

The Latest Message To World Leaders

So much has been said about the end of this age and the Great Tribulation that accompanies it, that few people want to hear about it anymore. But hear they will, because this is our job, and because this awesome event is well on its way and it cannot be stopped.

The events of September 11, 2001 have shown how quickly a seemingly tranquil world can be put on a knife-edge. A single event has shaken the world to its foundation and set the wheels of war turning again. Ever since that time people have been expecting more big events, but no one quite knows how big or how soon.

For us, it is that time of the year when we normally inform people of the appearance of a new edition of *The Christian Herald*. This time however we are doing more than that; we are informing them of an important new phase in this work.

As most of you would know by now, the purpose of this work has been to restore the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to call people to repentance, and to provide a service to world leaders with an analysis of world developments from a spiritual perspective. We have amply done that for more than twelve years now, during which time we have painstakingly documented that the world was unmistakably heading towards a catastrophic climax that would wipe out all life on earth if it were not for the intervention of God Almighty to put an end to human madness. But He would not do so for the sake of a world that does not believe in Him, but for the sake of His elect. Here are the famous words of Jesus Christ that are being fulfilled before our very eyes.

"For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the 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." (Mat 24:21-22).

In the last edition we unveiled the one prophecy that portends the beginning of the countdown to the Great Tribulation. We refer of course to the prophecy of Daniel's chapter 12 that has never been revealed before. That countdown began when the "abomination of desolation" profaned the Holy Land. Those who have kept up to date with our writings would know who that is and when that event took place. The question that everyone should ask now is how to become part of God's elect in order to escape the sorrows of the Great Tribulation. This is what the Scriptures say about that:

"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. "Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown." (Rev 3:10-11).

There is an "hour of trial" that shall come upon the whole world, and the way of escaping it is by persevering in the ways of God, by being at peace with Him, with the world, and with oneself. One cannot be at peace with oneself and the world if he is not at peace with God first. And he cannot be at peace with God if he does not know Him, does not obey Him, and does not follow His ways. Only one Gospel teaches these things in full, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Gospel of truth. You can find it detailed in *The Christian Herald*s.

Until now, these magazines have been available mostly to national, religious and academic leaders, but now they are accessible to the whole world through our web site: www.thechristianherald.info

The whole world ought to know why religious, academic, and national leaders are determined to keep our magazines from public knowledge, and especially out of the hands of their followers. We strongly recommend *The Christian Herald*s Nos 9 and 10, for those who have not read them yet and want to know more about it.

We will no longer send out hard copies of these magazines as we have done so far, unless they are specifically requested. But all of them will be available on this site from now on: www.thechristianherald.info

We mentioned at the beginning of this article that we are moving to an important new phase in this work. That phase has to do with the success, or rather lack of it, we have encountered in bringing the leaders of this world to the wedding feast Jesus Christ. Having refused to answer the call of our God, He is now sending us on "the streets, highways, lanes and hedges" to call the simple people to His feast. Here is that story.

"A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' "And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.' Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.'

"So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.' "And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' "Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.' For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper." (Luke 14:16-24).

Now, how many times does God have to call on people before they answer His call? Once, twice, three times? How about ten times? That is how many editions of *The Christian Herald* we have sent to those who were invited, but the result has been the same: "Why, when I came, was there no man? Why, when I called, was there none to answer?" (Isa 50:2). Does anyone still doubt that biblical prophecies are coming alive in real time? You are witnesses to this fact. You can find out more about that prophecy in Isaiah 65:11-15.

Early in our work, we discovered that important spiritual knowledge was missing from the vernacular of our leaders. That knowledge is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Gospel of salvation. Without it, the world was being led, unwarily but unmistakably, to catastrophe. But speaking about salvation to this "enlightened" world proved to be a lost cause.

Certain religious leaders made capital of the fact that we had no authority from today's religious establishments to carry out this work, and fiercely opposed us. But that put us in a good league, for that happened to Jesus Christ and His Apostles too.

"Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?" (Mat 21:23).

"And it came to pass, on the next day, that their rulers, elders, and scribes, as well as Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, "By what power or by what name have you done this?" Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, 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, by Him this man stands here before you whole. "This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marvelled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:5-13).

Jesus Christ and His Apostles were considered to be "uneducated and untrained men" by the leaders of their time, when in truth they had more knowledge about salvation and the ways of God than they all put together. Now should we be surprised that the same thing is happening to us now? The bona fides of our work is that our message is different, that we follow the unadulterated Word of God, and that we have done it all for free, just like the Apostles. No other people, church, denomination, or religion in the world, can make a similar claim.

Since the beginning of the world, people who came in the name of God, who brought important spiritual messages, were in conflict with the religious establishments of their day. Such had been the case with the prophets of the Old Testament time, with Jesus Christ, and with His Apostles. Therefore it should come as no surprise that God has followed the same pattern to our day by using people who were not encumbered by religious dogma to deliver His simple messages to the world.

We began our work by crying aloud the fact that this world was in grave danger and that it could not be saved from oblivion if it did not return to its Creator God in heartfelt repentance and worship. A decade ago we were the first to point out that the world had entered the spasms associated with the end of this age, yet not surprisingly no one took us seriously. What is surprising though is that although by now the question of life's survival on this planet is on many peoples' lips, and a common theme in the media, the true solution to this problem is still out of their minds. Not a single leader has turned to God and invoked spiritual principles in order to save their people from impending catastrophe. None has called on their people to return to the true Gospel, and none has lent us a helping hand or made a contribution to this work.

We knew from prophecy that this would be the case and wrote about it at the very beginning of this work, but found it hard to believe that it would stay that way to the very end. Unbelievably, it did.

The notion of salvation is simply out of the minds of our leaders, yet nothing matters more in these troubled times than giving people hope and certainty that God has the power to make a difference in their lives.

One of the imperatives of our time has been the restoration of the true Gospel and the preaching of it as a witness to the world. "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 come" (Mat 24:14). That work has been done!

Preaching the Gospel as a witness to the nations did not mean preaching it to every human being; otherwise it would no longer be a work of witness but one of full conversion. Leaders represent nations, and that is why this work had been geared primarily for them. But we have not done it in secret or in vacuum, for tens of thousands of other people in this country and around the world have been made aware of it too. Yet, unbelievably, just as the Bible had predicted long ago, no one has accepted our witness.

Truth has no value in this world, and that is why the world is coming to a crushing end. But there is light at the end of the tunnel, for although *The Christian Herald* has been a witness against an unbelieving world it is also a harbinger of good news. A bright and wonderful new world follows the Great Tribulation, but only for those who have turned to God when they had their chance, for "many are called, but few are chosen." (Mat 22:14). It is everyone's duty to make sure they become part of God's elect and survive the apocalypse. After that they will enjoy peace, prosperity, love and harmony forever more. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, without which no man can enter that world, is freely and universally available now in *The Christian Herald*.

Now with all the signs of the time, and in spite of the fact that the Gospel of the Kingdom of God has been restored and made available to all, and people have been warned of what is to come several times, this world will still be taken by surprise by the Great Tribulation. So said Jesus Christ, and so it shall be.

"But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. (Mat 24:37-38).

How could this be? It is because the world is full of false gospels, and a myriad of preachers who lull people into a false sense of security in the belief that the end of this age is still a long way off. That is why no one believes the true Gospel anymore. One cannot be ready for the return of his Saviour by believing a false gospel. *The Christian Herald* reveals to you both the true Gospel and how close to these events we really are.

Nowhere else you can find this information. On the contrary, all other publications steer people away from the belief that the end is near. Why? Because they know that if we are right, all those who have preached different gospels are doomed.

Contrary to what other churches and religions preach, there are only one true God, one true Saviour, one true Holy Spirit, and one true Gospel (Eph. 4:4-6). Everything else is deception. The closer we get to the end of this age the worse it gets. Complacency in these trying times and failure to see the difference are deadly. As the Bible says, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). You can only test the spirits by comparing what people preach with what is in the Bible.

The blessings and salvation of God Almighty are with those who hear His call and do His will!

The Curse Of Our Leaders

“And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory.”(Rev 16:9)

In the year 2000, Australia dazzled the world with an Olympic spectacle the likes of which the world had never seen. Everything seemed to go right for this ‘lucky country’, but no sooner had the real Olympics closed, and preparations began for the so-called *Gay and Lesbian Olympics*, which were to take place two years later, that things began to go sour. The country’s fortunes took a nosedive, and the nation found itself in the midst of the worst natural disaster in its history.

Ever since that time, Australia has been scorched by a devastating drought. Lives have been lost and hundreds of properties destroyed in uncontrollable fires that stretched on a scale that defied imagination. Yet our leaders, in their customary wisdom, started talking about solving this problem by impossible engineering feats – turning the rivers inland, instead of taking the most obvious and easiest of ways – turning to God who has the power to bless or punish any wayward nation.

History and prophecy have provided ample proofs that everything that happens in this world has a spiritual underlining and a predetermined consequence to it. But because we live in a world of pervading cynicism and unbridled materialism, talk about spiritual matters renders one obsolete and out of touch with reality. Yet, without reference to our Creator God, and His divine laws that keep the universe turning and regulate our relationship with Him and with each other, life is a meaningless chain of unrelated events, fraught with pitfalls and difficulties for the unwary that choose the path of unbelief.

The term ‘natural disaster’ is actually a misnomer for this drought. First because even in a country that is used to dry spells there is nothing natural about a drought that covers almost an entire continent. NSW, the *gay* capital of the world, is the worst hit State. Second, because our Creator’s handbook – the Bible – tells us that drought in agricultural areas is a consequence of national and personal sins.

“Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.” (Isa 59:1-2).

“Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. “And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God: “Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country. Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. “Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. “Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.

“The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.” (Deu 28:1-7).

“The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe them. “So you shall not turn aside from any of the words which I command you this day, to the right or the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

“But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: “Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country. Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. “Cursed shall be the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. “Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.

“The LORD will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me. The LORD will make the plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land which you are going to possess. The LORD will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with scorching, and with mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish.

“And your heavens which are over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you shall be iron. The LORD will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.”(Deu 28:12-24).

Some people may wonder why we apply the warnings that God gave to ancient Israel to a Christian nation today. That is because the New Testament itself is telling us that the Old Testament had been written as an example, for our admonition and correction, today.

“Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and *that Rock was Christ*. But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.

"Now these things **became our examples**, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they 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."

"Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; **nor let us tempt Christ**, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; **nor complain**, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

"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." (1 Cor 10:1 – 11).

These things happened to them as examples for us, *upon whom the ends of the ages have come*. Are we anywhere near the end of this age? We are at the very door of it. If there ever was a generation *upon whom the ends of the ages have come*, surely this is the one.

Apostle Paul went on to say: *Do not become idolaters, nor let us commit sexual immorality, nor let us tempt Christ, nor complain*. Normally, idolatry is associated with worshiping statues and images, but in this case he associated it with an inordinate desire for pleasures – *eat, drink and play* – the very characteristics of the *Gay and Lesbian Olympics*. It was widely reported in the media at that time that in the suburb of Sydney where these *Olympics* were held the pubs run out of grog twice in a week, something that had never happened to them before.

Do these people take note of God's warning against *sexual immorality*? 'You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination.' (Lev 18:22). Not only do they not care about it, but our political leaders have also encouraged such exhibitions, because *they are good for the economy*. We have not heard religious leaders voicing public disapproval of such abominable spectacles and practices either.

No, sins are not good for the economy! They are disastrous both for the economy and for the social fabric of society. The current national distress is only one such obvious proof of it.

God does not mind when people enjoy themselves appropriately and in moderation as long as they do not forget where their blessings come from and render due credit to who credit is due. But when they step out of line, punishment is never too far away.

Homosexuality is only one of the sins that plague this country and the world at present. With the disappearance of the concept of God from our educational institutions, our youths grow up in a moral, ethical and spiritual vacuum, surrounded by vice, unable to distinguish between right and wrong, good and evil, true and false, and holy and profane anymore. No one is telling them that true happiness is not achieved through sin, vulgarity, and rebelliousness, but through love, decency, chastity, faithfulness, respect for elders and authorities, and above all, reverence, love and worship for our Heavenly Father.

"You shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man, and fear your God: I am the LORD". (Lev. 19:32).

"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

"Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have 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. Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor. Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law." (Rom 12:21; 13:1-8).

"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." "This is the first and great commandment. "And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." (Mat 22:37-40).

Two major events in the life of this nation have shown how far our leaders have departed from God in recent times. Neither during the celebrations of the real Olympics, nor during the memorials of the devastating terrorist attack in Bali in October 2002 that killed nearly 200 people, most of them Australians, have any of them mentioned God in their speeches. No one remembered, or reminded people, of the promise of Jesus Christ: "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die." (John 11:25-26).

The Premier of NSW went so far as to say that those who died in Bali '*were all good men*'. Well, we hope so, but how would he know that? Can he read human hearts to know whether people are good or bad? The Bible tells us that only God can do that, and that human beings are much too often misled by appearances.

"Now the LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite. For I have provided Myself a king among his sons." So it was, when they came, that he looked at Eliab and said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him."

"But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. *For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.*" So Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these."

"And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all the young men here?" Then he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him. For we will not sit down till he comes

here." So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with bright eyes, and good-looking. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!" (1 Sam 16:1,6-12).

The majority of those who died in Bali were there to celebrate the end of their rugby or 'footy' season. Now, rugby, like many other sports, is a violent game that punishes the body excessively. It is a well known fact that by the time they reach their fifties many players end up looking like old men, wracked by arthritis, broken limbs, and other degenerative diseases (See an excellent article on this topic by Miranda Devine in *Sydney Morning Herald*, October 10, 2002). Anyone who subjects his body to that kind of punishment cannot please his Maker. A macho image and a humble image don't go together very well from a Christian point of view either.

If the biblical standard of moderation and due care for the '*temple of the living God*' is applied, it is doubtful that one could say they '*were all good men*'. That is not to say one should not lament the deaths of so many people in such a violent manner, but let truth be truth and not always be subject to political imperatives.

If there ever was a man who deserved to be called *good*, by virtue of the fact that He had never sinned, it was Jesus Christ. Yet when a young man addressed Him by that epithet this is what He said:

"Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, " 'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?"

"Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. "And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Mat 19:16 - 26)

There are many lessons that come out of this passage, not the least that with God all things are possible. Why then did He not answer the nation's prayers to put an end to this disastrous drought before it devastated the nation's stock of grains and animals? This is the Bible's answer:

"Your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear." (Isa 59:2).

"They do not say in their heart, "Let us now fear the LORD our God, Who gives rain, both the former and the latter, in its season. He reserves for us the appointed weeks of the harvest." "Your iniquities have turned these things away, And your sins have withheld good from you." (Jer 5:24 - 25).

And from the New Testament we have this.

"And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight." (1 John 3:22).

So what is the solution? Well, what was true of the young man, who could not follow Jesus Christ and gain eternal life because of his greed, is true of everyone today: KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS, and share your wealth with the poor. Which Commandments? The same that Christ said are essential for eternal life. Read that passage again, and take note of it for it has some very important lessons for today.

If this nation follows the example of other nations that have received similar warnings and turned around (see Jonah chapter 3 for example), not only will its fortunes turn around too, but those who keep God's Commandments would ensure themselves of eternal life as well.

"If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever; the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

"I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you". "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." (John 14:15-18, 13-14).

Now do people love Jesus Christ and keep His Commandments these days? They come up with all sorts of excuses for not keeping the Commandments, yet Jesus Christ clearly linked them with eternal life. God is answering the prayers of those who keep His Commandments, and conversely, He does not answer them to those who do not keep them.

Now while Australia has been under severe distress for some years now, other nations have not been spared their share of problems either. Unbelief and sin are ripe everywhere, and so is the punishment for them. But does anyone tell the people why they are suffering?

More than at any other time in history, the world is experiencing major cataclysmic upheavals: droughts, floods, famines, earthquakes, epidemics, devastating storms, killer tornadoes, crime, unemployment, poverty, social upheavals – you name them, they are everywhere. And now the latest: worldwide terrorism.

These are abnormal times: it was not meant to be this way. We would like to tell you that all these things will be over soon, but we can't because they won't. Things will get worse before they get better. The world is well and truly on its last legs, having entered the last stages before it plunges itself into what Jesus Christ called the Great Tribulation. All that is left now is

the final worldwide nuclear blow out, but the world is blindly ignorant of its march towards that event, even though it has been told about it several times.

Since 1990, Australia has been the headquarters for God's end-time work on earth. Every year, national and religious leaders from around the world have been kept informed of the progress of this work, including our Prime Minister and the Premiers of all States. There was a good reason why, at a time when many nations underwent serious economic upheavals, Australia surged ahead unaffected by the collapse of other nations' economies. Yet, our Federal and State leaders have not so much as even acknowledged our correspondence, let alone support this work. All while they donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to Prostitute Collectives and Homosexual Organizations.

Admittedly, we never requested anything from anyone and never will, for that would be contrary to our apostolic tradition, but that should not have prevented them from voluntarily supporting a work that is good for them and for the country.

The Apostles never begged, cajoled or imposed themselves on the general public. They only expected donations from church members and from those who benefited from their work and were of a willing heart. The moment one solicits help from the general public he ceases to be a Christian, for that is like begging from strangers, and is contrary to the Scriptures.

"I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread." (Psa 37:25).

"Wait on the LORD, And keep His way, And He shall exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you shall see it." (Psa 37:34).

It is easy to know those who do not follow the Scriptures, for in general they are scriptural illiterates. They offer a mumbo-jumbo type of preaching that they themselves do not understand and find it hard to explain when pressed to do so. Apostle Paul said that they are, "always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim 3:7). And it cannot be otherwise, for the Holy Spirit does not help those who act contrary to the examples of Jesus Christ and His Apostles. And without the Holy Spirit one should never open his mouth to preach in the name of Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS, and tell your leaders to keep them too. In so doing, you will both help the nation out of distress, and ensure eternal life and a bright future for yourself in the Kingdom of God too.

Restoring The Gospel Of Jesus Christ

Most Christians believe that before the return of Jesus Christ, one man would come, in the spirit of Elijah, and restore "all things". We say 'most' because some believe that he had already come two thousand years ago in the form of John the Baptist and fulfilled that prophecy. The problem is there are several prophecies about Elijah that could not have been fulfilled at that time. Here is one that was fulfilled then.

Mat 11:7 "As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? "But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.

Mat 11:9 "But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet.

Mat 11:10 "For this is he of whom it is written: 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare

Mat 11:11 Your way before You.' "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Mat 11:12 "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent

Mat 11:13 take it by force. "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

Mat 11:14 "And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come."

Here we have a clear statement from Jesus Christ that John the Baptist was indeed Elijah. He was the messenger that prepared the way for the Lord. The problem is, Jesus Christ was destined to come twice to this earth: first as a human being, a 'Son of Man', to offer a beacon to the world and qualify for His eternal kingship, and a second time as a triumphant Son of God, to save humanity from self-annihilation, take His people to Himself, and take control of the kingdoms of this world. We have covered this subject at length in *The Christian Herald No 1*. Here is just a glimpse of these prophecies.

