way to Noah's arc and started to call on him. Noah, Noah, open the arc to us! We are sorry for what we did to you, and for not listening to you! Now please open to us; save us please!

But there was no reply from Noah. He could not hear them. The noise from the thunderstorm was drowning their cries. He could not have opened the ark for them anyway, for the door was sealed from the inside. There was no glass in those days, so the arc had no windows. Nor could those from outside force their way in, for the arc was made of hard solid wood capable of withstanding the rigors of a worldwide flood. They all perished regretting that they had not listened to the warnings of that prudent and wise man.

Jesus Christ said that it would be the same in the end-time. People would not listen to those whom God sends to warn them of an equally awesome event. They will laugh at, and ridicule, those who say that the end is near. There are two reasons for this:

1) Mainstream Christianity is very weak in the Scriptures. Its preachers are virtual illiterates when it comes to biblical prophecies. The Catholic Church even went so far as to forbid its priests from talking about those prophecies, particularly those of the book of Revelation. That book contrasts the work of two lonely individuals who are doing God's end time work of preaching His Gospel as a witness to all nations before the end comes (Rev. 11), with the work of a great institution, which it calls, “MOTHER OF HARLOTS” (Rev.17), which has corrupted the world with its fornications and false gospels. Can you see why the mainstream churches do not want their people to know much about biblical prophecies, particularly those of the book of Revelation? Bear in mind that all of them are daughters of the Catholic Church.

2) Fundamentalist preachers, who have some knowledge of biblical prophecies, have a different reason for not wanting Jesus Christ to return too soon, and for not preparing their followers for that event. They do not want these prophecies to be fulfilled while we are still around, for if they do they know that they are doomed. We have exposed their hypocrisy and false teachings too, and that is why they have not been any more welcoming of our message than have mainstream churches.

Now we are at the stage in which no one wants to hear our message anymore, but we cannot stop in order to please people but must continue to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to the very end. Perchance, some might hear and turn to God.

It is extremely dangerous for people to turn down messages that come out of the Scriptures, for that would play right into the hand of the Adversary. Satan does not want anyone to pay attention to God's warnings and to repent of their sins. He does not want them to take any notice of the signs of the times, in direct opposition to what Jesus Christ expects of His followers to do.

Mat 24:42 "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

Mat 25:13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

Mat 26:41 "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Mark 13:37 "And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!"

Watch, watch, watch, and watch again. “And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!” Watching and being ready for the return of their Lord is a matter of life and death for the people of God, as the parable of the ten virgins clearly shows (Mat. 25). All virgins fell asleep while the bridegroom tarried, but while five were wise and took reserves of oil with them, five were foolish and didn't. When they were woken up and told that the bridegroom was coming, the lamps of the wise kept going, but those of

the foolish ones flickered off. While they went out to buy more oil, the bridegroom came, entered the wedding chamber with the wise virgins, and closed the door behind leaving the foolish ones out.

Now what does this mean in the spiritual sense? It means that you need to be in good relationship with God all the time. It means that you must be imbued with the Holy Spirit, and show the fruits of the Holy Spirit, all the time. In so doing you will be able to stand on your feet at the time of your trials, and face adversities with the conviction that God is with you and won't let you be overcome by the wicked one and be bereaved of your salvation. This is what Apostle Paul wrote in his epistle to Timothy.

2 Tim 3:10 But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love,
2 Tim 3:11 perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured. And out of them all Lord delivered me.
2 Tim 3:12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.
2 Tim 3:13 But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.
2 Tim 3:14 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom
2 Tim 3:15 you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.
2 Tim 3:16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction,
2 Tim 3:17 for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every
2 Tim 4:1 good work. I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:
2 Tim 4:2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and
2 Tim 4:3 teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;
2 Tim 4:4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.
2 Tim 4:5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.
2 Tim 4:6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.
2 Tim 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.
2 Tim 4:8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing."

One cannot go very far in the New Testament without coming across warnings about impostors and false teachers. Apostle Paul clearly had a lot of oil in his lamp. He was close to being executed, yet he looked forward to a crown of righteousness that the Lord will give him "ON THAT DAY", not immediately after death. He did not feel that he was going to heaven after death. None of the Apostles spoke of going to heaven after death. They all died in the hope of being resurrected one day and be given a "crown of righteousness" in God's eternal Kingdom. If you believe the Scriptures and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and are at peace with God, you too will receive a "crown of righteousness" on that day, but not before then.

This brings us back to the question of why all predictions about the new millennium did not materialize. It all has to do with the way people look at biblical prophecies. Just about everyone who has ever written about the end time, has quoted the prophecy of Jesus Christ recorded in Matthew 24. In that prophecy, He gave us a general outline of all the major events that were to occur from the time He ascended to heaven until the time He returns to this earth. But that does not tell us anything about the prophecies of Revelation 11 and Daniel 12, which are more specific in nature, and without which the end cannot come until they are fulfilled.

No biblical scholar, as far as we know, has been able to explain these prophecies and the order of their fulfillment – whether they were to be fulfilled before or after the 6,000 years are completed. Let us begin with Revelation 11.

Rev 11:3 "And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed
Rev 11:4 in sackcloth." These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth.
Rev 11:5 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner.
Rev 11:6 These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.
Rev 11:7 When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against
Rev 11:8 them, overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.
Rev 11:9 Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three and a half days,
Rev 11:10 and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.
Rev 11:11 Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them.
Rev 11:12 And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here."
Rev 11:13 And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid
Rev 11:14 and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly.
Rev 11:15 Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"
Rev 11:16 And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying:
Rev 11:17 "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come,
Rev 11:18 Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth."

One sure point that comes out of this passage is that when the two witnesses finish their work, there is still one more woe to come (v.14). Which means that the two witnesses must appear in the world before the 6000 years are completed, and do their work during the events connected with the transition to the new millennium. In other words, the two witnesses must be in the world right now, but would anyone believe them if they told the world who they were? If a single person who "dwells on the earth" believes in them and follows them, they are not the two witnesses. The Scriptures clearly say that, "those who dwell

on the earth will rejoice over them [when they are killed], make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth" (v.10). The Word of God is a powerful weapon in the hands of these people.

Heb 4:12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Why do the priests, ministers, and their followers, hate the very people they ought to love and support? Some of them have consistently requested our magazines, yet in all the years that we have complied with their requests, they have never offered to cover even their own postage costs. They get their spiritual food from us, then they go to their local church and comply with a heavy regime of tithes and offerings in exchange for a concoction of false teachings and false gospels that leads them nowhere except to perdition. They have been so damaged by their spiritual masters they no longer have a sense of propriety and fairness. As Jesus Christ said:

Mat 23:15 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves."

Coming back to Revelation 11, there is another point in this prophecy that few people have stopped to consider. Verse 7 says that, "When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them." Now how long do you think that war would last? Most people have assumed that they would be killed immediately after the three and a half years of preaching, but have you ever heard of a one-day war? There have been a hundred years war, thirty years war, eight years war, four years war, even a seven-day war, but a one-day war? Never! Never because what happens in one day can hardly be called a skirmish, let alone a war. The Bible does not mince words: when it says war, it means war. So when these two witnesses reach the end of three and a half years of preaching, they merely begin a fierce war with the beast of the bottomless pit. And what beast might that be? This is the beast of the bottomless pit.

Rev 20:1 "Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great
Rev 20:2 chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan,
Rev 20:3 and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished."

We have discussed in some detail the case of the two witnesses in previous editions of *The Christian Herald*. Here is part of what we wrote in *TCH No 3*.

"The signs that accompany the work of these prophets are with us now. The two witnesses are either in the world right now or will appear shortly. It should be noticed that the Bible does not say that during their testimony the earth will be struck with all those plagues, but that they have power to strike the earth with all plagues "as often as they desire." They may not desire to strike the earth with any more plagues, so these are not the signs by which they could be recognized.

The Scriptures say that fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours their enemies. But what kind of fire could that be? It cannot be real fire, for it would devour them too. It is the words that come out of their mouth that devour their enemies – that is the kind of fire.

At the end of their testimony, they will be killed and all "those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them." That is quite a feat; here you have two people speaking the truth, preaching and witnessing the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, yet the world hates them. In a world saturated with falsehood, iniquity and deception, one sure way of causing people to hate you is to speak the truth. Which raises an important question: will Elijah hate these prophets too? Both the work of Elijah and that of the two witnesses are to be done at the same time, just prior to the return of Jesus Christ.

If no one else recognized these two witnesses, Elijah certainly would. How can we explain then that all those who dwell on earth rejoice over their death? The only possible explanation is that Elijah is one of them.

But if the two witnesses are equal before God, one sitting at His right side and the other at His left, why did Jesus Christ say that before His return Elijah, not Elijahs, will come to restore all things? How can Elijah do the work of one person in one place and the work of two in another? Jesus Christ gave us the answer to this astonishing Bible mystery:

"The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?' And He answered and said to them, 'Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?' So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.'" (Matt 19:3-6).

The two witnesses are a husband and wife team. Only in marriage can one person be two and two people be one. Apostle Paul clarified this point when he said that a woman couldn't preach but be in submission to her husband.

"Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love and holiness, with self-control." (1 Ti. 2:11-15).

A woman is saved not by preaching, but by childbearing. She redeems herself from the bondage of Satan by fulfilling the holy role given to her by God – childbearing. In the case of the two witnesses, her role is to stand by her husband during the most perilous time in the history of the world. Although she cannot preach, she can, nevertheless, be a witness in her own way. To be a witness, one does not need to be a preacher. Anyone can be a witness. All he or she needs to do is to be faithful to God, be righteous, chaste, truthful, loving, humble, helpful, etc. In other words, she

witnesses by example not by preaching. This does not prevent her from answering questions about her faith, or from addressing small groups of women. But she could never hold spiritual or administrative positions in the Churches of God. Any church that permits a woman to usurp the role of men ceases to be a Church of God.

So while the husband is doing the work of Elijah, preaching and teaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and restoring the things that need to be restored, both of them are witnesses of God – each in their own way. The world started with a husband and wife failing before God; it will end up with them redeeming themselves by doing the work of God together when no one else is doing it.

Adam was the son of God (Luke 3:38; Gen. 1:26-27). But Adam and Eve sinned and hid themselves from their Father (Gen. 3:8). In His disappointment, the Father of Mankind (Gen. 5:1-2) turned His heart away from His creation and hid His face from them too (Isa. 59:2), then let them learn their own lesson. Now, six thousand years later, the lesson is complete. The world is on the verge of destruction. Unless God turns His heart to us and saves us, we will perish. That is why the work of Elijah and his companion is so important.

Satan and his ministers will be furious when their work is exposed and brought to an end, and will kill the two witnesses. That will be the end of the reign of Satan, of his ministers, and of this age.

"Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been shattered, all these things shall be finished." (Daniel 12:7).

Who are the holy people whose power shall be shattered in the end time? The words "time, times and half a time" equal three and a half years – the length of time the two witnesses would be doing their work. The holy people, whose power shall be shattered, are none other than the two witnesses of God. When they are killed, "all these things shall be finished", this age shall have run its course, and a new age began." (*The Christian Herald* No 3, p. 8).

Now let us go to Matthew 24 and connect the two witnesses with this prophecy. Matthew 24 contains the only direct sign that foretells the imminent return of Jesus Christ – the sign of the "abomination of desolation". All other signs are general and circumstantial in nature, but this one is specific, unique, and unambiguous. But one still needs to know what to look for, for otherwise this sign becomes as unassailable as all the others.

In the *Christian Herald* no 3, and other editions, we also discussed and revealed the identity of the "abomination of desolation" and the location of the holy place. That was never in question anymore, but what was in question is what happened when this creature profaned the holy place. That is where we made a mistake in one of our earlier writings, and that gave a lot of gist to the grinding mills of our nemesis. Let us take a closer look at that prophecy.

Mat 24:1 Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the
Mat 24:2 temple. And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."
Mat 24:3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"
Mat 24:4 And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.
Mat 24:5 "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.
Mat 24:6 "And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass,
Mat 24:7 but the end is not yet. "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines,
Mat 24:8 pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. "All these are the beginning of sorrows.
Mat 24:9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.
Mat 24:10 "And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.
Mat 24:11 "Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.
Mat 24:12 "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.
Mat 24:13 "But he who endures to the end shall be saved.
Mat 24:14 "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will
Mat 24:15 come. "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand),
Mat 24:16 "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.
Mat 24:17 "Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house.
Mat 24:18 "And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.
Mat 24:19 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!
Mat 24:20 "And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.
Mat 24:21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor
Mat 24:22 ever shall be. "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days
Mat 24:23 will be shortened. "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it.
Mat 24:24 "For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible,
Mat 24:25 even the elect. "See, I have told you beforehand. "Therefore if they say to you,
Mat 24:26 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it.
Mat 24:27 "For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.
Mat 24:28 "For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.
Mat 24:29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars
will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.
Mat 24:30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will
see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. "And he will send His angels with a great sound of a
Mat 24:31 trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.
Mat 24:32 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth
Mat 24:33 leaves, you know that summer is near. "So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near; at the
Mat 24:34 doors! "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.
Mat 24:35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.
Mat 24:36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.
Mat 24:37 "But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. "For as in the days before
Mat 24:38 the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered
Mat 24:39 the arc, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be."