Dan 9:20 "Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God,

Dan 9:21 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.

Dan 9:22 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to

Dan 9:23 understand. "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, and the wall, even in troublesome times.

Dan 9:26 "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."

The Pharisees knew about these prophecies and were waiting for the Messiah at the time of Jesus Christ, but when He made His appearance, they rejected Him because He spoke of a different kind of Kingdom; one based on righteousness, truth, justice and holiness that belonged to another world. When they perceived that they had little chance of entering that Kingdom they rejected Him and killed Him, and decided that they would wait for another Messiah. They are still waiting for Him, but when He comes this time He will make them an offer they can't refuse anymore. They ignored the fact that the Messiah would come first to suffer at the hands of the wicked and be cut off in the middle of the week, and in so doing they became participants and executors of that prophecy.

Psa 22:6 "But I am a worm, and no man; A reproach of men, and despised by the people.
Psa 22:7 All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,
Psa 22:8 "He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!"
Psa 22:9 But You are He who took Me out of the womb; You made Me trust while on My mother's breasts.
Psa 22:10 I was cast upon You from birth. From My mother's womb You have been My God.
Psa 22:11 Be not far from Me, For trouble is near; For there is none to help.
Psa 22:12 Many bulls have surrounded Me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me.
Psa 22:13 They gape at Me with their mouths, Like a raging and roaring lion. I am poured out like water,
Psa 22:14 And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me.
Psa 22:15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to
Psa 22:16 the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.
Psa 22:17 They pierced My hands and MY feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me.
Psa 22:18 They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.
Psa 22:19 But You, O LORD, do not be far from Me; O My Strength, hasten to help Me!
Psa 22:20 Deliver Me from the sword, My precious life from the power of the dog.
Psa 22:21 Save Me from the lion's mouth And from the horns of the wild oxen! You have answered Me.
Psa 22:22 I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You."

That was the first coming of the Messiah, and here is the second.

Dan 7:13 "I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.

Dan 7:14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed."

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

Rev 21:3 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, Rev 21:6 for these words are 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."

Since John the Baptist came before the first arrival of the Messiah, the question is will there be another 'Elijah' before His second coming? When asked about his role, John the Baptist said that he was not Elijah.

John 1:19 "Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask John 1:20 him, "Who are you?" He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."
John 1:21 And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?"
John 1:22 And he answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"

John 1:23 He said: "I am 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Make straight the way of the LORD,"

John 1:24 "as the prophet Isaiah said." Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees."

Now why did John deny that he was Elijah when Jesus Christ clearly said that he was? Because he knew that there would be another Elijah after him, one who would serve a different purpose. Take a careful look at this passage for it portrays some important developments prior to the arrival of the second Elijah.

Mal 3:14 "You have said, 'It is useless to serve God; What profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, And that we have walked as mourners Before the LORD of hosts? So now we call the proud blessed,
Mal 3:15 For those who do wickedness are raised up; They even tempt God and go free."

Mal 3:16 Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, And the LORD listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the LORD And who meditate on His name.

Mal 3:17 "They shall be Mine," says the LORD of hosts, "On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him." Then you shall again discern

Mal 3:18 Between the righteous and the wicked, Between one who serves God And one who does not serve Him."

Mal 4:1 "For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the LORD of hosts,

Mal 4:2 "That will leave them neither root nor branch. But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings;

Mal 4:3 And you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves. You shall trample the wicked, For they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet On the day that I do this," Says the LORD of hosts.

Mal 4:4 "Remember the Law of Moses, My servant, Which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, With the statutes and judgments.

Mal 4:5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

Mal 4:6 And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."

Three are three points of interest for us in this passage.

1. There will be a Day, burning like an oven in which the proud and the wicked become stubble and ashes under the feet of the righteous. It is appropriate to note here that the wicked of our time have introduced the false doctrine that all human beings will be saved, because 'God is good and cannot destroy His own creation'. Instead of changing their life of sin and turning to God in heartfelt repentance, they are finding escape in falsehood and immersing themselves ever deeper in self-deluding doctrines. The second Elijah will fight these deceivers prior to the Great Tribulation and the return of Jesus Christ.
2. God is sending His people to the Law, statutes and judgments that He gave to Moses. This Law contains among other things the Sabbaths, Holy Days and Commandments of God. Since John the Baptist did not accomplish this restoration, it follows that the second Elijah must do it. One of the identifying signs of the second Elijah then is the upholding and restoring the Law of Moses – the Law of God.
3. Before the 'great and dreadful day of the Lord', Elijah must turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers. There never was a greater need of this kind of love in the world than it is now. Love of our parents and love of our heavenly Father and our Savior have never been scarcer in the world. That love is being restored through the Law of God – the Ten Commandments. Remember, the first four Commandments regulate our relationship with God, and the last six with each other. Jesus Christ summarized the Ten Commandments in this manner, but did not supplant them.

Mat 22:37 "Jesus said to him, " 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul,

Mat 22:38 and with all 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."

Elijah must restore these things if the world is to have any chance of surviving the 'great and dreadful day of the Lord'. John the Baptist said that he was not Elijah because he knew that the 'great and dreadful day of the Lord' was a long way off yet. He expected Messiah to come and restore the kingdom to Israel first, and free them from the Roman yoke. His role was to 'prepare the way of the Lord', not save the world from *utter destruction*, as Malachi 4:6 should have it.

If the worldwide conspiracy against God succeeds, and the whole world turns against God and denies its Creator, as our 'wise' men, media people, scientists, educators, academics, politicians and even religious leaders are so desperate to accomplish, the world will simply vanish from existence and never be seen or heard of again. That is how important the work of Elijah is. Unfortunately, right now even the elect of God have fallen asleep and are unaware of what is happening around them. They are oblivious to the fact that Elijah and the world need them badly.

If we did not know where 'Satan's throne is' (Rev. 2:13), and who the 'abomination of desolation' that sits on it is, (Mat.24: 15), we might have been tempted to think that it is at the headquarters of Australia's national public broadcaster, the ABC TV. The producers of their religious programs have scurried the world to find the most demonic and offensive programs one could imagine. They are particularly fond of those that deny the authenticity of the Bible, and the historicity of the events associated with Jesus Christ. When we drew their attention to this fact they accused us of being un-scriptural and un-Christian. As the saying goes, those who deny the existence of demons, behave like ones. Any wonder that Australia goes through hell at present.

Now notice what Jesus Christ told His disciples about the Kingdom when they asked Him about it.

Acts 1:4 And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water,

Acts 1:5 "but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

Acts 1:6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore

Acts 1:7 the kingdom to Israel?" And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the

Acts 1:8 Father has put in His own authority. "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

They did not ask Him about the Kingdom of God, but the kingdom of Israel. Jesus knew that the kingdom they had in mind was not His Kingdom, but He was in no mood to argue with them about it at that time. He merely let them discover the

truth for themselves after they were 'baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now'. Without the Holy Spirit, people simply cannot understand the meaning of salvation, or what the Kingdom of God is all about.

Jesus Christ told His disciples that before the Kingdom would be set up they would have to be 'witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.' That Kingdom would contain not only Israel but also the entire world. The Jews were very upset about this notion of the Kingdom, for it would mean they were no longer the only "chosen" people, and were prepared to commit murder in order to maintain their exclusivity.

Acts 22:17 "Now it happened, when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I was in a
Acts 22:18 "trance and saw Him saying to me, 'Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning Me.' "So I said,
Acts 22:19 'Lord, they know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believe on You.
Acts 22:20 'And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.'
Acts 22:21 "Then He said to me, 'Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles."
Acts 22:22 And they listened to him until this word, and then they raised their voices and said,
Acts 22:23 "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he is not fit to live!" Then, as they cried out and tore off their clothes and threw dust into the air, the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, and said that
Acts 22:24 he should be examined under scourging, so that he might know why they shouted so against him."

The mere mention of the word "Gentile" sent them wild. To this day the Jews struggle with the concept of the Kingdom of God, still believing that it means restoring their nation to the glory and borders of the ancient kingdom of David and Solomon. That is why they are so desperate to rebuild the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem too. The Christians, on the other hand, want to see that temple rebuilt for a different purpose. They believe that their Lord cannot return unless the 'abomination of desolation' profanes the holy place which is supposed to be inside that temple. But of course, they are both wrong. There is neither the need, nor the time to build a new temple in Jerusalem before the return of Jesus Christ. The Kingdom of God is not the Kingdom of Israel, and Jesus Christ does not return to any temples built by human hands, but to the 'temples of the living God' built by Him and the Father.

Acts 7:47 "But Solomon built Him a house.
Acts 7:48 "However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says:
Acts 7:49 'Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool. What house will you build for Me? says the LORD,
Acts 7:50 Or what is the place of My rest? Has My hand not made all these things?'

Acts 17:24 "God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands."

2 Cor 6:16 "And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people."

Jesus Christ returns not to live on this earth among human beings, for it is not possible for human beings to intermingle with spirit beings, but to take His people to Himself, to the throne of His Father in Heaven, to the heavenly Mount Zion after touching down briefly on the Mount of Olives, the earthly Mount Zion.

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."

Oba 1:17 "But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance, And there shall be holiness; The house of Jacob shall
Oba 1:18 possess their possessions. The house of Jacob shall be a fire, And the house of Joseph a flame; But the house of Esau shall be stubble; They shall kindle them and devour them, And no survivor shall remain of the house of Esau," For the LORD has spoken.

Micah 4:6 "In that day," says the LORD, "I will assemble the lame, I will gather the outcast And those whom I
Micah 4:7 have afflicted; I will make the lame a remnant, And the outcast a strong nation; So the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion From now on, even forever."

Heb 12:22 "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an
Heb 12:23 innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the
Heb 12:24 new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel."

Rev 14:1 "Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.
Rev 14:2 And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps.
Rev 14:3 They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.
Rev 14:4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.
Rev 14:5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God."

The holy place is not inside any temple in Jerusalem; it is the ground on which Jesus Christ walked, was crucified, and holds His blood. That place has already been profaned by the 'abomination of desolation.' We are that close to the great and dreadful Day of the Lord.

The glorified Christ cannot live among human beings, for it would pulverize them with His brightness. That is why God (Christ, 1 Cor 10:4), could not be seen with the naked eye by Moses. He was hidden in the cleft of a rock and covered by God's hand, and saw only the back not the face of God for a fraction of a second.

Exo 33:17 "So the LORD said to Moses, "I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in
Exo 33:18 My sight, and I know you by name. "And he said, "Please, show me Your glory."
Exo 33:19 Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD
before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have
Exo 33:20 compassion." But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." And the
Exo 33:21 LORD said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. "So it shall be, while My glory
Exo 33:22 passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by.
Exo 33:23 "Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."

Now when John the Baptist was thrown into prison and saw that his life was in danger, he realized that something was not right and began to wonder about the role of Jesus Christ in restoring the kingdom to Israel. He sent two of his disciples to ask Him whether He was indeed the 'Coming One'?

Mat 11:2 "And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples
Mat 11:3 and said to Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"

Prior to that, John confidently preached the coming of the Kingdom of heaven, telling people that One coming after him would set it up with fire and the ax.

Mat 3:1 "In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, "Repent,
Mat 3:2 for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying:
Mat 3:3 "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight."
Mat 3:4 And John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was
Mat 3:5 locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to
Mat 3:6 him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.
Mat 3:7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of
vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
Mat 3:8 "Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves,
Mat 3:9 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from
Mat 3:10 these stones. "And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not
bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.
Mat 3:11 "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I,
whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
Mat 3:12 "His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His
wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

John, like all the Jews of his time, must have expected Jesus to handle the Romans first, for the kingdom of Israel could not be set up as long as they were masters of the Holy Land. This belief was held even by people who were in tune with much of God's prophecies.

Luke 1:68 "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited and redeemed His people,
Luke 1:69 And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of His servant David,
Luke 1:70 As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, Who have been since the world began,
Luke 1:71 That we should be saved from our enemies And from the hand of all who hate us,
Luke 1:72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers And to remember His holy covenant,
Luke 1:73 The oath which He swore to our father Abraham:
Luke 1:74 To grant us that we, Being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear,
Luke 1:75 In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life."

"Save us from our enemies", was the general wish of the Jews at that time. Yet instead of taking up the fight to the Romans, Jesus began to heal both Jews and Romans.

Luke 7:2 "And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die.
Luke 7:3 So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and
Luke 7:4 heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for
Luke 7:5 whom He should do this was deserving, "for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue."
Luke 7:6 Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends
to Him, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof.
Luke 7:7 "Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be
Luke 7:8 healed. "For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,'
and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."
Luke 7:9 When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that
followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!"
Luke 7:10 And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick."

When John's disciples asked Jesus Christ whether He was the 'Coming One', this is what He answered.

Mat 11:4 "Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see:

Mat 11:5 "The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

Mat 11:6 "And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."

Jesus perceived that John's understanding was not perfect and gave him some new insights about His role and the nature of His Kingdom, concluding with a subtle but powerful warning: "blessed is he who is not offended because of Me". Later, Jesus reconfirmed that John was Elijah, but left room for a second Elijah.

Mat 17:1 "Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by

Mat 17:2 themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes

Mat 17:3 became as white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.

Mat 17:4 Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

Mat 17:5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"

Mat 17:6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid.

Mat 17:7 But Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid."

Mat 17:8 When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

Mat 17:9 Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead."

Mat 17:10 And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?"

Mat 17:11 Jesus answered and said to them, "Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things.

Mat 17:12 "But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands."

Mat 17:13 Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist."

This quotation, taken in its entirety, connects Moses with Elijah, just like the one from the book of Malachi. In fact, it does more than that: it places Jesus, Moses and Elijah, on the same level. Here we have the first direct confirmation of the heavenly Trinity in the New Testament. (See *The Christian Herald No 5* for an extensive discussion on this topic).

The role of the first Elijah was to 'Make straight the way of the LORD'. The role of the second Elijah is to 'restore all things'. The question is, what things need to be restored at this time? Well, Jesus foresaw that in the intervening time, between His ascension to heaven and His return to this earth, there would be a wholesale departure from the truth of God, from the Law, statutes and judgments of God, and from the Christian Gospel. These things need to be restored at this time in preparation for the Millennial Kingdom, the precursor to the Kingdom of God.

When Grace Does Not Overrule Works

After two thousand years of Christianity you think that people would know by now what roles grace and works play in the process of salvation, but apparently this is not the case. Here is a quote from a letter sent to us by a concerned 'Christian' who took issue with our preaching the need to keep the Commandments of God.

"My second comment is directed at your "solution", i.e. Keep the commandments. Yes, I agree that keeping God's commandments is part of being a Christian, but the Bible is quite clear in stating that this is not the way to gain eternal life. Eg: John 3:16, Ephesians 2:8 ... *we are saved by faith in Jesus ... by grace alone*. Your emphasis on keeping the commandments is advocating a works based salvation, instead of a salvation that is gained by faith alone. I'd like to say that I am a Christian. Jesus is the Lord of my life and I believe that salvation comes through faith in Jesus alone, not by any works that I may do."

What can one say to that? Modern day Christianity is full of this kind of ambiguity and double talk. 'Yes, keeping God's commandments is part of being a Christian, but if you preach keeping the commandments you advocate a works based salvation, instead of a salvation that is gained by faith alone.'

Friend, you say that you are a Christian, but would Jesus Christ agree with you when you countermand the most important prerequisite for salvation: keeping the Commandments of God?

1 John 2:3 "Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments."

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."

1 John 3:24 "Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us."

1 John 5:2 "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His
1 John 5:3 commandments." "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His
commandments are not burdensome."

Let us now look at the two references this concerned 'Christian' gave us as proof that grace and faith override works.

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."

To believe in Jesus Christ means to do what He wants you to do if you want Him to save you. And this is what He wants.

Mat 19:16 "Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have
Mat 19:17 eternal life?" So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if
you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

Mat 19:18 He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, " 'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You
shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,'

Mat 19:19 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

"If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." Could it be any clearer? It is not enough to believe in Him, you
must keep the Commandments if you want to gain eternal life. If you do not do that you are a liar and the truth is not in you.

1 John 2:4 "He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

Mat 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will
of My Father in heaven.

John 14:21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be
loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

John 14:23 "Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love
him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.

John 14:24 "He who does not love Me does not keep My words; **and the word which you hear is not Mine but
the Father's who sent Me.**"

John 15:8 "By this My Father is glorified, that **you bear much fruit**; so you will be My disciples.

John 15:9 "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.

John 15:10 "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's
commandments and abide in His love."

Bearing godly fruit and keeping the Commandments of God go hand in hand. You have to do both if you want to get a
place in the eternal Kingdom of God. Believing in Jesus Christ not only does not override works, it encumbers you to bring
forth fruit in accordance with your faith. It is your proof that you love Him: "If you love Me, keep My commandments." (John
14:15). One does not believe in Jesus Christ if he does not keep His Commandments.

Now let us look at the second reference from that letter.

Eph 2:8 "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,
Eph 2:9 not of works, lest anyone should boast."

Here we have specific mention of salvation by grace through faith and not by works. What then do we do about the
following Scripture? "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work." (Rev 22:12). Jesus Christ did not say, I will reward everyone according to his belief in Me, but '**according to his work**'. If you
do not bring forth works worthy of salvation, no matter what you believe in, you will not make it into the Kingdom of God.

This is how faith and works go hand in hand in the process of salvation.

James 2:17 "Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

James 2:18 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works,
and I will show you my faith by my works.

James 2:19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe; and tremble!

James 2:20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?

James 2:21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?

James 2:22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?

James 2:23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for
righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.

James 2:24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only."

It so happens that even Apostle Paul who wrote the epistle to the Ephesians in which he spoke about salvation by grace
through faith and not of works, also said that works are needed for salvation.

Phil 2:12 "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in
my absence, **work out your own salvation** with fear and trembling;

Phil 2:13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure."

"Work out your own salvation!" Well, if you must work out your own salvation you must bring forth works worthy of
salvation, or fruits worthy of repentance, as John the Baptist put it; you cannot just rest on your laurels and think that you will
be saved just because you believe in Jesus Christ.

You cannot take one verse out of the Bible and make a doctrine of salvation out of it. That is why God have us a whole Book to study, meditate upon, and obey, if we want to be saved. Little knowledge is dangerous knowledge, particularly when you talk about salvation and you do not know what you are talking about.

The question is where does grace come into it if we must work out our own salvation? Simple. God had shown us His grace when He forgave us our sins, granted us repentance, and called us to follow in the steps of His Son in order that we too become His children and gain eternal life in His Kingdom. Repentance itself is a gift from God, and it comes not because we deserve it, but as part of God's grace towards us. He exercises His grace once, at the beginning, after which we must bring forth works, or fruit commensurate with our faith. Those who do not do so, and continue in sin forfeit that grace.