On a superficial reading of this passage, particularly verses 24:15 – 16, 29 – 30, it would appear that all these events follow a chronological order. First we have the desecration of the holy place by the “abomination of desolation”, then the Great Tribulation, and soon after that the “Son of Man” makes His triumphal return to this earth. But if this is the case, when would the false christs and false prophets of verses 23 – 24 make their appearance? That there have been false christs and false prophets throughout all time, there is no doubt, but Jesus Christ implied that at the end of time they would intensify their work in trying to deceive the very elect.

Now these people cannot just show up suddenly from nowhere, and then after discovering that they cannot deceive the very elect, they conveniently lay down and disappear from the face of the earth. No, they need time to fill the world with their deceptions.

If you could see what we receive at this office, your hair would stand on end too. Sufficient to say that after realizing that they cannot beat us at the Scriptures, they are now desperately trying to destroy the Scriptures themselves. We have said it many times in the past and say it again: if anyone comes to you and says that the Scriptures are wrong in any way, or that those who put the Bible together have made a mistake, have nothing to do with them. One characteristic of these deceivers is that they seldom speak of, or take into consideration, the work of the Holy Spirit. What you need to know is that by the time Apostle John, the last of Jesus’ Apostles, received the book of Revelation, the Bible was complete. From then on, the only way by which people could safeguard themselves against false preachers was by referring to the Bible.

For more than a thousand years, the Catholic Church bypassed this obstacle by forbidding its members from owning or reading the Bible. Those who disobeyed paid with their life. That way this church was able to stamp the word “Christian” on its pagan traditions, and twist the Scriptures at will in a continuous process of teaching false gospels. Its daughters, the Orthodox and Protestant Churches, have hardly begun to purge the errors inherited from their mother church. But the Catholic Church did not count on the Protestant Reformation and the advent of the printing press that made the Bible available to the general population. The vast majority of people however still do not use it to safeguard themselves against false preachers. Now they are falling victims to a new form of deception. Instead of trying to isolate the Scriptures from their members, false preachers are attacking the reliability of the Bible. How many of them, for example, still preach that the account of creation from the book of Genesis is factual and accurate?

Fundamentalist preachers on the other hand, while not denying divine creation altogether, preach theistic evolution, as if that were any better than Darwinian evolution. But a more subtle deception comes from their attack on the signs that identify the people of God – the biblical Holy Days. They try to derail their observance by changing the Jewish lunar calendar by which these Holy Days are being set. This deception is so subtle and powerful, an untrained person would find it virtually impossible to detect. We expand on this topic in the article, “*Another Deception Put To Rest*”, elsewhere in this magazine.

Now just as the two witnesses do not appear suddenly then disappear after three and half years, but stay on to fight their war with the beast of the bottomless pit, or better said with its servants, so the false preachers do not appear suddenly then disappear after a few days of unsuccessful attempts to deceive them. All of these people need a period of germination and maturation in a Church of God before they begin their respective missions. It has to be a Church of God, rather than a mainstream church, for two reasons: 1) One cannot deceive that which is already deceived, and 2) The Churches of God make intensive use of the Scriptures, and that is essential for the grooming of both the two witnesses and the false preachers.

The question is where do we fit in the false preachers in the end time scenario? For this we need to have another look at verse 15. “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand).” Jesus Christ sent His disciples to Daniel’s prophecies in order to understand the truth about the ‘abomination of desolation’. We did not do that and that is where we made our mistake. This is what Daniel says.

Dan 12:8 Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, "My lord, what shall be the end of these things?"

Dan 12:9 And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

Dan 12:10 "Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.

Dan 12:11 "And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days.

Dan 12:12 "Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.

Dan 12:13 "But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days."

Did you get it? From the time the “abomination of desolation” is set up and profanes the holy place there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days, then the Great Tribulation begins. That explains when the false christs and false prophets make their appearance too. Placing these events in their proper order would make Matthew 24:15-16 to read like this:

Mat 24:15 "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), [there will be one thousand two hundred and ninety days],

Mat 24:16 "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains . . ."

In some of our earlier writings we got the Great Tribulation wrong by one thousand two hundred and ninety days. Does that make us false prophets? Our nemesis thinks so. The fact that they are clueless when it comes to biblical prophecies and never got anything right doesn't seem to bother them.

There remains one other point to be clarified here. In the beginning, we assumed that the term 'holy place' referred to the ground on which Jesus Christ was crucified and which contains His blood. But we have been too restrictive with that term, and have realized since then that 'holy place' and 'Holy Land' mean the same thing. In other words, every piece of ground on which Jesus Christ walked, is holy place. As a popular proverb says, sometimes people cannot see the woods for the trees. It is not for nothing that from the very beginning the Holy Spirit has inspired people to call the land of Israel, Holy Land. So if you know when the 'abomination of desolation' profaned the Holy Land (by walking on the steps of Jesus Christ), you can start counting one thousand two hundred and ninety days and then get ready to face your destiny.

Daniel's Last Great Mysteries Unveiled

The Greek Orthodox Church has never forgiven the Roman Catholic Church for usurping its leadership position in the Christian world. The New Testament was entrusted to the Greeks as the Old Testament was to the Jews, but the Roman Church usurped that legacy, took over the leadership of the Christian world, and made Latin its official language.

In more recent times, Protestant Christians have taken up the battle against the papist Rome, but their gripe has been more against the leadership of the Pope than against the false teachings of that church or for making Latin its official language. Nevertheless the Protestant movement and the advent of the printing press have facilitated the publication of the Bible in virtually all languages of the world.

What neither the Greeks nor the Protestants seem to have realized is that there is extensive discussion in the Scriptures about the Roman world, and not all of it negative as previously thought. This has been one of the greatest, longest held, and most impenetrable biblical mysteries, and one that was not meant to be unveiled until the very end of this age.

The story of the Roman world is found in a number of prophetic books, but the core of it is in the book of Daniel. Daniel however did not write just one prophecy, but a chain of them. We have revealed the greater part of his prophecies in previous editions of *The Christian Herald* (all of which are freely available from us now), but there was one mystery that we left out of our previous discussions too. That prophecy, like all the others, could not be revealed ahead of its time, and its time has only come now.

Ever since we began this work a decade ago, we have never stopped being amazed at how one prophecy leads to another, and how neatly all biblical prophecies fit together even though they were written by people who lived hundreds of years apart.

One of the greatest impediments to understanding biblical prophecies is the false information that passes as scriptural enlightenment these days. There are mountains of publications that purport to reveal one prophecy or another, which deserve nothing but the accolade of 'trash'. And yet, we could see a purpose even in those publications, for they represent an important test for the people of God. We could not have reached our level of spiritual understanding if we had not grappled with those false teachings first. God expects His people to prove themselves by freeing themselves from the clutches of those who would deceive them and turn them into their virtual slaves.

The process of salvation is fraught with trials and dangers, and only those who stay on course to the very end and overcome all their trials make themselves worthy of the Kingdom of God. It is not for nothing that Jesus Christ said, "the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen." (Mat 20:16). And also:

Mat 10:16 "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless
Mat 10:17 as doves. "But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. "You will be brought
Mat 10:18 before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.
Mat 10:19 "But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given
Mat 10:20 to you in that hour what you speak; "for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who
Mat 10:21 speaks in you. "Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to put to death.
Mat 10:22 "And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved."

Those who think that such persecutions were a thing of the past do not know what the people of God have to put up with these days. "The end" to which Jesus Christ was referring to is as much the end of one's life as the end of this age. The children of God must prove themselves by growing in grace and knowledge, by attaining the mind of God, by understanding the Scriptures, and by penetrating the mysteries of the Kingdom of God.

Phil 3:13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,
Phil 3:14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
Phil 3:15 Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise,
Phil 3:16 God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.
Phil 3:17 Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.
Phil 3:18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the
Phil 3:19 enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame; who set their mind on earthly things.

Gal 2:4 And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage),
Gal 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

2 Pet 3:17 You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own

2 Pet 3:18 steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

Rom 8:38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
Phil 2:5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,
Phil 2:6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,
Phil 2:7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.
Phil 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

If Jesus Christ had to prove Himself by becoming obedient even to the point of death on the cross, so must His followers prove themselves by overcoming the trials that come their way. A popular proverb says that as the strongest steel is created through the hottest fire, so is character created through the greatest trials. Here is a wonderful passage from Apostle Paul.

1 Cor 9:24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way
1 Cor 9:25 that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus:
1 Cor 9:26 not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring
1 Cor 9:27 it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.
1 Cor 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

When you find yourself under severe trial, remember that last verse in particular. Turn to God in prayer for He always gives His people a way out of their difficulties. King David of Israel also endured many trials, yet God delivered him out of them all because he was faithful. Read 2 Samuel chapters 22 and 23 and see what David had to say at the end of his life. You will find some very encouraging words there.

Faith in God not only helps you in times of difficulties, but also grants you courage and strength to overcome what otherwise might be insurmountable obstacles, as the case of David and Goliath shows only too well.

The greatest trial for the people of God is to withstand the wiles of the Devil and the false teachings of his servants. In this process it is impossible not to slip sometimes, but the main thing is to get up, dust yourself off, and keep going even when you feel that the sky has fallen on your head and the world laughs and rejoices at your fall.

Micah 7:7 “Therefore I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; My God will hear me.
Micah 7:8 Do not rejoice over me, my enemy; When I fall, I will arise; When I sit in darkness, The LORD will be a
Micah 7:9 light to me. I will bear the indignation of the LORD, Because I have sinned against Him, Until He pleads my case And executes justice for me. He will bring me forth to the light; I will see His righteousness.
Micah 7:10 Then she who is my enemy will see, And shame will cover her who said to me, “Where is the LORD your God?” My eyes will see her; Now she will be trampled down Like mud in the streets.”

Daniel the prophet understood that there was a great chasm between the wicked people and the holy people. God told him that none of the wicked shall understand his prophecies, but the wise shall understand.

Dan 12:10 “Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.”

The theme of trials and purification for the people of God is ever present in the Bible.

No other book of the Bible has generated more explanations and supposed prophetic revelations than the book of Daniel. Yet this is the very book that sifts out the wise from the wicked by the way they understand and handle his prophecies.

Most of the writings about Daniel's prophecies are simply wrong. But knowing which ones are right and which are wrong is a mammoth job. It requires not only a good understanding of the Scriptures, but a good historical background too.

My introduction to the prophecies of Daniel, as in fact to the rest of the Scriptures, was through the Worldwide Church of God and especially through the writings of its founder Herbert W. Armstrong. At the time of my initiation into that Church, some three decades ago, I was fresh out of the Iron Curtain and I had scant knowledge of both history and the Scriptures. But after they entrapped me, I made extra effort to study these subjects thoroughly, not with the view of freeing myself from their clutches, but in the hope of joining their ranks. But the more I studied, the more disturbed I became by what I discovered. In the end, we parted company and in so doing I chose a life of struggle rather than one of abundance. Nevertheless the spiritual joys that came from this path are more than words could ever express. Truly God never abandons those who genuinely seek Him and His ways.

Some of my greatest joys came when I began to understand Daniel's prophecies. God told Daniel that these prophecies were not meant to be understood before the end time, therefore if we can unveil them now it means that those times are upon us indeed.

We begin by taking a look at the general outline of Daniel's writings. The first chapter gives us the story of the captivity in Babylon of four Jewish boys among whom was Daniel. The second chapter is the story of a dream of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, which could not be interpreted by anyone except Daniel. That dream is important because it represents the beginning of Daniel's great prophecies and because it connects with later dreams of Daniel himself. Let us look at it now.

Dan 2:31 "You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome.

Dan 2:32 "This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,

Dan 2:33 "its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. You watched while a stone was cut out without

Dan 2:34 hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.

Dan 2:35 "Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

Dan 2:36 "This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king.

Dan 2:37 "You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength,

Dan 2:38 and glory: and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all; you are this head of gold.

Dan 2:39 "But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze,

Dan 2:40 which shall rule over all the earth. "And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all

Dan 2:41 the others. "Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.

Dan 2:42 "And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong

Dan 2:43 and partly fragile. "As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

Dan 2:44 "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms,

Dan 2:45 and it shall stand forever. "Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."

Dan 2:46 Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should

Dan 2:47 present and offering and incense to him. The king answered Daniel, and said, "Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret."

Dan 2:48 Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon.

Dan 2:49 Also Daniel petitioned the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel sat in the gate of the king."

Of the four kingdoms that would arise and dominate the world from then on, the only one that is identified at this point is the Babylonian kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar the Great. We will say more about this prophecy later.

The third chapter deals with Nebuchadnezzar's idolatry, the refusal of Daniel's companions to worship Nebuchadnezzar's statue, and their miraculous escape from the burning fiery furnace.

The fourth chapter deals with Nebuchadnezzar's humiliation, his forced exile into the wilderness, and his redemption after acknowledging the supremacy of the Most High God in heaven. Here is the wonderful conclusion to that chapter.