Rom 5:20 "Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded
Rom 5:21 much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rom 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

Rom 6:2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

Rom 6:3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into His

Rom 6:4 death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Apostle Paul also told his followers that there are certain things they must do in order to be saved.

Phil 4:8 "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is

Phil 4:9 anything praiseworthy; meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, **these do**, and the God of peace will be with you."

2 Th 2:15 "Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our
2 Th 2:16 epistle. Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation **and good hope by grace**,

2 Th 2:17 comfort your hearts and establish you in every **good word and work**."

Notice carefully, in one sentence he spoke of both grace and work. One did not exclude the other. He went on to tell his followers that whatever they saw in him, they must do too. And what did he do? Well, he did a lot of things, including sacrificing his life for the Gospel.

2 Th 3:1 "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with

2 Th 3:2 you, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith.

2 Th 3:3 But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one.

2 Th 3:4 And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, **both that you do and will do the things we command you**."

2 Th 3:5 "Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ.

2 Th 3:6 But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us.

2 Th 3:7 For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you;

2 Th 3:8 nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but **worked with labor and toil night and day**, that we might not be a burden to any of you, not because we do not have authority,

2 Th 3:9 but **to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us**."

How many preachers do you know who follow the Apostles' example and 'work with labour and toil night and day'? We do not know the person who sent us that letter, but most likely he or she is a priest or a minister in a church. They are the ones who keep on confronting us on this matter. We know of no priest or minister who follows the example of the Apostles, other than those in our Foundation. That is why they run away from us as from a plague, for we would send them all to work.

There are times when a preacher may be spending all his working hours in the church, but that is never a licence for lifetime employment. Certainly he would not be moved around to another church if he proved to be a sinner, a sexual miscreant, as they do in so many churches these days.

2 Th 3:10 "For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he
2 Th 3:11 eat. For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all,
2 Th 3:12 but are busybodies. Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread.

2 Th 3:13 But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in **doing good**.

2 Th 3:14 And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with

2 Th 3:15 him, that he may be ashamed. Yet do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

2 Th 3:16 Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord be with you all."

Why The Commandments Are Important Today

There are two main reasons for which mainstream Christians do not keep the Commandments of God:

- 1) Human beings already have immortality within themselves therefore they do not need the Commandments to gain eternal life;
- 2) The Ten Commandments were done away with, 'nailed to the cross,' therefore they are no longer necessary for salvation.

We will look at both these reasons and see how well they stand in the light of the Scriptures.

The first one comes from Jesus' promise to the thief on the cross that he will be with Him in Paradise that same day.

Luke 23:39 "Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Luke 23:40 Yourself and us." But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation?"

Luke 23:41 "And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing Luke 23:42 wrong." Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom."

Luke 23:43 And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

Fundamentalist Christians, who do not believe in immortality of the soul, take issue with the last verse by saying that the coma should be after the word 'today' and not before it. Jesus' statement would then become, "I say to you today, you will be with Me in Paradise." That would allow the thief to inherit eternal life after resurrection from the dead, not immediately after death. Mainstream Christians however, would have none of it. They are convinced that the statement is correct as it is, and as the author intended it to be. They point to the fact that all major translations of the Bible render this verse the same way.

Vine's Expository Dictionary, a highly authoritative source on biblical matters, says this about it.

"There are no grammatical reasons for the insistence that the connection [of the word 'today'] must be with the statement "Verily I say to unto thee," nor is such an idea necessitated by examples from either the Sept. or the N.T.; the connection given in the A.V. and R.V. is right."

'Sept.' means Septuagint, an ancient Greek version of the Bible, A.V. means Authorised Version (King James), and R.V. comes from Revised Standard Version. Vine uses the terminology of King James Version.

He gives credence to mainstream Christianity, and so do we, but for different reasons.

First of all let us point out why going to the original source does not help. Ancient writers used few punctuation marks. Most of them did not even leave spaces between words. If you see an ancient epitaph on a tombstone for example, you may have a hard time understanding it even if you understand ancient Greek or Latin perfectly. That is because they are written as one long sentence with no spaces and punctuation marks. They did not do that for lack of space but because that was their writing style. Not many people could read and write in those days, and those that did, a privileged class, were expected to know and understand it. In some languages, such as Hebrew, the problem was compounded by the fact that they did not even use vowels in writing. You can see why scribes and lawyers were held in high esteem at the time of Jesus Christ, and why they were so surprised when they encountered people who could read, write and teach the Scriptures without having attended rabbinical schools as was the case with Jesus Christ and His Apostles. Obviously they had learned letters privately at home.

This problem is compounded by the fact that we no longer have the original texts. What have come down to us are copies of copies of copies that have passed through many hands. Which raises the question, should we be concerned that we may not have the whole truth? The answer is an emphatic **no!** What we have today is the truth, the whole truth, and the guaranteed truth. We know that from the Holy Spirit.

When Jesus Christ left this earth, He told His disciples that soon afterwards He would send them the 'Helper' who would guide them into all they needed to know about salvation. His promise was fulfilled fifty days later on the day of Pentecost. The 'Helper' – the Holy Spirit – came upon them in spectacular fashion, granting them, among other gifts, the ability to speak in many languages. See Acts Chapters 2 and 10.

There was no other way by which they could fulfil their mission, for they did not have the translations of the Scriptures and the facilities that we have today. Knowing a multiplicity of languages was the only way by which they could preach the Gospel to all people and make disciples of all nations.

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.

Now although the Holy Spirit no longer comes in similar fashion these days, people continue to receive a multiplicity of heavenly gifts, the greatest being the Holy Spirit Himself!

Acts 2:38 "Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Without the Holy Spirit we cannot achieve spiritual union with God and with Jesus Christ, and cannot be saved.

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."

When we receive the Holy Spirit, we are imbued with at least one of the following gifts:

1 Cor 12:4 "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.
1 Cor 12:5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.
1 Cor 12:6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.
1 Cor 12:7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:
1 Cor 12:8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through
1 Cor 12:9 the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit,
1 Cor 12:10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another
different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.
1 Cor 12:11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills."

Spiritual wisdom is at the very top of this list. Without it, one cannot understand of the purpose of life, the meaning of salvation, and the nature of the Kingdom of God.

If you ever felt revulsion of your way of life and felt the need for something better and more meaningful, the Holy Spirit has probably touched you. Without the Holy Spirit people wonder aimlessly through life, never seeing the error of their ways, and never feeling the need to repent and change for something better.

When that happens to you, as it happens to all at least once in their life, don't miss your opportunity and neglect your call from God, for you may never have another chance. Be particularly aware of the trap of evolution into which so many 'educated' have fallen. You did not create yourself out of nothing, as so many people have foolishly come to believe. God gave you the gift of life and called you to qualify for something infinitely better and more rewarding. You were born for a noble purpose – to become an immortal child of God through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit grants people a sixth sense, and internal eye, a window into a transcendental world that cannot be described by words.

1 Cor 2:9 "But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

1 Cor 2:10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep
1 Cor 2:11 things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God."

Those who embraced the pernicious theory of evolution have handicapped themselves and missed their opportunity. Yet, incredibly, they think that they are wise and we are fools. But this was to be expected.

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!
2 Tim 3:6 For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded
2 Tim 3:7 down with sins, led away by various lusts, **always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.**"

They don't need to creep into households anymore, they can make captives of gullible women in clubs, sporting venues, community centres, educational institutions, even in churches. The opposite is very much the case these days too: women taking the initiative and making captives of gullible men.

In the western world, due to their militancy, the law has been so skewed in women's favour, the media and current affair programs are full of horror stories about men who have been reduced to tears, and even committed suicide, because a corrupt judicial system and insensitive judges have turned them into sub-humans. All while the real criminals have a chorus of defenders, particularly from those who claim to stand for human rights. Have you ever heard them call for human rights for honest law abiding citizens, the victims of crime and injustice? These do not bring much profit to lawyers and judges hence they are expendable. But what does God say? "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 2:3).

The current judicial system perpetuates itself through artificially created conflicts; issues and appeal venues that bankrupt the unwary who seek justice that way. The penal code is so burdensome and convoluted, smart lawyers turn it whichever way they want. Justice seldom has a bearing on Court outcomes anymore. But this has been a problem with this world for a long time.

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 that He will not hear.**

Isa 59:3 For your hands are defiled with blood, And your fingers with iniquity; Your lips have spoken lies,

Isa 59:4 Your tongue has muttered perversity. **No one calls for justice, Nor does any plead for truth.** They trust in empty words and speak lies; They conceive evil and bring forth iniquity.

Isa 59:5 They hatch vipers' eggs and weave the spider's web; He who eats of their eggs dies, And from that which is crushed a viper breaks out.

Isa 59:6 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 iniquity; Wasting and destruction are in their paths.

Isa 59:8 **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.

Isa 59:9 Therefore **justice is far from us,** Nor does righteousness overtake us; We look for light, but there is darkness! For brightness, but we walk in blackness!

Isa 59:10 We grope for the wall like the blind, And we grope as if we had no eyes; We stumble at noonday as at twilight; We are as dead men in desolate places.

Isa 59:11 We all growl like bears, And moan sadly like doves; **We look for justice, but there is none;**

Isa 59:12 **For salvation, but it is far from us.** For our transgressions are multiplied before You, And our sins testify against us; For our transgressions are with us, And as for our iniquities, we know them:

Isa 59:13 In transgressing and lying against the LORD, And departing from our God, Speaking oppression and revolt, Conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.

Isa 59:14 **Justice is turned back, And righteousness stands afar off; For truth is fallen in the street, And**

Isa 59:15 **equity cannot enter. So truth fails, And he who departs from evil makes himself a prey. Then the LORD saw it, and it displeased Him That there was no justice."**

Isa 59:16 He saw that there was no man, And wondered that there was no intercessor; Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; And His own righteousness, it sustained Him."

The Apostles knew that there was no justice in this world and that **'he who departs from evil makes himself a prey'** and urged their followers to suffer loss rather than seek justice from unbelievers.

1 Cor 6:5 "I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able

1 Cor 6:6 to judge between his brethren? But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers!

1 Cor 6:7 Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated?"

The cries to Heaven for a righteous judicial system and a simplified code of laws have never been stronger. This prayer is about to be answered, for we cannot have this kind of iniquity in the new age. It is one of Elijah's roles to prepare the groundwork for the restoration of the Law of God (the Law which He gave to Moses), for the Millennial Kingdom.

Mal 4:4 "Remember the Law of Moses, My servant, Which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, With the statutes and judgments.

Mal 4:5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

Mal 4:6 And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."

A synopsis of that Law can be found in Exodus 20 to 23, and Leviticus 18 to 20. It is a wonderfully simple, yet all encompassing Law. When combined with Christian love and tolerance, and the three-strikes-and-you-are-out principle (whenever possible), it produces a wonderfully safe and liveable environment.

The Law of Moses restores the God-given role of man as leader and provider, and the God-given role of woman as homemaker and child raiser and educator, that have been usurped by the current judicial systems. The result is much too obvious: an epidemic of crime and rebelliousness that is out of control everywhere, yet no one has any idea of how to put things right anymore. Without divine intervention, which will come after humanity has learned the lesson that it cannot govern itself, the world would simply perish.

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

Mat 24:22 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."

The Bible speaks of an 'abomination of desolation' that has changed 'times and the law' (Dan.7:25). That same entity has persecuted the true Christians, the elect of God, and the 'salt of the earth', for centuries for no other reason than that they held on to the Law, Sabbaths, and Holy Days that God gave to Moses. Jesus Christ amplified that Law when He said, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfil." (Mat 5:17).

The Gospel of Jesus Christ has long since reached every corner of the earth. Those who had it in their heart to seek God could find Him and receive the Holy Spirit. The world has had ample proofs about which religion is more conducive to life and provides genuine spiritual fulfilment.

Virtually all religions have good points in them, but salvation cannot be partly true and partly false. That is why only the religion of the Son of God Himself offers true salvation. No other saviour has come out of the grave and said: I have overcome the world and live forever more, and you could too if you follow Me and keep My Commandments.

Unfortunately even within Christianity it has not always been plain sailing. More than any other religion it has had to fight against counterfeits, schisms and internal dissensions that have torn it apart for centuries. The 'god of this age' has made sure of that because it did not want humanity to be saved.

2 Cor 4:3 "But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,

2 Cor 4:4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, 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.”

There is no other way by which people can ensure their salvation except by familiarizing themselves with the Word of God. Those who entrust their salvation to other people, without checking that they follow the Word of God accurately, especially in this age of widespread deception, will almost certainly lose it. Human nature as it is, is deceitful above all things and cannot be trusted.

Jer 17:9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? I, the LORD, search the
Jer 17:10 heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.”

The Bible offers its own seal of approval to those who are worried about its accuracy and inspiration. Once you become reasonably familiar with it, you begin to see certain chemistry and unity that are missing from similarly compounded books.

Books of the Bible that have been written by people who lived hundreds of years apart, complement each other as if colleagues have written them. Read the article, "The Inspiration Of The Scriptures Scientifically Demonstrated," in *The Christian Herald No 1*, and see some astonishing scientific proofs of divine inspiration.

The study of the Bible goes hand in hand with prayer, meditation, and worship of the Eternal God.

Josh 1:8 "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”

Psa 119:15 "I will meditate on Your precepts, And contemplate Your ways.

Psa 119:16 I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.”

Psa 145:4 "One generation shall praise Your works to another, And shall declare Your mighty acts.

Psa 145:5 I will meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty, And on Your wondrous works.

Psa 145:6 Men shall speak of the might of Your awesome acts, And I will declare Your greatness.

Psa 145:7 They shall utter the memory of Your great goodness, And shall sing of Your righteousness.

Psa 145:8 The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, Slow to anger and great in mercy.

Psa 145:9 The LORD is good to all, And His tender mercies are over all His works.

Psa 145:10 All Your works shall praise You, O LORD, And Your saints shall bless You.

Psa 145:11 They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom, And talk of Your power,

Psa 145:12 To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, And the glorious majesty of His kingdom.

Psa 145:13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And Your dominion endures throughout all generations.”

God is generous with His Holy Spirit to those who clear their heart of sin and purify themselves spiritually. Without the Holy Spirit no one could call himself a Christian. In due course you achieve a certain union with God, and communicate with Him through your heart and conscience. It is an exhilarating feeling, but one that cannot be described by words or understood by those who are outside the Law. You know in your heart whether you are right before God or not, and whether what you read and study is the real thing or a counterfeit.

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.

1 John 3:24 Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.”

Many studies have shown that people who are in good terms with God are healthier, happier, calmer, and more levelheaded. This is where academic scholars have failed abysmally. They study the Bible, some have given their life to it, but they do so without prayer and worship because their environment forbids it. Academia does not produce spiritual enlightenment because it does not have the Holy Spirit. Their conclusions on the Bible do more harm than good.

When we first published the articles on the Dead Sea Scrolls (See *TCH No 9*), they got a shock and quickly came up with a new TV program that tried to counter our arguments. It was such a feeble effort, we felt sorry for them. We could have torn them to pieces again if we had set our minds to it. We expected opposition from them and sympathize with their plight, for it is not easy to have a life-long conviction overturned overnight, but hoped that in due course sanity would prevail, they would come to their senses, and render due credit to whom credit is due. But it wasn't to be. Instead, they cocooned themselves in their circles as if nothing had happened, no doubt, hoping that the storm would pass away. But pass away it won't, because when the truth of God is being revealed, it cannot be bottled up again. So much for academic integrity!

We feel sorry for those who embark themselves enthusiastically on academic studies in order to become Priests or Ministers of Religion. By their very nature these institutions destroy faith not build it. One classic example of a church that destroyed itself because it relied on Priests recruited from college graduates rather than worthy members of the church is the Worldwide Church of God. Honest and faithful members offer their allegiance to God, whereas college graduates offer it to their benefactor. When the benefactor dies, so does the church.

If you want to serve God, you should study, pray, meditate on His Law, and worship Him privately, and in due course Jesus Christ will draw you into His fold and lead you on the way of truth and genuine service.

Restoring The Signs That Identify The People Of God

When mainstream Christianity decided that the Commandments of God were no longer necessary for salvation, it lost the signs that identified the people of God. God specifically designated one of the Ten Commandments – the fourth – as the sign that would identify His people. Do you know which one that is? Here are all of them, just in case.

The First Commandment: "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. "You shall have no other gods before Me." (Exo 20:2-3).

The Second Commandment: "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments." (Exo 20:4-6).

The Third Commandment: "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain." (Exo 20:7).

The Fourth Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." (Exo 20:8 -11).

The Fifth Commandment: "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you." (Exo 20:12).

The Sixth Commandment: "You shall not murder." (Exo 20:13).

The Seventh Commandment: "You shall not commit adultery." (Exo 20:14).

The Eighth Commandment: "You shall not steal." (Exo 20:15).

The Ninth Commandment: "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." (Exo 20:16).

And the Tenth Commandment: "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's." (Exo 20:17).

The Fourth Commandment requires that the Sabbath be kept holy. Now it is a well-known fact that the biblical Sabbath is the seventh day called in the Roman calendar, which we now use, Saturday. Christian zealots have tried to get around this Commandment by calling Sunday their Sabbath. Such sleight of hand may fool their followers, but not God.

Mainstream Christians, on the other hand, have come up with another reason for not keeping the Sabbath holy. They say they worship on Sunday not because they inherited this practice from the Romans, who inherited it from the Egyptians, who worshiped the Sun on that day, but because it is the day in which their Lord was resurrected. But if that is the case why don't they keep the other Holy Days according to the Scriptures, and instead observe the Roman holy days that are not even mentioned in the Bible? Most Christians have not even heard of such Holy Days as the Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Feast of Tabernacles, let alone observe and keep them holy.

It is God, not human beings, who decides what people must observe or not observe, and the days in which they ought to worship Him. There is no scriptural justification for changing the day of worship from Sabbath to Sunday or for replacing God's Holy Days with man made holy days. And if it is not in the Bible, it is not true. What we find in the Bible is that Jesus Christ, the Apostles, and the early Churches of God, observed the Sabbaths and Holy Days that God gave to Moses in the Old Testament, the same that were to remain signs between Him and His people through all generations.

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.

Exo 31:15 'Work shall be done 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 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."

Not surprisingly, God linked the keeping of the Sabbath with revering both our human parents and our heavenly Father.

Lev 19:1 "And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Lev 19:2 "Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am
Lev 19:3 holy. 'Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and keep My Sabbaths: I am the LORD your God."
Lev 19:30 'You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I am the LORD.

Lev 20:7 'Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the LORD your God.

Lev 20:8 'And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them: I am the LORD who sanctifies you.

Lev 20:9 'For everyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. He has cursed his father or his mother.
His blood shall be upon him."

In the Bible, God used the term 'Feasts' to include the weekly Sabbaths, and the term 'Sabbaths', to include the annual Holy Days. This means that both the weekly Sabbaths and the annual Holy Days are signs that identify the people of God. The first sign is the weekly **Sabbath**.

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."

The next sign is the **Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread**. These two Holy Days always go together.

Lev 23:4 'These are the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times.

Lev 23:5 '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 days you must eat

Lev 23:7 unleavened bread. 'On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.

Lev 23:8 [. . .] The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it."

Then follows the **Pentecost**.

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 LORD.

Lev 23:21 'And you shall proclaim on the same day that it is a holy convocation to you. You shall do no customary work on it. It shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations."

Then follows a group of three Holy Days: **Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Feast of Tabernacles**.

Lev 23:23 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, saying: In the seventh month,

Lev 23:24 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:

Lev 23:27 "Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the **Day of Atonement**. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.

Lev 23:28 "And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the

Lev 23:29 LORD your God. "For any person who is not afflicted in soul on that same day shall be cut off from his people.

Lev 23:30 "And any person who does any work on that same day, that person I will destroy from among his people.

Lev 23:31 "You shall do no manner of work; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

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,

Lev 23:33 from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath." Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Lev 23:34 "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the **Feast of Tabernacles** for.

Lev 23:35 seven days to the LORD. '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

Lev 23:37 it. '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 day; besides the Sabbaths of the

Lev 23:38 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.

Lev 18:4 'You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I am the LORD your God.

Lev 18:5 'You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the LORD.

Lev 20:22 'You shall therefore keep all My statutes and all My judgments, and perform them, that the land where I am bringing you to dwell may not vomit you out.

Now of course, we do not need to offer sheaf offerings, burnt offering, grain offerings, and the like, as they did in the Old Testament times. We observe these Holy Days in the Spirit of the New Testament, with a solemn Christian service, and a communal meal when applicable. Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the greatest Christian Holy Days, have their own special memorial and commemorative services.

1 Cor 11:17 "Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse.

1 Cor 11:18 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 you.

1 Cor 11:20 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 drunk.

1 Cor 11:22 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

1 Cor 11:24 betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for

1 Cor 11:25 you; do this in remembrance of Me." 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 of the body and blood
1 Cor 11:28 of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.
1 Cor 11:29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.
1 Cor 11:30 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep."

In conclusion, if you want to become part of God's elect, you begin by embracing and observing the signs that identify the people of God.

Just What Was "Nailed To The Cross"?

Even at that time of Jesus Christ there were people who dismissed the Commandments of God, for otherwise He would not have told His disciples that He did not come to destroy but to fulfil the Law.

Mat 5:17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfil.
Mat 5:18 "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.
Mat 5:19 "Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

To make sure that they understood Him well, later He told them that if they loved Him they would keep His Commandments.

John 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.
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 you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you."

There are two important points that come out of these Scriptures. First, that anyone who breaks the Commandments, or teaches men to do so, "shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven". And second, the Commandments are connected with the arrival of the 'Spirit of truth' – Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit no one could say that he is a Christian.

Rom 8:8 "So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.
Rom 8:9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now **if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.**
Rom 8:10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.
Rom 8:11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you."

Yet in spite of all this, mainstream Christians still maintain that God's Commandments are not needed for salvation. They use the following Scriptures in support of their position.

Col 2:13 "And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive
Col 2:14 together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross."

Obviously Jesus Christ 'nailed' something to the cross, but what? If it were the Ten Commandments why did He tell His disciples to keep them if they loved Him? And why did He say that those who break them 'shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven'? And why did He tell the young man to keep the Commandments if he wanted to gain eternal life? (Mat. 19: 17). And why did He tell His disciples that He came to fulfil the Law not to destroy it?

Could it be that He nailed something else to the cross? Indeed, a closer look at that statement reveals that what He wiped out were not the Ten Commandments, but the 'handwriting of requirements that was against us'. 'Handwriting of requirements?' What exactly is that? What requirements were against us? Well, they follow immediately after that statement, but for some reason mainstream Christians prefer to ignore them.

Col 2:16 "So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths,
Col 2:17 which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ."

And these:

Eph 2:14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of
Eph 2:15 separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile
Eph 2:16 them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity."

'Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances.' The Ten Commandments are not 'ordinances' or mere 'requirements'; they are Laws that cannot be broken, and eternal Laws at that. What 'ordinances' then were nailed to the cross? These:

Heb 9:6 "Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the Heb 9:7 tabernacle, performing these services. But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance;
Heb 9:8 the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the Heb 9:9 first tabernacle was still standing." "It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience;
Heb 9:10 concerned only **with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances** imposed until Heb 9:11 the time of reformation. But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and Heb 9:12 more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.
Heb 9:13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the Heb 9:14 purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?
Heb 9:15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance."

And these:

Col 2:18 "Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,
Col 2:19 and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.
Col 2:20 Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the Col 2:21 world, do you subject yourselves to regulations; "Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,"
Col 2:22 which all concern things which perish with the using; according to the commandments and doctrines of Col 2:23 men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.
Col 3:1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right Col 3:2 hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth."

If this does not answer the question of what was 'nailed' to the cross, nothing will. Incredibly, while mainstream Christians wrongly believe that all of the Old Testament has become obsolete, including the Commandments, the Sabbaths and the Holy Days of God, fundamentalist Christians just as wrongly believe that virtually all of the Old Testament is still valid today. They find it impossible to accept that the dietary laws and the special washings and ceremonies associated with them and with the new moons, new seasons, and new harvests, have been nailed to the cross. Under the New Testament, these 'ordinances' have not only been wiped out, they have become "doctrines of demons". Their observance indicates disobedience to Jesus Christ and make a mockery of His sacrifice.

1 Tim 4:1 "Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to **deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,**
1 Tim 4:2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,
1 Tim 4:3 **forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods** which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.
1 Tim 4:4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving;
1 Tim 4:5 for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.
1 Tim 4:6 If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed."

A good minister, a genuine follower of Jesus Christ, gives no heed to such deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons. Fundamentalist Christians have great difficulty conforming with the following Scriptures too.

1 Cor 10:25 "Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for conscience' sake;
1 Cor 10:26 for "the earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness."
1 Cor 10:27 If any of those who do not believe invites you to dinner, and you desire to go, eat whatever is set before you, asking no question for conscience' sake."

True Christians do not pick and choose what they like from the Bible, and discard what they do not like. "You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons" (1 Cor 10:21), just as you cannot keep some Commandments and break the others.

James 2:10 "For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.
James 2:11 For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.
James 2:12 So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty."

In regard to "forbidding to marry", what that means is that under the New Testament there is no longer a marital interdiction based on race as was the case in the Old Testament, because, "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor

uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all" (Col 3:11). The only interdiction in the New Testament is marriage between believers and non-believers. Here is a lengthy quotation on the topic of marriage and divorce.

1 Cor 6:9 "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites,
1 Cor 6:10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.
1 Cor 6:11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.
1 Cor 6:12 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under
1 Cor 6:13 the power of any Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.
1 Cor 6:14 And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.
1 Cor 6:15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not!
1 Cor 6:16 Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become
1 Cor 6:17 one flesh." But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.
1 Cor 6:18 Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins
1 Cor 6:19 against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?
1 Cor 6:20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.
1 Cor 7:1 Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.
1 Cor 7:2 Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own
1 Cor 7:3 husband. Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.
1 Cor 7:4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.
1 Cor 7:5 Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.
1 Cor 7:6 But I say this as a concession, not as a commandment.
1 Cor 7:7 For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and
1 Cor 7:8 another in that. But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am;
1 Cor 7:9 but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.
1 Cor 7:10 Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband.
1 Cor 7:11 But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to
1 Cor 7:12 divorce his wife. But to the rest I, not the Lord, say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her.
1 Cor 7:13 And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him.
1 Cor 7:14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.
1 Cor 7:15 But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has.
1 Cor 7:16 called us to peace. For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?
1 Cor 7:17 But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him walk. And so I ordain in all the
1 Cor 7:18 churches. Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Was anyone called while
1 Cor 7:19 uncircumcised? Let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the
1 Cor 7:20 commandments of God is what matters. Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called.
1 Cor 7:21 Were you called while a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it.
1 Cor 7:22 For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is
1 Cor 7:23 Christ's slave. You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.
1 Cor 7:24 Brethren, let each one remain with God in that state in which he was called.
1 Cor 7:25 Now concerning virgins: I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in His mercy has made trustworthy.
1 Cor 7:26 I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress; that it is good for a man to remain as he is:
1 Cor 7:27 Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife.
1 Cor 7:28 But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you.
1 Cor 7:29 But this I say, brethren, the time is short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though
1 Cor 7:30 they had none, those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did not possess,
1 Cor 7:31 and those who use this world as not misusing it. For the form of this world is passing away.
1 Cor 7:32 But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord; how he may please the
1 Cor 7:33 Lord. But he who is married cares about the things of the world; how he may please his wife.
1 Cor 7:34 There is a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world; how she may please her
1 Cor 7:35 husband. And this I say for your own profit, not that I may put a leash on you, but for what is proper, and that you
1 Cor 7:36 may serve the Lord without distraction. But if any man thinks he is behaving improperly toward his virgin, if she is past the flower of youth, and thus it must be, let him do what he wishes. He does not sin; let them marry.
1 Cor 7:37 Nevertheless he who stands steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but has power over his own will, and has so determined in his heart that he will keep his virgin, does well.
1 Cor 7:38 So then he who gives her in marriage does well, but he who does not give her in marriage does better.
1 Cor 7:39 A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.
1 Cor 7:40 But she is happier if she remains as she is, according to my judgment; and I think I also have the Spirit of God."

Some people may wonder why we use such lengthy biblical quotations instead of paraphrasing or merely referring to them, as do most biblical scholars? First, because the Bible puts it better than we would, and second, to make it more convenient for our readers who may not have a Bible ready at hand. Another reason is that English is not our mother tongue; both of us have had to learn it relatively late in life. As a result, we often struggle to convey particular points of view, so we let the Bible speak for itself as much as we can. Now have you ever considered the meaning of these Scriptures?

Isa 28:9 "Whom will he teach knowledge? And whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just drawn from the breasts?
 Isa 28:10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little,
 Isa 28:13 there a little." But the word of the LORD was to them, "Precept upon precept, precept upon precept,
 Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little," That they might go and fall backward, and be broken And
 Isa 28:11 snared and caught. For with stammering lips and **another tongue He will speak to this people . . .**"

If you want to find out the truth of God these days you need to seek it from people of 'another tongue'. If we were to take that Scripture literally we would have spoken to you in Romanian, but what good would that have done? It is an extraordinary irony that the so-called 'Land of Dracula' should give rise to God's end time witnesses. We were both born in that land, and paid a heavy price for escaping it.

The Almighty brought to the land of Joseph's children, the birthright inheritors of Abraham's blessings, and gave us the task of restoring the Gospel of Jesus Christ and preach it as a witness to the world before the end comes. It was imperative that people of another tongue, who grew up in an atheistic world, come and restore the Gospel to those who had it with them all the time, because their preachers made a mockery of it by turning it into a money making venture. Their deceptions became complete when they convinced their followers that the Commandments of God had been wiped out and are no longer valid or necessary for salvation.

In regard to Apostle Paul's injunction of not observing "new moons and sabbaths" (Col 2:16), we have amply documented that the correct Sabbath and Holy Days for the people of God, are those listed in the Old Testament (see *The Christian Herald* No 4). These are the same Sabbaths and Holy Days that were observed by Jesus Christ, by the Apostles, and by the early Churches of God until the Romans imposed their religion over Christianity and forbade the people of God from 'Judaizing'. After the Council of Nicaea (325 AD), the true Church of God went underground, and remained so for more than a thousand years, until the Reformation opened a new era of freedom of worship.

Apostle Paul preached on the Sabbath and kept the Holy Days, most of which are mentioned directly or indirectly in his writings. What then do we make of his apparent contrary statement to the Colossians?

There can only be one conclusion: the mention of "new moons and sabbaths" in connection with the 'ordinances' and 'requirements' that were abolished by Jesus Christ can only refer to practices that were only incidental or temporary, and no longer necessary for the true Sabbaths and Holy Days in the New Testament.

The Jews were required to perform certain ceremonies at new moons, new seasons, new harvests, during Sabbaths and Holy Days, and during ceremonial sacrifices. In the New Testament however, these ceremonies are no longer necessary, and we celebrate the Sabbaths and the Holy Days in a new spirit and in a new manner. We notice that while the Colossians took to dietary laws and 'festivals, new moons, and sabbaths' in order to be 'good' Christians, the Galatians took to observing 'days and months and seasons and years', which were equally unnecessary.

Apostle Paul made it clear that all of these belonged to another era.

Gal 3:1 "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?"

Gal 3:2 This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing

Gal 3:3 of faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?

Gal 3:4 Have you suffered so many things in vain; if indeed it was in vain?

Gal 3:5 Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?;

Gal 3:6 just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

Gal 3:7 Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

Gal 3:8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."

Gal 3:9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

Gal 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

Gal 3:11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith."

Gal 3:12 Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them."

Gal 3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written,

Gal 3:14 "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

Gal 3:19 "What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator."

Gal 3:24 "Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Gal 3:25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor."

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 weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage?"

Gal 4:10 You observe days and months and seasons and years.

Gal 4:11 I am afraid for you, lest I have laboured for you in vain."

What 'tutor' was introduced at the time of Moses that brought us to Christ? Animal sacrifices, dietary laws, and all those special ceremonies and ordinances. Were the true Sabbaths and Holy Days included in those ceremonies? Most certainly! But when the law of sacrifices ended with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, so did all those special requirements and ceremonies. Henceforth, the original Sabbaths and Holy Days were to be observed in a new Spirit. This is what Apostle Paul told the Corinthian Church about the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

1 Cor 11:20 "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 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, "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 of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

1 Cor 11:29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep."

Most Christians, mainstream and fundamentalist alike, know little or nothing of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, yet you can see how important these were in the life of early Christians.

Jesus Christ specifically told His disciples to commemorate these Holy Days in a specific manner, as a memorial to His sacrifice and a proclamation of the New Testament. It should never be forgotten that the Sabbaths and the Holy Days that God gave to Moses were to remain the identifying signs for the people of God throughout all generations.

Ezek 20:12 "Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be **a sign between them and Me**, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them.

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.

Exo 31:15 'Work shall be done 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 generations as a **perpetual covenant**.

Exo 31:17 '**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.'"

For Apostle Paul to have said that the Commandments were nailed to the cross together with the sacrificial laws and the dietary ordinances would have meant that, 1) he preached contrary to Jesus Christ, whom he claimed to serve, and whose Apostle he was, and 2), he denied the signs that identified him and the followers of Jesus Christ as the new people of God.

That is simply not true, for he himself declared that the law of God was "holy and just and good" (Rom 7:12). To make sure that there was no misunderstanding about his intentions, he also wrote, "Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, **but keeping the commandments of God is what matters**" (1 Cor 7:19).

So then, the man who supposedly said that the commandments of God were 'wiped out and nailed to the cross' also told us that what matters for salvation is keeping the Commandments of God. Isn't that what Jesus Christ told His disciples too? It is obvious then that the Old Testament contained two kinds of laws: the sacrificial, dietary, and special "requirements" and "ordinances" that brought us to Christ and were eliminated with His sacrifice, and the Commandments, Judgments and Statutes of God that shall remain valid forever more.

Life After Death Or After Resurrection?

The controversy connected with Jesus' statement to the thief on the cross needs a closer look, for it completely changes the message of the Gospel. This is how the New King James Version has it: "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise." (Luke 23:43)

Now given the fact that there is no other statement in the Bible as clear as this one about Paradise after death, and that there are dozens of Scriptures that speak of life after resurrection, one would have to agree with the fundamentalist belief that life comes again only after resurrection and not after death. Hence the paradox: while mainstream Christians are correct in the way they render that statement, fundamentalists Christians are correct in the way they interpret it. For if the thief had gone to Paradise immediately after death he would have done so before Jesus Christ Himself! Yet, three and a half days later, Jesus Christ told Mary Magdalene after His resurrection that He had not yet ascended to the Father.

John 20:16 "Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher).

John 20:17 Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'"

Since the Bible makes no difference between Paradise and Heaven, it follows that one cannot go to Paradise after death and to Heaven after resurrection. Jesus Christ Himself showed us the way of salvation, and since He went to Heaven after resurrection it follows that those who follow Him will also enter the Kingdom of Heaven after resurrection. Here are some examples that confirm this fact.

John 3:13 "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven."

Acts 2:29 "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried,
Acts 2:30 and his tomb is with us this day. "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, he,
Acts 2:31 foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor
Acts 2:32 did His flesh see corruption. "This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.
Acts 2:33 "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.
Acts 2:34 "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at
Acts 2:35 My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'"

Was the thief on the cross more worthy of Paradise than David, who was described by God as a man after His own heart? (1 Sam 13:14). Hardly. The question is, does it matter, does it make any difference, whether that thief went to Paradise immediately after death, or will get there after the general resurrection that will take place at the end of this age? For him it won't. For whenever he is resurrected, it will be as if he died only yesterday. From that point of view Jesus' statement to him is true either way. Since there is no consciousness after death, people are resurrected with the memory and consciousness in which they died. It is on that basis that they are judged too, not on what they might have done under different circumstances.

In the Bible, death means complete cessation of everything connected life: breath, memory, consciousness, etc.

Eccl 9:4 "But for him who is joined to all the living there is hope, for a living dog is better than a dead lion.
Eccl 9:5 For the living know that they will die; But the dead know nothing, And they have no more reward,
Eccl 9:6 For the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, their hatred, and their envy have now perished;
Nevermore will they have a share In anything done under the sun.
Eccl 9:7 Go, eat your bread with joy, And drink your wine with a merry heart; For God has already accepted
Eccl 9:8 your works. Let your garments always be white, And let your head lack no oil.
Eccl 9:9 Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun, all your days of vanity; for that is your portion in life, and in the labour which you perform under the sun."

For King Solomon, who wrote these words, the rewards of a meritorious life were measured by what one could get in this world. Those below him were to be satisfied with the wife of their youth. For him, however, being Solomon, only a thousand women would do. That was his paradise. He had no concept of a reward in a heavenly Paradise after death or after resurrection. Nevertheless, the definition of death he gave us is valid: the dead know nothing anymore. Unless they are resurrected, their memories, their consciousness, are lost forever.

Jesus Christ opened the way to Paradise for those who are worthy of eternal life, and that comes after resurrection from the dead not after death. He gave us a powerful example when He went to His death confident that He would live again and not remain in the tomb forever. It is only then that He became the Messiah and Saviour of the world.

John 10:14 "I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.
John 10:15 "As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.
John 10:16 "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.
John 10:17 "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.
John 10:18 "No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."

Acts 10:39 "And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem,
Acts 10:40 whom they killed by hanging on a tree. "Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him
Acts 10:41 openly, not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank
Acts 10:42 with Him after He arose from the dead. "And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead. "To Him all the prophets
Acts 10:43 witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins."