Dan 4:34 And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom is from generation to generation.

Dan 4:35 All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, "What have You done?"

Dan 4:36 At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was

Dan 4:37 added to me. Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down."

The fifth chapter gives us the story of the end of the Babylonian kingdom and the rise of Media and Persia. The sixth chapter is the story of Daniel's troubles with the new rulers, and his miraculous escape from the lion's den. Here too we have a wonderful conclusion to that chapter.

Dan 6:25 Then King Darius wrote: To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be

Dan 6:26 multiplied to you. I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God, And steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, And His dominion shall endure to the end. He delivers and rescues, And He works signs and wonders in

Dan 6:27 heaven and on earth, Who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.

Dan 6:28 So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if today's rulers – kings, presidents, prime ministers, etc. – made a decree that "men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel" too? Two of the greatest kings that ever lived, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and Darius of Persia, were not ashamed to issue such a decree. Perhaps our leaders need an experience like that of Nebuchadnezzar to bring them to their senses too.

The seventh chapter brings us to a prophecy that parallels the one from chapter two. Daniel had a vision about four beasts, representing four kingdoms, of which the fourth was to be more dreadful than all the others.

Dan 7:15 "I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.

Dan 7:16 "I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things:

Dan 7:17 "Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth.

Dan 7:18 "But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even

Dan 7:19 forever and ever.' "Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, which devoured, broke in pieces, and

Dan 7:20 trampled the residue with its feet; and the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows.

Dan 7:21 "I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them,

Dan 7:22 "until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and

Dan 7:23 the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom. "Thus he said: 'The fourth beast shall be A fourth kingdom on earth, Which shall be different from all other kingdoms, And shall devour the whole earth, Trample it

Dan 7:24 and break it in pieces. The ten horns are ten kings Who shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first ones, And shall subdue three kings.

Dan 7:25 He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a

Dan 7:26 'time. But the court shall be seated, And they shall take away his dominion, To consume and destroy it

Dan 7:27 forever. Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him."

It is clear that the four kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar's dream are the same as the four kingdoms of Daniel's dreams. In both cases they are said to dominate the world from that time on until the end of the age, when the Kingdom of the Most High will be established over the whole world and all other kingdoms brought to an end.

So far only the first kingdom was identified, that of Babylon, but the next chapter, the eighth, gives us the identity of the next two kingdoms – Medo-Persia and Greece respectively.

Dan 8:18 Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me, and stood me upright. And he said, Look, I am making known to you

Dan 8:19 what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; for at the appointed time the end shall be.

Dan 8:20 "The ram which you saw, having the two horns; they are the kings of Media and Persia.

Dan 8:21 "And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king.

Dan 8:22 "As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that

Dan 8:23 nation, but not with its power. "And in the latter time of their kingdom, When the transgressors have

Dan 8:24 reached their fullness, A king shall arise, Having fierce features, Who understands sinister schemes. His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; He shall destroy fearfully, And shall prosper and thrive; He shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people.

Dan 8:25 "Through his cunning He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; And he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; But he shall be broken

Dan 8:26 without human means. "And the vision of the evenings and mornings Which was told is true; Therefore seal up the vision, For it refers to many days in the future."

The emphasis in this chapter, as was in chapter seven, is on that dreadful fourth kingdom, but we are not told which one that is either in here or anywhere else in the Bible. The first three kingdoms, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece, seem to serve little other purpose than to bring us to the fourth kingdom. This is confirmed by Daniel's reaction to his understanding of the truth about that kingdom.

Dan 7:28 "This is the end of the account. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly troubled me, and my countenance changed; but I kept the matter in my heart."

Dan 8:27 And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king's business. I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it.

At first, merely his thoughts greatly troubled him, but as he understood more about the fourth kingdom he fainted and was sick for days. Now what did he understand that made him so sick, and more importantly why was he not allowed to tell us about what he understood? He was forced to keep that mystery to himself and take it with him to the grave.

Now remember, when he interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream there was nothing that bothered him then, but the more revelations he received the more troubled he became. Well, the time has come to reveal to the world

that long held mystery. Daniel became sick when he understood that the fourth kingdom would rise from none other than his own people Israel.

Ever since the second century A.D., biblical scholars have held the view that the fourth kingdom was the Roman Empire. We too have expressed that view in some of our previous writings. But the time has now come to shed light on the whole truth and reveal the very mystery that portends the end of this age.

The second part of chapter nine introduces two new and very important elements: the arrival of the Messiah and His death at the hands of an "abomination that makes desolate".

Dan 9:20 Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel,

Dan 9:21 and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God. yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said,

Dan 9:22 "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand.

Dan 9:23 "At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision:

Dan 9:24 "Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.

Dan 9:25 "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again,

Dan 9:26 and the wall, Even in troublesome times. "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

Dan 9:27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."

There has been no end of speculation as to who or what this 'abomination of desolation' might be. What is surprising is that even after that prophecy has been fulfilled, when it has become clear to all who is responsible for the death of the Messiah, they are still wondering about the identity of this "abomination".

When talking about the 'abomination of desolation' in Matthew chapter 24, Jesus Christ was telling His disciples about His own death. That is why he said, "whoever reads, let him understand".

Remember, He also told His followers never to call anyone on earth (spiritual) Father. "Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven." (Mat 23:9). This warning had little to do with the Jewish people, for they were not calling their leaders 'Father', but 'Rabbi', or 'Teacher'. In this warning He was drawing their attention to the one who was already masquerading as "Holy Father", who was beginning to exercise his authority over the Holy Land, and that was Pontifex Maximus.

Leaders of the people must take responsibility for the actions of their followers.

Pontius Pilate was told that Jesus Christ was the Son of God and he believed it for he was afraid when he heard it. Like all Romans, he also believed that his religious leader, Pontifex Maximus, claimed descent from the gods, and was regarded by his followers as "King Sacrorum" (Sacred or Divine King) and King Sacrificulum" (King of Sacrifices). Pontifex Maximus, who to this day retains the title of King in the Catholic Church, is ultimately responsible for the actions of his subjects, particularly in religious matters. So when Pontius Pilate acceded to the mob's request to crucify the Son of God, he fulfilled the prophecy about the 'abomination of desolation' cutting off Messiah in the middle of the week. Jesus Christ was crucified on Wednesday afternoon, and remained in the grave until Sunday morning, slightly over three days and three nights.

Jesus Christ did not absolve the Jews of the guilt of delivering Him to the Romans to be crucified, but the context of Daniel's prophecies make it clear that ultimate responsibility for His death remains with the highest religious authority of the land. That authority is the one that Jesus Christ and Daniel called "abomination that makes desolate" or "abomination of desolation".

Daniel clearly associated the "abomination that makes desolate" with the fourth beast, and was highly distressed about the death of the Messiah at its hand. But he was distressed about the fourth beast even before he foresaw the fate of the Messiah.

The next two chapters, 10 and 11, have a lot to say about the last two kingdoms, but what he saw in them about the fourth beast did not just make him sick for a day or two, he was ill for three whole weeks.

Dan 10:1 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message was true, but the appointed time was long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision.

Dan 10:2 In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food,

Dan 10:3 no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

What followed was a series of historical events and conflicts that occurred between the "king of the South" and the "king of the North". Now instead of going directly to the Bible, we are going to quote from a religious source. The reason for this will become apparent later.

“The first 35 verses of Daniel 11 give an account, written years in advance, of the intrigue between two political entities—the “king of the South” and the “king of the North”. In secular history, the king of the South is often referred to as Ptolemy. This dynasty ruled from Alexandria in Egypt. The king of the North from Antioch in Syria under the name Seleucus, or Antiochus.

With this in mind, we will provide commentary on the prophecy. The reader may consult Glason L. Archer’s research on *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, which we quote below, or other reliable reference works for a more complete account. Please read in your own Bible the verses we cite, and remember that these details were foretold far in advance of their occurrence.

Daniel 11:2: The “three more kings” are *Cambyses*, the elder son of Cyrus; *pseudo-Smendis*, an impostor who passed himself off as Cyrus’s younger son, who had been secretly killed; and Darius the Persian. ‘The Persian king who invaded Greece was . . . Xerxes, who reigned 485-464 B.C.’ (*The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p.128).

Verses 3-4: “Verse 3 introduces us to . . . the rise of Alexander the Great” (ibid.). The language in verse 4 “clearly suggests that this mighty conqueror was going to have a comparatively brief reign . . . In seven or eight years he accomplished the most dazzling military conquest in human history. But he lived only four more years more; and . . . died of a fever in 323 . . .” (ibid.) Alexander’s kingdom was divided “among four smaller and weaker empires” (ibid., p. 129). Alexander’s infant son was murdered in 310. Alexander’s uncle was assassinated in 317. “Thus there were no descendants or blood relatives to succeed Alexander himself” (ibid). So his kingdom was not divided among his posterity (verse 4).

Alexander’s generals warred for control of his empire. The ensuing struggles for domination eliminated all but four, who became heads of the four divisions of his empire. The four were Cassander, reigning in Greece and the West, Lysimachus in Thrace and Asian Minor, Ptolemy in Egypt and Seleucus in Syria. Of these four, two—Ptolemy and Seleucus—expanded their rule and territory. These were the kings of Egypt and Syria, respectively.

The machinations that followed relate to these two. They are referred to as the king of the South (Ptolemy) and the king of the North (Seleucus) because of their location relative to Jerusalem.

Verse 5: “The king of the South was to be Ptolemy I” (*The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 130). The biblical expression “one of his princes refers to Seleucus. He had originally served under Ptolemy. In the intrigue after Alexander’s death, Seleucus ultimately gained control over Syria and became king of the North. Seleucus eventually wielded more power than Ptolemy. The dynasty of the Seleucid line was to continue until 64 B.C.

The Laodicean war

Verse 6: A state of tension and hostility existed between the king of the South and the king of the North. Ptolemy I died in 285 B.C. In 252 the two powers attempted a treaty under *Berenice*, the daughter of Ptolemy II, was to marry *Antiochus II*, the king of the North. Laodice, the first wife of Antiochus II was angry because he had divorced her. In retaliation, she manipulated a conspiracy from her place of banishment. She had Berenice and her infant son assassinated. “Not long afterward the king himself [Antiochus II] was poisoned . . .” (ibid).

Laodice established herself as queen, because her son Seleucus was too young to rule. The prophecy “she [Berenice] shall be given up” refers to the coup that Laodice engineered to the effect the execution of Berenice.

Some nobles who had supported Berenice as queen were also brought down.

Verses 7-9: Retaliation followed. A series of military actions, which came to be known as the Laodicean War, resulted. Ptolemy II died soon after Laodice killed his daughter, Berenice. *Ptolemy III* sought to avenge his sister’s death. He attacked the king of the North and captured the Syrian capital of Antioch. Verse 8 describes the recapture by Ptolemy of the “long-lost idols and sacred treasures” (ibid., p. 131) that had been stolen from Egypt by Cambyses in 524 B.C.

Peace was concluded between Ptolemy III and Seleucus II in 240, and hostilities ceased until 221, when Ptolemy II died. Verses 10-12: The sons of Seleucus II attacked the king of the South after their father died. One of these sons, Seleucus III, reigned for only three years. His military activity was relatively minor. He died by poisoning. Another son, Antiochus II (the Great), did “overwhelm and pass through.” He conquered Palestine.

Ptolemy IV, the king of the South, retaliated (verse 11) and defeated the larger army of Seleucus III at the Battle of Raphia. After his victory Ptolemy turned to a life of debauchery during which he slaughtered tens of thousands of Jews in Egypt (verse 12). Through all this he weakened his kingdom.

Verses 13-16: The phrase “at the end of some years” refers to an incident when, 14 years after his defeat, Antiochus III came against *Ptolemy V*, still a young boy. Ptolemy IV had died in 203). The Egyptian provinces were in turmoil because of the wretched life of Ptolemy IV. Many of the people—including Jews sympathetic to the king of the North—joined with Antiochus against the king of the South. The rebellion was ultimately crushed by the Egyptian general *Scopus* (verse 14).

Scopus also rebuffed the forces of Antiochus during the winter of 201-202. The king of the North responded with another invasion. He captured the city of Sidon (“a fortified city”), where Scopus surrendered. Antiochus acquired complete control of the Holy Land, the “Glorious Land” (verse 16).

Verse 17: The Revised English Bible reads: “He [the king of the North] will resolve to advance with the full might of his kingdom; and, when he has agreed to terms with the king of the south, he will give his young daughter in marriage to him, with a view to the destruction of the kingdom by treaty; but the treaty will not last nor will it be his purpose which is served.”

Having defeated Scopus, Antiochus desired to gain control of Egypt itself. He gave his daughter, Cleopatra, to Ptolemy V in marriage. He believed she would betray the interests of her husband in favor of her father. Cleopatra frustrated the plans of Antiochus by siding with her husband.

Verses 18-19: In his frustration, Antiochus attacked islands and cities bordering on the Mediterranean. The inhabitants of some of these appealed to Rome for aid. Rome responded by attacking Antiochus and inflicting defeat on his forces. The Romans deprived him of much of his territory and took several hostages to Rome, including Antiochus's son. Rome exacted heavy tribute of him (verse 18).

Antiochus returned in disgrace to his stronghold, Antioch. Unable to pay the heavy fees exacted by the Romans, he attempted to plunder a pagan temple. His action so enraged local inhabitants that they killed him, bringing him to an inglorious end (verse 19).

Verse 20: According to 2 Maccabees 3:7-40, Antiochus other son, Seleucus IV, was unable to pay the taxes (2 Maccabees is an apocryphal book that reports on these events). Seleucus sent a Jew, Heliodorus, to plunder the temple at Jerusalem. Heliodorus went to the holy city but obtained nothing. Seleucus was later poisoned by Heliodorus, and so killed, "but not in anger or in battle."

Antiochus Epiphanes

Daniel 11:21-35: These verses speak of the infamous Antiochus Epiphanes, the brother of Seleucus IV, who had earlier been taken hostage to Rome. He was a "tyrannical oppressor who did his utmost to destroy the Jewish religion altogether" (The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Vol. 7, p. 136).

Antiochus passed laws that forbade the practice of a Jewish religion, under penalty of death. He was a man of incredible cruelty. On his orders "an aged scribe, Eleazar, was flogged to death because he refused to eat swine's flesh. A mother and her seven children were successively butchered, in the presence of the governor, for refusing to pay homage to an image. Two mothers who had circumcised their New-born sons were driven through the city and cast headlong from the wall" (Charles Pfeiffer, *Between the Testaments*, 1974, pp. 81-82).

Verse 31: This refers to the momentous events of Dec. 16, 168 B.C., when a crazed Antiochus entered Jerusalem and killed 80,000 women and children (2 Maccabees 5:11-14). He then desecrated the temple by offering a sacrifice to a pagan god, Jupiter Olympus. This outrage was a forerunner of a comparable event that Jesus Christ said would occur in the last days (Matthew 24:15). [*Jesus Christ said no such a thing. Matthew 24:15 refers to an entirely different event, as we shall see later*].

Verses 32-35: This is the story of the indomitable will and courage of the Maccabees, a family of priests who resisted Antiochus and his successors. The Maccabees' revolt against the Syrian king was triggered when "Matthias, the leading priest in the city of Modein. . . , after killing the officer of Antiochus who had come to enforce the new decree concerning idolatrous worship. . . , led a guerilla band that fled to the hills. . ." (*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 141).

Matthathias was aided in his cause by five sons, most notably Judas, nicknamed Hammer. Many of these patriots died in this cause, but their heroics ultimately drove the Syrian forces from the country.

At this point Daniel's prophecy takes on a different tone, shifting to "the time of the end" near the end of verse 35. To quote Archer (*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 143): "With the conclusion of the preceding pericope [extract] at v. 35, the predictive material that incontestably applies to the Hellenistic empires and the contest between the Seleucids and the Jewish patriots ends. This present section (vv. 36-39) contains some features that hardly apply to Antiochus IV, though most of the details could apply to him as well as to his latter-day antitype, "the beast".

Liberal and conservative scholars "agree that all of chapter 11 up to this point contains strikingly accurate predictions of the whole sweep of events from the reign of Cyrus . . . to the unsuccessful effort of Antiochus Epiphanes to stamp out the Jewish faith (ibid.)." (*Is The Bible True?* pp. 19-21).

At this point this article stopped discussing Daniel's prophecies and went on to other topics. Now we would have liked to give you the author's name but we couldn't because it did not list one. All we could do is give you the name of the booklet from where we got it, *Is The Bible True?*, published by the United Church of God from Cincinnati, Ohio.

This church, like many that came out of the Worldwide Church of God, seldom gives the authors of its articles or publications. There are two reasons for that:

1) Most of their materials are plagiarized, and as such they do not dare take credit for what is not their own. This is not the case with our quote, for they gave us their source – *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* – but virtually all of their other teachings are taken from churches and people, including us, whom they do not acknowledge. Yet this is a church that claims its authority on the basis of "scholarly" leadership.

2) The leaders are afraid that others might outshine them, so they force their underlings to write anonymously. We know some of them personally, and believe us they do not offer a pretty picture character wise. This church is involved in a fierce cannibalizing war for membership with other churches that arose from the fall of the Worldwide Church of God.

Now neither *The Expository Bible Commentary* nor the "scholars" of this church, could explain to us the rest of Daniel prophecies. Which brings to mind a verse from chapter 12. "Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand" (Dan 12:10). Well, since they admit that they do not understand the rest of those prophecies perhaps we should not be too harsh on them, for it takes courage to admit that one is wicked.

We have no problem with most of their explanation of the historical events of the third and second centuries B.C. and their correlation with Daniel's prophecies, except in the division of Alexander's empire. We believe that the kingdom of the east is Babylonia and Persia, the kingdom of the North, the territories north of Israel – Greece, Asia Minor and Syria combined, the kingdom of the South being Egypt, and the kingdom of the West being southern Italy, Sicily and the other territories and islands in the Mediterranean over which Greece had control at that time. This division does not change much from their correlation, but it fits better into the end time developments that Daniel's prophecies lead us to.

The area north of Israel was thoroughly Hellenized in those days, plus the lines of command among Alexander's generals were not as clear-cut as they make it. Initially there was intense struggle between the leaders of forces stationed in Greece, Asia Minor and Syria until one gained ascendancy and began his wars with the king of the South. It should not be forgotten that the Scriptures do not divide Alexander's empire among four men, but in the "four winds of heaven".

Dan 11:4 "And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity nor according to his dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these."

We also have disagreement over their interpretation of verses 29 to 35. The historical background of Daniel's prophecies contains many time gaps and shifts of topic. The greatest of these occurs not at verse 35, as they assert it, but at verse 29. If you look in the Bible (we use the New King Version, the most accurate of all), you will notice that verse 29 is in bold face numerals, whereas those immediately before and after are not. That indicates a paragraph break or a shift to a new point. From then on the one referred to as "he" is neither the king of the North nor the king of the South, but a new personality altogether. This becomes clearer in verse 40, which is part of the same scenario.

Dan 11:40 "At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through."

At the time of the end, this 'he' will be opposed by both the king of the South and the King of the North, but before then he does a lot of damage to the people of God. From our time, with the advantage of hindsight, we could look in history and see what figure of great stature did much damage to the holy people? This is precisely what God wants us to do now, and why these prophecies were sealed until the time of the end (Daniel 12:9). It is not a mere coincidence that both Jesus Christ and His followers down through the centuries have been persecuted and killed by the same 'abomination of desolation'.

Based on what we know from history and prophecy, we can point out with certainty that verses 29 to 45 do not refer to the time of the Maccabees, but to the period after the "Glorious Land" came under the Roman control. At the time of the end there is another shift. The kingdom of the West becomes the Roman religious empire, or the Catholic Church, while the kingdom of the North becomes the Greek religious empire, or the Greek Orthodox Church. The center of the Orthodox Church has by now shifted from Constantinople to Moscow, and Russia is right in the thick of it in the end time prophetic developments.

Let us look at verse 31 and see another important point that hardly anyone has ever paid attention to.

Dan 11:31 "And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation."

The word 'sacrifices' is in Italics, which means that it has been added for clarification. Well at least that was the intention, but in this case it did anything but. The translators could have inserted the word 'prayer', or other words, and still made good sense. The event described in this verse most certainly refers to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ by the Roman authorities. With His death, the homage, worship and prayer that Jesus Christ offered to God the Father daily came to an end. The Jews had not performed daily animal sacrifices in the temple for centuries, and that is why the word "prayers" is more appropriate than the word "sacrifices" if any word must be inserted there. God said that He did not want animal sacrifices anyway, but righteousness, worship, prayer, and personal sacrifice, and that is what Jesus Christ offered Him daily, and why He said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mat 3:17). Notice also what these Scriptures say.

Heb 10:5 Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a
Heb 10:6 body You have prepared for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure.
Heb 10:7 Then I said, 'Behold, I have come; In the volume of the book it is written of Me; To do Your will,
Heb 10:8 O God.'" Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the law), then He said, "Behold, I have come to do
Heb 10:9 Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second.
Heb 10:10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

The desecration of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes had nothing to do with the "abomination of desolation", which the Scriptures make clear is a person not an animal. The following verses describe his actions

over a long period of time, and they refer to the persecution of the Christians by the Roman religious authorities in the past centuries.

Dan 11:32 "Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits."

Dan 11:33 "And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering.

Dan 11:34 "Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue.

Dan 11:35 "And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time.

This language does not apply to the Jews by birth, who do not need to be purified in order to be Jews, but for the Christians who need a continuous process of refinement "until the time of the end" in order to become spiritual Jews and make it into the Kingdom of God (See also Revelation 3:18).

Dan 11:36 "Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done.

The "king" that magnified himself above every god is the one who took the identity of God by claiming to be "Holy Father". That is a title that belongs to God and to Him alone. Notice whom Jesus Christ called Holy Father.

John 17:11 "Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are."

Jesus Christ called His Father in heaven 'Holy Father', not an impostor on this earth. Now back to Daniel.

Dan 11:37 "He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all.

His disregard for the "desire of women" is a clear reference to the celibacy rule.

Dan 11:38 "But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things.

Dan 11:39 "Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain."

The expression "god of fortresses" is a reference to the military nature of his reign, the Roman Empire being the most successful and powerful military machine in the history of the world.

Now let us look at two expressions from verses 37 and 38 that no one has been able to explain: "He shall regard neither the God of his fathers" and "he shall honor . . . a god which his fathers did not know". The contexts of these verses indicate that his fathers were in good terms with God. Now the only people of whom the Scriptures would say such a thing are the fathers of Israel, the patriarchs of old. Which raises the question, how could Pontifex Maximus be connected with the fathers of Israel? This is where truth becomes stranger than fiction.

Official history books shed no light on this matter. They dismiss the origin of Pontifex Maximus as being "lost in the mist of antiquity". Well, if we are willing to listen to what the ancients had to say, we find that his origin is not as lost as modern historians would have us believe.

Consider the case of the Trojan War. Homer wrote that story from the point of view of a contemporary person. It was something that happened in his time and he had direct evidence of it. But that does not fit well with modern thinking, which demands that history be stretched to the maximum in order to accommodate evolutionary developments. The effect of this is that the deeper one delves into history, the further away from truth he gets. Hence we have the so-called "dark ages", or historical gaps. One of these gaps is between the years of 1200 B.C., when official historians say that the Trojan War occurred, and about 800 BC when Homer recorded his story and said that it occurred. Well, if there are any gaps they must be in the heads of those who preach such things, for we know better now.

There is a good reason why we began with Homer's story of the Trojan War. The ancients believed that the Trojans were Israelites, and upon their defeat by the Greeks they migrated to Europe – some via the Mediterranean Sea, others via the Danube River and the lands north of it.

Priam, the king of Troy, had two sons: Paris and Hector, and a nephew Aeneas. Hector died in the war, but Aeneas became the founder of Lavinium, a religious center 30 km south of Rome, while Paris became the founder of . . . guess what other European capital? The people who lived around Troy were called Phrygians, from whom we get the terms "Franks" and "French". Many maps of the ancient world still mark the area around Troy as Phrygia.

In recent times, some people have postulated that virtually all of Europe, not just the Anglo-Saxons and the northern peoples, are of Hebrew origin. To give you just one example, the term 'Iberia' comes from 'Hiberia', which means the land of the Hebrews. Which makes the Spanish and the Portuguese as much children of Israel as the "blessed" Anglo-Saxons of Herbert W. Armstrong.

Now if the Trojans were Israelites that establishes the link between Pontifex Maximus and the Israelite fathers. The question still remains, where did his "kingship" and religious authority come from? That is even easier to establish. After Israel split into two nations, Judah and Samaria, the king of Samaria changed the law, the calendar, the Holy Days, and the location of the sacrifices in order to prevent his followers from absconding back to Judah and Jerusalem.

The Israelites took to the new religion like ducks to the water. One, because it freed them from the strictness of the Mosaic Law, and two, because the new religion resembled that of Egypt for which they had always yearned and wished to go back to. That apostasy, in fact, began with king Solomon.

1 Ki 3:1 "Now Solomon made a treaty with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and married Pharaoh's daughter; then he brought her to the City of David until he had finished building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and the wall all around Jerusalem.

1 Ki 6:37 "In the fourth year the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid, in the month of Ziv.

1 Ki 6:38 And in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its details and according to all its plans. So he was seven years in building it.

1 Ki 7:1 "But Solomon took thirteen years to build his own house; so he finished all his house.

1 Ki 7:8 "... Solomon also made a house like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken as wife.

It took Solomon seven years to build the temple of God, but thirteen years to build his own palace. Then, to top it all, he built a similar palace for the Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken as wife.

Can you see now how the Freemasons trace the roots of their organization and their faith all the way back to Solomon, and through him to the Pharaohs and the Egyptian gods? That is how the Romans ended up with a religion that resembles that of Egypt, and why modern day Israelite nations, such as the USA, still glorify the gods of ancient Egypt.