Rom 6:3 "Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?
Rom 6:4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Rom 6:5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness
Rom 6:6 of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.
Rom 6:7 For he who has died has been freed from sin.
Rom 6:8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ,
Rom 6:9 having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him."

Rom 10:5 "For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall
Rom 10:6 live by them." But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down from above)

Rom 10:7 or, " 'Who will descend into the abyss?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).
Rom 10:8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith
Rom 10:9 which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God
has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

Notice carefully, Jesus was brought up not from Paradise after death, but 'from the dead'. And what did He die for? That we may be 'freed from sin' and from death! 'That just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.' For 'if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.'

Neither Apostle Paul nor any of the other writers of the New Testament have said anything about life after death. They couldn't, because that is contrary to the teachings, the example, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Now given that all the writers of the New Testament had seen Jesus Christ in person after His resurrection, prior to His ascension to Heaven, except Luke, the question is why did Luke give us a statement that did not fully conform to the teachings of the other Gospel writers? The answer may surprise you.

A Closer Look At The Mysterious Gospel Of Luke

The Bible is a complete Book, and the Gospel of Luke is an integral part of it. None other than Jesus Christ Himself has confirmed and sealed the Bible in its present form.

Unlike the other Gospel writers, Luke was a Gentile. He wrote his account many years after the other synoptic Gospels were completed, which he used as a source of inspiration for his own Gospel. His intention was to make the doctrines and beliefs of the early Church of God more palatable and compatible with the general Gentile beliefs of his time.

He did a fair bit of research among those who had seen and talked with Jesus Christ, and gave us valuable information that is missing from the other Gospels (See for example his introductory chapters). He was convinced that his Gospel was complementary to the other Gospels, and just as reliable.

Luke 1:1 "Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been
Luke 1:2 fulfilled among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word
Luke 1:3 delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus,
Luke 1:4 that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed."

Now knowing what we do now about Luke's Gospel, we can see that God had a sense of humour when He allowed him to say that he had 'perfect understanding' of the things that he wrote about. It is to its credit that the Bible gives us the unadulterated truth, even when impetuosity and imperfect understanding and preparation taint it. It is a lesson in patience and perseverance for the people of God, a lesson that is often a trap for the unwary. We should never forget what God said about His truth. On the one hand, He hid it so that humans may cover themselves in glory by discovering it.

Prov.25:2 "It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter."

And on the other, He hid it from the wicked so that they may never discover it and be healed.

Mat 13:10 "And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"
Mat 13:11 He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the
Mat 13:12 kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. "For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.
Mat 13:13 "Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not
Mat 13:14 hear, nor do they understand. "And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive;
Mat 13:15 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and
Mat 13:16 turn, So that I should heal them.' "But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear;
Mat 13:17 "for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did
Mat 13:18 not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it. "Therefore hear the parable of the sower: . . ."

Luke blended a few Gentile beliefs into his Gospel that are missing from the other Gospels. When viewed in the totality of the Gospel of Jesus Christ they are hardly more than minor digressions, but on their own they could be deadly weapons in the hands of the enemies of the people of God. In the course of time this is exactly what happened.

Luke's Gospel became the mainstay of mainstream Christianity. The small changes that he introduced suited them well. Unfortunately those changes had a profound effect upon the history of the Church of God.

Luke had little knowledge of the Old Testament, and treated it as if all of it had become obsolete. He did not understand that aside from the dietary and sacrificial laws, and the ceremonies associated with them, virtually all of it is still valid today. Jesus Christ and the Apostles based most of their teachings on the Old Testament, from which they quoted copiously. It is said that there are more than one hundred and fifty references to it in the New Testament.

When he explained the Christian Gospel to the Gentile converts, he related it not to the Old Testament, but to their own general beliefs. Almost every case in which he diverged from other Gospels can be traced to just one factor: his belief in immortality of the soul and life after death. These beliefs permeate his Gospel, and his only.

Now had he looked into the Old Testament, he would have found the following clear statements about the soul.

Ezek 18:4 "Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; The soul who sins shall die."

Ezek 18:20 "The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself."

The souls who sin shall die. Where? In a Lake of Fire at the end time!

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. 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."

Those who are cast into the Lake of Fire **shall die** there, not be tormented forever, as Luke implied in more than one place, and as mainstream Christians believe. Belief in immortality of the soul, and life after death, were common among the Gentiles then, as they are today, but not among the Jews. Not surprisingly, we find these beliefs reflected in their respective Gospels. The implications of these differences for the history of the Church of God have been horrendous.

Let us now compare the Gospels of Matthew and Luke in the areas in which they diverge and see the implications.

Mat 10:28 "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."

Luke 12:5 "But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!"

Luke's souls, being immortal, cannot be destroyed. But he cannot say so directly, for that would put him in conflict with the Apostles of Jesus Christ. Instead he leaves the soul out of the equation altogether, saying only that after God has killed, He has power to cast into hell, without telling us what it is that God has killed and cast into hell.

Now considering that the other Gospels inspired Luke, and not the other way around, and that Luke's deviations follow a certain pattern, any variation must be considered deliberate rather than accidental. This becomes more evident as we go further along.

Mat 12:31 "Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. "Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

Luke 12:10 "And anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven."

There are no ages to come in Luke. Why? Because his souls are already in Paradise or in Hell, so these ages serve no purpose. Mainstream Christians, who have embraced Luke's Gospel unquestioningly, have always had difficulty reconciling judgment after death with judgment after resurrection. If people have already been judged and apportioned to Paradise or Hell after death, why bring them up again for another judgment after resurrection? The truth is, they have not been judged after death, but will be resurrected and judged at the end of time.

Mat 5:32 "But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery."

Luke 16:18 "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery."

Did you notice the difference? It does not strike you in the face when you first read it casually, but when you look at it carefully you find a difference that has had catastrophic consequences upon the world. In Luke people marry for life; never a reason for divorce. In Matthew, however, sexual immorality requires divorce. Now since Matthew was a disciple of Jesus Christ, who do you think recorded Him more faithfully?

Since Jesus Christ said that He did not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it, the question is which Law applies in this case? Which Law must be considered in matters of marriage and divorce? This Law:

Deu 24:1 "When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man's wife,

Deu 24:3 "if the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife,

Deu 24:4 "then her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the LORD, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance."

So strongly does God feel about this Law that He repeated it in Jeremiah.

Jer 3:1 "They say, 'If a man divorces his wife, And she goes from him And becomes another man's, May he return to her again?' Would not that land be greatly polluted? But you have played the harlot with many lovers; Yet return to Me," says the LORD."

It should not be forgotten that God Himself divorced His first wife – the Israel of old – for sexual and spiritual immorality. Those who think that the Jews are still the chosen people of God do not know the Law. He did more than just divorce His wife: He died at her hands and ended forever the Old Covenant with Israel. The prophecies that are being fulfilled these days with the Jews have nothing to do with the fact that they are chosen people anymore, and everything to do with the unconditional promises God made to Abraham. These developments have no bearing on the spiritual development of the new bride of Christ, the new Israel – the Church of God. Individually, the Jews can become part of the new Israel, through repentance and acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, but nationally they can't.

Jesus Christ upheld that Law when He said that sexual immorality requires divorce, yet the biggest 'Christian' Church, has made a mockery of it and polluted the land by forcing people to stay together even after adultery. This makes it abundantly clear what is an abomination before the Lord: taking back a wife that has lain with another man.

Now can you guess whom Jesus Christ had in mind when He made the following statement?

Mat 24:14 "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations,
Mat 24:15 and then the end will 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 24:20 "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
Mat 24:22 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."

If you want to know more about this prophecy, read *The Christian Herald No 10*.

Luke wrote his Gospel in a manner that would conform to some of his Gentiles beliefs, yet in leaving out the reason for divorce he gave us another identifying sign for the 'abomination of desolation'. But he had more surprises in store for us. He gave us the parable of Lazarus and the rich man, which also supports the idea of immortality of the soul and life after death?

Luke 16:19 "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously
Luke 16:20 every day. "But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate,
Luke 16:21 "desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came
Luke 16:22 and licked his sores. "So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.
Luke 16:23 "And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his
Luke 16:24 bosom. "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.'
Luke 16:25 "But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.
Luke 16:26 'And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'
Luke 16:27 "Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house,
Luke 16:28 'for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'
Luke 16:29 "Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.'
Luke 16:30 "And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'
Luke 16:31 "But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'"

As a parable, this expresses a good principle, but that's all, a principle not a fact. Yet those who believe in immortality of the soul often speak of it as if it were a fact. We do not know where Luke got it from, but he did not get it from the other Gospels for they do not have it.

The Jewish concept of the Kingdom of God was not to Luke's liking either. He avoided speaking of it as much as he could, but when he had no choice he gave it his own peculiar touches.

Mat 19:27 "Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall
Mat 19:28 we have?" So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes
Mat 19:29 of Israel. "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.
Mat 19:30 "But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

Luke 18:28 Then Peter said, "See, we have left all and followed You."

Luke 18:29 So He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God,

Luke 18:30 "who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life."

What is remarkable about this example is not so much in what Luke says as in what he leaves out. He does not have the twelve Apostles reigning over twelve tribes of Israel. Why? Because his kingdom is in the hearts of men, as we shall see.

Now while he leaves out the notion of a kingdom made of twelve tribes, he introduces eternal life in the age to come, which Matthew does not have. Remember he left out the age to come when Matthew had it (Ch 12:32), yet he introduced it here where Matthew does not have. The reason could only be that in this context his kingdom can be explained in terms of an age to come after death. The question is why would he do this kind of substitution when it was not called for? For one simple reason: so that he could leave out the notion of 'regeneration', which cannot be explained in terms of life after death.

For Matthew 'regeneration' meant the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel, a concept with which Luke was uncomfortable because it clashed with the notion of Paradise after death.

In the beginning, the disciples of Jesus Christ hoped that He would establish the Kingdom to Israel right then and there (Acts 1:6), but later they understood that Jesus' Kingdom belonged to another age and another word. (See *The Christian Herald No 1* for extensive discussion on this topic). Luke's kingdom, however, was different. It was not an entity that one could put his finger on; it was something that resided 'within' people.

Luke 17:20 "Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation;

Luke 17:21 "nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

We cannot compare his version of the kingdom with other Gospels because only Luke has it. Only his kingdom is within human beings. It appears that later he became aware that he was digressing from the definition of the Kingdom of God from the other Gospels, and corrected himself, but still in such a manner that could accommodate his beliefs.

Luke 22:28 "But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials.

Luke 22:29 "And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat

Luke 22:30 "and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

The Kingdom, over which the twelve Apostles would reign, belonged to those who continued with Jesus in His trials, not to the Gentiles. It was a Kingdom that would be 'bestowed upon' people, not one they would enter after resurrection from the dead. Luke's Kingdom, being 'bestowed upon' people and 'within' people could be set up at any time.

He had Jesus say that the Father had bestowed a Kingdom upon Him too. Well, at that time, God had not yet 'bestowed' a Kingdom upon anyone, not even Jesus. In fact even now He hadn't. At present Jesus merely sits with the Father on His throne. The Kingdom that will be 'bestowed upon' the twelve Apostles and 'bestowed upon' Jesus, is yet to be set up.

Luke's rendition of the sign of Jonas gives us another example of his doctoring.

Mat 12:38 "Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from

Mat 12:39 You." But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.

Mat 12:40 "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Mat 12:41 "The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here."

Luke 11:29 "And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, "This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet.

Luke 11:30 "For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation.

Luke 11:31 "The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is

Luke 11:32 here. " The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here."

Luke changed the sign of Jonas from being three days and three nights in the belly of the fish, to merely being a prophet to the Ninevites. Why? Because he misunderstood how long Jesus had been in the grave. All other disciples knew that He was dead no less than three days and three nights, from Wednesday afternoon until Sunday morning (Jesus was 'cut off' in the middle of the week, Daniel 9:27), whereas Luke believed that He was dead only half that time, from Friday afternoon until Sunday morning. The reason for this discrepancy requires a lengthy explanation, which we cannot offer here, but which we have covered at length in *The Christian Herald no 4*. In that edition we also explained why God placed Luke's Gospel alongside the others in spite of its apparent discrepancies.

Luke certainly did not intend any harm to the Christian Church. His attempts to reconcile the Christian Gospel with the general Gentile beliefs of his time were noble in intent. They do no harm to those who are solid in their faith, but unfortunately in the course of time the enemies of the true Church of God have isolated them and used them against the very elect. They turned the tables on the true believers, accusing them of Judaising when all they did was to remain faithful to the true Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The 'abomination of desolation', who had already changed 'times and law', grabbed on Luke's Gospel with its errors, and led humanity on the path of the abyss. The beliefs in immortality of the soul, life after death, and Kingdom of God within you, together with the notion that the Law of God was nailed to the cross, led the vast majority of Christians to believe that they do not need to keep the Commandments of God in order to gain eternal life. This brought humanity to the brink of annihilation. Unless Elijah succeeds in rectifying these beliefs and restoring the truth of God, humanity has no future.

Mal 4:5 "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.
Mal 4:6 And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers,
Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."

Unfortunately, the 'abomination of desolation, has turned the tables on Elijah too. The world looks upon him as the enemy, and the 'abomination of desolation' as the saviour. This is a mystery this world is not prepared to believe in. Yet!

What Does It Mean To "Endure To The End"?

Jesus Christ foresaw two major dangers for His followers: false preachers who would lead them to perdition, and turning back from the true path when the going gets tough. We have written enough about the first point, but have said little about the second one. We begin by looking at the parable of the sower and the seeds.

Mat 13:3 "Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow.
Mat 13:4 "And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them.
Mat 13:5 "Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth.
Mat 13:6 "But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away.
Mat 13:7 "And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them.
Mat 13:8 "But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.
Mat 13:9 "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Mat 13:18 "Therefore hear the parable of the sower:
Mat 13:19 "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.
Mat 13:20 "But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately
Mat 13:21 receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.
Mat 13:22 "Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.
Mat 13:23 "But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

If we were to tell the people who reject our messages that in reality it is not they who reject it but 'wicked one' whom they allowed to enter their heart and take control over their mind processes, they would get even angrier with us. Yet this is exactly what Jesus Christ is telling us through this parable. People are not aware that their actions and their attitude reflect the attitude of either a good or a bad spirit.

When Jesus Christ spoke to His disciples about enduring to the end, this is what He was referring to – a battle with the wicked forces of this world over the direction of their life. Most people believe that they have free moral agency and do what they want, when they want it, when in reality they only do what their spirit allows them to do.

Mat 10:17 "But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues.
Mat 10:18 "You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the
Mat 10:19 Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak;
Mat 10:20 "for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you."

If the 'Spirit of their Father' speaks through the people of God, the spirit of whose father speaks through their enemies?

John 8:44 "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

John 8:45 "But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me."

How do we overcome the wicked spirits of this world and ensure that we stay on the right path?

Eph 6:10 "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.
Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
Eph 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up

Eph 6:13 the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,
Eph 6:15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;
Eph 6:16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the
Eph 6:17 wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;
Eph 6:18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all
perseverance and supplication for all the saints."

Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, Word of God, prayer, and worship, protect us against the wiles of the Devil.
Now take a look at the context in which Jesus Christ used the expression "he who endures to the end will be saved."

Mat 10:5 "These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans [*it was not yet the time of the New Testament*].

Mat 10:6 "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Mat 10:7 "And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

Mat 10:8 "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely

Mat 10:9 give. "Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts,

Mat 10:10 "nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food.

Mat 10:11 "Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out.

Mat 10:12 "And when you go into a household, greet it.

Mat 10:13 "If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return

Mat 10:14 to you. "And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or

Mat 10:15 city, shake off the dust from your feet. "Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!

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

Mat 10:18 synagogues. "You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them

Mat 10:19 and to the Gentiles. "But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak.

For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak;

Mat 10:20 "for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

Mat 10:21 "Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be 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.**"

This extraordinary prophetic insight must have left His disciples puzzled, because their expectation of the Messiah and the kingdom was quite different from what He was telling them here. They were expecting Him to free them from the Roman yoke and set up a glorious kingdom to Israel, but instead He was telling them to endure to the end if they wanted to be saved when they had not suffered anything yet.

The world described in this passage was one in which itinerant preachers roamed the country with the Word of God and lived off their work on a daily basis without amassing any reserves for the future. That was one way of keeping them focussed on their work, for the moment they became lacklustre and ineffective they would have had to find another source of income. How different from our time when people set themselves up nicely for life by carving out a career in preaching. Do you know of anyone who lives according to this standard?

Acts 20:27 "For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.

Acts 20:28 "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

Acts 20:29 "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the

Acts 20:30 flock. "Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the

Acts 20:31 disciples after themselves. "Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to

Acts 20:32 warn everyone night and day with tears. "So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Acts 20:33 "I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel.

Acts 20:34 "Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who

Acts 20:35 were with me. "I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak.

And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Acts 20:36 And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all."

Do you think that the Holy Spirit contrasted Apostle Paul's work with that of 'savage wolves' for nothing? Or that it recorded it just for a show? Towards the end of his life, Apostle Paul showed us what it meant to endure to the end.

2 Cor 11:19 "For you put up with fools gladly, since you yourselves are wise!

2 Cor 11:20 For you put up with it if one brings you into bondage, if one devours you, if one takes from you, if one

2 Cor 11:21 exalts himself, if one strikes you on the face. To our shame, I say that we were too weak for that! But in whatever anyone is bold; I speak foolishly; I am bold also.

2 Cor 11:22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I".

It was people of Israelite stock that were preaching 'ordinances and requirements' and the 'weak and beggarly elements' of the law among the Gentiles, and brought them into bondage with mandatory tithes and offerings, as in fact they do today. Tithes and offerings were the form of taxation for ancient Israel, and will once again become the norm in the Millennial Kingdom, but they won't be forced upon people on top of an already exorbitant taxation system, as is the case these days.

The Apostles perceived that their followers were having a hard enough time as it was and chose not to impose any additional burdens upon them, but no such scruples on the part of today's "ministers" of Jesus Christ.

2 Cor 11:23 "Are they ministers of Christ?; I speak as a fool; I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above
2 Cor 11:24 measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty stripes
2 Cor 11:25 minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a
night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, weariness and toil,
2 Cor 11:26 in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in
perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;
2 Cor 11:27 in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness;
2 Cor 11:28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.
2 Cor 11:29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation?
2 Cor 11:30 If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity.
2 Cor 11:31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying.
2 Cor 11:32 In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a
garrison, desiring to arrest me;
2 Cor 11:33 but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands."

Apostle Paul, who began by persecuting the Church of God, ended up by suffering the most for it. Many people who were once lawbreakers have used his example and carved out a nice career in preaching for themselves. In fact, this seems to be a prerequisite for priesthood in many churches today. Strictly speaking, Apostle Paul was never a lawbreaker. For even when he persecuted the Church of God he did so on the basis of Moses' law, which forbade the Jews from departing from the religion of their fathers on the penalty of death. In addition, he was well versed on the Scriptures, which is what one could hardly say about the preachers of today. Any wonder that this is how Jesus Christ will deal with them at Judgment time?