Solomon however was not satisfied with just the gods of Egypt; he set about to please the pagan gods of all his neighbors. And the best way to do that was through their daughters.

1 Ki 11:1 But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the

1 Ki 11:2 Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites; from the nations of whom the LORD had said to the children of Israel, "You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods." Solomon clung to these in love.

1 Ki 11:3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned

1 Ki 11:4 away his heart. For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David.

1 Ki 11:5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of

1 Ki 11:6 the Ammonites. Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not fully follow the LORD, as did

1 Ki 11:7 his father David. Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon.

1 Ki 11:8 And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.

1 Ki 11:9 So the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the LORD God of

1 Ki 11:10 Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the LORD had commanded. Therefore the LORD said to

1 Ki 11:11 Solomon, "Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant.

1 Ki 11:12 "Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand

1 Ki 11:13 of your son. "However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of my servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen."

Solomon had no less than seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines. Since he reigned for forty years, it means that he had a new wedding, or a new woman, every two weeks. That means that no woman spent more than two weeks in his bedchamber. Any wonder that no woman clung to him as a wife clings to a faithful husband all her life? At the end of his life, he complained that he found one faithful man in a thousand, but could not find one faithful woman in a thousand. It took him all his life and one thousand women to realize that one wife from youth to death is more valuable than a new wife every two weeks.

Prov 5:15 Drink water from your own cistern, And running water from your own well.

Prov 5:16 Should your fountains be dispersed abroad, Streams of water in the streets?

Prov 5:17 Let them be only your own, And not for strangers with you.

Prov 5:18 Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice with the wife of your youth. As a loving deer and a graceful

Prov 5:19 doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; And always be enraptured with her love.

Prov 5:20 For why should you, my son, be enraptured by an immoral woman, And be embraced in the arms of a seductress?"

Ecc 7:27 "Here is what I have found," says the Preacher, "Adding one thing to the other to find out the reason,

Ecc 7:28 Which my soul still seeks but I cannot find: One man among a thousand I have found, But a woman among all these I have not found.

Of course he couldn't find a faithful woman among all his wives. What woman would love a man till death after ruining her life by making her his wife for just two weeks? With all his wisdom, Solomon did not seem to realize that women have feelings too. He may forgiven many of his other sins and weaknesses, but I doubt that he could be forgiven the unjustified aspersion he placed on women, which caused them three thousand years of anguish by implying that they were incapable of life long love and devotion. People have quoted Solomon's words to us to justify their hatred of women. They cannot achieve happiness and become victims of self-fulfilled prophecy by having women react to them the way they project themselves towards them in the first place. People forget that the Bible also gives plenty of examples of faithful and righteous women, and that among the most devoted followers of Jesus Christ were women too.

Heb 11:11 By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.

Heb 11:23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command.

Heb 11:31 "By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the Heb 11:32 spies with peace. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets:

Heb 11:33 who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths Heb 11:34 of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

Heb 11:35 Women received their dead raised to life again. And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, Heb 11:36 that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, Heb 11:37 and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

Heb 11:38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of Heb 11:39 the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, Heb 11:40 God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us."

Mat 27:55 And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from Mat 27:56 afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

1 Pet 3:1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, 1 Pet 3:2 without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.

1 Pet 3:3 Do not let your adornment be merely outward; arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine 1 Pet 3:4 apparel; rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and

1 Pet 3:5 quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed

1 Pet 3:6 Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror."

Apostle Paul also mentioned many faithful and righteous women in his epistles, particularly in his salutations to various churches.

Yes, many women were faithful to God, to their husbands, and to the Churches of God, and proved to be worthy companions in the struggles of life and in the tribulations for the Kingdom of God. Even the harlots that turned to God, like Rahab, deserve respect for their courage, anguish and struggles they must have endured in the process.

Solomon however was just as accommodating with his neighbor's pagan gods as he was with their women. He made a collection of them, but place of honor undoubtedly must have been held by his first whoring attachment, the Sun god of Egypt, who became the Sun god of the western world, hence the Sun Day (Sunday) worship.

It appears that the Pharaoh of Egypt was not too happy with the way Solomon treated his daughter in the end, for he harbored and groomed many adversaries to Solomon. One of these, an Edomite by the name of Hadad, was treated so well he even became Pharaoh's brother in law by marrying the sister of Pharaoh's wife.

1 Ki 11:14 Now the LORD raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he was a descendant 1 Ki 11:15 of the king in Edom. For it happened, when David was in Edom, and Joab the commander of the army

had gone up to bury the slain, after he had killed every male in Edom (because for six months Joab remained 1 Ki 11:16 there with all Israel, until he had cut down every male in Edom), that Hadad fled to go to Egypt,

1 Ki 11:17 he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him. Hadad was still a little child.

1 Ki 11:18 Then they arose from Midian and came to Paran; and they took men with them from Paran and came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house, apportioned food for him, and gave him land.

1 Ki 11:19 And Hadad found great favor in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him as wife the sister of his own 1 Ki 11:20 wife, that is, the sister of Queen Tahpenes. Then the sister of Tahpenes bore him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house. And Genubath was in Pharaoh's household among the sons of Pharaoh.

1 Ki 11:21 So when Hadad heard in Egypt that David rested with his fathers, and that Joab the commander of the army was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Let me depart, that I may go to my own country."

Hadad, however, being an Edomite, could not become leader in Israel, so the Pharaoh groomed another adversary to Solomon. The man who split Israel in two and became king over Samaria, Jeroboam, also spent many years in Egypt as a fugitive from Solomon.

- 1 Ki 11:26 Then Solomon's servant, Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite from Zereda, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, also rebelled against the king.
- 1 Ki 11:27 And this is what caused him to rebel against the king: Solomon had built the Millo and repaired the
- 1 Ki 11:28 damages to the City of David his father. The man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valor; and Solomon, seeing that the young man was industrious, made him the officer over all the labor force of the house of Joseph.
- 1 Ki 11:29 Now it happened at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite met him on the way; and he had clothed himself with a new garment, and the two were alone in the field.
- 1 Ki 11:30 Then Ahijah took hold of the new garment that was on him, and tore it into twelve pieces.
- 1 Ki 11:31 And he said to Jeroboam, "Take for yourself ten pieces, for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and will give ten tribes to you' (but he shall have one tribe for the sake of My servant
- 1 Ki 11:32 David, and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel),
- 1 Ki 11:33 'because they have forsaken Me, and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the people of Ammon, and have not walked in My ways to do what is right in My eyes and keep My statutes and My judgments, as did his father David.
- 1 Ki 11:34 'However I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, because I have made him ruler all the days of his life for the sake of My servant David, whom I chose because he kept My commandments and My statutes.
- 1 Ki 11:35 'But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand and give it to you; ten tribes.
- 1 Ki 11:36 'And to his son I will give one tribe, that My servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen for Myself, to put My name there.
- 1 Ki 11:37 'So I will take you, and you shall reign over all your heart desires, and you shall be king over Israel.
- 1 Ki 11:38 'Then it shall be, if you heed all that I command you, walk in My ways, and do what is right in My sight, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as My servant David did, then I will be with you and build for you an enduring house, as I built for David, and will give Israel to you.
- 1 Ki 11:39 'And I will afflict the descendants of David because of this, but not forever.'"
- 1 Ki 11:40 Solomon therefore sought to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam arose and fled to Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.
- 1 Ki 11:41 Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book
- 1 Ki 11:42 of the acts of Solomon? And the period that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty
- 1 Ki 11:43 years. Then Solomon rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David his father. And Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.
- 1 Ki 12:1 And Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had gone to Shechem to make
- 1 Ki 12:2 him king. So it happened, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard it (he was still in Egypt, for he had fled from the presence of King Solomon and had been dwelling in Egypt), that they sent and called him.
- 1 Ki 12:3 Then Jeroboam and the whole assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying,
- 1 Ki 12:4 "Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father, and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you."
- 1 Ki 12:5 So he said to them, "Depart for three days, then come back to me."
- 1 Ki 12:6 And the people departed. Then King Rehoboam consulted the elders who stood before his father Solomon while he still lived, and he said, "How do you advise me to answer these people?"
- 1 Ki 12:7 And they spoke to him, saying, "If you will be a servant to these people today, and serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever." But he rejected the advise
- 1 Ki 12:8 which the elder had given him, and consulted the young men who had grown up with him, who stood
- 1 Ki 12:9 before him, And he said to them, "What advice do you give? How should we answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, 'Lighten the yoke which your father put on us?'"
- 1 Ki 12:10 Then the young men who had grown up with him spoke to him, saying, "Thus you should speak to this people who have spoken to you, saying, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make it lighter on us'; thus you
- 1 Ki 12:11 shall say to them: "My little finger shall be thicker than my father's waist! 'And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with
- 1 Ki 12:12 scourges!" So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had directed, saying, "Come back to me the third day."
- 1 Ki 12:13 Then the king answered the people roughly, and rejected the advice which the elders had given him;
- 1 Ki 12:14 and he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!"
- 1 Ki 12:15 So the king did not listen to the people; for the turn of events was from the LORD, that He might fulfill His word, which the LORD had spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.
- 1 Ki 12:16 Now when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, saying: "What share have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Now, see to your
- 1 Ki 12:17 own house, O David!" So Israel departed to their tents. But Rehoboam reigned over the children of
- 1 Ki 12:18 Israel who dwelt in the cities of Judah. Then King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was in charge of the revenue; but all Israel stoned him with stones, and he died. Therefore King Rehoboam mounted his chariot in haste to
- 1 Ki 12:19 flee to Jerusalem. So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.
- 1 Ki 12:20 Now it came to pass when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had come back, they sent for him and called him to the congregation, and made him king over all Israel. There was none who followed the house of David, but the

1 Ki 12:21 tribe of Judah only. And when Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah with the tribe of Benjamin, one hundred and eighty thousand chosen men who were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, that he might restore the kingdom to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.

1 Ki 12:22 But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying, "Speak to Roboam the son of

1 Ki 12:23 Solomon, king of Judah, to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, saying,

1 Ki 12:24 'Thus says the LORD: "You shall not go up nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel. Let every man return to his house, for this thing is from Me." ' " Therefore they obeyed the word of the LORD, and turned back, according to the word of the LORD.

1 Ki 12:25 Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the mountains of Ephraim, and dwelt there. Also he went out from

1 Ki 12:26 there and built Penuel. And Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom may return to the house of

1 Ki 12:27 David: "If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and go back to Rehoboam king

1 Ki 12:28 of Judah." Therefore the king asked advice, made two calves of gold, and said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!"

1 Ki 12:29 And he set up one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.

1 Ki 12:30 Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan.

1 Ki 12:31 He made shrines on the high places, and made priests from every class of people, who were not of

1 Ki 12:32 the sons of Levi. Jeroboam ordained a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the feast that was in Judah, and offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. And at Bethel he installed the priests of the high places which he had made.

1 Ki 12:33 So he made offerings on the altar which he had made at Bethel on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, in the month which he had devised in his own heart. And he ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and offered sacrifices on the altar and burned incense.

1 Ki 13:1 And behold, a man of God went from Judah to Bethel by the word of the LORD, and Jeroboam stood

1 Ki 13:2 by the altar to burn incense. Then he cried out against the altar by the word of the LORD, and said, "O altar, altar! Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, a child, Josiah by name, shall be born to the house of David; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and men's bones shall be burned on you.'"

1 Ki 13:3 And he gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign which the LORD has spoken: Surely the altar shall split apart, and the ashes on it shall be poured out."

1 Ki 13:4 So it came to pass when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, who cried out against the altar in Bethel, that he stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, "Arrest him!" Then his hand, which he stretched out toward him, withered, so that he could pull it back to himself.

1 Ki 13:5 The altar also was split apart, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. Then the king answered and said to the man of God,

1 Ki 13:6 "Please entreat the favor of the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me." So the man of God entreated the LORD, and the king's hand was restored to him, and became as before."

The first thing Jeroboam did when he became king over Samaria was to build two golden calves to draw people away from God. You may remember that when they rebelled against Moses in the wilderness after they came out of Egypt they also built for themselves a golden calf.

Exo 32:1 Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." And Aaron said to them,

Exo 32:2 "Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and

Exo 32:3 bring them to me. So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought

Exo 32:4 them to Aaron. And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. Then they said, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!"

Exo 32:5 So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow Exo 32:6 is a feast to the LORD." Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. And the LORD said to Moses,

Exo 32:7 "Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves.

Exo 32:8 "They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made themselves a molded calf, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, 'This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!'"

Solomon may well have decided to go after Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, and Molech, the abomination of Ammon, in order to spite the Pharaoh and his gods when he found out that the Pharaoh was harboring his enemies.

1 Ki 11:7 Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon.

The Pharaoh, no doubt, expected to establish the royal line of Israel through his daughter, but Solomon gave it instead to Rehoboam, his son by an Ammonite wife (1 Kings 14:31). As one might have expected, Rehoboam turned out to be a bad king. Not surprisingly, five years after ascending to the throne, the Pharaoh came up against him and took away all the treasures of Judah, including, no doubt, the fabulous dowry he must have given to his daughter when she married Solomon.