Mat 7:15 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.
Mat 7:16 "You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?
Mat 7:17 "Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.
Mat 7:18 "A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.
Mat 7:19 "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.
Mat 7:20 "Therefore by their fruits you will know them.
Mat 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will
Mat 7:22 of My Father in heaven. "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your
name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'
Mat 7:23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'
Mat 7:24 "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who
Mat 7:25 built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on
that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.
Mat 7:26 "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who
built his house on the sand: and the rain descended,
Mat 7:27 "the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."
Mat 7:28 And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching,
Mat 7:29 for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

Only in Christianity is the danger of deception from false preachers ever present. That deception goes hand in hand with turning back from the true path. At no time was this danger greater than it is today.

2 Th 2:1 "Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we
2 Th 2:2 ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as
2 Th 2:3 though the day of Christ had come. Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come
unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,
2 Th 2:4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in
the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.
2 Th 2:5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?"

Should we be surprised that the end time wholesale departure from the truth of God is associated with the 'man of sin' and 'son of perdition' who claims to be God? Who is this man? The one who claims to be 'Holy Father' and 'King of the Church'! It should never be forgotten that the title 'Holy Father' belongs to God the Father and to Him alone. It is He whom Jesus Christ worshiped and called 'Holy Father', not an impostor on this earth.

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."

Combine that with the following interdiction against calling anyone on earth [spiritual] father, and you should have no difficulty identifying the one whom Jesus Christ referred to as the "abomination of desolation".

Mat 23:9 "Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven."

Can you see how easy it is to fall away from the truth of God and fall under the spell of the Devil and his rebellious angels? By calling anyone on earth [spiritual] 'Father' you disobey Christ. By calling anyone on earth 'Holy Father' you commit idolatry and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Yet, millions of people do it every day. How will they face Jesus Christ

in the Day of Judgment and expect Him to save them when they did not obey Him in what must be one of the easiest of His commandments?

In a world of falsehood, staying on the right path and enduring to the end is not easy. Your relatives will turn against you; you will lose your friends, and most likely you will lose your job too, but remember what Jesus Christ endured to the very end, and what the Apostles had to go through too.

John 15:18 "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.

John 15:20 "If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also."

John 16:20 "Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy."

Suffering for righteousness sake and for the Word of God is a sure sign that you are right with God and are on the right path. We take pleasure in our trials, not mourn our losses. We try not to lose sight of what our Lord did for us, and what the Apostles taught us about the right attitude in the face of life's trials.

Rom 5:1 "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
Rom 5:2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of
Rom 5:3 the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces
Rom 5:4 perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope."

Phil 3:1 "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for

Phil 3:2 you it is safe. Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!

Phil 3:3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

1 Th 5:15 "See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves

1 Th 5:16 and for all. Rejoice always,

1 Th 5:17 pray without ceasing,

1 Th 5:18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1 Th 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit.

1 Th 5:20 Do not despise prophecies.

1 Th 5:21 Test all things; hold fast what is good.

1 Th 5:22 Abstain from every form of evil.

1 Th 5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

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 various

1 Pet 1:7 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

1 Pet 1:11 that 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;

1 Pet 1:13 things which angels desire to look into. Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

1 Pet 1:14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance;

1 Pet 1:15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written,

1 Pet 1:16 "Be holy, for I am holy."

1 Pet 1:17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct

1 Pet 1:18 yourselves 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 4:12 "Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing

1 Pet 4:13 happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you

1 Pet 4:14 may also 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

1 Pet 4:19 let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator."

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

John 15:22 "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.

John 15:23 "He who hates Me hates My Father also.

John 15:24 "If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father.

John 15:25 "But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'

John 15:26 "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.

John 15:27 "And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

John 16:1 "These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble.
 John 16:2 "They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God
 John 16:3 service. "And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.
 John 16:4 "But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.
 John 16:5 "But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?'
 John 16:6 "But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.
 John 16:7 "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you."

This is what the Bible teaches us about life in this world, but how many times have you heard these Scriptures read in the churches these days? Not many times for sure, because trials are considered evil things, and coming from the Devil, not from our Father. As with almost every other doctrine, they have turned this principle upside down too.

Trials are necessary and good for us, though few of us would agree with them when they come our way. We must never forget why we are being subjected to trials, testings and chastening.

Heb 12:1 "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
 Heb 12:2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
 Heb 12:3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary
 Heb 12:4 and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.
 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 not chasten?
 Heb 12:8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.
 Heb 12:9 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.
 Heb 12:14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:
 Heb 12:15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there be any fornicator
 Heb 12:16 or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.
 Heb 12:17 For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.
 Heb 12:18 For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness
 Heb 12:19 and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word
 Heb 12:20 should not be spoken to them anymore. (For they could not endure what was commanded: "And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow."
 Heb 12:21 And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.")
 Heb 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable
 Heb 12:23 company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect,
 Heb 12:24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.
 Heb 12:25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven."

When trials come your way and the going gets tough, never forget the rewards for those who overcome to the end.

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."

Rev 2:17 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it."

Rev 2:26 "And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations;

Rev 2:27 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels'; as I

Rev 2:28 also have received from My Father; "and I will give him the morning star."

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Rev 2:27 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels'; as I

Rev 2:28 also have received from My Father; "and I will give him the morning star."

Rev 3:5 "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels."

Rev 3:12 "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name."

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."

Is there anything in this world that is worth giving up these wonderful prizes? Certainly not!

Jesus Christ said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away" (Mat 24:35).

These are His words and therefore the following promises are sure to come true.

Mat 7:13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who

Mat 7:14 go in by it. "Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Mat 7:15 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.
 Mat 7:16 "You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?
 Mat 7:17 "Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.
 Mat 7:18 "A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.
 Mat 7:19 "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.
 Mat 7:20 "Therefore by their fruits you will know them.
 Mat 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in
 Mat 7:22 heaven. "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'
 Mat 7:23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

“Many Are Called, But Few Are Chosen”

Not long ago we received a severe reprimand from a 'brother' who objected to our preaching that not all human beings could be saved. He assured us that as a result of God's goodness all human beings will be saved in the end. Well, we can only say 'Amen' to that, but unfortunately the Bible is telling us a different story. Nevertheless, we took his advice and went on the Internet to a specific place where he assured us we would find this valuable information. This is what we found.

"All manner of sin will be forgiven in this AGE as well as in the AGE (not eternity) to come, except blasphemy against God's Spirit-until-such blasphemy finds pardon in the fullness of the times (or ages) when God unites all in Christ. For the Lord does not retain His anger forever because He delights in mercy (Matt.12:32; 18:11,21-22, Eph. 1:9-11, Rev. 4:11; 5:13, Mic. 7:18-20) . . .

"Christ's fallen apostle, Judas, will be restored just as surely as fallen Israel (of which he is a member) will be restored. For the gifts and callings of God are irrevocable, and He has purposed to unite all in Christ. For the Scripture assures us that He who calls us is 'faithful'. He will surely perform it. So Judas is lost-until-the Lord restores Him [sic] (John 15:16, 1Thess. 5:24).

"So, Christ will say to unrighteous NATIONS: "Depart from Me into 'everlasting fire". And these nations will go away into "everlasting" (original language; age-lasting) punishment or pruning, that is-until-by God's severe mercy shown in judgment, ALL nations He has made glorify and worship Him. Thus God will fulfil His covenant with Abraham that in Christ all the families of ALL the nations will be BLESSED (Gen. 12:3, Ps. 62:12, 67:12, 67:4, 86:9, Matt. 25:41, 46). For according to Paul (Gal. 3:8), God's covenant with Abraham means that ALL will be justified and set right with God. So all flesh will bless His name forever and ever (Ps. 145:21) . . .

"God is God. Why do we get mad when He becomes good to all just because He delights in doing good? There is a parable about some workers who worked all day yet were given the same wages as those who only worked a short while. Perhaps we, Christians, should learn the lesson of that parable. (Matt. 20:1-16) What is in us that doesn't think it's fair if God gives us all eternal life? After all, did we earn ours? Maybe that's where the real problem lies. Many of us have been duped into mixing law and works with grace thereby falling from grace and becoming unrighteous judges just like the Pharisees of old."

Those who disobey the gospel and persecute Christians will be repaid with "everlasting" (that is, continuous) tribulation, destruction and punishment-until-by such persistent correction God shows them their need for Christ. So what is written in the prophets will come to pass, that ALL shall be taught of God, and everyone who has heard and LEARNED from the Father (eventually) comes to Christ. Thus all the families of the nations will remember Him and worship Him. And all will submit to Him and sing His praise. So God's promise will be fulfilled that ALL men shall reverence Him proclaim His works, and wisely consider His doings (Ps. 22:27-28, 64:4-5, 64:9, 2 Thess.1:7-10)." Gary Amirault, "The End of Forever in the Bible", pp. 7,8.

We knew from prophecy that the closer we get to the end of this age the worse it will get, but this is even more than we expected. In one stroke of the pen they turned the Scriptures upside down and nullified the most basic requirements for salvation: living a holy life, keeping the Commandments of God, and overcoming to the end. We said 'they' because this man is not alone. We found an unbelievable coterie of preachers who have embraced this dangerous apostasy.

What motivation would a sinner have to give up his debaucheries, turn around, and endure the strictness of Christian life, if he thinks that in the end he would be saved anyway?

In order to justify their new doctrine, they had to explain away the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. In so doing they tampered with the Scriptures and made sure they will face the wrath of Jesus Christ.

Mat 12:31 "Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men.

Mat 12:32 "Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come."

Rev 22:18 "For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book;

Rev 22:19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

And how did they explain away the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?

"All manner of sin will be forgiven in this AGE as well as in the AGE (not eternity) to come, except blasphemy against God's Spirit-until-such blasphemy finds pardon in the fullness of the times (or ages) when God unites all in Christ. For the Lord does not retain His anger forever because He delights in mercy (Matt.12:32; 18:11,21-22, Eph. 1:9-11, Rev. 4:11; 5:13, Mic. 7:18-20)".

Anyone who believes this kind of hogwash deserves his fate. Do they have any scriptural evidence for this unbelievable assertion? No! Instead they give us a whole range references that prove God's 'mercy'. A clever substitution! Well, we don't need proof of God's mercy, we all know that God is merciful, tolerant and patient, otherwise He would not put up with such blasphemies. What we want to know is where are the Scriptures that support this all-encompassing doctrine? The truth is, there aren't any, for that would nullify the Gospel of Jesus Christ, render meaningless His sacrifice, and make a mockery of the meaning of life and the purpose of salvation!

We have been born to become children of God, and gain eternal life in the Kingdom of God, and only those who prove themselves in this life after they have been called to repentance can make it. Unfortunately, just as there are aborted fetuses in real life so there are aborted ones at the spiritual level too.

Rev 3:5 "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels."

There are people whose names will be blotted out of the Book of Life. And if one's name is blotted out of the Book of Life, he will not be saved but blotted out of existence too.

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

Rev 20:13 written in the books. 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."

What God does in the process of salvation is not merely granting places of rest to human beings in His eternal Kingdom, He is reproducing Himself through those human beings that do not abort themselves in the process.

1 John 3:1 "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

1 John 3:3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."

1 John 3:4 "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.

1 John 3:5 And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.

1 John 3:6 Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.

1 John 3:7 Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is

1 John 3:8 righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

1 John 3:9 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been

1 John 3:10 born of God. In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.

1 John 3:11 For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another,

1 John 3:12 not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.

1 John 3:13 Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.

1 John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.

1 John 3:15 Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that **no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.**"

Jesus Christ made it clear that, "many are called, but few are chosen"? (Mat 22:14). And why only few are chosen? Because many abandon the trials and tribulations that we must overcome in order to qualify for eternal life.

Heb 6:4 "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God

Heb 6:5 and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance,

Heb 6:6 since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame."

There comes a time when Jesus Christ will have nothing to do with incorrigible sinners anymore.

Rev 22:10 "And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.

Rev 22:11 "He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still."

Rev 22:12 "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his

Rev 22:13 work. "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."

Rev 22:14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.

Rev 22:15 But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever

Rev 22:16 loves and practices a lie. "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."

Rev 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely."

Will the "dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie" be saved in the end? According to those apostates yes, but according to Jesus Christ NO.

Both John the Baptist and Jesus Christ began their ministries by calling on people to repent.

Mat 3:1 "In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea,

Mat 3:2 and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

Mat 4:16 The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned."

Mat 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

How do you think Jesus Christ will deal with those who preached a different gospel, who encouraged people not to repent because supposedly they would be saved anyway?

Apostle John told us that no murderer can have eternal life, and that there are sins than can never be forgiven.

1 John 5:16 "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that."

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is one sin that can never be forgiven regardless of whether people are aware of it or not when they commit it. That is why people must never speak evil or contrary to God, Jesus Christ, or the Holy Spirit, even in jest, for that becomes an unpardonable sin.

One of the reasons put forward by those who preach that there is no punishment in Hell for sinners is that the original Scriptures supposedly did not contain the word 'Hell'. Well, whether that exact term was in the original Scriptures or not is irrelevant. What is relevant is that the concept of eternal punishment for incorrigible sinners is ever present in the Bible. That is something that can never be taken out of the Bible, for to do so would mean to take the soul out of it. It would also mean to face the wrath of Jesus Christ, who said this about those who would tamper with the Bible.

Rev 22:18 "For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book;

Rev 22:19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Rev 22:20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

We wonder if these people have ever come across these Scriptures too.

Jude 1:10 "But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts,

Jude 1:11 in these things they corrupt themselves. Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

Jude 1:12 These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves.

They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever."

And these:

2 Pet 2:1 "But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.

2 Pet 2:2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.

2 Pet 2:3 By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

2 Pet 2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;

2 Pet 2:5 and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;

2 Pet 2:6 and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; and delivered righteous Lot, (for that righteous man,

2 Pet 2:7 who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked dwelling among them, tormented his

2 Pet 2:8 righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds); then the Lord knows

2 Pet 2:9 how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of
 2 Pet 2:10 judgment, and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise
 authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries,
 2 Pet 2:11 whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them
 2 Pet 2:12 before the Lord. But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of
 the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption,
 2 Pet 2:13 and will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the
 daytime. They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you,
 2 Pet 2:14 having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart
 trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children.
 2 Pet 2:15 They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who
 2 Pet 2:16 loved the wages of unrighteousness; but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with
 a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet.
 2 Pet 2:17 These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of
 2 Pet 2:18 darkness forever. For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts
 of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error.
 2 Pet 2:19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is
 overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.
 2 Pet 2:20 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior
 Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.
 2 Pet 2:21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known
 2 Pet 2:22 it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the
 true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

Do these blasphemers think those who resemble the 'dogs that return to their own vomit', and the sows that return to wallowing in the mire after being washed would be saved in the end? That they fool themselves that way would not be much loss, but unfortunately many people have drunk from their poisoned chalice too.

Now let us check in the Scriptures the three tenets on which they base their theology.

1) That Judas will be 'restored' because all Israel will be saved.

"Christ's fallen apostle, Judas, will be restored just as surely as fallen Israel (of which he is a member) will be restored. For the gifts and callings of God are irrevocable, and He has purposed to unite all in Christ. For the Scripture assures us that He who calls us is 'faithful'. He will surely perform it. So Judas is lost-until-the Lord restores Him [sic] (John 15:16, 1Thess. 5:24).

They gave John 15:16 and 1 Thessalonians 5:24 as supporting evidence for this assertion. Let us look at them.

John 15:16 "You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you."

1 Th 5:24 "He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it."

Where is "Judas is lost-until-the Lord restores Him" here? If anything, these references destroy the very point they are trying to make. Jesus Christ calls for fruits from those that are to be saved; He does not save them just because they are members of Israel; they must bear lasting fruit and prove themselves in the long run.

Notice how they do not use the term 'save', but 'restore'. Why? Because in their vernacular, salvation means restoring the Kingdom to Israel, just as the Pharisees of old believed, and still believe today. This gives you an idea where their theology comes from.

They appeal to God's faithfulness as proof that all human beings will be saved including Judas. If they think that God is like human beings to fall for flattery, they are grievously mistaken. No Scripture in the Bible confirms this fact.

Now should we be surprised that their references do not prove the points they are trying to make? No, we shouldn't, because that is their trademark: misquoting, misleading, and falsifying the Scriptures. There is however, one Scripture that seems to justify the belief that all Israel will be saved.

Rom 11:25 "For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

Rom 11:26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn

Rom 11:27 away ungodliness from Jacob; For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins."

Here it clearly states that, "all Israel will be saved." What these preachers did not want to take into consideration is that not all Israel is Israel. This is what they skipped in order to reach to their "proof".

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 accursed 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 law, the service of God, and the promises;

Rom 9:5 of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.

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 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."

And whose seed are those who are not the children of God?

John 8:39 "They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham.

John 8:40 "But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did

John 8:41 not do this. "You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of

John 8:42 fornication; we have one Father; God." Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me.

John 8:43 "Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.

John 8:44 "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

John 8:45 "But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me."

In other words, "the children of the flesh", the old Israel, of whom this authors' beloved Judas was a member, are not 'children of God', but the children of promise, the children of faith, are.

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

So then the true Israelites are not those of the Old Testament, but those who are genuine followers of Jesus Christ. That is why He told His Apostles that they would sit on twelve thrones over the new tribes of Israel.

Mat 19:28 So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

The fathers of the original twelve tribes, who should have been the natural heirs of the Kingdom of God and leaders of the twelve tribes of Israel, were a bunch of plotters and murderers. They would have murdered even their own brother Joseph, if God had not intervened to save him miraculously. They did not qualify to rule over the twelve tribes of the new Israel, but the Apostles did. This is why Israel according to the flesh will not be saved, but the Israel of faith will be. Among those saved will be many Israelites according to the flesh, but by no means all of them.

Now let us look at the second tenet of their theology: that all nations would be saved in the end too.

"So, Christ will say to unrighteous NATIONS: "Depart from Me into 'everlasting fire". And these nations will go away into "everlasting" (original language; age-lasting) punishment or pruning, that is-until-by God's severe mercy shown in judgment, ALL nations He has made glorify and worship Him. Thus God will fulfil His covenant with Abraham that in Christ all the families of ALL the nations will be BLESSED (Gen. 12:3, Ps. 62:12, 67:12, 67:4, 86:9, Matt. 25:41, 46). For according to Paul (Gal. 3:8), God's covenant with Abraham means that ALL will be justified and set right with God. So all flesh will bless His name forever and ever (Ps. 145:21) . . .

We don't need to check out the string of references they give us as proof that all nations will be blessed in Abraham; this is a well-established fact. What we want to do instead is to look at the last sentence and its references: Galatians 3:8 and Psalms 145:21 to see if "God's covenant with Abraham means that ALL will be justified and set right with God" as they say.