It is extraordinary what damage two bad leaders can do to a nation. In two short generations, the mighty kingdom of David, which stretched out from the Euphrates to the Nile, was reduced to almost nothing. Syria,

which was subject to David, was now taking territories from Israel in the north, and Egypt was plundering Judah from the south.

Jeroboam however was on good terms with the Pharaoh. He was well entrenched in the Egyptian religion and thoroughly dedicated to the Egyptian gods. Upon becoming king of Samaria, he made two golden calves, released the Levites from their priesthood duties to the LORD, appointed other people as priests of the new religion, and made himself High Priest in the manner of the Egyptians.

1 Ki 13:33 "After this event Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but again he made priests from every class of people for the high places; whoever wished, he consecrated him, and he became one of the priests of the high places."

Jeroboam became the first Pontifex Maximus, a position he passed on to the Romans through the royal house of the Trojans. This also explains why the French fought with the Italians over the custody of the position of Pontifex. At one time, Avignon, was the center of the papacy.

The symbol of the ancient Egyptian religion was two bullhorns pointing upwards in a semicircle with the rising sun in the middle. But the Egyptians had many anthropomorphic gods. Anubis is a well-known Egyptian god of the underworld with the body of a man and the head of a jackal. The cat, the bird ibis, the snake, and other animals, were all part of the pantheon of anthropomorphic Egyptian gods. It is interesting to note that one of the very first things Apostle Paul noticed about the Romans was their attachment to idols in the form of animals.

Rom 1:18 "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,
Rom 1:19 who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them,
Rom 1:20 for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without
Rom 1:21 excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but
Rom 1:22 became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they
Rom 1:23 became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man; and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things."

Ancient Egyptians (as in fact all ancient peoples), glorified death and the after-life, and regarded their Pharaoh as a god – the Sun god. These beliefs found their way into the Roman religion through Samaria. The difference being that instead of calling their leader Pharaoh, they called him Pontifex. This is from where the Roman religious leader draws his belief that he is God, or 'Holy Father', and where the practice of making saints out of dead people comes from.

Can you see now why Daniel became sick when he understood the truth about the fourth beast? Anyone would have become sick when told that his kingdom would trample the world under foot, murder the Messiah, and persecute the holy people to the very end.

The Roman Empire had its roots in the nation of Samaria. The so-called lost Ten Tribes of Israel are not lost anymore. They are Europe. There are only a few pockets of people in Europe that do not belong to the Hebrew stock.

When Julius Caesar crossed the Rubicon, and brought the Roman civilization to the other side of the Alps, he did not conquer barbarian tribes, but people of the same kin, albeit not as advanced as the Romans.

In June 2001, I was invited to attend a seminar by Professor Terry Marvin Blodgett of the University of Utah on the linguistic similarities between the Indo-European languages and the Hebrew and Germanic languages. I was then in the process of putting the finishing touches to this edition, but then I decided to hold back until I heard what he had to say. Prior to that time I had spent countless hours of search and research through libraries, encyclopedias, history books, the Internet, and everything I could think of, in an attempt to establish a link between Pontifex Maximus and ancient Israel. I was struggling hard to unveil Daniel's last great prophecy, but I soon realized that without that link it could not be done. In the end I had to rely on Homer's story of the Trojan War and Virgil's Aeneid for the link between Rome and Troy, and on bits of information that I had gathered over the years in my own mind from sources that I could not remember or quote anymore, for the link between Troy and ancient Israel. I was convinced that I had the truth, but I wasn't too happy with my supporting evidence. Then came Professor Blodgett's seminar, and that was like manna from heaven as far as I was concerned.

He spoke of several Hebrew migrations from the Middle east to Europe, and elsewhere. The first one came about 1500 B.C. – before Moses – and most likely occurred as a result of the Egyptians' harshness towards the multiplying Hebrews. These were the Italic, Hellenic, Indic, and Slavic peoples. Another migration occurred about 1200 B.C. at the time of the Exodus. Many established themselves in the land of Israel, but others went on to Troy, Greece, Rome, Macedonia, even as far away as Spain and Portugal. The next Hebrew migration occurred about 700 B.C. at the time of the Assyrian invasion of Samaria. These went to Italy, France, Germany, Denmark, and the British Isles.

Another Hebrew migration occurred about 600 B.C., when Judah was taken captive by the Babylonians. Professor Blodgett traced the Jews through Italy, Venice, Austria, France, all the way to the Danish peninsula called Juteland, or Jew land. Finally the last Hebrew migration occurred in 70 A.D. at the time of the Roman destruction of Jerusalem.

Professor Blodgett went to a great length to prove a linguistic connection between these peoples and their migratory movements, and I apologize if in any way I may have misquoted him. He said that in a few months time

he would publish a book that will spell out all these details. I wish I had the chance to read that book before I published this edition, but I could not wait any longer.

His thesis places on more solid foundation the link that I needed between Pontifex Maximus and Israel. However I believe that in placing the Exodus at 1200 B.C. he is about 250 years too late for that event. I also think that not all of the Germanic peoples come from the Hebrew stock, for that contradicts H. W. Armstrong's notion that Germany is the Assyria of old. Although I disagree with most of what that man has written, I think he is right in this point, for it fits better in biblical prophecies. If all of Germany is of Hebrew stock, then we need to find another candidate for the "rod of God's anger" (Isa. 10:5), and I simply cannot see what nation could possibly usurp that role from Germany.

In one of his raving speeches, Hitler once said: "Judah must and will be destroyed. That is our holy conviction." Well, that "holy conviction" did not start with Hitler. Or with Wagner, his favored composer, and an avowed anti-Semite. Not even with Martin Luther who said some unquotable things about the Jews. The conflict between Germany and Judah goes way back to ancient times when Assyria tried to conquer Judah. Having taken captive the northern kingdom of Samaria, the Assyrians wanted to do the same to Judah. But notice what happened then.

2 Ki 18:17 Then the king of Assyria sent the Tartan, the Rabsaris, and the Rabshakeh from Lachish, with a great army against Jerusalem, to King Hezekiah. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. When they had come up, they

2 Ki 18:18 went and stood by the aqueduct from the upper pool, which was on the highway to the Fuller's Field.

And when they had called to the king, Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came out to them. Then the Rabshakeh said to them, "Say now to Hezekiah,

2 Ki 18:19 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: "What confidence is this in which you trust?"

2 Ki 18:20 "You speak of having plans and power for war; but they are mere words. And in whom do you trust,

2 Ki 18:21 that you rebel against me? "Now look! You are trusting in the staff of this broken reed, Egypt, on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who trust in him.

2 Ki 18:22 "But if you say to me, 'We trust in the LORD our God,' is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has taken away, and said to Judah and Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem'?" "Now therefore I urge you, give a pledge to my master the king of Assyria,

2 Ki 18:23 and I will give you two thousand horses; if you are able on your part to put riders on them!

2 Ki 18:24 "How then will you repel one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put your trust in Egypt

2 Ki 18:25 for chariots and horsemen? "Have I now come up without the LORD against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, 'Go up against this land, and destroy it.'

2 Ki 18:26 Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, Shebna, and Joah said to the Rabshakeh, "Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it; and do not speak to us in Hebrew in the hearing of the people who are on

2 Ki 18:27 the wall." But the Rabshakeh said to them, "Has my master sent me to your master and to you to speak these words, and not to the men who sit on the wall, who will eat and drink their own waste with you?" Then

2 Ki 18:28 the Rabshakeh stood and called out with a loud voice in Hebrew, and spoke, saying, "Hear the word

2 Ki 18:29 of the great king, the king of Assyria! "Thus says the king: 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he

2 Ki 18:30 shall not be able to deliver you from his hand; nor let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, "The LORD will surely deliver us; this city shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria."

2 Ki 18:31 "Do not listen to Hezekiah; for thus says the king of Assyria: 'Make peace with me by a present and come out to me; and every one of you eat from his own vine and every one from his own fig tree, and every one of you

2 Ki 18:32 drink the waters of his own cistern; 'until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive groves and honey, that you may live and not die. But do not listen to Hezekiah, lest he persuade you, saying, "The LORD will deliver us."

2 Ki 18:33 'Has any of the gods of the nations at all delivered its land from the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad?

2 Ki 18:34 Where are the gods of Sepharvaim and Hena and Ivah? Indeed, have they delivered Samaria from

2 Ki 18:35 my hand? 'Who among all the gods of the lands have delivered their countries from my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?"

2 Ki 18:36 But the people held their peace and answered him not a word; for the king's commandment was,

2 Ki 18:37 "Do not answer him." Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and told him the words of

2 Ki 19:1 the Rabshakeh. And so it was, when King Hezekiah heard it, that he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD.

2 Ki 19:2 Then he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz.

2 Ki 19:3 And they said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah: 'This day is a day of trouble, and rebuke, and blasphemy; for the children have come to birth, but there is no strength to bring them forth.

2 Ki 19:4 'It may be that the LORD your God will hear all the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to reproach the living God, and will rebuke the words which the LORD your God has heard. Therefore lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left.'

2 Ki 19:5 So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. And Isaiah said to them,

2 Ki 19:6 "Thus you shall say to your master, 'Thus says the LORD: "Do not be afraid of the words which you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me.

2 Ki 19:7 "Surely I will send a spirit upon him, and he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.'"" Then the Rabshakeh returned

2 Ki 19:8 and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah, for he heard that he had departed from Lachish.

2 Ki 19:9 And the king heard concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, "Look, he has come out to make war with

2 Ki 19:10 you." So he again sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, "Thus you shall speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying: 'Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying, "Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand
2 Ki 19:11 of the king of Assyria." 'Look! You have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by
2 Ki 19:12 utterly destroying them; and you shall be delivered? 'Have the gods of the nations delivered those
2 Ki 19:13 whom my fathers have destroyed, Gozan and Haran and Rezep, and the people of Eden who were in
Telassar? 'Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad,
2 Ki 19:14 and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?" And Hezekiah received the letter from the
hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.
2 Ki 19:15 Then Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said: "O LORD God of Israel, the One who dwells
between the cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth.
2 Ki 19:16 "Incline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and hear the words of
Sennacherib, which he has sent to represent the living God.
2 Ki 19:17 "Truly, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, and have cast their
2 Ki 19:18 gods into the fire; for they were not gods, but the work of men's hands; wood and stone. Therefore they
destroyed them.
2 Ki 19:19 "Now therefore, O LORD our God, I pray, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth
2 Ki 19:20 may know that You are the LORD God, You alone." Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah,
saying, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Because you have prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria,
2 Ki 19:21 I have heard.' "This is the word which the LORD has spoken concerning him: 'The virgin, the daughter
of Zion, Has despised you, laughed you to scorn; The daughter of Jerusalem Has shaken her head behind your back!
"Whom have you reproached and blasphemed?
2 Ki 19:22 Against whom have you raised your voice, And lifted up your eyes on high? Against the Holy One of
2 Ki 19:23 Israel. By your messengers you have reproached the Lord, And said: "By the multitude of my chariots I
have come up to the height of the mountains, To the limits of Lebanon; I will cut down its tall cedars And its
2 Ki 19:24 choice cypress trees; I will enter the extremity of its borders, To its fruitful forest. I have dug and drunk
strange water, And with the soles of my feet I have dried up All the brooks of defense."
2 Ki 19:25 'Did you not hear long ago How I made it, From ancient times that I formed it? Now I have brought it to
pass, That you should be for crushing fortified cities into heaps of ruins.
2 Ki 19:26 Therefore their inhabitants had little power; They were dismayed and confounded; They were as the
grass of the field And the green herb, As the grass on the housetops And grain blighted before it is grown.
2 Ki 19:27 'But I know your dwelling place, Your going out and your coming in, And your rage against Me.
2 Ki 19:28 Because your rage against Me and your tumult Have come up to My ears, Therefore I will put My hook
in your nose And My bridle in your lips, And I will turn you back By the way which you came.
2 Ki 19:29 'This shall be a sign to you: You shall eat this year such as grows of itself, And in the second year what
springs from the same; Also in the third year sow and reap, Plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them.
2 Ki 19:30 And the remnant who have escaped of the house of Judah Shall again take root downward, And bear
2 Ki 19:31 fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, And those who escape from Mount Zion.
2 Ki 19:32 The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.' "Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of
Assyria: 'He shall not come into this city, Nor shoot an arrow there, Nor come before it with shield, Nor build a siege
mound against it.
2 Ki 19:33 By the way that he came, By the same shall he return; And he shall not come into this city,' Says the
2 Ki 19:34 LORD. 'For I will defend this city, to save it For My own sake and for My servant David's sake."
2 Ki 19:35 And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the
Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when people arose early in the morning, there were the
2 Ki 19:36 corpses; all dead. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went away, returned home, and
2 Ki 19:37 remained at Nineveh. Now it came to pass, as he was worshiping in the temple of Nisroch his god, that
his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer struck him down with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. Then
Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place."

The Assyrians lost the crème of their army – one hundred and eighty-five thousand of the most capable, well trained, and valiant soldiers of the ancient world – in their venture against Judah. Not at the hands of human beings, but at the hands of God Himself. Is it any wonder that the Germans (the Assyrians of old), still hold a grudge against the Jews and regard it as their 'holy conviction' to destroy them?

Assyria was so weakened by that disaster, it was easily pushed out of its lands on the Euphrates Rives by its southeasterly neighbor, the rising Babylonian Empire. After that, the Assyrians vanished from history in the same way that the Ten Tribes vanished. Well, we know now that they did not really disappear from the face of the earth, but migrated in a northwesterly direction to the highly fertile but sparsely populated fields of Europe. Now having mingled so closely and for so long, you would expect to find many linguistic links between these peoples. Racially however they are different.

After their disaster in Judah, it is highly likely that the captives became masters, and the masters captives. The Tribes of Israel and the Assyrians cohabited for centuries before the Germans were able to assert themselves again.

It is not for nothing that the Romans called the inhabitants of the Germanic lands, Germans, or Men of War, whom they could never quite bring into total submission. It was not the same with their neighbors to the west with whom the Romans found more linguistic and cultural similarities, and who took more readily to the Roman rule.

At the beginning of this article I said that the Bible is not altogether critical of the Roman world and the Catholic Church. Well, leaving aside the role of the Pontiff, which cannot be defended by any means, Europe as a whole is seen in a much better light than Judah. Here is a lengthy prophecy that attests to this fact.

Ezek 16:2 "Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, and say, "Thus says the Lord GOD to
Ezek 16:3 Jerusalem: "Your birth and your nativity are from the land of Canaan; your father was an Amorite and
Ezek 16:4 your mother a Hittite. "As for your nativity, on the day you were born your navel cord was not cut, nor
were you washed in water to cleanse you; you were not rubbed with salt nor wrapped in swaddling clothes.
Ezek 16:5 "No eye pitied you, to do any of these things for you, to have compassion on you; but you were thrown
out into the open field, when you yourself were loathed on the day you were born.
Ezek 16:6 "And when I passed by you and saw you struggling in your own blood, I said to you in your blood,
Ezek 16:7 'Live!' Yes, I said to you in your blood, 'Live!' "I made you thrive like a plant in the field; and you grew,
matured, and became very beautiful. Your breasts were formed, your hair grew, but you were naked and bare.
Ezek 16:8 "When I passed by you again and looked upon you, indeed your time was the time of love; so I spread
My wing over you and covered your nakedness. Yes, I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, and
you became Mine," says the Lord GOD.
Ezek 16:9 "Then I washed you in water; yes, I thoroughly washed off your blood, and I anointed you with oil.
Ezek 16:10 "I clothed you in embroidered cloth and gave you sandals of badger skin; I clothed you with fine linen
Ezek 16:11 and covered you with silk. "I adorned you with ornaments, put bracelets on your wrists, and a chain
Ezek 16:12 on your neck. "And I put a jewel in your nose, earrings in your ears, and a beautiful crown on your
Ezek 16:13 head. "Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your clothing was of fine linen, silk, and
embroidered cloth. You ate pastry of fine flour, honey, and oil. You were exceedingly beautiful, and succeeded to
Ezek 16:14 royalty. "Your fame went out among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect through
Ezek 16:15 My splendor which I had bestowed on you," says the Lord GOD. "But you trusted in your own beauty,
played the harlot because of your fame, and poured out your harlotry on everyone passing by who would have it.
Ezek 16:16 "You took some of your garments and adorned multicolored high places for yourself, and played
Ezek 16:17 the harlot on them. Such things should not happen, nor be. "You have also taken your beautiful
jewelry from My gold and My silver, which I had given you, and made for yourself male images and played the harlot with
them.
Ezek 16:18 "You took your embroidered garments and covered them, and you set My oil and My incense before
Ezek 16:19 them. "Also My food which I gave you; the pastry of fine flour, oil, and honey which I fed you; you
Ezek 16:20 set it before them as sweet incense and so it was", says the Lord GOD. "Moreover you took your sons
and your daughters, whom you bore to Me, and these you sacrificed to them to be devoured. Were your acts of
Ezek 16:21 harlotry a small matter, that you have slain My children and offered them up to them by causing
Ezek 16:22 them to pass through the fire? "And in all your abominations and acts of harlotry you did not
remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare, struggling in your blood.
Ezek 16:23 "Then it was so, after all your wickedness;
Ezek 16:24 'Woe, woe to you!' says the Lord GOD; that you also built for yourself a shrine, and made a
Ezek 16:25 high place for yourself in every street. "You built your high places at the head of every road, and made
your beauty to be abhorred. You offered yourself to everyone who passed by, and multiplied your acts of
Ezek 16:26 harlotry. "You also committed harlotry with the Egyptians, your very fleshly neighbors, and
Ezek 16:27 increased your acts of harlotry to provoke Me to anger. "Behold, therefore, I stretched out My hand
against you, diminished your allotment, and gave you up to the will of those who hate you, the daughters of the
Philistines, who were ashamed of your lewd behavior. "You also played the harlot with the Assyrians,
Ezek 16:28 because you were insatiable; indeed you played the harlot with them and still were not satisfied.
Ezek 16:29 "Moreover you multiplied your acts of harlotry as far as the land of the trader, Chaldea; and even
Ezek 16:30 then you were not satisfied. "How degenerate is your heart!" says the Lord GOD, "seeing you do all
Ezek 16:31 these things, the deeds of a brazen harlot. "You erected your shrine at the head of every road, and
built your high place in every street. Yet you were not like a harlot, because you scorned payment.
Ezek 16:32 "You are an adulterous wife, who takes strangers instead of her husband.
Ezek 16:33 "Men make payment to all harlots, but you made your payments to all your lovers, and hired them to
Ezek 16:34 come to you from all around for your harlotry. "You are the opposite of other women in your harlotry,
because no one solicited you to be a harlot. In that you gave payment but no payment was given you, therefore you
Ezek 16:35 are the opposite." 'Now then, O harlot, hear the word of the LORD!
Ezek 16:36 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Because your filthiness was poured out and your nakedness uncovered in
your harlotry with your lovers, and with all your abominable idols, and because of the blood of your children which
Ezek 16:37 you gave to them, surely, therefore, I will gather all your lovers with whom you took pleasure, all those
you loved, and all those you hated; I will gather them from all around against you and will uncover your nakedness to
Ezek 16:38 them, that they may see all your nakedness. "And I will judge you as women who break wedlock or
Ezek 16:39 shed blood are judged; I will bring blood upon you in fury and jealousy. "I will also give you into their
hand, and they shall throw down your shrines and break down your high places. They shall also strip you of your clothes,
take your beautiful jewelry, and leave you naked and bare.
Ezek 16:40 "They shall also bring up an assembly against you, and they shall stone you with stones and thrust
Ezek 16:41 you through with their swords. "They shall burn your houses with fire, and execute judgments on you
in the sight of many women; and I will make you cease playing the harlot, and you shall no longer hire lovers.
Ezek 16:42 "So I will lay to rest My fury toward you, and My jealousy shall depart from you. I will be quiet, and be
Ezek 16:43 angry no more. "Because you did not remember the days of your youth, but agitated Me with all these
things, surely I will also recompense your deeds on your own head," says the Lord GOD. "And you shall not commit
lewdness in addition to all your abominations.
Ezek 16:44 "Indeed everyone who quotes proverbs will use this proverb against you: 'Like mother, like
Ezek 16:45 daughter!' "You are your mother's daughter, loathing husband and children; and you are the sister of
your sisters, who loathed their husbands and children; your mother was a Hittite and your father an Amorite.
Ezek 16:46 "Your elder sister is Samaria, who dwells with her daughters to the north of you; and your younger
Ezek 16:47 sister, who dwells to the south of you, is Sodom and her daughters. "You did not walk in their ways
nor act according to their abominations; but, as if that were too little, you became more corrupt than they in all your

Ezek 16:48 ways. "As I live," says the Lord GOD, "neither your sister Sodom nor her daughters have done as
 Ezek 16:49 you and your daughters have done. "Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her
 daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and
 Ezek 16:50 needy. "And they were haughty and committed abomination before Me; therefore I took them away
 Ezek 16:51 as I saw fit. "Samaria did not commit half of your sins; but you have multiplied your abominations
 more than they, and have justified your sisters by all the abominations which you have done.
 Ezek 16:52 "You who judged your sisters, bear your own shame also, because the sins which you committed were
 more abominable than theirs; they are more righteous than you. Yes, be disgraced also, and bear your own
 Ezek 16:53 shame, because you justified your sisters. "When I bring back their captives, the captives of Sodom
 and her daughters, and the captives of Samaria and her daughters, then I will also bring back the captives of your
 captivity among them,
 Ezek 16:54 that you may bear your own shame and be disgraced by all that you did when you comforted
 Ezek 16:55 them. "When your sisters, Sodom and her daughters, return to their former state, and Samaria and
 her daughters return to their former state, then you and your daughters will return to your former state.
 Ezek 16:56 "For your sister Sodom was not a byword in your mouth in the days of your pride,
 Ezek 16:57 "before your wickedness was uncovered. It was like the time of the reproach of the daughters of Syria
 and all those around her, and of the daughters of the Philistines, who despise you everywhere.
 Ezek 16:58 "You have paid for your lewdness and your abominations," says the LORD. 'For thus says the Lord
 Ezek 16:59 GOD: "I will deal with you as you have done, who despised the oath by breaking the covenant.
 Ezek 16:60 "Nevertheless I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an
 Ezek 16:61 everlasting covenant with you. "Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed, when you
 receive your older and your younger sisters; for I will give them to you for daughters, but not because of My covenant
 Ezek 16:62 with you. "And I will establish My covenant with you. Then you shall know that I am the LORD,
 Ezek 16:63 "that you may remember and be ashamed, and never open your mouth anymore because of your
 shame, when I provide you an atonement for all you have done," says the Lord GOD."

Another prophecy that speaks of these two sisters and the peoples they represent is found in Ezekiel 23:1-49. You can read that in your own Bible. Now we have to clarify one other point. In the book of Genesis God promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that in them all the families of the earth would be blessed.

Gen 12:1 Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's
 Gen 12:2 house, To a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your
 Gen 12:3 name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who
 curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Gen 28:10 Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran.
 Gen 28:11 So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of
 the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep.
 Gen 28:12 Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and
 Gen 28:13 there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And behold, the LORD stood above it
 and said: "I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you
 and your descendants.
 Gen 28:14 "Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the
 east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Herbert W. Armstrong and his followers, have always maintained that this promise was fulfilled in the empires and blessings of the British Commonwealth and the United States of America. But these nations have gained prominence only in the last three centuries or so, which is a fraction of the time since God made those promises.

The truth is, the Roman Empire, the Holy Roman Empire, and the empires of Europe that have followed since – of Charlemagne, of France, Portugal, Spain, Holland, Sweden, Germany, Denmark, Austria, Poland, Russia, etc. – all empires of Europe down through the centuries are part of Abraham's promise and legacy. All nations of Europe have belonged to a great empire at one time or another. And all of them collectively form the dreadful fourth kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel's dreams. That kingdom was said to conquer the world and trample under foot all other kingdoms. In the course of history it did just that. And continues to do it. Yes, it trampled under foot the other kingdoms, but it also blessed those that accommodated it. Remember, God said that the world would not only be trampled under foot by Abraham seed, but be blessed by it too. It is not for nothing that none of the nations that freed themselves from the "yoke of colonialism" are better off now. That is not to say that they should not have fought to improve their lot, because they certainly deserved better treatment, but cutting off all their links with their "colonial masters" did not advantage them. By setting themselves adrift from Abraham's descendants, they set themselves adrift from their blessings too.

Now both Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel foresaw the fourth kingdom as being made of ten nations. So if all of Europe represents the fourth kingdom, which exactly are those ten nations? Well, number ten in this case does not refer to specific nations, but to the Ten Tribes of Samaria. These are both the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's figure, and the ten horns of Daniel's 'beast'. In regard to the little horn that rose from among the ten heads and grew to dominate the world, that is Pontifex Maximus. The three horns that fell before him are the three tribes that formed the nation of Judah. Judah contained not two, but three tribes: Judah, Benjamin and Levy. Israel contained not twelve, but thirteen tribes after the tribe of Joseph split into two and became Ephraim and Manasseh. The three tribes that formed Judah fell before the advancing armies of Pontifex Maximus.

It is his people that conquered the "Glorious Land", crucified the Messiah, scattered Judah among other nations, and persecuted the people of God ever since. How could Daniel not become sick when seeing what that dreadful beast was up to?

Another Deception Put To Rest

When Apostle Paul took the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, he foresaw a time when the new converts may wonder what Holy Days they were to observe. This is what he said.

Rom 3:1 "What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision?"

Rom 3:2 Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.

Rom 3:3 For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?

Rom 3:4 Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: "That You may be justified in Your words, And may overcome when You are judged."