Gal 3:8 "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."

Does being blessed in Abraham also mean being saved? We could make a good case that God's promise of blessings to Abraham has been fulfilled in his descendants, the twelve tribes of Israel, among who are the Christian nations of Europe, North America and Oceania. Nevertheless, let us assume that these blessings are also for the Israel of faith, and are yet to be accomplished. Do the Scriptures support the idea that all human beings will be saved eventually? Let us look at what Apostle Paul said about predestination in his epistle to the Romans.

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 called."

Rom 9:8 That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the

Rom 9:9 promise are counted as the seed. For this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son."

Rom 9:10 And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac

Rom 9:11 (for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according

Rom 9:12 to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger."

Rom 9:13 As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated."

Rom 9:14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not!

Rom 9:15 For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on

Rom 9:16 whomever I will have compassion." So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows

Rom 9:17 mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth."

Rom 9:18 Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

Rom 9:19 You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?"

Rom 9:20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it,

Rom 9:21 "Why have you made me like this?" "Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?"

Rom 9:22 What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering

Rom 9:23 the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory,

Rom 9:24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

Rom 8:29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He

Rom 8:30 might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified."

Hmmm! Are all people going to be saved unconditionally? Certainly not! Some are simply not born to be saved, but to receive their blessings in this world. These are the vessels of destruction.

Luke 6:23 "Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, For in like manner their

Luke 6:24 fathers did to the prophets. "But woe to you who are rich, For you have received your consolation."

And which people are going to be saved? Those who "endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, **even us whom He called**, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles".

Our exceedingly generous preachers, who would save everybody in the world, quoted Galatians 3:8 as proof that all nations will be blessed in Abraham, meaning, according to them, that all nations will also be saved in Abraham.

But have they ever read these Scriptures, also from the Galatians?

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

Gal 1:7 gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.

Gal 1:8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be

Gal 1:9 accursed. 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."

Will these people also be saved due to the goodness of God? And what about these?

Gal 4:16 "Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth? They zealously court you,

Gal 4:17 but for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them."

Gal 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of

Gal 5:2 bondage. Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing.

Gal 5:3 And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law.

Gal 5:4 You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from

Gal 5:5 grace. For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

Gal 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through

Gal 5:7 love. You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?

Gal 5:8 This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you.

Gal 5:9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

Gal 5:10 I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall

Gal 5:11 bear his judgment, whoever he is. And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution?

Gal 5:12 Then the offense of the cross has ceased. I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off!"

Apostle Paul wished death to those who were peaching false gospels and were leading the Galatians astray. These people will not, and cannot, be saved regardless of whether they were Gentiles or Israelites. It is hard enough for one to be saved when he is burdened with his own sins, but it is virtually impossible for him to be saved when he is causing other people to fall away from the truth of God. Now let us look at their other reference: Psalm 142: 21

"My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD, And all flesh shall bless His holy name Forever and ever."

How can we get around this statement, which clearly says that all flesh shall bless God's holy name forever and ever? It appears to be an impossible task, until that is we read the very next verse prior to it.

Psa 145:20 "The LORD preserves all who love Him, But all the wicked He will destroy.

Psa 145:21 My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD, And all flesh shall bless His holy name Forever and ever."

Well, well, well, did we catch them again? They cannot claim that they did not see this verse when they assured us that "all flesh shall bless His holy name Forever and ever", for it is right before it. They could only have left it out because it destroys the very point they try to make. All flesh shall bless the name of the Lord forever and ever, **after** the wicked are destroyed. Finally, a look at the last tenet of their theology: that those who worked little will be saved just like those who worked all day.

"God is God. Why do we get mad when He becomes good to all just because He delights in doing good? There is a parable about some workers who worked all day yet were given the same wages as those who only worked a short while. Perhaps we, Christians, should learn the lesson of that parable. (Matt. 20:1-16) What is in us that doesn't think it's fair if God gives us all eternal life? After all, did we earn ours? Maybe that's where the real problem lies. Many of us have been duped into mixing law and works with grace thereby falling from grace and becoming unrighteous judges just like the Pharisees of old."

Now what is wrong with the notion that because God is good, all human beings will be saved? God and Jesus Christ have told us that those who blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, or turn back from the true path, cannot be saved. We have given ample proofs of this fact, including the words of Jesus Christ who said that, "the unjust, the filthy, the dogs, sorcerers, sexually immoral, murderers, idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie" **will not be in the Kingdom of God**. This is not to speak of those who do not care about, or do not believe in, eternal life? Ask an anthropologist about salvation and see what he tells you. Is God going to force people into His Kingdom against their will? And what about cannibalistic serial killers, rapists, and their like, what redeeming features do they have to deserve salvation and eternal life?

By pleading with God to save these people, they merely join their ranks. Their theology is not so much designed to save the contemptible, as to save themselves. They find it more convenient to invent self-serving doctrines, than to repent and join true believers in a life of righteousness.

The parable they gave us as proof that all will be saved is another classic example of a clever subterfuge. The issue is not whether those who worked little received the same as those who worked much, but whether the wicked receive the same as the righteous. The answer is an absolute NO!

They go on to say, "Many of us have been duped into mixing law and works with grace thereby falling from grace and becoming unrighteous judges just like the Pharisees of old." Well, those who do not bring works worthy of repentance and salvation are unworthy of the grace of God. As for becoming unrighteous judges like the Pharisees of old, we are not judging these false preachers, we exposing them and trying to save others from falling victims to their venomous doctrines.

Spiritism: Should People Inquire The Dead On Behalf Of The Living?

It used to be that those who practiced witchcraft, divination, fortune telling, astrology, palmistry, and the like, did so at the peril of their life, but no more. These practices are not only widely spread these days, they are held in high esteem and highly profitable too. In this "enlightened" age, the most widely read sections of the media are the horoscopes and star signs. Many people do nothing for the day before they know the stargazers' prognostications.

You can hardly walk down the aisle of a large shopping centre or a down town busy street, without being cajoled by someone who wants to tell you your future, how to win the lottery, how to amass a fortune, how to find a partner, etc. You just wonder if wealth and happiness are so easy at hand why do they all look like they had just escaped from the funny farm?

This world has achieved awesome technological developments, but in the social sciences it has failed to keep up with the pace. Although we live in a sea of people, the world is full of unfulfilled and lonely hearts that are easy pray to such illogical, meaningless, and costly claims.

For thousand of years, churches have been the upholders of society's social mores, concerning themselves with such things as moral and ethical laws, interpersonal relationships and character development, in addition to their normal spiritual matters. But these days churches hardly know what they stand for anymore, most being embroiled in sexual scandals that threaten to bankrupt them. It is a result of this kind of moral and spiritual vacuum that pagan practices and religions have flourished in recent years. Not surprisingly, people's wellbeing has suffered too and the world has experienced a growing list of disasters, plagues and social problems.

Today's generation is conditioned to believe in witchcraft tales and stargazers' prognostications, but disdains any idea that God is punishing them for departing from the straight and narrow path. They fail to make a connection between their general state on unhappiness and never-ending quest for futile thrills and spills, and their willingness to believe such soul-destroying tales and practices. Contrast this with the serenity and spiritual wellbeing of the genuine followers of Jesus Christ, who although by this world's standards are poor and miserable, in terms of their outlook in life they could hardly be happier.

Jesus Christ brought a Gospel to this world that teaches people not only how to live an abundant and fulfilled life, but how to achieve it eternally as well. He said, "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10b). That life is not achieved through mediums and 'familiar spirits', but through decent living and the Holy Spirit.

Stargazing and astrological charts are a common feature of Eastern religions – Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Animism, etc. – but are a curse and a snare for the people of the Book. From the very beginning, God has thundered in the strongest terms against such practices, the penalty being nothing less than death. Yet by now this plague is well entrenched into the western culture, few people caring much about what God thinks and says about it anymore. In so doing, they thrust themselves with an arrow through their own heart.

We will have a look now at what the Bible says about spiritism and the consequences for it.

Isa 8:19 "When they say to you, "Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter," should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living?"

Isa 8:20 "To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

Lev 19:30 "You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I am the Lord".

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 20:6 '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.'

People die for turning to mediums and familiar spirits, but you will never find a death certificate listing that as a cause of death.

Lev 20:27 '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.'

Num 23:16 "Then the LORD met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth, and said, "Go back to Balak, and thus
Num 23:17 you shall speak." So he came to him, and there he was, standing by his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab were with him. And Balak said to him, "What has the Lord spoken?"

Num 23:18 Then he took up his oracle and said: "Rise up, Balak, and hear! Listen to me, son of Zippor!

Num 23:19 "God is not a man, that He should lie, **Nor a son of man, that He should repent.** Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?

Num 23:20 Behold, I have received a command to bless; He has blessed, and I cannot reverse it.

Num 23:21 "He has not observed iniquity in Jacob, Nor has He seen wickedness in Israel. The LORD his God is with him, And the shout of a King is among them.

Num 23:22 God brings them out of Egypt; He has strength like a wild ox.

Num 23:23 "For there **is no sorcery against Jacob, Nor any divination against Israel.** It now must be said of Jacob And of Israel, 'Oh, what God has done!'

Num 24:1 "Now when Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he did not go as at other times, to seek to use sorcery, but he set his face toward the wilderness.

Num 24:2 And Balaam raised his eyes, and saw Israel encamped according to their tribes; and the Spirit of God came upon him. Then he took up his oracle and said:

Num 24:3 "The utterance of Balaam the son of Beor, The utterance of the man whose eyes are opened,

Num 24:5 "How lovely are your tents, O Jacob! Your dwellings, O Israel!

Num 24:6 Like valleys that stretch out, Like gardens by the riverside, Like aloes planted by the LORD, Like cedars beside the waters. He shall pour water from his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters.

Num 24:7 "His king shall be higher than Agag, And his kingdom shall be exalted.

Num 24:8 "God brings him out of Egypt; He has strength like a wild ox; He shall consume the nations, his enemies; He shall break their bones And pierce them with his arrows.

Num 24:9 'He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him?' "Blessed is he who blesses you, And cursed is he who curses you."

Num 24:10 Then Balak's anger was aroused against Balaam, and he struck his hands together; and Balak said to Balaam, "I called you to curse my enemies, and look, you have bountifully blessed them these three times!

Num 24:11 "Now therefore, flee to your place. I said I would greatly honor you, but in fact, the LORD has kept you back from honor."

Num 24:12 So Balaam said to Balak, "Did I not also speak to your messengers whom you sent to me, saying,

Num 24:13 'If Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the word of the LORD, to do good or bad of my own will. What the LORD says, that I must speak!'

When blessings and curses come from the Lord, they are effective and are being fulfilled in their time. In this passage we can see the blessings that Israel was meant to have for not allowing sorcery and divination to take root in its land. "Blessed is he who blesses you, And cursed is he who curses you."

The next passage however shows us what happened when the King of Israel ignored this warning from God.

Num 25:1 "Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of
Num 25:2 Moab. They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods.

Num 25:3 So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel.

Num 25:4 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Take all the leaders of the people and hang the offenders before the LORD, out in the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel."

Num 25:5 So Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal of

Num 25:9 Peor." And those who died in the plague were twenty-four thousand."

No mercy was to be shown to those who departed from the true God and sought solace in pagan deities. What God is telling us here, as in fact throughout the Bible, is that life without Him, outside the bounds set by Him, is not worth living. Those who took it upon themselves to defy Him were wiped out from the face of the earth, lest they infected others with their ideas. But that did not register for very long with the people of Israel and their leaders.

2 Chr 33:1 "Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem.

2 Chr 33:2 But he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

2 Chr 33:3 For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down; he raised up altars for the Baals, and made wooden images; and he **worshipped all the host of heaven and served them.**"

Does this sound familiar to you? Do you know who worships the host of heaven today? Pagan and animist religions thrive on it, but unfortunately so do many mainstream churches. Look at their calendars and see how many 'saints' they have created out of dead people over the years. That is spiritism of the worst kind.

2 Chr 33:4 "He also built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem shall My name be forever."

2 Chr 33:5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

2 Chr 33:6 Also he caused his sons to pass through the fire in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom; he practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger.

2 Chr 33:7 He even set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son, "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever."

No carved images were to be set up in the house of God. Carved images, statues, idol paintings, and the like, represent death, and are an abomination before the Lord. He is a living God and is not to be compared with immovable idols.

Mat 22:31 "But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, Mat 22:32 saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? **God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.**"

The Bible allows artistic designs, carvings and paintings for the house of God, but NO idol images before which people prostrate themselves in worship and homage. And NO carcasses of dead peoples in the house of God either! No graves or burials in the places of worship.

Jer 16:17 "For My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from My face, nor is their iniquity hidden from My Jer 16:18 eyes. "And first I will repay double for their iniquity and their sin, because they have defiled My land; they have filled My inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable idols."

Ezek 43:7 And He said to me, "Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever. No more shall the house of Israel defile My holy name, they nor their kings, by their harlotry or with the carcasses of their kings on their high places.

Ezek 43:8 "When they set their threshold by My threshold, and their doorpost by My doorpost, with a wall between them and Me, they defiled My holy name by the abominations which they committed; therefore I have consumed them in Ezek 43:9 My anger. "Now **let them put their harlotry and the carcasses of their kings far away from Me, and I will dwell in their midst forever.**"

2 Chr 33:9 "So Manasseh seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel.

2 Chr 33:10 And the LORD spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they would not listen.

2 Chr 33:11 Therefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze fetters, and carried him off to Babylon.

2 Chr 33:12 Now when he was in affliction, he implored the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the

2 Chr 33:13 God of his fathers, and prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD was God."

With all the evils that he committed, when he turned to God, Manasseh was forgiven and his sins were blotted out. A lesson for all the people, and for all time! Now let us look at some examples from the New Testament.

Acts 8:5 "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them.

Acts 8:6 And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the

Acts 8:7 miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed.

Acts 8:8 And there was great joy in that city.

Acts 8:9 But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, to whom they all gave heed,

Acts 8:10 from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God."

Spiritists do not say that they deal with evil powers; they say they serve "the great power of God". People do not know that just because something has a spiritual undertone to it, it is not necessarily good. And they do not know it because churches, which should be guiding people away from these things, are themselves up to their neck in spiritism and idolatry

1 John 4:1 "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world."

Acts 8:11 "And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time.

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.

Acts 8:13 Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.

Acts 8:14 Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them,

Acts 8:15 who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.

Acts 8:16 For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord

Acts 8:17 Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.
 Acts 8:18 And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, saying,
 Acts 8:19 "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit."
 Acts 8:20 But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money!
 Acts 8:21 "You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God.
 Acts 8:22 "Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you."
 Acts 8:23 For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity."
 Acts 8:24 Then Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me, that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me."

In this passage we have a contrast between the Holy Spirit and the wicked spirits. The Holy Spirit can never be invoked to amass great wealth. The moment one does that he loses Him, for it reflects a wrong attitude of mind. Never forget what the Scriptures say about those who are wealthy.

James 4:13 "Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.
 James 4:14 buy and sell, and make a profit"; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.
 James 4:15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."
 James 4:16 But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.
 James 4:17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.
 James 5:1 Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you!
 James 5:2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.
 James 5:3 Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire.
 James 5:4 You have heaped up treasure in the last days. Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.
 James 5:5 You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.
 James 5:6 slaughter. You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.
 James 5:7 Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain.
 James 5:8 You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.
 James 5:9 Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!
 James 5:10 My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord; that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.
 James 5:11 suffering and patience. Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord; that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.
 James 5:12 But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your "Yes," be "Yes," and your "No," "No," lest you fall into judgment."

James was one of the New Testament writers that made Martin Luther very uncomfortable. One cannot but wonder whether his sudden elevation to wealth and fame had something to do with it.

As you can see, both the Old and the New Testaments strongly condemn spiritist practices. There is however one incident in the Bible that seems to give credence to mediums and 'familiar spirits'. Here it is in its entirety.

1 Sam 28:4 "Then the Philistines gathered together, and came and encamped at Shunem. So Saul gathered all Israel together, and they encamped at Gilboa.
 1 Sam 28:5 When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly.
 1 Sam 28:6 And when Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by the prophets.
 1 Sam 28:7 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 to you."
 1 Sam 28:9 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?"
 1 Sam 28:10 And Saul swore to her by the LORD, saying, "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!" And the king said to her, "Do not be afraid. What did you see?"
 1 Sam 28:13 have you deceived me? For you are Saul!" And the king said to her, "Do not be afraid. What did you see?"
 And the woman said to Saul, "I saw a spirit ascending out of the earth."
 1 Sam 28:14 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 do."
 1 Sam 28:16 Then Samuel said: "Why then do you ask me, seeing the LORD has departed from you and 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 28:17 you and 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, therefore the LORD has done this thing to you this day.
 1 Sam 28:19 "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 deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines."
 1 Sam 28:20 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.

1 Sam 31:1 Now the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and
 1 Sam 31:2 fell slain on Mount Gilboa. Then the Philistines followed hard after Saul and his sons. And the Philistines killed Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons.
 1 Sam 31:3 The battle became fierce against Saul. The archers hit him, and he was severely wounded by the archers.
 1 Sam 31:4 Then Saul said to his armor bearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised men come and thrust me through and abuse me." But his armor bearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and
 1 Sam 31:5 fell on it. And when his armor bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword, and died with him.
 1 Sam 31:6 So Saul, his three sons, his armor bearer, and all his men died together that same day.
 1 Sam 31:7 And when the men of Israel who were on the other side of the valley, and those who were on the other side of the Jordan, saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities and fled; and the Philistines
 1 Sam 31:8 came and dwelt in them. So it happened the next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa.
 1 Sam 31:9 And they cut off his head and stripped off his armor, and sent word throughout the land of the Philistines, to proclaim it in the temple of their idols and among the people.
 1 Sam 31:10 Then they put his armor in the temple of the Ashtoreths, and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth Shan."

If one took this passage at its face value, not knowing what the Bible says elsewhere, he could easily be tempted to think that séances, divination and spiritism are useful practices and sanctioned by God. How else could a medium bring up the dead and tell the truth about the living? What one should ask himself rather is whether that woman brought up Samuel indeed, or whether a wicked spirit masqueraded as Samuel? To understand this, we go back to the reason for which Saul went to that medium in the first place.

1 Sam 28:6 "And when Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by the prophets."

Dreams, Urim, and the prophets were the three sanctioned venues by which God communicated with His people. Urim was a special breastplate used by the priests of Israel when they served in the Temple that gave them authority to stand before God and receive His words.

Exo 28:30 "And you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be over Aaron's heart when he goes in before the LORD. So Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel over his heart before the LORD continually.

Num 27:18 And the LORD said to Moses: "Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom is the Spirit, and
 Num 27:19 lay your hand on him; set him before Beazar the priest and before all the congregation, and inaugurate
 Num 27:20 him in their sight. "And you shall give some of your authority to him, that all the congregation of the
 Num 27:21 children of Israel may be obedient." He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire before the LORD for him by the judgment of the Urim. At his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, he and all the children of Israel with him; all the congregation."