Now consider carefully what Apostle Paul was telling his followers in this chapter. One, that circumcision of the heart in the Spirit is more valuable than that of the flesh. Two, that the true Jews are those of the faith not of the flesh. Three, that even though the Jews of the flesh did not believe, they are not to be despised or completely shunned off, because "to them were committed the oracles of God". So if anyone, at any time, anywhere in the world, wanted to know which were the oracles of God all he had to do was go to the Jews of the flesh and take it from them. Some people may well wonder, what exactly were these "oracles" that Apostle Paul was referring to? Well, he gave us that answer too.

Acts 7:35 "This Moses whom they rejected, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge?' is the one God sent to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the Angel who appeared to him in the bush. "He brought them out, after he

Acts 7:36 had shown wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness forty

Acts 7:37 years. "This is that Moses who said to the children of Israel, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you

Acts 7:38 a Prophet like Me from your brethren. Him you shall hear.' "This is he who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers, the one who received the living oracles to give to us."

Moses received the "living oracles" of God. And what were they? The very things that became signs between God and His people.

Exo 31:13 "Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: 'Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you.

Exo 31:14 'You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. "Work shall be done

Exo 31:15 for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

Exo 31:16 'Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their

Exo 31:17 generations as a perpetual covenant. 'It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed."

This passage refers to the weekly Sabbaths, but elsewhere in the Bible, God used the terms "Sabbath" and "sabbath-rest" to signify all of His Holy Days. Here is one such case.

Lev 23:37 'These are the feasts of the LORD which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, everything on its

Lev 23:38 day; besides the Sabbaths of the LORD, besides your gifts, besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill offerings which you give to the LORD.

Lev 23:39 'Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the LORD for seven days; on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest."

The first and last days of the Feast of Tabernacles are a "sabbath-rest" to the Lord. The punishment for Israel for not observing God's Sabbaths, and for disregarding the sign between God and them, was very severe.

Ezek 20:12 "Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know Ezek 20:13 that I am the LORD who sanctifies them. "Yet the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the

wilderness; they did not walk in My statutes; they despised My judgments, 'which, if a man does, he shall live by them'; and they greatly defiled My Sabbaths. Then I said I would pour out My fury on them in the wilderness, to consume

Ezek 20:14 them. "But I acted for My name's sake, that it should not be profaned before the Gentiles, in whose

Ezek 20:15 sight I had brought them out. "So I also raised My hand in an oath to them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them, 'flowing with milk and honey,' the glory of all lands, because they despised My judgments and did not walk in My statutes,

Ezek 20:16 but profaned My Sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols.

Ezek 20:17 "Nevertheless My eye spared them from destruction. I did not make an end of them in the

Ezek 20:18 wilderness. "But I said to their children in the wilderness, 'Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, nor observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols. "I am the Lord your God:

Ezek 20:19 Walk in My statutes, keep My judgments, and do them; 'hallow My Sabbaths,

Ezek 20:20 and they will be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the LORD your God.'

Ezek 20:21 "Notwithstanding, the children rebelled against Me; they did not walk in My statutes, and were not

careful to observe My judgments, 'which, if a man does, he shall live by them'; but they profaned My Sabbaths. Then I said I would pour out My fury on them and fulfill My anger against them in the wilderness."

Now we all know what happened to both Judah and Samaria in the end. But while Judah retained its allegiance to God's Sabbaths in the lands in which it was scattered, Samaria did not. Hence the Jews retained their identity and became the custodians of God's oracles, while the Samaritans lost it and became known as the lost Ten Tribes.

Apostle Paul made it clear that it did not matter that some Jews did not believe; they still remained in charge of His oracles. But it is not enough to know which are God's Sabbaths and Holy Days; you also need to know when to observe them. That is where the Jews come to our rescue. To their credit, throughout their long and tortuous history, they managed to retain not only God's oracles, but the correct calendar too.

The Romans have on more than one occasion changed their calendar. Moreover, the calendar that we currently observe is a solar calendar, whereas the one by which God's Holy Days are set is a lunar one. To complicate the matter, the weekly cycle does not follow either the solar or the lunar year. So when the annual and the weekly Sabbaths overlapped, one or the other of their respective duties could not be performed properly.

This problem became even more acute for the Jews when they were scattered among all nations. Without a central authority to decide on such matters, they run the risk of losing their identity, just like the Samaritans lost it when they abandoned God's calendar and Holy Days. Such a development would have had implications not only for the Jews, but for the Christians too, for they would not have been able to know which were God's oracles and the days of their observance either. All these problems were solved when a brilliant group of Jewish scholars led by Hillel II, came up with a formula in the year 359 A.D. that not only retained the integrity of God's oracles, but also resolved the conflict between the solar, lunar and weekly cycles for all time. The Jews rightly saw the genius in Hillel's reforms, and accepted them unequivocally.

For more than a millennium and a half, Jews and true Christians observed God's Holy Days on the days and dates recommended by Hillel, only with different emphasis. The Christians observed them in the Spirit of the New Testament, while the Jews clung to the notion that one day they would offer animal sacrifices in the temple of God that they would rebuild in Jerusalem.

This is what Apostle Paul told the Corinthian Church about the right way of observing the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

1 Cor 11:17 Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but
1 Cor 11:18 for the worse. For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions
among you, and in part I believe it.
1 Cor 11:19 For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among
1 Cor 11:20 you. Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper.
1 Cor 11:21 For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is
1 Cor 11:22 drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and
shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you.
1 Cor 11:23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night
in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said,
1 Cor 11:24 "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."
1 Cor 11:25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My
blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."
1 Cor 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.
1 Cor 11:27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty
1 Cor 11:28 of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread
1 Cor 11:29 and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment
1 Cor 11:30 to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and
1 Cor 11:31 many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.
1 Cor 11:32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the
1 Cor 11:33 world. Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. But if anyone
1 Cor 11:34 is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order
when I come.

So the New Testament tells us not only which are God's oracles, but where to find them, when to keep them, and how to observe them. This is where an insidious new deception has crept in. A group of deceivers, are throwing aspersion on the Bible by insisting that what the Jews observe these days – their calendar, Sabbaths and Holy Days – are not correct or approved by God. Look at this example.

"What's Wrong with the Jewish Calendar? Are the "postponements" added to the sacred calendar in the fourth century of the present era justified? Did Hillel II and his compatriots in 358 A.D. wisely add new regulations to the calendar, causing Yom Kippur to never fall on a Friday or Sunday, or Hoshana Rabbah never to fall on a weekly Sabbath? What about these so-called "postponements"? WHY were they added? Were they observed in the days of the Second Temple? Were they observed during the time of Jesus Christ?"

Now what were the days of the "Second Temple"? This term is not found in either the Old or the New Testaments and as such it has no relevance for the Christians. As for the question of whether the "postponements" were observed in Jesus time, the Jews have never observed "postponements", but Sabbaths and Holy Days.

The author of that article went on to say: "Everybody admits that the Jewish calendar today is far different from the calendar of Biblical times." What are "Biblical times"? Are we not in biblical times now? What makes the Old Testament more biblical than the New? From the time the Bible has been completed until now are all biblical times. It is this kind of subtle change of topic that allows people like this deceiver to send the Christians back to "Biblical times", meaning to the Old Testament. This has major implications for salvation, for it implies that everything true Christians have observed since the time of Jesus Christ until now has been in vain. The author went on to say that the present day Jewish calendar "is based on mathematical formulas, whereas in Christ's time the calendar was based on observations of the new moon every month".

The Churches of God have now taken up the practice of watching new moons, sun rises, and sun downs more scrupulously than the Jews. It is as if Apostle Paul had never written this:

Gal 4:9 But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the Gal 4:10 weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? You observe days and Gal 4:11 months and seasons and years. I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain."

This man went on: "The calendar was changed in 358 A.D. by Hillel II and his compatriots, because of the fear that the Jewish religion would become extinct, due to persecution of the Romans, and due to the widespread scattering of Jewish communities throughout the world, which would have no central authority."

And what was wrong with that? It is to their credit that in the midst of severe persecutions, and widespread scattering, the Jews found a formula by which they could keep a unified calendar and a central authority that could decide on such matters. Instead of being condemned for what they did, they ought to be congratulated. For not only did they have the right to enact such favorable changes, but the obligation to seek the best solution to the conflicts that arose from time to time between the solar, lunar and weekly cycles. As we said, that was important not only for the Jews, but for the Christians too. But modern day fundamentalist deceivers see that as a negative and urge Christians to go back to the calendar of the Old Testament times. The problem is, there is no calendar in the Old Testament. All that the Old Testament does is tell us in what days of the month God's Holy Days would fall, and the manner in which they were to be observed by the Jews. Notice:

Lev 23:1 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them:
Lev 23:2 'The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts.
Lev 23:3 'Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.
Lev 23:4 'These are the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed
Lev 23:5 times. 'On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the Lord's Passover.
Lev 23:6 'And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven
Lev 23:7 days you must eat unleavened bread. 'On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do
Lev 23:8 no customary work on it. 'But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD for seven days. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it."
Lev 23:15 'And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed.
Lev 23:16 'Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the
Lev 23:21 LORD. 'And you shall proclaim on the same day that it is a holy convocation to you. You shall do no
Lev 23:23 customary work on it. It shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.
Lev 23:24 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation.
Lev 23:25 'You shall do no customary work on it; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD."
Lev 23:26 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of
Lev 23:27 Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering
Lev 23:28 made by fire to the LORD. "And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God.
Lev 23:32 "It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your Sabbath."
Lev 23:33 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'The fifteenth
Lev 23:34 day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the LORD.
Lev 23:35 'On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it.
Lev 23:36 'For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do no customary work on it.
Lev 23:37 'These are the feasts of the LORD which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, everything on its
Lev 23:38 day; 'besides the Sabbaths of the LORD, besides your gifts, besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill offerings which you give to the LORD.
Lev 23:39 'Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the LORD for seven days; on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a
Lev 23:44 sabbath-rest. So Moses declared to the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD.

The Bible cannot tell us when a year or a month begins and ends. This is a tradition that has come down to us through the Jewish scribes. They have meticulously preserved the lunar calendar from the ancient of times to the present time. Without such scholarly tradition, neither the Jews nor the Christians would know when to observe God's Holy Days. Apostle Paul confirmed this when he said that to the Jews were committed the oracles of God. But the deceiver who wrote that article said that, "we should obey the injunctions of the scribes and Pharisees *so long as they are in accord and agreement with Scripture itself!* But when they begin to contradict the laws of Moses, or misinterpret them, then we must "obey GOD rather than men" (Acts 5:29)."

Can you understand what this man is saying here? He is contradicting both Jesus Christ and the Apostles by placing a qualification on the Scriptures and on the scribes that neither Jesus Christ nor the Apostles placed on them. In so doing he is denying the work of the Holy Spirit in compiling and preserving the Bible for us.

Jesus Christ told His followers to obey the scribes and the Pharisees even though they were not perfect before God. Take a look at this.

Mat 23:1 "Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples,
Mat 23:2 saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.
Mat 23:3 "Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their
Mat 23:4 works; for they say, and do not do. "For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's
shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.
Mat 23:5 "But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the
Mat 23:6 borders of their garments. "They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues,
Mat 23:7 "greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.'
Mat 23:8 "But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren."

Mat 23:13 "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against
men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.
Mat 23:14 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense
make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.
Mat 23:15 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and
when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves."

You could not have a better example of people who "contradicted and misinterpreted the laws of Moses" than these hypocritical Pharisees. Read the rest of that chapter, for Jesus Christ had a lot more to say about them, yet He still told His disciples to obey them because they were sitting in Moses' seat.

It is not the Christians' role to judge the scribes of the Old Testament or the writers of the New Testament on whether they conformed with the whole Scriptures. God does that. It is not the Christians' role to judge the Scriptures either. Their role is to OBEY the Scriptures. Jesus Christ knew that the Holy Spirit – the Helper – would play an important role in guiding us through the Scriptures.

John 14:16 "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever;
John 14:17 "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but
John 14:18 you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to
you."

He knew that the Holy Spirit would work even with the unbelieving Jews in preserving the Scriptures for us. And so did Apostle Paul. In telling his followers to look to the Jews for God's oracles, he specifically made the point that it did not matter that some were non-believers.

Now since neither Jesus Christ nor His Apostles were worried that the Jewish scribes may depart from the Scriptures, neither should you. Put your trust in the Holy Spirit – the Helper – of whom Jesus Christ said that would be with us to the very end, and avoid those who introduce deceptive notions that the Scriptures or the Jewish scribes are unreliable. That is for God to determine, not for human beings. When Apostle Paul said that the Jews are custodians of God's oracles that is the end of the matter. No one will ever lose his salvation by following the Scriptures, but no one will gain salvation by following deceivers. Remember what Jesus Christ said: "For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect" (Mat 24:24). If you allow these people to deceive you, you are not one of God's elect.

There is a brilliant work by a Jewish scholar that sets out God's calendar and Holy Days for two hundred years: Arthur Spier, *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar, twentieth to twenty second century*, Fieldheim Publishers, Jerusalem, New York, third revised edition, 1986.

This is the calendar used by the Jews, and the one we have adopted too.

We also recommend that you read *The Christian Herald No 4* in which we discussed in detail the proper Christian Holy Days.