When Israel departed from the Lord and went after pagan deities, this practice fell into disuse. And when Saul departed from the Lord, the Lord departed from him, and no longer answered his queries. Now instead of repenting, as humans should always do, Saul sought to save his skin and his kingdom by going after mediums and familiar spirits, knowing full well that the penalty for that was death. What happened to him in the end? Exactly what God said that He would do to those who go after such spirits! Saul lost his life, his children, and his kingdom, all in one day. So was that familiar spirit Samuel the prophet or another devious spirit? If it were Samuel it was contrary to what the Bible teaches us elsewhere about the dead.

Ecc 9:5 "For the living know that they will die; But the dead know nothing, And they have no more reward, For the
 Ecc 9:6 memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, their hatred, and their envy have now perished; Nevermore will they have a share In anything done under the sun."

The dead know nothing anymore, nor will they have a share in anything that is done under the sun. If what that woman did were true, then the dead would know something and have a share in what is being done under the sun.

How then do we explain the uttering of that spirit, for he spoke the truth, didn't he? Most people have a mistaken understanding of how wicked spirits work. From the beginning of the world, their trademark has been to mix truth with falsehood and present it as pure truth. That is what Satan did in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve. He let them believe that God had not told them the whole truth, and that they would be better off listening to him, and testing and trying things for themselves at least once. They did, and their descendants are still trying things for themselves 'at least once'. They do not know that once you take a bite of the apple once, the second time it appears to be even more natural to do so.

Heb 12:1 "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and **the sin which so easily ensnares us**, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
 Heb 12:2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Did Adam and Eve know good and evil after they sinned? Of course not! Instead, they were cast out of the Garden of Eden and were cursed for the rest of their life. For good measure, they passed on that curse to the rest of mankind.

That is what happens when people disobey their Creator God. Not that their eyes are opened and they know good and evil, but that their eyes are being shut to the truth of God, and they know evil and nothing but evil from then on. As God said, "None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand" (Dan 12:10b). And, "These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me" (Mat 15:8). And again, "God has given them a spirit of stupor, Eyes that they should not see And ears that they should not hear, To this very day." (Rom 11:8).

The prophet Isaiah has it this way:

Isa 29:13 "Therefore the LORD said: "Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths And honor Me with their lips, But have removed their hearts far from Me, And their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men,
Isa 29:14 Therefore, behold, I will again do a marvelous work Among this people, A marvelous work and a wonder; For the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, And the understanding of their prudent men shall be hidden."
Isa 29:15 Woe to those who seek deep to hide their counsel far from the LORD, And their works are in the dark; They say, "Who sees us?" and, "Who knows us?"

Yes, their hearts are far from God, their eyes are closed to His truth; they do their deeds and séances in the dark, and think that God cannot see and hear them. Some churches have elevated such practices to official church doctrines. They turned the dead into "saints", and inquire of them whenever they want the 'truth' revealed in séances and special services and ceremonies. To God that is nothing but sorcery, divination and spiritual fornication. In the course of time, those who embraced such pagan practices were led to commit murder against the very people of God who guarded themselves against falling victims to such wicked spirits.

Rev 17:1 "Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters,
Rev 17:2 with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication."
Rev 17:3 So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.
Rev 17:4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication.
Rev 17:5 And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.
Rev 17:6 I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marvelled with great amazement."

Now if kings and great men of the earth were seduced by this harlot's sorceries, what chance do simple people have in the face of such powerful deceptions? People are predisposed to seek solace in spiritism and fall easier victims to such deceitful practices when they are at a low ebb in their life, exactly when they have a greater need of God and His salvation. You may have noticed how national leaders seek to revive a sagging popularity at home by a much-publicized audience with the head of this Mother of Harlots. They do not care that in so doing they forfeit their spiritual salvation, and that what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination with the Lord.

Luke 16:15 "And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God."

So what were the truth and the falsehood in what that medium said to Saul, the king of Israel? Did he find out anything that he did not already know? He knew that God had castigated him out of His sight for disobedience, yet instead of repenting and seeking God's forgiveness, he went after wicked spirits and sank even deeper in the mire.

There are plenty of examples in the Bible that show how God changed His mind about punishing people when they repented, even after committing grievous sins. David, the next king of Israel, was one such example; Manasseh, of whom we read above, was another one. Saul however was not of the type who would repent and return to God. Instead, he thought he could do better by going after mediums and familiar spirits. In the end all he did was to make sure that he would lose his life.

What about that women's ability to raise the dead and speak with them? If that was an authentic scene, why would those who were raised to life want to go back to being dead again? The truth is, the one who spoke with her was not Samuel but a lying spirit masquerading as Samuel. Wicked spirits can certainly do that. How is it then that he spoke the truth? He spoke the truth because he had no choice. It is in God's power to force such spirits to obey Him. He determines what they can and cannot do or say, and they have no choice but to obey.

1 Ki 22:20 "And the LORD said, 'Who will persuade Ahab to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?' So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner.
1 Ki 22:21 "Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, and said, 'I will persuade him.'
1 Ki 22:22 "The LORD said to him, 'In what way?' So he said, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And the LORD said, 'You shall persuade him, and also prevail. Go out and do so.'
1 Ki 22:23 "Therefore look! The LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and the LORD has declared disaster against you."

Saul already knew his fate and his trip to the woman made no difference in that regard. What it did however was that it weakened his spirit, and sapped whatever strength and hope of victory he may have had prior to that. So rather than make a case for spiritism, this example destroys it and shows how futile and dangerous such practices really are.

The spirit masquerading as Samuel spoke no more than what God allowed him to, what had already been determined for Saul when he failed to repent of his transgressions. God allowed that incident to happen, and recorded it in the Scriptures as a warning to those who may be tempted to dabble in spiritism, not as an example to be followed. Those who still go after mediums and familiar spirits after all that God has revealed to us, cannot complain about their fate in the end.

Deu 12:29 "When the LORD your God cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you displace them and dwell in their land,
Deu 12:30 "take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.'

Deu 12:31 "You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods.

Deu 12:32 "Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.

Deu 13:1 "If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder,

Deu 13:2 "and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods'; which you have not known; 'and let us serve them,'

Deu 13:3 "you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your **God is testing you** to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

Deu 13:4 "You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice, and you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him.

Deu 13:5 "But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall put away the evil from your midst."

Instead of giving their life away to mediums, demons and seducing spirits, people should give it to the Holy Spirit who has never failed or deceived anyone.

Confessing Your Sins, But To Whom?

We may have our problems, but one thing is sure: life is never boring in this work of ours. An old acquaintance of ours, was telling us once about her dissatisfaction with her priest because he was pestering her about confession. She had her reasons for not wanting to confess, and as she was talking with us she stopped and ask us whether we have confession in our church. Thinking that she wanted a way out of her dilemma, I quickly answered 'No, we don't'. On the contrary, we do not encourage people to burden others with the dark secrets of their life. It is better that they remain forgiven and forgotten. All they need to do is acknowledge that they have been sinful, and leave it at that." Yet instead of joining us, she decided that because we do not have confession we are not a proper church. As the saying goes, damned if you do, and damned if you don't. Which brings us to the question of what makes a church.

Jesus Christ said that, "where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them" (Mat. 18:20). Bear in mind that originally the term 'church' meant a congregation of people. So, according to the Scriptures, as few as two people gathered in the name of Jesus could make a Church of God. We say 'according to the Scriptures,' because according to human standards and expectations we are not a proper church. Lack of the 'sacrament' of confession denies us the right to call ourselves a church.

At no time did Jesus Christ envision His Church as a worldwide institution. On the contrary, He referred to it as a little flock over which the gates of Hell would not prevail.

Luke 12:32 "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Mat 16:18 "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."

The saying, 'the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it' indicates that Jesus Christ expected His 'little flock' to be engaged in a life and death struggle with its adversaries. The book of Revelation even tells us who it is that His little Church will struggle against: a worldwide institution described as the Mother of Harlots, with whom the people of this world, particularly kings and leaders, have committed spiritual fornication (Rev.17).

Countless books have been written about this "Mother of Harlots", virtually all pointing the finger at Rome and its worldwide Church. We have covered this subject at length too in *The Christian Herald numbers 3,4 and 10*.

Now should we be surprised that the same Mother of Harlots, who seduced the leaders of this world with its sorceries, and persecuted the people of God down through the centuries, also demands that its followers discharge their souls to its priests, thus keeping them in a tight grip to herself?

Few doctrines are as encompassing and intrusive into one's life as the doctrine of confession. Failure to comply with it places a question mark over one's membership into that church. For those who have been led to believe that their wellbeing and salvation depend on their status in that church, being excommunicated from it could be as painful as death itself.

But what do the Scriptures say about confession? Is this a prerequisite for membership into a church? The Apostles of Jesus Christ had a lot to say on this matter, and not quite one might expect. But first, let us deal with the statement on which mainstream Churches base their doctrine of confession.

James 5:16 "Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."

Clear and straightforward, we must confess our trespasses to one another. Assuming that trespass and sin is the same thing, which may not necessarily always be the case, what kind of sins should we confess to one another? Should we bring out of the deep recesses of our mind the foolish things we did when we were young, and not so young, which made us sick and did our best to forget and wipe out of our mind, and confess them to other members of the Church? What purpose would that serve other than embarrass them and make them sick too? Would you be happy to confess the worst of your sins to

another person? Ever wondered why priests and ministers of religion in churches that practice confession are emotional and spiritual wrecks?

You know what the golden rule says: do to others as you want them to do to yourself. And its corollary silver rule expressed in the negative: do not do to others what you do not want them to do on to yourself. Well, I neither want to unburden my soul to other people, nor to hear their souls unburdened to me. Jesus Christ forgave me my sins once, when I confessed them to Him. He put behind me that phase of my life, and I want it to stay that way, undisturbed, forever.

David, the famous King of Israel, also sinned grievously against God, but when he repented, he was forgiven and his sins were wiped out. Although he committed adultery, and then murder in order to cover his sin, he went before God in prayer saying that he sinned against God, and against Him, only. However, in seeking forgiveness of his sins, he did not list them again. He merely acknowledged his transgressions in general terms and left it at that.

Psa 51:1 "Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your loving kindness; According to the multitude of Your
Psa 51:2 tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me
Psa 51:3 from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me.

Psa 51:4 Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight; That You may be found just when
You speak, And blameless when You judge.

Psa 51:5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.

Psa 51:6 Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.

Psa 51:7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Psa 51:8 Make me hear joy and gladness, That the bones You have broken may rejoice.

Psa 51:9 Hide Your face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities.

Psa 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Psa 51:11 Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

Psa 51:12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit.

Psa 51:13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You."

God recorded this episode for posterity, as an example for us. He then proceeded to tell us how we could reason with Him about our sins.

Isa 1:18 "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

Isa 1:19 If you are willing and obedient, You shall eat the good of the land;

Isa 1:20 But if you refuse and rebel, You shall be devoured by the sword"; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

Isa 44:22 I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, And like a cloud, your sins. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you."

Isa 43:25 "I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins."

Wonderful staff, isn't it? We confess our sins to God who blots them out of our memory and His memory. Now if God does not want to remember our sins anymore, why should a human being want to dig deep into our subconscious and hear our sins confessed to him, after we have been forgiven and washed by God and been made white as snow and wool? Wouldn't that defile and trouble our mind and our soul and be contrary to God's principle?

The question is, did the Apostles really want us to unburden our conscience to one another in contravention to what God told us in the Old Testament? The answer is an emphatic NO. Let us consider the case of Apostle Paul. More than any other person in the Bible, he is used as an example of one who was sinful once, saw his errors, confessed his sins, was forgiven, and became a holy man. Let us contrast him with David. Here are his own words.

Acts 22:3 "I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today.

Acts 22:4 "I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women,

Acts 22:5 "as also the high priest bears me witness, and all the council of the elders, from whom I also received letters to the brethren, and went to Damascus to bring in chains even those who were there to Jerusalem to be punished."

1 Cor 15:9 "For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."

Gal 1:13 For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it."

He confessed that he was a sinful man by zealously persecuting the Church of God. What these Scriptures do not tell us here is that his sins were already well known to the Churches of God. Confessing them merely confirmed to the people he persecuted that he had repented of them and was now rehabilitated and accepted by both God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Gal 1:23 "But they were hearing only, "He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once

Gal 1:24 tried to destroy." "And they glorified God in me."

Now notice what happened when it came to personal sins of which he was even more loathsome.

Rom 7:15 "For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate,

Rom 7:16 that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good.

Rom 7:17 But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

Rom 7:18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to

Rom 7:19 perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do,
 Rom 7:20 that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.
 Rom 7:21 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.
 Rom 7:22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.
 Rom 7:23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.
 Rom 7:24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?
 Rom 7:25 I thank God; through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

When it came to personal life and the sins of his flesh, Apostle Paul was not as forthcoming as when discussing his well-known persecution of the Church. He was not happy with 'the law in his members' that was causing him to sin and feel so bad about himself, but did not think it necessary to tell people the exact nature of those sins. He had confessed them to Christ, who obviously had forgiven him, and that was enough.

Mainstream churches place their priests as intermediaries between men and God, but we have no such custom because it is not scriptural. Our Intermediary and Advocate with the Father is none other than Jesus Christ, our Lord who took our sins upon Himself in the first place.

1 John 1:8 "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all
 1 John 1:10 unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.
 1 John 2:1 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, **we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.**"

There is also the question of who has the power to forgive sins. This is what Jesus Christ told His chief Apostle, Peter.

Mat 16:18 "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
 Mat 16:19 "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

Was Peter alone in this privileged position? No! All of Jesus' Apostles had this power.

John 20:19 "Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be
 John 20:20 with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.
 John 20:21 So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."
 John 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.
 John 20:23 "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

And did they exercise it? Certainly! This is how.

Acts 3:19 "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,
 Acts 3:20 "and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,
 Acts 3:21 "whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began."

Jesus Christ did not mean that His Apostles would simply go out and forgive people sins willy-nilly. He meant that they would do it in connection with the act of repentance. It is in that context that sins forgiven on earth are forgiven in heaven. In regard to private sins for which people express personal remorse, this is what Jesus said.

Mat 18:21 "Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"
 Mat 18:22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.
 Mat 18:35 "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother
 Mat 6:14 his trespasses." "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.
 Mat 6:15 "But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses
 Mark 11:25 "And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.
 Mark 11:26 "But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses."

One cannot offer atonement or forgiveness for future sins. When a person sins again, unless he or she repents and seeks forgiveness again, the previous act of forgiveness becomes void.

An example of collective forgiveness for publicly known sins is found in this example.

2 Cor 2:6 "This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man,
 2 Cor 2:7 so that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be
 2 Cor 2:8 swallowed up with too much sorrow. Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him.
 2 Cor 2:9 For to this end I also wrote, that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things.

2 Cor 2:10 Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ,
 2 Cor 2:11 lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

Here Apostle Paul was forgiving sins that were known by, and affecting, the church. He had no hesitation in asking the Church to forgive him when he perceived that the man had repented. In all likelihood, the man was not even aware that living with his stepmother was a grievous sin, because no one had told him that. But once he was made aware of it, he became broken-hearted. Apostle Paul then became concerned that continued ostracism would push him over the edge into the hands of Satan, and become lost to Christ. The Church of God forgave him, and all ended up well, as it always should in such cases.

Sins that are of a private nature, that affect no one but the person itself, must be confessed to Jesus Christ, and to Him alone. There is no advantage in burdening someone else's with your sins. But sins that are of a publicly nature, must be confessed publicly, and be forgiven publicly. In both cases, once that is done, the matter becomes closed and never revisited.

Confession must always be linked to repentance. Confessing one's sins without repentance, either publicly or privately, serves no purpose. One would kid himself to think that repeated confessions would allow him to start from scratch and commit the same sins again. It should never be forgotten either that some sins can be forgiven, while others cannot.

1 John 5:16 "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray
 1 John 5:17 about that. All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not leading to death."

Some people become heartbroken with fear that they may have committed an unpardonable sin. There is a simple test for that. If you really desire in your heart to be forgiven, and want to start afresh, you have not committed an unpardonable sin.

One can think of no better example of a useless confession than one offered by Mafia dons to their priests. They shamelessly murder and commit grievous crimes in the belief that a last minute confession would clear their conscience, wipe out their slate clean, and guaranty them a place in "heaven". Upon their death, competing dons come together in lavish displays of solidarity, no doubt believing that a façade of public respectability in death automatically translates into forgiveness in heaven. Are priests telling them that such contrived acts of repentance are worse than useless? Obviously not, for if they did criminals would stop deceiving themselves into believing that tailor made confessions at the last minute offer them absolution, forgiveness and salvation.

Confessing your dirty deeds to another human being does not clear your conscience; it makes it worse by knowing that another person has been burdened with it. Human beings have no business in taking other people's sins upon themselves. Jesus Christ did that when He dies on that cross for all of us.

Heb 2:17 "Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

Heb 2:18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

Heb 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, **consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,**

Heb 3:2 who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house."

Having become the High Priest of our confession, Jesus Christ alone can hear the intimate details of our sins and wipe them out of our record. If you feel the need to unburden a heavy conscience, do it to Him privately as David did to God, after which you must believe that God and Jesus Christ had wiped out your slate clean and gave you the chance to start a new life.

THE CHRISTIAN HOLY DAYS FOR THE YEARS 2003 - 2005

	2003	2004	2005
The Passover (Pesah - Nissan 14) Unlike the Jews, who used to kill the Passover lamb "at the twilight" of Nissan 14 (meaning in the evening towards Nissan 15), we, Christians, observe the Passover when our "Lamb" – Jesus Christ – was sacrificed. That happened on the afternoon of Nissan 14, before the twilight of Nissan 14, meaning that we keep it a little earlier than the Jews. We commemorate His death, not His supper, which occurred the previous evening, as some churches do. The time when His body was broken, not when He broke the symbolic bread.	16 April	5 April	23 April
Days of Unleavened Bread (Nissan 15 – 21)	17 – 23 April	6 – 12 April	24 – 30 April

On the first and seventh days there shall be holy convocations. No work shall be done on these days.				
Pentecost (Shavuot – Sivan 6)		6 June	26 May	13 June
Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah - Tishri 1)		27 Sept.	16 Sept.	4 Oct.
Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur – Tishri 10)		6 Oct.	25 Sept.	13 Oct.
Feast of Tabernacles (Succoth -- Tishri 15 – 22)		11 – 18 Oct.	30 Sept. – 7 Oct.	18 – 25 Oct.

On the first and the eighth days there shall be holy convocations. No work shall be done on these days.

Please note: The Holy Days for the year 2003 which we published in *The Christian Herald No 9* were wrong. They were for the year 2002. If you have ever observed a Holy Day on a wrong date, you need not worry about it. God does not hold against people genuine mistakes.